

## IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme Postdoctoral Charter

### Welcome to IARC as a Postdoctoral Scientist

A period of postdoctoral training at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) through the IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme provides a unique opportunity for cancer research training in an international environment. IARC Postdoctoral Scientists have manifold opportunities to establish an international network, become involved in multinational studies or consortia, or meet renowned researchers in their field who are collaborating with or working at IARC. The programme is designed to provide young researchers with a strong foundation for a career in cancer research.

The training period, under the guidance of an IARC staff Scientist, provides opportunities:

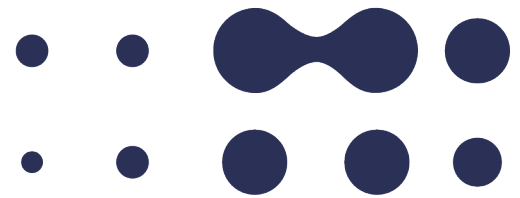
1. to apply knowledge acquired in basic and PhD training in a first-rate research programme; and
2. to gain experience in conducting research in an international environment; and
3. to develop skills contributing to career progression (including, for instance, becoming an independent scientist).

So that Postdoctoral Scientists can fully benefit from this opportunity, the Agency has put in place this Charter, which describes the opportunities and commitments expected of the Postdoctoral Scientists, the supervisor, and the Agency during the training period. The Charter covers all Postdoctoral Scientists within the framework of the IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme, regardless of the source of financial support. Postdoctoral scientists enter IARC through one of two routes: (1) recruitment directly to a Research Branch or (2) those who have been awarded a competitive IARC Postdoctoral Fellowship who are also referred to as Fellows. The acronym ECS stands for Early Career Scientist.

### Research areas

The objective of IARC is to promote international collaboration in cancer research. The Agency is interdisciplinary, bringing together skills in epidemiology, laboratory sciences, and biostatistics to identify the causes of cancer and elucidate the underlying mechanisms so that preventive measures can be adopted, and the burden of disease and associated suffering reduced. A significant feature of IARC is its expertise in coordinating research across countries and organizations; its independent role as an international organization facilitates this activity. The Agency has a particular interest in conducting research in low- and middle-income countries through partnerships and collaborations with researchers in these regions.

Disciplines covered include epidemiology (descriptive [including cancer registration], analytical, genetic, and molecular, as well as evaluation of preventive interventions), biostatistics, bioinformatics, and areas related to mechanisms of carcinogenesis, including molecular and cell biology, molecular genetics, epigenetics, and molecular pathology. There is an emphasis on interdisciplinary projects.



## **Duration and supervision**

### **IARC Fellows:**

The duration of an IARC Fellowship is two years. An interim report is provided to the Fellowship Selection Committee, so as to monitor progress, offer feedback, and discuss future plans as well as any other issues that might be relevant to the Fellow's progress. An extension as a Branch-funded Postdoctoral Scientist may be offered subject to availability of funding and performance, and up to the maximum duration for the entire postdoctoral period at IARC, regardless of funding (see below).

### **Branch-funded Postdoctoral Scientists:**

Postdoctoral Scientists funded by means other than IARC Fellowships can remain at IARC for up to a maximum of five years. Once the initial application for a postdoctoral opportunity at IARC has been approved by the IARC Director, subsequent requests for extension are to be initiated and submitted by the supervisor/Research Branch via the related management tool. The request includes a section requiring the Branch's comments on activities performed to date and reasons for the extension.

### **Supervision**

Each Postdoctoral Scientist is assigned an IARC staff Scientist as a formal supervisor. The Head of the Research Branch and the Head of the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch provide further advisory support.

### **Generic training and self-learning**

An important feature of the postdoctoral training programme at IARC is generic training. The objective of generic training is to provide Postdoctoral Scientists with the opportunity to acquire a broad set of skills and competencies necessary to develop a successful career in international cancer research.

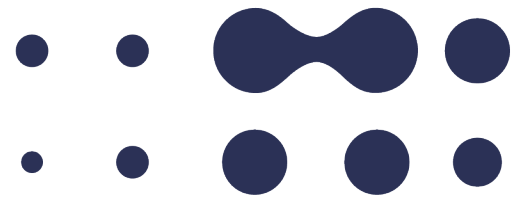
Although IARC is not an institution of higher education and thus does not offer a full set of courses, several specifically tailored training courses and lectures are organized in the context of generic training (see Annex 2).

As the specialized cancer research agency of the World Health Organization (WHO)/United Nations (UN), IARC is keenly aware of the broader ethical and policy implications of the international collaborative research it leads. For young researchers, this formative environment nurtures motivation, impartiality, and commitment to public health.

### **Expectations**

#### **What you can expect from IARC:**

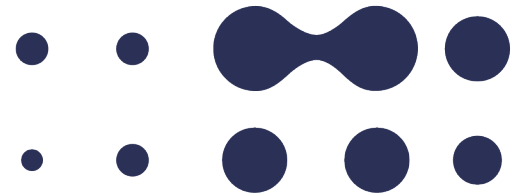
1. opportunities to put into practice knowledge acquired during your studies to date, particularly in your specific areas of competence;
2. participation in an ongoing research project with a defined role and responsibilities;



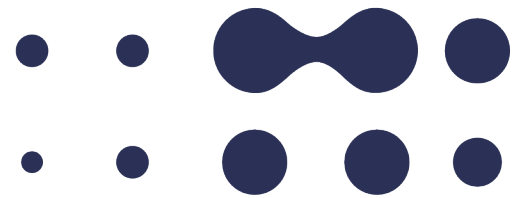
3. receiving supervision, training (including internal and external courses as appropriate; see below and Annex 2), and physical resources/equipment as necessary for the conduct of the planned activities/project;
4. gaining research experience in international projects and opportunities to establish international networks;
5. an opportunity to attend at least one national or international conference, dependent on having an accepted poster or oral presentation;
6. recognition of authorship in work you contribute to, in a major role when appropriate, in scientific publications and other outputs;
7. opportunities to develop skills in grant writing, with the possibility to be named on grant applications, either as a Co-PI or multiple PI or as a co-investigator, according to what is permissible within specific funding schemes, as long as there is an IARC staff Scientist involved in the grant (see Annex 1 for more details);
8. exposure to an international, multicultural, multilingual, and multidisciplinary environment;
9. an introduction to the opportunities, duties, and constraints of the professional research world;
10. a unique and first-hand experience of the workings of IARC, part of WHO, a specialized agency of the UN; and
11. career development advice from supervisors, including an annual appraisal.

**What IARC can expect from you:**

1. to bring enthusiasm, fresh points of view, and up-to-date scientific knowledge;
2. to undertake the tasks and activities set out in the research training programme agreed with your supervisor at the start of the postdoctoral stay;
3. to contribute to the overall planning and development of the research project as outlined in the programme;
4. to publish and/or present the results of the research project and of other related activities, including a presentation at an IARC Science Café at least once during your postdoctoral stay;
5. to attend to the conduct of your research project in an accurate, timely, and orderly fashion;
6. to demonstrate progress relative to the level you had at the start of your postdoctoral training period at IARC in:
  - knowledge of current cancer research issues as well as advances in the area of your project,
  - competence in techniques relevant to your work,
  - analysing data collected during the project and interpreting and discussing the results thereof,
  - accurately and clearly reporting project results orally and in writing,
  - ability to work independently,
  - planning new studies and formulating these as possible grant applications,
  - awareness of the public health implications of your work at national and international levels;
7. to show evidence of a globally satisfactory performance at the annual evaluation;
8. to attend generic training courses and lectures as appropriate to the conduct of your research project and to the widening of your scientific horizons in cancer research;

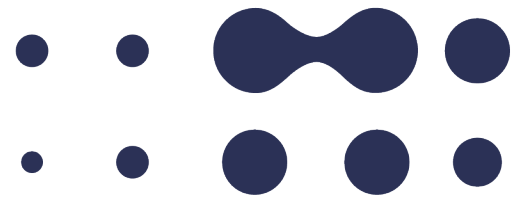


9. to become familiar with the IARC Medium-Term Strategy and be able to place your research project within the context of that Strategy;
10. to adhere to the IARC values of courtesy, honesty, generosity, independence, and integrity in your work and interactions with everyone with whom you come into contact, respecting the cultural differences at IARC and being able to work with people of all nationalities;
11. to comply with IARC's discipline and health and safety procedures, including attendance at safety training courses and occupational health monitoring where appropriate.



**IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme  
Postdoctoral Charter  
ANNEX 1 - Rules and procedures**

1. Upon arrival at IARC, the Postdoctoral Scientist will be contacted by the Research Training and Fellowship Office (FEL) to finalize administrative formalities and will be invited by the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch for a brief introduction to the IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme, of which the main rules and procedures are summarized below.
2. Postdoctoral Scientists do not have the status of an employee of IARC/WHO, nor does the training period create an employee–employer relationship. From the administrative point of view, Postdoctoral Scientists retain the status of Early Career and Visiting Scientists within the programme and are subject to the rules and regulations governing trainees, students, Postdoctoral Scientists, and Visiting Scientists at IARC, as described in the Handbook on the IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme.
3. The Postdoctoral Scientist is assigned an IARC staff Scientist as a formal supervisor. The supervisor must closely guide the Postdoctoral Scientist during their postdoctoral stay at the Agency, providing both training opportunities and guidance on career prospects.
4. An IARC Postdoctoral Scientist is not entitled to benefit from the United Nations pension fund or from the French social protection system (i.e. unemployment benefit, French state pension, etc.). It is the responsibility of Postdoctoral Scientists to make their own arrangements for pension purposes through potential providers should they wish to do so.
5. In cases where the Postdoctoral Scientist is paid by IARC, an internationally competitive monthly stipend will be paid based on IARC’s scale. The stipend is paid at the beginning of each month. Postdoctoral Scientists are therefore entitled to receive their first stipend payment at the start of the contract.
6. In cases where Postdoctoral Scientists are fully funded by IARC, IARC will arrange for return travel for the Postdoctoral Scientist and, in certain circumstances, for their dependants. Recognized dependants are spouses (marriage certificate, French PACS, or equivalent civil partnership needed) and children up to age 18 years (birth certificate needed) who accompany the Postdoctoral Scientist for at least 8/12 of the duration of the stay.
7. A health insurance allowance will be paid to Postdoctoral Scientists who are fully funded by IARC.
8. Postdoctoral Scientists are welcome to liaise with the IARC Relocation Assistant (part-time; exact schedule on the IARC intranet) for support and consultation. Assistance and advice are provided to newcomers in adapting to the living conditions in Lyon, searching for suitable accommodation, integrating into the French community, etc. The Relocation Assistant can also advise, upon request, on personal matters such as childcare, education, domestic help, insurance for accommodation or a vehicle, Internet contract, mobile phone contract, etc.



9. IARC will provide office or laboratory space/supplies, where applicable. The Postdoctoral Scientist's host Branch will ensure that computing facilities and essential software for the Postdoctoral Scientist are ready upon their arrival.

10. Postdoctoral Scientists are expected to comply with IARC's Working Policy and IARC's Policy on Flexible Working Arrangements. Currently, the normal workday at IARC is 8 hours and the normal workweek is 40 hours, not including the time taken for a lunch break (minimum of 30 minutes). However, some flexibility is possible at the discretion of the supervisor, provided that the Postdoctoral Scientist commits 8 hours per day, including during the core hours, i.e. 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Any absences must have the prior approval of the supervisor.

11. Postdoctoral Scientists may take 2.5 days of annual leave per month or 30 days per 12-month period in addition to the IARC official holidays, to be requested in advance from and approved by the supervisor within IARC's leave system.

12. Postdoctoral Scientists who are fully funded by IARC and who have been training at IARC for a minimum period of 6 months can take maternity leave for a maximum period of 24 weeks in total, financed by their host/funding Branch. At the end of a Postdoctoral Scientist's stay at IARC that included maternity leave, an extension may be required to complete the envisioned activities. Any stipend payment for this additional period will depend on the type of funds used and will be decided by, and be the responsibility of, the Branch Head.

13. Postdoctoral Scientists who are fully funded by IARC and who have been training at IARC for a minimum period of 6 months can take paternity leave for a maximum period of 4 weeks in total (28 calendar days), financed by their host Branch. The paternity leave dates requested should fall within 12 months from the date of birth of the child (or children).

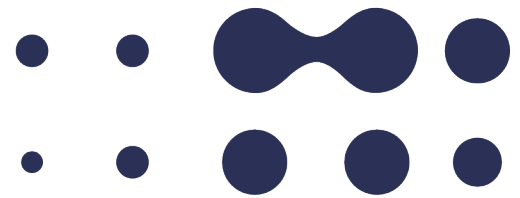
14. Any absences during working hours for health reasons must be communicated to the supervisor and the Branch secretary (leave attendance clerk) as early as possible and no later than the first day of absence. In cases where sick leave exceeds consecutive 3 days, a medical certificate is to be sent to IARC Medical Services, which will create a file for the person and follow up as needed.

15. Postdoctoral Scientists have access to IARC Medical Services for (i) medical onboarding visits (for stays of longer than 6 months), (ii) genuine emergencies, (iii) illnesses or problems related to work, or (iv) preparation in anticipation of duty travel.

16. Postdoctoral Scientists must agree to follow the IARC health and safety rules, especially with respect to handling biological samples and radioactive or toxic products. All requirements and precautions are detailed in the IARC Safety Manual, which can be consulted in English and in French on the IARC intranet (<http://intra.iarc.fr/vie-pratique/healthandsafety/Pages/default.aspx>).

17. IARC follows the WHO Policy on Preventing and Addressing Abusive Conduct, and support is in place for anyone finding themselves in such a position. Full details can be found here: <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/preventing-and-addressing-abusive-conduct>.

18. Postdoctoral Scientists shall have a career development meeting with their supervisor within the first two months after arrival at IARC, during which research and training priorities will be identified.



Thereafter, there will be an annual review, during which progress will be reviewed. The outcome of these meetings will be recorded by completing and submitting the corresponding online form (Career Development Meeting Summary). Guidance on this process is provided in Annex 3.

19. Postdoctoral Scientists will be supported by their supervisor in participating in a set of generic training courses (certificates of completion can be provided by the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch upon request). It is recommended that the Postdoctoral Scientist should attend 2–5 generic training courses per year, in addition to the mandatory courses. For training courses that are longer than 10 hours, it is strongly recommended to discuss the opportunity with the supervisor before registration.

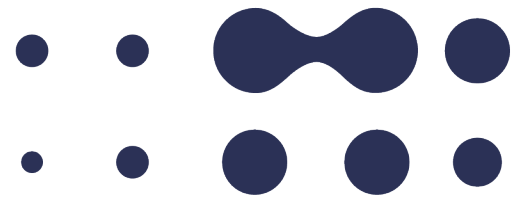
20. Postdoctoral Scientists may attend open meetings at IARC on subjects of interest to their work and participate in the work of their Branch at a level corresponding to their educational and working background.

21. Postdoctoral Scientists are encouraged to gain experience in preparing grant applications; this is indeed increasingly important for Postdoctoral Scientists, either to succeed in obtaining research funds or, at least, to demonstrate that they have been actively engaged in such activities. Participation in any grant submission should be agreed in advance with the Postdoctoral Scientist's supervisor and documented in writing. Should such an application be prepared, a Postdoctoral Scientist can be named on grant applications if and when relevant, either as a Co-PI or multiple PI (MPI) or as a co-investigator, according to what is permissible within specific funding schemes, as long as there is an IARC staff Scientist involved in the grant. In cases of awards specifically targeting Postdoctoral Scientists, early career scientists or students, for example to cover their living expenses, Postdoctoral Scientists may apply for a grant as a PI. When allowed within the specific funding scheme, the IARC supervisor should be a Co-PI/MPI. The acceptance of a grant does not affect the contract of the Postdoctoral Scientist named in the grant. When funds are granted, issues regarding the length of stay/departure of the Postdoctoral Scientist are dealt with by the IARC Director in coordination with the Branch Head, including respecting the maximum allowed duration of stay at IARC as part of the IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme.

22. When working in IARC laboratories, Postdoctoral Scientists must record their daily activities, including every manipulation and experiment carried out, in an Electronic Laboratory Notebook (ELN). The login and password are to be obtained from the Branch secretary. When completing their ELN, Postdoctoral Scientists must follow the instructions described in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Upon leaving the Agency, the Postdoctoral Scientist can copy part of their ELN material for their own use (one page at a time).

23. Postdoctoral Scientists shall be required to comply with the instructions given by their supervisor and by other senior IARC staff member in relation to scientific projects.

24. If applicable, any scientific misconduct, unjustified absences, or inappropriate behaviour by the Postdoctoral Scientist or the IARC supervisor will be reported to the management (focal points/channels available on the IARC intranet) for investigation and, as applicable, sanction up to and including, as far as Postdoctoral Scientists are concerned, termination of training.



25. IARC Postdoctoral Fellows are required to submit a report to IARC at the end of their Fellowship. The IARC supervisor will also be asked to submit a confidential report on the activities of the Fellow.

26. All publications co-authored by a Postdoctoral Scientist stating an IARC affiliation must be approved by the supervisor and cleared internally at IARC through the Manuscript Clearance System before submission to a scientific journal or other publisher.

27. Although they are not WHO staff, Postdoctoral Scientists must nevertheless comply with the WHO Staff rules about security and confidentiality. In addition, Postdoctoral Scientists must not disclose to any unauthorized persons, either during or after their postdoctoral stay, any information that has not already been made public.

28. The use of the Agency's letterhead is restricted to official communications only, and these must be cleared by the Branch Head.

29. Postdoctoral Scientists whose stay at IARC exceeds six months are entitled to IARC business cards. These can be obtained upon request from the Branch Head.

30. The Postdoctoral Scientist may terminate the training period before its official end date, at any time and without compensation, on giving one month's notice. In order to do so, a written notice needs to be sent to the supervisor, copying the Research Training and Fellowship Office ([fel@iarc.who.int](mailto:fel@iarc.who.int)). Termination of the stay by the Postdoctoral Scientist may be negotiated with a shorter notice in certain circumstances.

31. A few months after their arrival at the Agency, Postdoctoral Scientists will attend an Entrance meeting with the Head of the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch or the Fellowship Assistant, to discuss training progress and any issues with arrival and settling in. At the end of the training period, they will attend an Exit meeting to provide feedback on their experience at IARC. Intermediate meetings will also be offered on an annual basis.

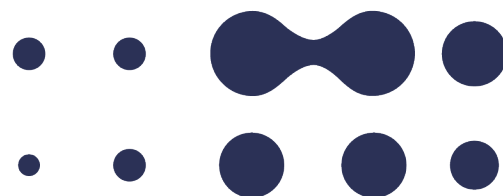
I certify that I have read the above information and will conform to it.

Signature of IARC Supervisor ..... Date: .....

Signature of Postdoctoral Scientist..... Date: .....

The main Charter document and Annex 1 will be signed by the supervisor and attached to the internal workflow request as a supporting document. The document will be sent to the Postdoctoral Scientist for signature with the letter of agreement.





**IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme  
Postdoctoral Charter  
ANNEX 2 - Generic courses and self-learning at IARC**

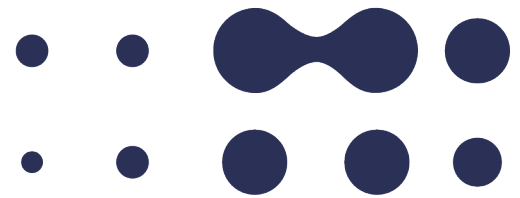
IARC is committed to training the Postdoctoral Scientists and students it hosts. To complement the day-to-day training provided by the host Branch, Early Career Scientists (ECSs) can benefit from several activities and resources, which are described below. Beyond developing or enhancing skills, most of these also contribute to building your professional network.

**Courses and learning resources**

**1. Generic training courses for Early Career Scientists**

IARC provides opportunities for generic training to equip you with essential skills to enhance your career prospects. These courses are taught by professionals from IARC or WHO, or external experts. The list of courses is planned by IARC on an annual basis (i.e. is subject to change without notice) and is managed through *ilearn*, the WHO global learning platform, which was adopted by IARC. The table below gives an example of courses taught in a calendar year.

<b>Research Skills Development</b>	<b>Scientific Writing Skills</b>
Cancer Pathology: Basic Principles Multiple Imputation for Missing Data Good Clinical Practice Introduction to Bayesian Statistics Laboratory Safety: Biological Risks Learn R (Beginner and intermediate levels) MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) in bioinformatics and biostatistics Multivariate analysis for -omics data integration: principles and applications R Shiny (Beginner and intermediate levels) REDCap for Surveys REDCap for Data Collection	Copyright Workshop Effective Scientific Posters EndNote Basic EndNote Advanced Grant Writing Open Access Workshop Publishing in Scientific Journals PubMed Workshop Science Communication Workshop Systematic Reviews Search Methodology Web of Science
<b>Research Ethics</b>	<b>Interpersonal Communication Skills</b>
Biomedical research ethics: an introductory course	Conflict management in theory and in practice Effective Interpersonal Communication Skills Giving and receiving feedback Mental health and psychosocial support trainings (WHO Staff Health & Well-being team) Motivation and well-being



IT Skills	Leadership and Management
Electronic Laboratory Notebook Microsoft Teams: Meetings, Webinars, Teams channel management Office 365 tools: OneDrive, OneNote	Career Compass CV skills and competency-based interviews Creating your personal brand Networking Project Management Time Management

## 2. IARC-specific mandatory and institutional programmes

Mandatory and institutional programmes include trainings required for all personnel or for certain functional areas depending on the programme content. Typical topics covered are health and safety, data protection, cybersecurity, prevention of abusive conduct, and specific training on laboratory guidelines, procedures, and regulations.

Institutional programmes include Agency-level learning opportunities such as Learning and Discussion Week, Respectful Workplace Day, ad hoc IARC briefings, and sessions organized by the Equity and Diversity Advisory Group (EDAG).

The calendar and details of courses are regularly updated and are available on the IARC intranet.

## 3. Language classes

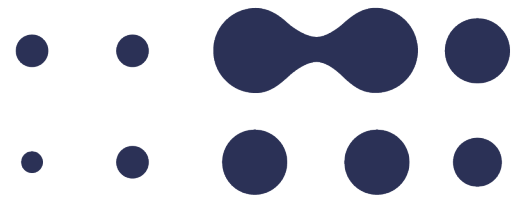
Language classes in English, Spanish, and French are offered to all people working at the Agency (and spouses under preferential conditions and provided there are vacancies) for a modest financial contribution. There are several levels for each language.

Each participant receives a digital education pack, including the training booklet, audio tracks, and, depending on the programme, online exercises. Online and/or face-to-face classes are provided by first-language trainers.

The calendar, details of courses, and application procedure are available on the IARC intranet.

## 4. *ilearn* and the IARC Learning portal

Access to *ilearn*, the IARC and WHO learning and management system, will be provided to you a few days after the official start of your contract and will enable you to complete the IARC mandatory courses and to register for IARC generic courses as and when they are open for applications. In addition to internal courses, with your *ilearn* user account you can access a large catalogue of WHO online workshops and e-learning materials, as well as additional multidisciplinary and multilingual resources (tutorials, exercises, online courses, quizzes, etc.) provided by LinkedIn Learning. All the courses that you complete during your stay will be recorded in your learning records in your *ilearn* profile.



The [IARC Learning portal](#) is a public single access point to a wide variety of learning and training resources, organized into different thematic platforms, which are developed and maintained in collaboration with IARC research Branches and key collaborators. IARC Postdoctoral Scientists are invited to [create an account](#) to join a vibrant community of researchers and health professionals committed to continuous professional development in cancer research for cancer prevention.

## Scientific seminars and events

### Distinguished Speaker Series

The IARC Distinguished Speaker Series, with regularly organized presentations that are accessible to all IARC personnel, is a fantastic opportunity to learn from invited senior-level external scientists, to exchange knowledge and facilitate collaboration, and to expand your networks.

### Science Café Series

Knowledge not shared is knowledge lost. An important part of research is learning how to explain your research to other scientists. The Science Café Series provides an opportunity for Early Career and Visiting Scientists, as well as other junior or senior IARC scientists, to informally present their ongoing research work for discussion. During your stay at IARC, you are encouraged to volunteer to present at least once at a Science Café ([sciencecafe@iarc.fr](mailto:sciencecafe@iarc.fr)).

### IARC Statistical Working Group seminars

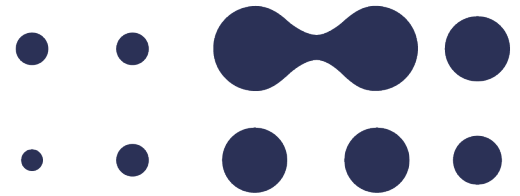
Informal statistical lectures on methodological topics relevant to the research conducted throughout the Agency are organized by the IARC Statistical Working Group. Anyone with a background in and/or an interest in biostatistics can join the Working Group, to participate in the selection of themes and lecturers for the seminars, to give a presentation, or both. The Working Group can be contacted by sending an email to [nmb@iarc.fr](mailto:nmb@iarc.fr).

### Science Forum

The Science Forum is intended to profile the Agency's work and explore other areas of activity, identifying synergistic opportunities. The overarching objective of the Science Forum is to increase cross-Branch and cross-Pillar collaboration. Science Forums are intended for a small, focused audience, but all members of personnel are welcome to listen in and learn from each other.

### Open Forum

The Open Forum is intended to facilitate broad discussion at IARC. Topics are proposed by personnel members, who then vote for their choice. The proposer of the topic chairs a panel discussion, and participants are encouraged to ask questions and respond to surveys.



### **ECSA Scientific and Career Day**

The Early Career Scientist Association (ECSA) is an association that facilitates advocacy, career development, and networking. It is composed of students Postdoctoral Scientists, and Fellows undergoing training at IARC and is run in collaboration with the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch. As a Postdoctoral Scientist at IARC, you are automatically a member of the ECSA. Every year there is a day for all members of ECSA at IARC, which is dedicated to interesting presentations and interactive seminars on important issues related to career development, including a career panel with well-known international scientists. ECSA Day is initiated and organized by the ECSA organizing committee and a subcommittee of ECS volunteers. ECSA Day gives members an opportunity to present their research and get feedback from their colleagues and peers while learning from each other, and provides an opportunity for ECSA members to get to know each other and build their scientific network.

### **Institutional events**

Many other events are organized at IARC, for example to discuss aspects of cancer research that have broad relevance for society during the IARC Cancer and Society Lecture, or to celebrate truly exceptional achievements in cancer research with the Richard Doll Lecture, the presentation of the IARC Medal of Honour, or the IARC Award for Women in Cancer Research.

The annual session of the IARC Scientific Council also offers the possibility for ECSs to present their research work and results to the Scientific Council members. This is a great opportunity to practise and learn.

### **IARC Monographs and IARC Handbooks**

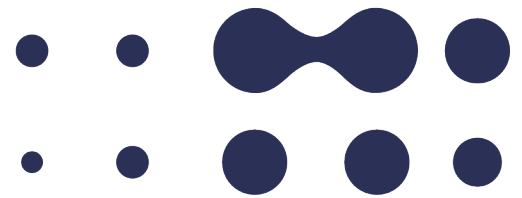
Participation in one of the world-renowned meetings of the IARC Monographs on the Identification of Carcinogenic Hazards to Humans or the IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention will enable you to gain unique insights into the evaluation process.

### **IARC Summer School**

The IARC Summer School is a unique international and multicultural learning event, held every two years (in May–June). It includes two modules: “Introduction to Cancer Epidemiology” and “Implementing Cancer Prevention and Early Detection”. A few places are kept for internal applicants, and ECSs are encouraged to apply with the support of their supervisors. Alternatively, you can attend selected sessions as an observer and still benefit from the high-level multidisciplinary lectures and state-of-the-art presentations.

### **Other international meetings and training courses at IARC**

Events are regularly organized at IARC and often provide an opportunity for any IARC personnel member to attend as a full participant or an observer. We recommend consulting the IARC intranet for related announcements and contacting the organizers and/or the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch if you would like to attend.



## Career development

### Meet with IARC visitors

With numerous high-profile experts visiting the Agency or participating in IARC's events or projects, opportunities abound for ECSs to strengthen their networks. You can consult the list of visitors and participants on the IARC intranet and contact the host Branch to facilitate a meeting.

### The Career Prospects Portal

The Career Prospects Portal provides guidance and resources on career development. Whether you are looking for tips or training or considering the next step in your career, you can find information relevant to your current situation.

On the portal you can book a Job Application Clinic (JAC), which is a one-to-one meeting, in confidence, with a member of the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch team. This will help you to review and to finalize your documents before submission for a job application and improve your chances for interview consideration.

### IARC Mentoring Programme

To support IARC personnel in achieving their career growth and development plans, the IARC Mentoring Programme is intended to encourage partnership for learning alongside the existing supervisor–supervisee relationship.

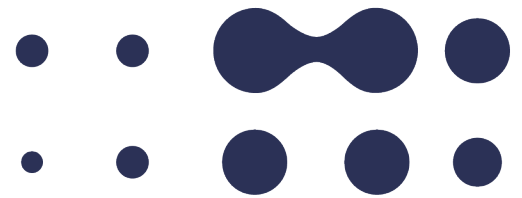
The Mentoring Programme is accessible to all, and Postdoctoral Scientists wishing to take part are expected to self-initiate and organize this activity. The Charter of the IARC Mentoring Programme, which is available on the Career Prospects Portal, describes the opportunities and commitments expected of the mentors, the mentees, and the Mentoring Programme. You can look at the Directory of IARC Mentors and identify a possible match for you.

### Social networks

You are invited to follow the official IARC Twitter account: @IARCWHO; <https://twitter.com/iarcwho>.

Within the LinkedIn social network, the **IARC Alumni Group** is open to former IARC personnel, including Postdoctoral Scientists. You may wish to have a look at the [IARC Alumni Group page](#).

Visit the official [IARC YouTube channel](#) to find interviews with IARC scientists, animations explaining topics related to cancer, and more!



## Teaching opportunities

During your stay at IARC, contributing to IARC teaching activities is a great opportunity to strengthen your facilitation and/or teaching skills during online and/or in-person training sessions.

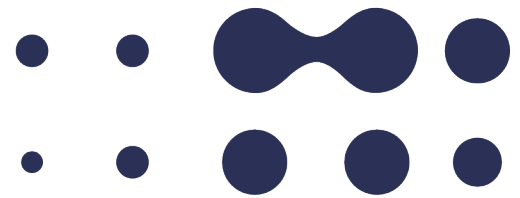
At IARC, the Learning and Capacity-Building Branch welcomes anyone who is interested in:

- sharing experiences and expertise with other IARC personnel during an IARC internal training session,
- assisting a faculty member during a practical workshop,
- coordinating some group activities within a training programme (e.g. during the IARC Summer School),
- acting as an e-facilitator of a learning space,
- facilitating online teaching sessions, or
- helping to design and/or review or test IARC learning resources before publication/release.

Outside IARC, Postdoctoral Scientists may teach/lecture at other institutions, according to the available opportunities (often through the host Branch/supervisor). Prior approval should be sought from the supervisor, based on compatibility between overall teaching time commitment and ongoing projects. While remuneration can be accepted for such activities and formal IARC/DAF approval is not required as is for WHO/IARC staff members under the IARC's policy on external activities, the following standard conditions for external activities apply:

1. The Postdoctoral Scientist must make it clear to the organizers that they participate in the activity in an individual capacity. The personal nature of their work should also be appropriately reflected in any relevant printed or electronic documents that may be produced. WHO/IARC's name and logo must not be used.
2. If they find themselves in a situation that gives or may give rise to conflict of interest in respect to WHO/IARC, Postdoctoral Scientist are asked to recuse themselves and contact a responsible officer for guidance.

If you would like to declare your interest in teaching activities, please complete this [online form](#).



**IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme  
Postdoctoral Charter  
ANNEX 3 - Career development in relation to research and training**

The information contained in this document is a **guide for Postdoctoral Scientists and their supervisors** throughout the process. It is based on best practice available, as well as experience and tools shared by IARC colleagues.

### **1. Instructions**

Postdoctoral Scientists shall have a career development meeting with their supervisor within the first two months after their arrival at IARC, during which research and training priorities will be identified. The outcome of this meeting will be summarized by completing and submitting the corresponding online form (Career Development Meeting Summary – as part of the *ilearn* assignment).

Thereafter, an annual review shall take place to discuss progress on research and training, and to plan for the next period (if applicable), once again completing the above-mentioned form each year.

To help Postdoctoral Scientists review their current work and future goals, a suggested Annual Planning and Self-Reflection Tool is provided below.

### **2. Topics for discussion**

This section lists important questions that are useful for discussions between Postdoctoral Scientists and their supervisors at the time of their arrival, but also throughout their stay at IARC for periodic and/or annual reviews (if applicable).

#### **2.1 Career objectives**

Discuss the Postdoctoral Scientist's **short- and long-term career objectives**, which can inform the rest of the talking points. For instance:

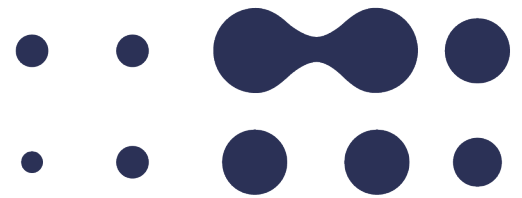
2.1.1 What type of **position** is **preferentially targeted** in the long run (e.g. university professor, teaching-heavy positions, staff scientist in another organization, industry)? What type of work, field (same as or different to current field), responsibility, organization, and in which country (important e.g. for French people, who have their own very specific system) would you be willing to accept?

2.1.2 What is your main **work objective for the year** (e.g. working on a specific project [will be detailed later], learning, taking on more responsibilities)?

2.1.3 Are your **short-term objectives** in alignment with your career goals?

2.1.4 How can your **supervisor** best support you in reaching your career goals?

2.1.5 Do you already have **mentors**? Do you plan to find mentors?



Useful extra information: Interested Postdoctoral Scientists can find supporting information in the **IARC Mentoring Programme**. A Directory of IARC Mentors with a short description of all volunteer mentors is available on the [IARC Career Prospects Portal](#), together with guidance and tools to set up mentoring relationships.

## 2.2 Projects

Discuss what analyses and/or manuscripts are already planned versus how much the Postdoctoral Scientist will be able to choose their projects. In particular:

2.2.1 Plan the project **timeline** – it would be ideal to have both short-term (within 1 year) and mid-term (within 2–3 years) projects, possibly together with long-term projects.

2.2.2 What are the plans/opinions on **authorships** (who is included, in which position)?

2.2.3 How much **funding** is currently available? From which source?

2.2.4 How much time will be dedicated to **grant writing**?

Useful extra information: The existing IARC policy on grant applications (also including the information on Co-PI/MPI) can be found under “GRANT APPLICATIONS” in the “[Handbook on the IARC Research Training and Fellowship Programme](#)”.

## 2.3 Communication with supervisors

2.3.1 What is the preferred **daily communication** method of the two people (face-to-face, Teams, emails, etc.)?

2.3.2 What is the preferred timing for regular **meetings** (e.g. weekly)?

2.3.3 When are you going to have the **annual review** with updates on career objectives, projects, working together, career development, etc.?

2.3.4 Are there opportunities to have **additional support from other IARC colleagues (within or outside the host Branch)**?

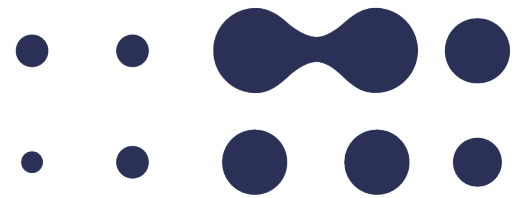
## 2.4 Well-being

How are you **feeling overall**? Is there anything you would like to share (e.g. working environment, balance between work and private life)?

## 2.5 Other topics

In addition to the questions listed above, valuable stimuli for substantive discussions can also be found online, for example the six core competencies that the [National Postdoctoral Association \(NPA\)](#) has established as critical for development during postdoctoral appointments, or the [NIH/NIAID Postdocs' Guide to Gaining Independence](#).





## ANNUAL PLANNING AND SELF-REFLECTION TOOL

This tool is available to Postdoctoral Scientists to help them get an overview of their current work and future goals by defining and reviewing their objectives, skills, and career development activities. This can be helpful to prepare for discussions with the supervisor.

### 1. Planning for the first or next year/period

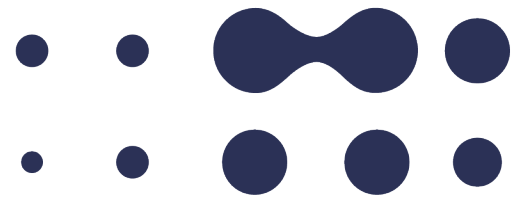
1.1 List your **objectives** for the next year/period, in each of the following categories.

Category	Specific goals	Current progress	Future actions
Scientific productivity			
Research skills			
Professional network			
Teaching skills			
Leadership and communication skills			
Administrative and management skills			

1.2 Are there **opportunities** at IARC or elsewhere that can assist you in reaching your objectives (e.g. meetings, courses, or workshops)? Identify specific events if possible. Consider including the associated dates.

1.3 What are your short-term research goals for your training period at IARC? For each goal, identify any areas where you feel you need **improvement or additional training** (e.g. new data analysis methods). Include any techniques you want to learn, collaborations to pursue, etc.

1.4 What should you ask for from your **supervisor(s)** (and mentors, if applicable) to help achieve your goals?



## 2. Review of the past year/period

2.1 **Overview:** briefly review in the table below your research and skills development for the past year/period.

Scientific production and skills in your field of expertise	Transversal skills and other achievements

### 2.2 Motivation and challenges

2.2.1 What were your work objectives for the current position? Have they been achieved?

2.2.2 What have the challenges been in the past year/period? And what was learned?

2.2.3 What have the strengths and weaknesses of your work been?

2.2.4 Have you been satisfied with the balance of activities?

2.3 **Supervision:** What is some feedback you have for your supervisor(s)? What has worked very well, and what could be improved?

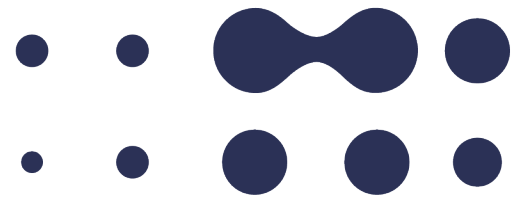
### 3. Career objectives

3.1 What **type of position** are you preferentially targeting in the long run?

3.2 What are your **expectations** for your future position? Have these expectations changed since the start of your postdoctoral training at IARC?

3.3 How do you see your possibilities for future **professional mobility**?

3.4 What are your options for after your current contract ends? Are there one or more **scientific field(s), branch(es), or types of organization(s)** in which you hope to work?



3.5 When do you anticipate beginning a **job search**? Do you feel comfortable with the resources you have for that?

Useful extra information: Interested Postdoctoral Scientists can find supporting information through **IARC's Job Application Clinics (JACs)**. The details can be found in the [IARC Career Prospects Portal](#).

#### 4. Well-being

4.1 Research environment:

- What features of your relationships with colleagues/collaborators are **helpful** and **supportive** to your well-being?
- What issues might **negatively affect** your **personal development** in your working environment?

4.2 Have you been satisfied with the **balance** between your **work and private life**? What will you continue to do? What will you do differently?

4.3 Are there any other stressors or concerns you would like to share?

4.4 Can you identify one or more **trusted people** in your working environment who are able to **find solutions** with you regarding these stressors or concerns?

Useful extra information: WHO has launched the Mental Health At Work platform (<https://mentalhealthatwork.app/>) for the WHO workforce, where access to high-quality mental health information and tips is provided. To log in, please use your WHO email credentials. In addition, WHO introduced the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) (Company Code: "WHO"), which is available to support the WHO workforce on a wide range of work and personal issues, including short-term professional counselling.

#### 5. How to complete the annual planning and self-reflection tool

##### **Re 1. Planning for the first or next year/period:**

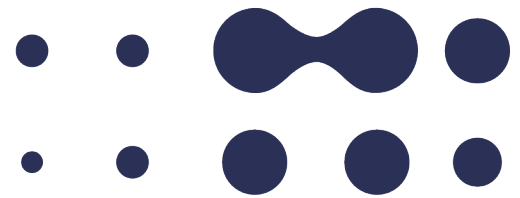
This section can help you shape and structure activities for the next year/period.

Re 1.1: This table should help you to structure your objectives for the next year/period, by identifying goals, checking the current progress, and planning future actions for specific research development categories. Each category is a general suggestion; feel free to add other items.

Re 1.2: This question should lead you to list intermediate steps to reach your short-term objectives by identifying opportunities that can boost your research development.

Re 1.3: This question should push you to identify short-term objectives, with a more precise idea of your current weaknesses that need to be worked on to facilitate your progress.

Re 1.4: This last question of the section should initiate your dialogue with your supervisor (and mentors, if applicable) about your short-term objectives and how to reach them.



## **Re 2. Review of the past year/period:**

This process should enable you to identify a global picture from past work by highlighting the main achievements and lessons learned.

### **Re 2.1: Overview**

In the left part of the table, you can list scientific achievements in the broad sense.

Examples: learning a new technique, submission of a manuscript or book chapter, scientific talks or posters, review of a manuscript, participation in a data collection campaign, submission or receipt of grants.

The right part of the table is dedicated to transversal activities.

Examples: organization of a seminar/working group, data management, training a colleague in a new technique, co-supervision of a student, visit to another laboratory, participation in a time management course (remember to mention mandatory training courses), participation in a laboratory council, participation in a social event promoting science.

Try to be concise, but make sure that key details are included. For example, you may refer to your level of expertise (e.g. basic, advanced, or expert knowledge), follow up on the development of a strategic skill in your field of expertise (e.g. you may explain how you gained this skill or describe your progress in developing it), or specify your contribution to the design of a research project (e.g. you may have carried out preliminary analyses or formulated a precise research question).

### **Re 2.2: Motivation and challenges**

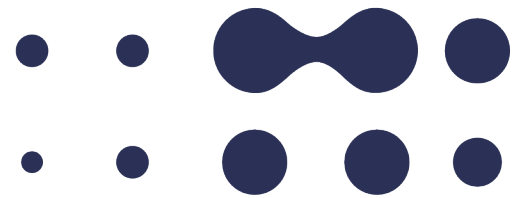
After you have listed the significant achievements of the past year/period, the following questions should help you assess what you learned from the path taken to produce the above-mentioned outcomes. The items you provide in this section are highly customizable because they depend on how you personally analyse the experiences of the past year/period.

**Re 2.2.1:** Take stock of your objectives. For example, you may cite a new source of motivation that is important to identify.

**Re 2.2.2:** Take stock of the challenges, expected or unexpected, that you may have faced. Solving challenges/overcoming difficulties, even if there is no immediate visible benefit, is an outcome in itself. For example, you may have carried out analyses that were not initially planned and with which you were not familiar, which required training time.

**Re 2.2.3:** Since you are the best expert on your project, you know its main strengths (e.g. the potential for ground-breaking results) and weaknesses (e.g. the acquisition of specific data is a slow process, with many different stages and partners). Now is a good time to list these items, because this could be very useful for future discussions (e.g. with reviewers, with a PhD defence jury, with a potential future mentor).

**Re 2.2.4:** At this point, you should have listed many different items relating to your activity in the past year/period. This last question of the section aims to assess whether the balance between all



these items is satisfactory. For example, you may feel that you have not spent as much time as you wanted on a particular task.

### **Re 3. Career objectives:**

This section should help you articulate your favourite activities in your jobs (question 3.1), as well as the functions, expectations, and location of your future position (questions 3.2 to 3.5). Some questions might not be answered during the first year/period but are there to engage reflection and discussion over the years.

Re 3.1: This question should help you to identify (i) the experiences that have already helped you to build your professional goals (this could help you confirm your short-term objectives) and (ii) your favourite activities (e.g. data analysis, pipeline development, presentations, teaching). You can think of your job priorities and their evolution over your current contract. For example, in addition to technical aspects, you can think of job security, pay scale, flexible hours, level of responsibility, social status, diversity and multiplicity of tasks, social responsibility, and specialization. Another possible way to look at this series of questions is to ask yourself, “If I could have a magic wand and develop my career in exactly the way I would like: What would I be doing day to day? Where would I be working? What kind of people would I be working with/for? What would I be delivering and producing, and who for? Why is that important to me?”

Re 3.2: This question should help you to think about future positions. Here are some examples: researcher, teaching and research, R&D project manager in a private company, consultant, expert, research organization, scientific communication or journalism, technical sales engineer, entrepreneur.

Re 3.3: This question is about your future mobility, i.e. whether you plan on a future national or international position.

Re 3.4: This question should help you think about which field/branch you want to work in (e.g. cancer genomics, epidemiology), and at which type of institution (e.g. international organization, university, industry, clinic).

Re 3.5: This question should give you the opportunity to discuss your job search and application process: when you should start it, where you should look, and how you should proceed.

### **Re 4. Well-being:**

Re 4.1: This section should help you identify the features that contribute to your well-being and those that negatively affect your personal development in your research environment.

Re 4.2: This question should boost your reflection about what promotes the balance between your work and private life and what can be improved.

Re 4.3: This question should be considered open-ended; feel free to add any concerns that have had an impact on your well-being.

Re 4.4: This last question of the section should encourage you to discuss issues that you may have with any support person in your working environment, to reduce the negative impact.