PhD & Postdoc Mobility Program
Terms and Conditions

These guidelines set out the rules for the ELIAS Mobility Program for PhD students and postdocs funded by the project European Learning and Intelligent Systems Excellence (ELIAS, Grant Agreement No. 101120237) under WP4 'Fostering Scientific excellence in AI', Task 4.2 'Supporting PhD and postdoc mobility at European scale'.

1. Description

ELIAS has a mobility fund to stimulate collaboration in the ELIAS/ELLIS networks, enabling young researchers to work with competitive industries/startups or top researchers at other sites in the partner network. The PhD and Postdoc Mobility Program is aimed at existing PhD students and postdocs in the network who want to initiate a collaboration with an Industry/Startup or ELLIS Member at another site in Europe. The Travel Grant covers travel costs of up to 2,400 EUR direct cost per researcher per year over the duration of their PhD or postdoc. Beneficiaries are allowed to increase this amount under specific conditions.

The ELIAS Mobility Program for PhDs and postdocs runs from April 1, 2024, to August 31, 2027, and has an overall budget of 619,200 EUR that has been distributed to all academic and research partners (typically 19,200 EUR direct cost per partner). The funding is distributed on a 'first come first served' basis until the travel funds run out. The eligibility criteria are determined by the ELIAS PhD & Postdoc Mobility Committee.

2. Eligibility criteria

– Duration of the visit: **up to 6 months** for Academic stays and **up to 3 months** for internships at startups or industries.

– Eligible applications: All European-based AI PhDs and postdocs visiting the ELIAS/ELLIS network for a research exchange can apply if the following conditions are fulfilled:

a) The applicant should explain how the visit contributes to the ELIAS project.

b) For ELLIS PhDs and postdocs/other AI PhDs and postdocs at ELIAS project partners (cf. list of institutions in the Appendix):

• Visiting an academic institution: the sending or hosting advisor is employed at an ELIAS project partner (cf. list of institutions in the Appendix); both of them are ELLIS members (https://ellis.eu/members). If the visit is linked to the interdisciplinary track (i.e., if the hosting advisor works in another research field such as Social Sciences or Humanities), the sending advisor is an ELLIS member (https://ellis.eu/members) OR ELLIS Unit Faculty (https://ellis.eu/units/).

• Visiting an industry partner: the sending advisor is an ELLIS member (https://ellis.eu/members), the hosting Industry/Startup is an ELIAS partner or an ELLIS member. For Industries/Startups that are not part of ELIAS and ELLIS, the sending advisor is a Fellow/Scholar (https://ellis.eu/fellows/) OR an ELLIS Unit Faculty (https://ellis.eu/units/) and the applicant should explain how the visit contributes to the ELIAS project.

c) For ELLIS PhDs and postdocs/other AI PhDs and postdocs not working/not visiting an ELIAS project partner (cf. list of institutions in the Appendix):

One advisor must either be an ELLIS Fellow/Scholar (https://ellis.eu/fellows/) OR an ELLIS Unit Faculty (https://ellis.eu/units/) and the applicant should explain how the visit contributes to the ELIAS project.

- Max. eligible travel and subsistence costs for ELIAS-external participants: 2,400 EUR per PhD/postdoc per year

- Number of visits: The upper reimbursement limit per applicant is 2,400 EUR in total within a year after the visit (not per visit). If the reimbursement of the first visit does not exceed 2,400 EUR, the applicant can reapply until the total limit is reached. Beneficiaries sending their own students can increase this limit to their own discretion, provided there is a legitimate need to do so.

- Eligible costs: Travel costs; accommodation under specific conditions and subsistence. Due to climate concerns, we strongly encourage travel by train whenever possible. All expenses need to be declared as actual costs, documented by original invoices, receipts and tickets, and need to be in line with the Beneficiary's/Partner's usual practices as well as Horizon Europe rules.

3. General conditions and eligibility of travel and subsistence costs

All PhDs and postdocs that fulfil the eligibility criteria specified in **Section 2** can apply for funding. Travel costs can only be reimbursed from the ELIAS Mobility Fund if:

- the application is approved by the ELIAS PhD & Postdoc Mobility Committee;

- they are in line with the Beneficiary's/Partner's usual practices on travel and accounting standards;

- they are in line with the Horizon Europe rules for reimbursement, i.e. the costs have been incurred during the duration of the ELIAS project, are necessary and linked to the action, are identifiable and verifiable.

The maximum amount of eligible costs per visit is set as a lump sum, but all the costs the researcher requests to be reimbursed have to be declared as actual costs documented by the original invoices, receipts, and tickets. Travellers must save all their original receipts, otherwise the costs cannot be claimed.

4. FAQs

Business/economy class tickets

Travel in business class is eligible if the Beneficiary/Partner usually pays for business class tickets for staff in this category. If the Beneficiary's/Partner's usual practice is to only pay for economy class tickets for staff in this category, then the cost of the business class ticket is not eligible.

Accommodation

Accommodation can only be reimbursed if it is documented by original invoices from a hotel, hostel or other type of accommodation. Expenses related to accommodation and the level of accommodation standard must be in line with the Beneficiary's/Partner's usual practices. All other expenses are considered private costs.

Daily allowance

The ELIAS Mobility Program for PhDs and Postdocs can cover a daily allowance if in line with the Beneficiary's/Partner's usual practices.

Multiple visits

The travel grant can in principle be used for multiple visits, but the upper reimbursement limit per applicant is 2,400 EUR in total within a year after the visit (not per visit). If the reimbursement of the first visit does not exceed 2,400 EUR, the applicant can reapply until the total limit is reached and as long as the ELIAS funds have not run out. Beneficiaries sending their own students can increase this limit to their own discretion, provided there is a legitimate need to do so.

Combination with personal travels or travels for other purposes

The costs of a combined journey will be reimbursed only up to the costs that would have been incurred if the travel would have been made exclusively for the ELIAS Mobility Program and if:

- it is the usual practice of the Beneficiary/Partner to pay for such travels (e.g. travels combining professional and personal reasons), and;

- it has been an actual cost for the Beneficiary.

Example: The researcher flies from London, which is the site of the Beneficiary/Partner, to Stuttgart for a research visit. After the visit, instead of flying back to London, the researcher flies directly to New York to participate in an event not related to the ELIAS Mobility Program. Eligible costs are: (a) the cost of the flight from London to Stuttgart, and (b) the part of the flight from New York to London up to the cost that would have been incurred for a flight back from Stuttgart to London after the end of the research visit. It is necessary to keep evidence of all flights.

Reimbursement

Researchers employed by institutions that are **Beneficiaries/Partners** in ELIAS (cf. institutions listed in the Appendix) will be reimbursed by their own institution and need to follow the institution's usual practices with respect to business travel.

Researchers employed by other organisations in the ELLIS network (i.e., institutions not taking part in ELIAS) will either be reimbursed by the **Hosting Beneficiary** or the **nearest ELIAS Beneficiary** and need to follow the institution's usual practices with respect to business travel.

Nature of the visit

The mobility grants are intended for exchanges/research visits to stimulate research collaborations in the network. They cannot be used to fund participation in conferences, workshops or similar events. For the ELLIS Doctoral Symposium, a specific mobility call is available for a limited number of students.

5. Procedure

Application

- To apply for a mobility grant, eligible candidates submit the application form to **phd@ellis.eu**.

- Submission deadline: Applications are possible year-round, but should be submitted no later than **1 month** before the starting date of the visit, as they need to be reviewed and processed by the ELIAS PhD & Postdoc Mobility Committee.

Evaluation and decisions

- The application is reviewed by the ELIAS PhD & Postdoc Mobility Committee.

- The decision (approval/rejection) is sent to the PhD student/postdoc, as well as the two supervisors. If the student is employed at one of the Beneficiaries, the local ELIAS contact needs to confirm if sufficient funds are available.

- If the application is approved, the PhD student/postdoc will also receive further instructions regarding the reimbursement procedure. Depending on the sending organisation, the reimbursement will be done by the Hosting Beneficiary, the nearest ELIAS Partner or locally by the sending institution.

Reimbursement procedure

- Depending on the sending institution, recipients of the travel grant must submit either the 'Visit Report' or 'Reimbursement Report' to phd@ellis.eu **within 1 month after the visit**. The researcher might need to submit additional forms to claim the actual costs if the respective institution requires it (instructions will be sent along with the decision letter).
- Only eligible costs can be claimed (see Sections 2–3). If the researcher fails to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the ELIAS Mobility Program, the ELIAS project is not obliged to reimburse any expenses related to the approved application.

Entity responsible for the reimbursement

- Researchers employed by **Beneficiaries/Partners**: Travel costs will be reimbursed directly by the Beneficiary as it has its own budget for the ELIAS Mobility Program. The PhD student/postdoc is still required to submit a Visit Report to phd@ellis.eu. Once a year, Beneficiaries (i.e. administrators of the sending institution) will be asked to submit a report of all the reimbursements paid out as part of the Mobility Program. Beneficiaries are expected to carefully document the reimbursements in case of an EU audit.

- Researchers employed by other organisations in the network: Travel costs will be reimbursed by the **Hosting Beneficiary or nearest ELIAS Partner**. The PhD student/postdoc is required to submit a Reimbursement Report to phd@ellis.eu.

Appendix: List of Beneficiaries in ELIAS

BITDEFENDER SRL (BD)

CESKE VYSOKE UCENI TECHNICKE V PRAZE (CTU)

COMMUNAUTE D'UNIVERSITE ET D'ETABLISSEMENTS UNIVERSITE FEDERALE DE TOULOUSE MIDI-PYRENEES (ANITI)

EBERHARD KARLS UNIVERSITAET TUEBINGEN (UT)

ETHNIKO KENTRO EREVNAS KAI TECHNOLOGIKIS ANAPTYXIS (CERTH)

FONDAZIONE BRUNO KESSLER (FBK)

FONDAZIONE ISTITUTO ITALIANO DI TECNOLOGIA (IIT)

FUNDACIÓN DE LA COMUNITAT VALENCIANA UNIDAD ELLIS ALICANTE (ALC)

IBM IRELAND LIMITED (IBM)

IDEAS NCBR SP Z O.O. (IDEAS NCBR)

INSTITUT JOZEF STEFAN (JSI)

INSTITUT NATIONAL DE RECHERCHE EN INFORMATIQUE ET AUTOMATIQUE (INRIA)

INSTITUT POLYTECHNIQUE DE PARIS (IPP)

KOBENHAVNS UNIVERSITET (UCPH)

MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT ZUR FORDERUNG DER WISSENSCHAFTEN EV (MPG)

POLITECNICO DI MILANO (POLIMI)

PROMETEIA (PRM)

ROBERT BOSCH GMBH (RB)

ROBERT BOSCH KFT (RBHU)

UMEÅ UNIVERSITET (UMU)

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO (UNIMI)

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA (UNIMORE)

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TRENTO (UNITN)

UNIVERSITAT DE VALENCIA (UVEG)

UNIVERSITATEA POLITEHNICA DIN BUCURESTI (UPB)

UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM (UVA)

Associated partners

FONDATION DE L'INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE IDIAP (IDIAP)

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER (UoM)

EIDGENOESSISCHE TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE ZUERICH (ETH Zürich)

AALTO KORKEAKOULUSAATIO SR (AALTO)

Third linked partners

UNIVERSITY OF GENOVA

ECOLE POLYTECHNIQUE (EP)

INSTITUT MINES-TELECOM- TELECOM PARIS (IMT-TP)