

# **Application guidelines**

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## **Application deadlines 2025:**

### **Stage 1:**

- Pre-application to the EMBO Young Investigator Programme: 1 April 2025, 12:00 CEST
- Referee submission of reference letters: 1 April, 12:00 CEST

### **Stage 2:**

Full application to the EMBO Young Investigator Programme: TBC, mid-July 2025, 23:55 CEST.

### **Stage 3:**

Online interview: On 4 or 5 November 2025

### **EMBC Member states:**

Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, and United Kingdom.

### **EMBC Associate Member states:**

India, Singapore

### **Countries/territories covered by a co-operation agreement:**

Taiwan (Taiwanese Ministry of Science and Technology), Chile (National Agency for Research and Development of Chile (ANID)).

For the application round 2025, current PIs or Co-PIs (as of 21st of February 2024) of the following programmes of the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) are eligible to apply: [ASPIRE](#), [FOREST](#) (in Japanese known as “創発的研究支援事業”), [PRESTO](#) (in Japanese known as “さきがけ”), [ACT-X](#).

### **EMBO subject areas:**

Cell Cycle, Cell & Tissue Architecture, Cellular Metabolism, Chromatin & Transcription, Development, Differentiation & Death, Evolution & Ecology, Genome Stability & Dynamics, Genomic & Computational Biology, Immunology, Membranes & Transport, Microbiology, Virology & Pathogens, Molecular Medicine, Neuroscience, Plant Biology, Proteins & Biochemistry, RNA, Signal Transduction, Structural Biology & Biophysics, Systems Biology

### **Contact: [yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)**

### **EMBO YIP Committee 2025**

Guillermina López-Bendito (Chair, ES)

Corinne Houart (UK)

Urs Jenal (CH)

Werner Kuehlbrandt (DE)

Gaëlle Legube (FR)

Laura Machesky (UK)

Jacques Neefjes (NL)

Marcin Nowotny (PL)

Giles Oldroyd (UK)

Sara Wickström (DE)

# 1. About the EMBO Young Investigator Programme

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The EMBO Young Investigator Programme supports life scientists, who have been group leaders for less than four years at the time of application, in setting up their laboratories. Young Investigators receive four years of financial support for networking, benefit from training opportunities, and receive support for their lab members and mentoring. Young Investigators become part of an international network of more than 700 current and former EMBO Young Investigators, Installation Grantees and Global Investigators.

Key points:

- The award is aimed at young group leaders to support establishing their labs.
- The EMBO Young Investigator Programme (YIP) application uses a two-stage online application process. Pre-applications are evaluated, and a subset is invited to the full application.
- Applications are evaluated by four Selection Committee members as well as an external peer reviewer.
- EMBO funds approximately 25 EMBO Young Investigators annually.
- Please ensure that you have carefully read the eligibility criteria before applying.
- Should you have questions regarding your application, please first consult the **FAQ section** on page 15 of this document. If your question is not answered, please contact the EMBO YIN office at [yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org).

## 2. Eligibility

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Applications are accepted from candidates who meet the following criteria:

Applicants should have been an independent group leader for at least one year and less than four years at the pre-application deadline (no earlier than 01.04.2021 and no later than 01.04.2024 for the application round 2025). Independence is defined by:

- Being able to apply for grants in one's own name and reporting directly to funding agencies.
- Being able to submit manuscripts as a last author ('corresponding author' is not considered equivalent to 'last author').
- Being responsible for supervising graduate students and/or postdocs in one's own lab.
- Applicants should have an excellent track record, as defined in Section 4.6.
- Candidates must do research in the life sciences (see EMBO subject areas on page 4) in a location/programme listed on page 4.
- Medical scientists working in the fields related to the general EMBO subject areas are eligible to apply.
- Applicants are expected to have obtained sufficient funding to run their laboratory (consumables, lab space, salary for themselves and their staff). The YIP funding is not intended to replace core funding.

Applicants must have at least one last author primary research paper accepted for publication or published in an international peer-reviewed journal from independent work carried out in their own laboratories. EMBO will consider peer-reviewed papers published on preprint servers (arXiv, BioRxiv, PeerJ, etc.), see below.

- We accept last author research papers that have “in submission” status by the application deadline (1 April). The status must be changed to “accepted” by the interview date.
- A last author preprint with public in-depth peer reviews is also sufficient for eligibility, provided the following conditions are met:
  - the preprint is posted on a recognized community preprint server such as Arxiv, bioRxiv, medRxiv, Zenodo;
  - the peer reviews must be publicly available online;
  - the peer reviews were verifiably obtained from an independent preprint peer review service such as "Peer Community In", "eLife" or "Review Commons";
  - the reviews provide an in-depth expert analysis of the rigor and validity of the research and its contribution to the field.

Examples of how to cite peer-reviewed preprints:

- Bénitière F, Necsulea A, Duret L (2023). AX1BP1 recruits ATG9 vesicles through SCAMP3 binding. bioRxiv <https://doi.org/10.1101/2022.12.09.519597> peer-reviewed by PCI Evolution <https://doi.org/10.24072/pci.evolbiol.100642>
- Hama Y, Kurikawa Y, Matsui T, Mizushima N, Yamamoto H (2023). TAX1BP1 recruits ATG9 vesicles through SCAMP3 binding. bioRxiv <https://doi.org/10.1101/2023.08.18.553817> peer-reviewed by Review Commons <https://reviewcommons.org/eeb/10.1101/2023.08.18.553817>

Note: informal comments and feedback, highlights or reviews posted by individuals are excluded.

The following items should not be listed as publications:

- Papers in preparation.
- Papers published in non-English language.
- Last author reviews.
- Abstracts of presentations at conferences.

Please note:

- In cases where a PhD or postdoc supervisor is included as an author on the paper, please include an explanation of their contributions to the work.
- Applicants must be available to attend a virtual interview (on 4 or 5 November 2025).
- Candidates can re-apply as many times as they fulfil eligibility criteria, but only once more after having been interviewed (i.e. candidates can only attend two interviews).
- Please note that no special provision will be made for lab closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For female candidates with children of any age, the limit of four years since independence is automatically extended by one year per child. The actual time taken as maternity leave (at any point during the career) should only be shared with the office if it exceeds more than one year per child.
- For male applicants with children, the four-year limit can be extended by the actual time taken off as paternity leave or – if their partner is working at least 80% FTE (full-time equivalent) – 3 months per child, whichever is longer.
- Illness, other care responsibilities and extended military service are considered exceptional circumstances, which are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Special provisions may also be made for clinical scientists.

Please contact the EMBO YIN office for eligibility advice before applying if:

- You require an extension of the eligibility period due to illness, extended military service or other exceptional circumstances.
- Your transition to an independent group leader did not involve a formal change in position.
- You are unsure whether you meet the criteria for an independent group leader.

## 3. Application process

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The application to the EMBO Young Investigator Programme uses a two-stage application process and must be made via the EMBO online system. The application includes an online form as well as an offline form (a Word form to download), both of which must be completed.

Please refer to the application guidelines below prior to starting your application.

### **USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS**

EMBO acknowledges the value of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, as well as human feedback, in the preparation of funding applications. Applicants are fully and solely responsible for the originality and accuracy of their applications.

EMBO will continue following the developments in generative AI and adapt this policy as required.

## 3.1. Timeline 2025

Deadline for pre-applications	1 April, 12:00 CEST
Pre-application results announced	late May
Full applications invited	late June
Deadline for full applications	TBC, mid-July 2025
Online panel interviews	4 or 5 November
Results announced to applicants	within one week after the interviews
Results announced publicly	the exact date will be included in the acceptance email

## 3.2. Application procedure

### Stage 1, pre-application:

Applicants are asked to submit basic information about their scientific career and track record via the online application system.

Within a week of the pre-application deadline on 1 April, applicants will receive confirmation that their pre-application has been received and is complete. Please note that no further changes (adding any extra information on papers and grants) can be made to your application after the deadline.

Pre-applications of eligible applicants are sent to the EMBO Young Investigator Committee for pre-screening.

Following pre-screening, approximately 50 applicants will be invited to submit a full application and attend an interview with the selection committee. All candidates are informed of the outcome of their pre-application by email. We expect to share this information by the end of June.

### Stage 2, full application:

Applicants who pass the pre-screen step are invited to submit a full application (Deadline for submission: 17 July 2025).

### 3.2.1. PRE-APPLICATION

The deadline for completing the pre-application is 1 April at 12:00 CEST annually.

The pre-application consists of:

- an online form;
- an offline form to be filled out and uploaded via the EMBO online application system;
- 3 reference letters (uploaded by the referees directly).

In the online form, you will be asked to provide:

- basic CV data;
- a short summary of your ongoing research (2000 characters, including spaces);
- details of your three referees;
- your ORCID ID (if you do not have one, please register at <https://orcid.org/register>);
- a PDF version of the completed offline form. Please follow the guidelines below.

Please do not forget to click “form complete” to submit your application.

## REFERENCE LETTERS

References from three scientists (preferably former supervisors) are part of your pre-application form and **must also be completed by the application** submission deadline (1 April 12:00 CEST). The referees can be listed and activated before the rest of the application is completed. Once referees are “activated”, the system will automatically contact these scientists, asking them to provide their letter of reference via the online system. Your application form will remain open for editing by you, but you will not be able to see the reference letters.

Please inform your referees that there will be **no option for document upload** in the online system **or sending via email**. All reference letters should be completed **via the online system**, no PDF/Word files sent by email to the EMBO YIN office will be accepted. Referees shall follow the steps explained in the form and paste their letter text in the provided field.

We strongly recommend that you complete/activate your referee details at least 4 weeks prior to the deadline to allow referees enough time to submit their letters.

### **Re-using letters from past applications:**

If you are re-applying to the Programme and wish to re-use the previous letters of reference, please fill out the name and postal address of the referee in the form but enter [yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org) into the email field. This way the EMBO YIN office will receive the reference letter request and the letter from your most recent application will be added to your application.

#### Reference submission status:

It is your responsibility to check that the referees have received the request and completed the form. Please follow up with your referees to ensure that reference letters are submitted on time.

Reference status is listed under the link to the application form in the EMBO application system, HOME tab.

Fig. 1: Example of incomplete references.

**4. EMBO Young Investigator Programme [submission open]**  
EMBO Young Investigator Programme application for Lena Steshenko [completed] [Print view](#)  
1st Reference status - email being processed by system  
2nd Reference status - email being processed by system  
3rd Reference status - email being processed by system

Fig. 2: Example of two complete references and one still pending.

**4. EMBO Young Investigator Programme [submission open]**  
EMBO Young Investigator Programme application for Lena Steshenko [completed] [Print view](#)  
1st Reference status - form completed by referee (yip@embo.org) and received by EMBO  
2nd Reference status - form completed by referee (yip@embo.org) and received by EMBO  
3rd Reference status - email being processed by system

If a referee has not received the reference request, please contact the EMBO YIN office (yip@embo.org), so that the request can be re-sent.

Applications that do not have all 3 letters of reference by the application deadline are considered incomplete.

Further instructions for completing the online pre-application form can be found in the EMBO application system.

## PRE-APPLICATION OFFLINE FORM

Please download the offline form from our website and fill it out following the guidelines below.

- The form should be completed in Helvetica or Arial font, size 10;
- The margins should not be altered;
- The form should be saved in PDF format for upload via the online system.
- Please be reminded that colour highlighting, table view or any other formatting is not acceptable.
- As a signatory of the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), EMBO does not use journal-based metrics such as impact factor during the assessment process. **Please do NOT include these in your publication list.**

#### Curriculum vitae

- Provide your professional experience and education in reverse chronological order i.e. with the most recent information first.
- Please include the month and year for the start/end dates. These should correspond to the dates entered in the scientific CV & current position section in the online form.
- Please include the start date of your independent laboratory. For re-applicant: please ensure that the date is congruent with the previous application.

- In general, the committee values mobility but recognizes that there may be specific reasons why a candidate may have remained at / returned to a former supervisor's institute. If applicable, please explain in brief.
- The 'Other relevant information' section should include only relevant CV information.

You can use this field:

- to provide information on any gaps in your CV
- to list your involvement in scientific community work (mentorship, scientific outreach, any other engagements)
- to list any recent awards.

Please keep it short.

Also, if you have discussed and received approval for any special eligibility extension with the EMBO YIN office, please briefly summarize them in this section.

### Publication list

- Publications should be listed in a compact format, such as that used in [The EMBO Journal](#).
- Please emphasize your own name in bold, and (where appropriate) italicize members of your own independent laboratory.
  - *Example: Thiru A, Nietlispach D, Mott HR, Okuwaki M, Lyon D, Nielsen PR, Hirshberg M, Verreault A, Murzina NV, **Laue ED**. Structural basis of HP1/PXVXL motif peptide interactions and HP1 localisation to heterochromatin. EMBO J. (2004) 23: 489-499*
- Please sort your publications into the categories shown by the headings, listing:
  - published or in-press primary research articles from different career stages in the relevant 'Publications arising from...' sections.
  - manuscripts submitted to peer-reviewed journals in the 'In submission' section;
  - reviews, comments, book chapters etc. in 'Other publications'.
- EMBO will consider papers published on preprint servers (arXiv, BioRxiv, PeerJ., etc.), but the last author publication in an international peer-reviewed journal with "accepted" status by the day of your interview is still a requirement. A last author preprint with public in-depth peer reviews is also sufficient for eligibility and selection, provided the following conditions are met:
  - the preprint is posted on a recognized community preprint server such as Arxiv, bioRxiv, medRxiv, Zenodo;
  - the peer reviews must be publicly available online;
  - the peer reviews were verifiably obtained from an independent preprint peer review service such as "Peer Community In", "eLife" or "Review Commons";
  - the reviews provide an in-depth expert analysis of the rigor and validity of the research and its contribution to the field.
- If a publication from your independent group is co-authored by your former supervisor, please briefly explain their contribution.
- EMBO is a signatory of DORA and does not use journal-based metrics such as impact factor during the assessment process. **Please do NOT include these in your publication list.**

The first two pages of the YIP full application offline form are almost identical to the YIP pre-application offline form; we, therefore, advise you to keep a copy of the pre-application form, so that you can copy and update the relevant information should you reach the final selection stage.

### 3.2.2. FULL APPLICATION

Applicants who are selected for an interview will be asked to submit a full application. The full application requires further information in the online application form including:

- a list of your grants,
- a list of your lab members,
- a short description of your institute.

An offline application form (YIP full application form) must also be completed and uploaded as a PDF. This form requires you to provide the following.

- (again) your CV and complete publication list (to allow the inclusion of any updates since 1 April);
- a summary of each of your three best papers;
- a description of your research vision (no longer than two pages).

For more detailed instructions, please see additional guidelines below.

### FULL APPLICATION OFFLINE FORM

#### Curriculum vitae and publication list:

- Please complete as described for the pre-application form above.
- Please underline your three best publications.

#### Your three best publications:

- Please provide details of three publications that best illustrate your scientific achievements, including a summary and a short explanation of why you chose each paper (max. 1000 characters including spaces). It is generally advisable to first include first/last author papers, then any others that you would like to highlight (first research papers and then reviews).

#### Research vision (two pages maximum, excluding list of references):

- Applicants should describe the research themes and future directions of their lab.
- Any figures are included in the page count. Figures can be added by using copy/paste or by dragging a jpg/png file into the text (the “insert” menu is not available in protected forms).
- References can be added on an additional page if necessary.

# 4. Selection procedure

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## 4.1. Pre-selection

Eligible pre-applications are sent to the EMBO Young Investigator Committee for pre-screening. Each application is independently evaluated by four committee members. The EMBO YIP Committee Guidelines can be found on [the EMBO website](#).

Approximately 50 applicants will be invited to submit a full application (Deadline for submission: TBC, mid-July 2025) and attend an interview with the selection committee.

## 4.2. External evaluation by an EMBO Member

Full applications are sent to EMBO Members with appropriate subject expertise for external and confidential review. Each application is sent to one EMBO Member. Applicants will have the option to exclude three EMBO Members from the evaluation process to eliminate any potential conflicts of interest. The EMBO Members send a written report of their review to the EMBO YIN office. This assessment focuses on the candidates' standing in the field and the feasibility of their proposed work. These reports are shared with the Young Investigator Committee members and considered in the further evaluation process.

## 4.3. Panel interview

All candidates who have submitted full applications are interviewed individually by the EMBO Young Investigator Committee using a panel interview format. The interviews take place in a hybrid format: committee members are present on-site in person, and the candidates are connected remotely (via Zoom). The interviews have a standard format that consists of a 10-minute research talk by each candidate, followed by 10 minutes Q&A with the panel. The interviews are conducted in parallel by two sub-panels, each panel consisting of 5 members of the Young Investigator Committee (a list of current committee members can be found on page 4 of this guide).

All candidates will be required to submit a backup video of their presentation in advance to be shared in case of connection issues, in which case they will be asked to dial in via phone to complete the Q&A part of the interview.

## YOUR PRESENTATION

Each research talk should be maximum 10 minutes long. It is up to you how you would like to structure it, but as a general guideline you may want to consider including the following:

- You are not expected to reiterate all the steps of your career during the presentation. Please only include the steps that are relevant to contextualising your research.

- Introduction of ongoing project(s) and results.
- Outlook and future plans.
- Any grant or publication updates since submission of the full application.

Please note:

The EMBO YIN office will only inquire about a publication update if, at the stage of the full application, your only last author paper from your independent laboratory has not been yet accepted. As by our eligibility criteria, candidates must have an accepted last author paper in a peer-reviewed journal by the time of their interview. Failing to provide this before the interview will lead to exclusion from the selection process.

## 4.4. Final selection

The final selection is made after the interviews by the whole EMBO Young Investigator Committee.

All candidates are informed of the outcome of their application by email within a week of the interview.

## 4.5. Feedback

No feedback will be given following the pre-selection stage due to the high number of applications each committee member has to review. However, the committee will provide feedback following an unsuccessful interview, via the EMBO YIN office.

Please do not contact any committee members directly for feedback. Any requests should be addressed to the EMBO YIN office only ([yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)).

## 4.6. Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria apply:

### 4.6.1 TRACK RECORD

**Criteria for evaluating the track record**

- Scientific achievements and professional development to date: Are they an indication that this is an outstanding scientist?
- Scientific breadth: Has the applicant shown a willingness to change research area or the ability to tackle new and important problems?

## 4.6.2 RESEARCH

### Criteria for evaluating the research

- **Ambition:** Is the proposed research ambitious and likely to lead to novel contributions in the field?
- **Potential for leadership:** Does the applicant have the potential to become a future leader in their field?

## 4.6.3 GROUP AND RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

### Criteria for evaluating the group and research environment

- **Group size and funding sources:** Are the number and the expertise of laboratory members and the available funds sufficient to undertake the described research?
- **Host institute:** Is the research environment conducive to competitive research?

## 4.6.4 INDEPENDENCE

### Criteria for evaluating the candidate's independence

#### Operational independence:

- Is the candidate financially independent? Is the candidate able to apply for grants in their own name and report directly to funding agencies?
- Is the candidate able to submit manuscripts as last author (“corresponding author” is not necessarily considered equivalent to “last author”).
- Is the candidate responsible for supervising graduate students and/or postdocs in their own lab?

#### Intellectual independence:

- What is the influence of former supervisors and institute/department heads on the candidate's current research?

# 5. Frequently Asked Questions

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## 5.1. General eligibility

**Q: Is it possible to apply to the Young Investigator Programme if you are a European national working in a non-EMBC member state?**

A: No, only applicants (of any nationality) working at an institute/university in locations and programmes listed on page 3 are eligible to apply.

**Q: Is it possible to apply for both the EMBO Young Investigator Programme and Global Investigator Network in the same year?**

A: Yes, scientists working in institutes in Chile, Taiwan, Singapore, or India (the current EMBC Associate Member States and countries/territories covered by a co-operation agreement) who fulfil the requirements of both programmes may apply to both in the same year. If the scientist makes it to the interview stage for both, they will only be required to attend the GIN interview if not selected as a Young Investigator. Please note that once you have been selected as a YI you cannot apply for the GIN in the future. However, as a successful GIN programme awardee, you can still apply to be a YI if you fulfil the eligibility criteria.

**Q: Is there any specific eligibility condition regarding mobility to apply for the Young Investigator Programme?**

A: In general, the committee values mobility to establish international networks but recognizes that there may be specific reasons why a candidate may have remained at / returned to a former supervisor's institute. If applicable, please explain in brief.

## 5.2. Age limit

**Q: Is there an age limit to apply for the Young Investigator Programme?**

A: There is no age limit for YIP applicants.

## 5.3. Re-application

**Q: Can I apply multiple times in case my first application is rejected, and would a potential rejection be a disadvantage for applications in the following years?**

A: If you were rejected after an interview, you may re-apply once more. Previous rejection does not have any impact on the success of the following applications.

## 5.4. Last author publications

**Q: What does “last author” mean, and does it have to be without PhD and/or postdoc supervisors?**

A: Applicants must have published at least one last author research paper in an international peer-reviewed journal from independent work carried out in their own laboratory. You can also count last author peer-reviewed preprints. If your PhD or postdoc supervisor is included as an author, please explain their contribution.

**Q: I am a senior author, but my name is not the “last author” name on the manuscript.**

A: Please contact the EMBO YIN office and describe your contribution to the manuscript, as well as the contributions of other senior authors and an explanation of how the author division took place.

**Q: I don't have a paper as the last author yet, but 2 manuscripts in revision. Would it increase my chances if I apply next year?**

A: At the pre-application stage we accept papers being in revision. However, if you are invited to the interview, you would have to have a paper accepted (an email from the editor is sufficient and can be forwarded to the EMBO YIN office by you) or a peer-reviewed preprint posted by the interview date and time.

**Q: My application is ready however; I am still waiting to submit two or three manuscripts. What should I do?**

A: Please submit your application by 1 April, listing the manuscripts in question as “in submission”. If your application passes to the next stage, you will be able to provide an update on the manuscript status in the full application form.

**Q: What do you mean by “publications arising from your independent laboratory”?**

A: This includes publication of projects that have been started in your independent group or projects that you started in your prior position and have continued and finished up in your own lab.

**Q: I have a co-corresponding authorship as an independent PI, can this be counted as a “last author” paper by your criteria?**

A: Co-corresponding authorship does not fulfil the “last author” requirement by default. Please write to the EMBO YIN office explaining your exact contribution to the paper compared to those from the last author (and if applicable other co-corresponding authors).

**Q: I'm both the first and a co-corresponding author of this paper, does this count as the last author publication?**

A: No. But if you feel there is more to the situation, please write to us providing a link to the paper in question, an explanation of how the author division took place and a detailed contribution of the first/last and corresponding authors on the paper.

**Q: My most important publication has been recently accepted for publication, and I'd like it to be considered. It is, however, very unlikely it will appear online prior to the 1 April deadline. Would it be acceptable to send you the manuscript with the acceptance letter from the editor attached?**

A: Yes. Please send the acceptance letter from the editor together with the manuscript to the EMBO YIN office.

## 5.5. Independence

**Q: How do you define independence?**

A: We define “independence” as:

- Being able to apply for grants in one's own name and reporting directly to funding agencies.
- Being able to submit manuscripts as last author (“corresponding author” is not necessarily considered equivalent to “last author”, please see above).

- Being responsible for supervising graduate students and/or postdocs in one's own lab.

**Q: Are postdocs eligible to apply for the Young Investigator Programme?**

A: No, postdocs are not eligible to apply. You must be a group leader for at least 1 year. Please see our eligibility criteria.

**Q: How much funding is considered necessary to be able to eligible to apply?**

A: There is no minimum requirement for the amount of funding you receive, as long as you can fully support your independent group (consumables, lab space, salary for you and your staff).

## 5.6. Cut-off date

**Q: Does it matter how long ago I completed my PhD?**

A: No, we only consider the number of years since starting your independent lab/group (less than four years and more than one).

**Q: What is the exact cut-off date for applicants to be considered eligible in 2025?**

A: Candidates are considered eligible if they started their independent group after 01.04.2021 and before 01.04.2024.

For female scientists, this is extended by one year per child and for male scientists by 3 months per child or by the duration of paternal leave taken (whichever is more). Other special circumstances may also extend the eligibility, please email [yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org) if you are uncertain.

**Q: I just started my group a couple of months ago, can I apply already this year?**

A: No, according to the eligibility criteria you need to have your independent group for at least 1 year (and no more than 4).

**Q: Do you have any general advice on how long one should wait to apply since the start of the independent lab?**

A: We have had successful applicants within the first 1.5 – 2 years of starting their group, but usually successful applicants are within 3 – 4 years since the start of their own lab. The success rate of being selected is ~12%, so having a relevant publication record coming from the independent group is highly favourable, but not the only criterion considered by the committee.

## 5.7. Online pre-application form

**Q: For my postdoctoral research I was supervised by two PIs. How can I best add those to the online form?**

A: Please write it in one line separated with a comma and please briefly explain the situation in your Word document (pre-application form) under the field "Other".

**Q: When will I receive a confirmation that my pre-application has been received and is in order?**

A: Within a week after the April 1 deadline, you will receive an email to confirm that your pre-application has been received and is complete. If there are questions, or any information missing, you will be requested to submit it as soon as possible. We will contact you in late May to let you know whether your application has passed the pre-screen and invite you to the second stage.

**Q: Can I add some information to the application AFTER I click "form complete"?**

A: No, no changes can be made to the form after clicking this button. Please take care that all information provided is complete and accurate before finalizing your submission.

**Q. I have finished the online form, uploaded my PDF and my referees have submitted their letters. However, the system status of my application is still “Submission open”. Could you please confirm that my pre-application is complete?**

A.: Please first check that you have clicked the “form complete” button in the online form, if you did but the status does not change, please send an email to the EMBO YIN Office.

**Q: In the “Publication Record” section of the form, which papers should I include?**

A: Please include all research articles including reviews in the “Total number of publications” field, but **only primary research articles** for the number of first and last author publications.

## 5.8. Reference letters

**Q: By when should the reference letters be submitted?**

A: The deadline for referees to submit the reference letters is 1 April 2025 at 12:00 CEST.

**Q: Can I submit only 2 reference letters?**

A: Applications with less than 3 reference letters are considered “incomplete” and will not pass to the next stage of the application process.

**Q: I am a re-applicant; how can I re-submit a reference letter from a former application?**

A: Enter the name and postal address of the referee in the online form but enter [yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org) into the email field; the EMBO YIN office will receive the reference submission request and will copy the reference letter from your most recent application. Please remember that this is a manual process, so the references will not appear as complete immediately.

*Fig.3: Example of 2 complete and one incomplete reference letter. It is visible in the HOME tab of the online application portal.*

### 4. EMBO Young Investigator Programme [submission open]

EMBO Young Investigator Programme application for Lena Steshenko [completed] [Print view](#)

1st Reference status - form completed by referee ([yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)) and received by EMBO

2nd Reference status - form completed by referee ([yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)) and received by EMBO

3rd Reference status - email being processed by system

**Q: Can I change my referee if the one I previously approached cannot make it?**

A: Please confirm with potential referees prior to entering them in the form, however, if you do need to change a referee, please email the EMBO YIN office ([yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)) right away. We will re-activate the referee form for you, and you will be able to enter new referee information and email.

**Q: Can I submit a reference letter on behalf of my referee?**

A: No, the reference letter must come from the referee listed in your form. If that referee has previously submitted a reference letter for a past YIP application, please enter “[yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)” into their email field and we will copy their most recent reference letter to your current application.

**Q: My referee said they did not receive an email with a link to the online form. What should I do?**

A: First ask your referee to check their spam folder. If they do not see the email, please email [yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org) and we will re-send the email containing the link.

**Q: My referee did not find an upload button for the letter; can I send the file to you by email?**

A: There is no option to upload documents in the referee portal. Referees should copy and paste the letter into the field and click “form complete” to submit the form. Reference letters sent by email are not accepted.

**Q: My referee made a mistake and accidentally submitted an empty form because they thought they would be able to attach a document. Can you re-open their online form?**

A: Yes, we will reactivate their form and re-send them an email containing the link. Please let your referees know that they will have to copy-paste the letter in the online form fields, not attach a document, as there is no option of doing so. Please have them email [yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org) if they encounter any difficulties.

**Q: Can I submit my application prior to the submission of all three reference letters, as one of my referees has not submitted their letter yet?**

A: Yes, you may submit your application without all the references being completed. Their submission is independent of your application; however, all should arrive by the 1 April deadline.

**Q: How can I check that the reference letters have been submitted?**

A: Reference status is listed under the link to the application form on the EMBO application system.

#### **4. EMBO Young Investigator Programme [submission open]**

EMBO Young Investigator Programme application for Lena Steshenko [completed] [Print view](#)

1st Reference status - form completed by referee ([yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)) and received by EMBO

2nd Reference status - form completed by referee ([yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)) and received by EMBO

3rd Reference status - email being processed by system

## **5.9. Best three papers**

**Q: What is meant by the best three papers? Do I have to select among my first/last author papers or does any paper on which I am an author count?**

A: In theory, you can use any three papers, as long as you justify why you chose them. However, it is generally advisable to include first/last author research papers, then any others that illustrate your scientific achievement.

## **5.10. Feedback**

**Q: Can I get feedback on my application?**

A: No feedback will be provided following the pre-selection stage due to the high number of applications each committee member has to review. However, the committee will provide feedback following a negative outcome at the interview stage. Please do not contact any committee members directly for feedback, any requests should be addressed to the EMBO YIN office only ([yip@embo.org](mailto:yip@embo.org)).