

Robert Gnehm Grant for Parent Postdocs

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Eligibility

Are eligible:

- Female postdocs¹ employed at EPFL (minimum work rate of 80 % at the time of the application) expecting a child or having a child less than one year old.
- Male postdocs¹ employed at EPFL who have a child less than one year old, or whose home-sharing partner is expecting a child (80 % minimum work rate for both parents at the time of the application).
- The applicant is the main care person for her or his children, or provides at least half of the childcare.
- A postdoc adopting a child is also eligible.
- Maximal duration of grant: one year. Only one grant can be allocated per child.

Are not eligible: Postdocs financed by the SNSF and who can apply for the SNSF Flexibility Grant².

Objectives

The Robert Gnehm Grant for parent postdocs (hereafter the RGG) aims to support parent postdocs in the early stages of parenthood, allowing them to devote more time to their child while alleviating a temporary decrease in scientific productivity. One aim is to free them from routine work that can be delegated to others, for example in the field of laboratory work, academic administration, and teaching. The grant funds short-term and part-time personnel support at EPFL, notably for:

- assistance to help with routine tasks in the laboratory,
- administrative assistance to assume the applicant's administrative tasks,
- assistance for teaching.

The postdoc could, for example, hire a "student assistant" to help with experiments and/or collecting data such as to accelerate the submission of scientific articles. Other types of financial support, such as prolongation of the working contract of the postdoc, are conceivable.

Scope of allocated grant

The RGG amounts to max. 20'000 CHF. The RGG is composed as follows: 75% (max. CHF 15'000) of the allocated grant stem from the Equal Opportunity Office's fund, and min. 25% matching funds by the employing unit (generally a laboratory or a research group).

For laboratories with small budgets, typically those of a PATT, the matching fund of the Laboratory can on request be financed by the EPFL Equal Opportunity Office.

The RGG should start after the return from maternity leave or during the first year of the child. It can be used during one year maximum.

¹ Postdocs : scientific collaborators with a non-permanent contract and a flat-rate salary at EPFL, max. 4 years after the PhD.

² <http://www.snf.ch/en/funding/supplementary-measures/flexibility-grant/>

Variants

Applicants can choose between two variants:

- A) A (temporary) reduction of max. 20% of the applicant's work rate compared to the prior contract based work-rate. In this case, the freed money should be used by the Laboratory as financial matching for additional support of the objective of the RGG request, resulting in an increased relief of the postdoc from laboratory tasks.
- B) Without reduction of contract based work rate. If the contractual work rate is not reduced, the grant will be used to finance work-related support. The increased availability of the applicant for child care will be described in the application form.

Application

Applications must be submitted to the EPFL Equal Opportunity Office at the latest one month before the expected implementation.

Application forms can be downloaded from the [equality website](#).

Evaluation and Selection

The RGG is granted by the EPFL Research Awards Commission upon recommendation by the EPFL representative in the Board of Trustees of the Robert Gnehm Fund and the EPFL Delegate for equal opportunity.

The evaluation is based primarily on how well the request meets the goals stated above, on the specific justification provided for the use of the requested funds, and on the recommendation and contribution of the supervisor/head of laboratory. Particular attention will be paid to the additional flexibility for the parent postdoc to organize his/her working time and spend more time with the child. Applicant and supervisor will be invited for a short meeting prior to the decision.

At equal priority level in other respects, priority will be given to female postdocs and postdocs of tenure-track assistant professors (PATT).

Project management

After the evaluation by the representative in the Board of Trustees of the Robert Gnehm Fund and the EPFL Delegate for equal opportunity, and the approval by the EPFL Research Awards Commission, the applicant registers the application on GrantsDB (<https://grantsdb.epfl.ch/pap/index.php>).

Follow-up and Reporting

After approximately three months and again after six months, RGG beneficiaries are invited for a discussion with the Equal Opportunity Office. These discussions aim to ensure the smooth running of the RGG support.

The recipient has to announce to the Equal Opportunity Office if she or he leaves EPFL before the end of the grant. An arrangement will be found with the recipient and the lab on a case-by-case basis.

Recipients of an RGG must submit a short (maximum 2 pages) report at the latest three months after the end of the grant. This report contains: information on the use of the fund, the benefits to the applicant in terms of work-life balance and child care.

In case of reduction of work rate, use of and benefit ensured through additional support from the laboratory through allocation of freed resources should be described as well.

Suggestions for improvements to the program are also encouraged.