

Frequently Asked Questions – EMBL Group Leader Recruitments

1. *Are there any eligibility restrictions (e.g. age, gender, nationality)?*

There are no nationality, gender or age restrictions.

2. *What qualifications, experience (incl. minimum postdoctoral experience) and other conditions are required of the applicants?*

The candidate needs to hold a PhD or equivalent degree. There is no minimum postdoc experience required, we have hired candidates in the past that have had between one and seven years of postdoc experience but this should be seen more as a guide than as a rule.

We encourage interdisciplinary research and would also welcome applicants that are trained as physicists, chemists or mathematicians, for example.

3. *What steps are involved in the selection process?*

Suitable applicants will be invited for an interview to EMBL. This will include presenting their work and future research plans and interviews with members of the search committee.

The search committee will then be recommended their selected candidate first to EMBL Senior Scientist Committee and then to the EMBL Scientific Advisory Committee for endorsement. An official offer letter will be issued in writing to the candidate.

4. *What are the conditions of employment?*

Successful applicants will receive an initial fixed term staff member contract for a period of five years, which includes a probation period of six months. Further contract extensions up to a maximum period of nine years as a staff member are dependent on receiving a favourable review by the EMBL Scientific Advisory Committee. The following information is a summary of the main conditions of employment, which are detailed in EMBL Staff Rules and Regulations.

A. Base Salary and Allowances

EMBL salary consists of a base salary and allowances (family allowance, child allowance and non-resident allowance), which are dependent on the personal circumstances of the staff member. Approximate starting group leader monthly remuneration levels for each of the four host countries, assuming appointment at the normal starting point on the scale, are available upon request from recruitment@embl.org. Salaries are also reviewed and adjusted annually taking into consideration factors such as price indices, changes in remuneration in the public sector as well as the financial situation of the organisation. Details of your remuneration will be explained in more detail by the recruiter during the interviews.

B. Grants/Indemnities

i. Installation Grant/Reinstallation Grant

On taking up appointment eligible staff members receive an installation grant to accommodate cost associated with your move. The amount varies depending on your salary and family situation between one and three monthly basic salaries within the limits of the defined minima and maxima amounts. If you decide to resign during your first year of employment, you will be required to repay this grant. A reinstallation grant may also be payable upon finishing your contract with EMBL and having moved to another place of residence.

ii. Indemnities

When leaving EMBL after a fixed term contract, you will receive indemnities of 0.5 monthly basic salaries per uninterrupted year of service, provided you have completed three years of service and have not resigned.

C. Rental/Housing Allowance

No rental or housing allowance is provided, but furnished guesthouse accommodation is available for rent at various sites.

D. Taxation

Because of EMBL special status as an international organisation salaries are subject to EMBL internal tax. Under the national agreements with Germany, UK, Italy and France, earnings from EMBL are not subject to national taxation in these countries, but may be taken into consideration when assessing the tax liability on total household income from other sources. Please note however that the host country agreement with Italy does not exempt Italian residents from national taxation.

If you are a non-EU-national your salary may be subject to taxation in your home country depending on the tax law and tax treaties between your home country and your EMBL duty country. There is eligibility for a foreign earned income exemption from any USA income tax liability. Please check your tax liabilities with the authorities in your home country.

Staff members are entitled to two free consultations with a tax advisor during their time at EMBL.

E. Working hours/Overtime

The normal working week at EMBL is 39 hours.

F. Resignation/Termination

The period for staff members on fixed term contracts is one month during the probation period and three months thereafter.

G. Social Security

EMBL provides comprehensive social security benefits to all staff members, including health insurance, pension, invalidity, accident at work, long term care, death benefit and unemployment insurances. Due to its special status as an intergovernmental organisation EMBL staff members are compulsorily insured in the EMBL social security schemes and are exempt from contributing to the national social security schemes in the EMBL host countries.

i. Health Insurance

The EMBL Health Insurance Scheme provides comprehensive coverage. Detailed information about the coverage can be found under the administrator's website: www.intermedex.de. Your contribution amounts to 3.6% of your basic (full time) salary and EMBL contributes 7.2%. A spouse (as defined in the EMBL Staff Regulations) who is not working and dependant children are covered without extra charge.

Please note that coverage under the health insurance scheme ceases once you leave the laboratory. Therefore, you are advised to investigate the conditions for reintegration into your current/former health scheme before joining EMBL. Many insurance companies provide ways of safeguarding the right to rejoin their scheme.

ii. Pension Benefits

As a staff member you are automatically enrolled in the EMBL Pension Scheme and are exempt from paying mandatory contributions into the national pension plans in the host countries. The premiums for the pension scheme are currently 7% of the basic net salary for the employee and 14% from EMBL. Please note that the entitlement to receiving a retirement pension will start only after ten years of service as a staff member at EMBL. However, if you leave EMBL before that, you will receive a refund of the premiums you paid into the plan together with 4% compound interest per annum. Furthermore, you are entitled to a leaving allowance amounting to 1.5 monthly basic salaries per year of service. During your employment at EMBL the pension scheme also provides for an invalidity pension and survivor benefits in the cases of death or invalidity.

Please consult your current pension providers (national or private schemes) on ways of safeguarding your entitlements.

In addition, please note that EMBL has arranged with Swiss Life Insurance for the possibility to join a private pension plan with advantageous conditions. You may want to join the plan on a voluntary basis.

iii. Accident at Work Insurance

EMBL automatically insures all staff members for accident at work in accordance with the social security treaties between EMBL and our host countries. Accident at work insurance is free of charge for all employees and covers you also on your way to and from work.

iv. Death Benefit Insurance

The EMBL death benefit scheme is compulsorily for all staff members. In the event of your death, the nominated beneficiary will receive a lump sum payment of twelve times your last monthly salary. Your contribution to the insurance amounts to 0.08% of your salary and EMBL contributes 0.16%.

You may decide to include your spouse in the insurance. In the case of his or her death, the payment amounts to six times your last monthly salary. For this additional cover you pay half the full contribution at 0.12% of your salary.

v. Long Term Care Insurance

You have the option to insure yourself and your family members with the Gothaer Versicherung against the financial risk related to requiring long term care. EMBL has arranged for a Group Insurance with special terms and conditions and will pay 50% of the premium for you and 25% for your spouse and children within certain limits.

vi. Unemployment Benefit

For the eventuality of not immediately finding a new job after your employment at EMBL, staff members are entitled to unemployment benefits, depending on time of service and family circumstances, for up to twelve months after the contract has come to an end.

H. Leave Entitlements

i. Annual Leave

Staff members are entitled to 2.5 days annual leave for each month or, 30 days in a calendar year. Annual leave is subject to the requirements of the Laboratory and may be taken with the prior approval of your supervisor. At least two weeks must be taken

consecutively each year and only 15 days may be carried forward to the next calendar year.

ii. Sick Leave

Inform your supervisor and hr officer/outstation administrator when you cannot come to the laboratory because of sickness. If your absence is longer than three consecutive calendar days you need to provide human resources with a medical certificate. A maximum of seven days of uncertified sick leave will be accepted within 12 months.

iii. Maternity Leave

Female staff members are entitled to 16 weeks paid maternity leave (normally 6 weeks before and 10 weeks after the expected date of birth) provided they have fulfilled ten months of uninterrupted service before the date of birth. In connection with paid maternity leave unpaid leave may be claimed for up to 36 weeks.

iv. Other reasons for Leave

EMBL grants special paid and/or unpaid leave on certain occasions such as marriage, birth of a child as well as for training. Also, all staff members at EMBL receive the public holidays in the country of their duty station.

I. Miscellaneous

i. Removal Expenses

EMBL reimburses expenses for the removal of staff members and their family when they move within a radius of 50 km of the workplace to take up appointment. This includes travel costs and the removal of furniture as well as storage within the volume and time limits defined in the staff regulations.

EMBL may also provide financial support for your removal upon leaving EMBL. However, you are advised to check with your new employer/grant awarding body if they provide assistance with regard to travel and removal.

ii. Travel Expenses

EMBL reimburses travel expenses for yourself and your family upon taking up appointment provided you move to within a radius of 50 km of the workplace. Please use the most economic and direct mode of public transport. In order to receive reimbursement, complete a travel reimbursement form and attach the receipts. The form must be submitted to human resources within three months.

iii. Duty Travel

EMBL reimburses travel expenses necessarily incurred on official business for the laboratory.

iv. Home Leave

The cost for an economy class return ticket to the home country is reimbursed to non-resident staff members and their family every second year.

v. Child Care

The main laboratory in Heidelberg has an on campus, partly subsidised crèche and kindergarten for ages three months to six years.

vi. Education Grant

Non-resident staff members may receive an education grant for each child attending an educational establishment on a full-time basis in the host or in the home country. Resident staff members may be entitled to an education grant provided that all of the following conditions are fulfilled: the staff member (and their spouse) is not a national of the host country; the child is educated in the language of the country of which one of the parents is a national or in one of the three official languages, but not in the language of a host country; the child has not attended a school in the host country education system for longer than two years. The annual maximum grant per academic year is three times the annual children allowance.

vii. Medical Examination

Every employee needs to undergo a medical examination upon taking up appointment and when leaving the Laboratory. Additional medical checks may be necessary depending on the work environment.

viii. Language Tuition

EMBL will reimburse 75% of language course tuition fees during the first three years of employment up to a maximum limit. Some language courses are provided on site.

ix. General Training and Development

Employees are also entitled to participate in a variety of language, IT and career development courses run via EMBL General Training and Development Programme. New group leaders are required to participate in management and leadership development courses within their first year at EMBL, where possible. Given the availability of courses it may not be possible for a new group leader to achieve this within their first year, but they should have at least registered for a course within their first year.

The courses are part of EMBL's General Training and Development Programme and have been developed to provide participants with an introduction to the key concepts of management and the fundamental techniques that will enhance a team's productivity and efficiency, and optimise a participant's leadership potential. In addition to the compulsory management and leadership courses there are also a range of courses available designed to develop personal, communication, project management, and computing skills. To view examples of courses offered under the Development Path for Advanced Staff, please click [here](#).

5. ***What are the visa requirements in Europe?***

A. Germany

The visa requirements for working in each of the host countries are detailed below. In general, EMBL will provide every assistance in obtaining the required visas/ work permits. It is important that you start the visa process well in advance by contacting EMBL.

Due to the special status of EMBL as an intergovernmental organisation you will not need a working visa but, depending on your nationality, you may need an entry visa. Please check with the German Embassy in your place of residence and at:

<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/WillkommeninD/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen.html>

Once in Germany, EMBL will register you with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from which you will receive a special permit (Sonderausweis) which allows you to work at EMBL, to live in Germany and to travel within the Schengen countries. Family members are also entitled to the "Sonderausweis" which includes a work permit for your spouse.

B. United Kingdom

EMBL-EBI staff and their families (spouses and dependant children) have a special immigration status. Because of this, it is not necessary to go through the usual entry clearance visa procedure. For more information please contact: personnel@ebi.ac.uk

C. Italy

If you have a non-EU passport, you need to apply for a visa (Visto per Missione) at the Italian Embassy/Consulate in your current place of residence. Without the correct visa you will not be permitted to stay in Italy and will have to return to your country to reapply. Once in Italy, non-Italian members of personnel (including their non-working spouse and dependents) receive an ID card from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs instead of having to register with the local Police Authorities, which otherwise would be required under Italian law. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.esteri.it/visti/home.asp>

D. France

If you have a non-EU passport, you need to apply for a Visa D at the French Embassy/Consulate in your current place of residence. Without this Visa you will not be permitted to stay in France. Once in France, non-French members of personnel (including their non-working spouse and dependents) receive a document called "Titre de Séjour" delivered by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For more information, please visit:

http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france_159/coming-to-france_2045/getting-visa_2046/do-you-need-visa_1559.html?var_recherche=visa

6. ***How is the group leader position funded and to what level?***

EMBL greatest asset is its unique scientific culture. The laboratory has a tradition of research excellence and a belief that this is best achieved via collaboration and integration. Most research groups at EMBL are led by young group leaders in their first independent position who stay at EMBL for a maximum of nine years. To achieve success at the level expected at EMBL these groups require a supportive environment. Components of this include excellent scientific services, state-of-the-art Core Facilities and the well-known EMBL International PhD Programme that creates a regular influx of top-quality PhD students into all EMBL labs. The constant rejuvenation of the EMBL faculty naturally maintains a high level of scientific excitement and enthusiasm. This leads to an unusually high level of information exchange between groups and scientific Units and thus to a very high number of collaborations. This in turn greatly increases the efficiency of both individual laboratories and of the collective and optimises EMBL's scientific output. One indication of this success is that EMBL has been ranked repeatedly in the world as one of the top research institutes in the life sciences. A wide range of seminars, courses and conferences are held at EMBL, providing access to a broad network of scientists and scientific information from Europe and beyond.

Many of these aspects of EMBL, including some of the most important factors behind our success, are not financially quantifiable. Indeed, our unique institutional structure makes us difficult to compare with more conventionally organised research institutes.

A. Internally provided Unit resources

Your group will have full EMBL funding of your own position, a technician or equivalent position, an average of two EMBL-funded PhD students at steady state and a year's postdoctoral funding.

i. In respect of operating expenditure

The operating budget depends on the Unit in which the research group is located and the type of research pursued (e.g. whether equipment or consumable intensive). The sums involved will be discussed in detail during interview.

It should also be emphasised that the operating budget is completely available for expenditure by the group on materials, travel and other costs as well as capital expenditure for equipment purchased in the group and Unit. Salary costs are not included in this budget. Salary budgets are allocated in addition to this allowance.

An additional central fund is available for the purchase of items of equipment whose cost exceeds that which can be carried by the Unit. A large variety of expensive technology and equipment is made available via EMBL's central services (see below). The initial equipment requirements of each group are different, and thus are dealt with on an individual basis during recruitment. The bottom line is that EMBL will aim to meet your research needs. EMBL enters these discussions with a view to finding ways to provide all necessary equipment. There are no charges for central overheads to be paid and a large range of services are provided centrally free of charge or on the basis of the cost of consumable materials.

ii. External funding

Your budget will provide for a group of roughly four to five people without requiring additional external funding. We always encourage postdoctoral fellows to apply for external funding. You can acquire additional funding by applying for external grants. Any grant income you are successful in obtaining would be additional so there is no expectation that grant funding should be used to offset the EMBL budget. EMBL's Grants Services will support you in the preparation of grant applications as well as in their administration.

EMBL's group leaders have an excellent track record of successful grant application. For example, in 2009 they are participating in over 150 EC Framework Programme projects and of these projects 29 are coordinated by EMBL. Depending on your nationality and location you may also be eligible for funding from national agencies. During 2008, funding of projects by grants amounted to over €37.4 million and represented 22% of EMBL's total income.

iii. In respect of centrally provided services

EMBL finds that, in an institute that is largely composed of junior groups of small to intermediate size, it makes more sense for many services to be provided centrally. This avoids wastage of resource and frees scientists to pursue their science rather than administer contracts for routine services. These central services are set out in the following table:

Centrally Provided Services

Core Facilities	Advanced Light Microscopy Facility Monoclonal Antibody Facility Microarray Facility In-house DNA Sequencing Service Proteomics Facility Protein Extraction & Purification Facility Electron Microscopy Facility Flow Cytometry Facility Chemical Biology Core Facility
Workshops	Mechanical Engineering Electronics Scientific Instrument Maintenance
Central IT Services	
Other Services	Photo Lab Conferences Services Library Media Kitchens (Dish-washing) Grants Office Safety

iv. In respect of other, non-scientific, services

The normal financial and personnel services are provided centrally without charge as are major building and refurbishment works, power, water, telephone, email, internet and air-conditioning. There is an efficient, computerised central purchasing system to facilitate your ordering of materials and equipment and reduce the time spent by your group members on this. A night security service watches over critical equipment and supplies during silent hours. Animal facilities are provided to those groups who need them. Like the experimentally-based central facilities, groups pay for the consumables used in providing animal resources, but not for the staff or overhead costs.

In terms of scientific productivity, the above attempt to provide reasonably accurate figures on the financial support provided to EMBL groups fall far short of illustrating how well EMBL's "culture" of having mainly young groups who work collaboratively with each other and make imaginative use of the common scientific facilities works in generating excellent research very cost-efficiently. This aspect is impossible to quantify but increases the real value of EMBL support considerably.

B. Moving your lab to EMBL

EMBL is very flexible in helping new group leaders and unit coordinators move to the laboratory. As already mentioned, EMBL will aim to meet your research needs. The average research area per Unit is 1,594 m² with 154 m² being the average laboratory size per group. Costs for the refurbishment of laboratory space are covered by central funds. We can also help to transfer grants that are still extant and will take over the administration of the grant where this is permitted by the funding institution. The Unit into which the group leader is moving provides start-up consumables and equipment from its budget, but where significant equipment costs are necessary central resources are also available. If applicable, we are also helpful in transferring key group members from the previous institute to EMBL and are prepared to pay for the transfer

of equipment from your previous lab where this is scientifically important and makes financial sense as compared to purchasing new equipment.

C. Inventions

EMBL has a forward-looking and progressive policy on inventions made by its staff and visitors. While it claims ownership of all intellectual property generated by EMBL employees it allows the inventor to decide whether or not an invention will be protected and/or commercialised. A scientist is free to decide to publish and leave the invention unpatented if he or she wishes. Should a scientist decide to protect and commercialise an invention, our technology transfer company (EMBLEM) is available to take all aspects of the process forward and thus to free the scientist from having to deal with patents, financing, licensing, etc. EMBL has a generous scheme for sharing the proceeds of commercialisation with inventors once the costs of commercialising inventions are met from the income generated. No charge for EMBLEM's service is made to the scientist.
