



NOMIS-ISTA Fellowship Program



Guide for Applicants 2026

The **NOMIS-ISTA Fellowship Program** offers excellent postdoctoral researchers the freedom to work on questions at the intersection of two or more scientific disciplines in a unique research environment, while also providing the security of outstanding scientific mentorship from proven leaders in their respective fields. A **cross-discipline project proposal**, to be **co-supervised by two group leaders from different disciplines**, identifies projects and fellows who demonstrate great flexibility, creativity and collaboration.

All research fields supported at ISTA will be eligible (see <https://ista.ac.at/en/research>). Should the specific interdisciplinary expertise required for the research project not be available at ISTA, an external secondary supervisor can be proposed. This external supervisor can host the fellow (secondment) for up to three months per fellowship year.

NOMIS and ISTA award two NOMIS Fellowships annually, following a two-stage application process (including interview).

The **closing date** for the 2026 Call for Proposals is **September 10, 2026 (14:00 CEST)**

Further information on the program can be found at:

<https://ista.ac.at/en/education/postdocs/nomis-ista-fellowship/>

Applications can be submitted at: <https://apply.ista.ac.at/>

Benefits of a NOMIS Fellowship

- Cutting-edge and state-of-the-art resources ([scientific service units](#), research and travel funds)
- Freedom to explore high-risk concepts
- Three-year fully funded position with an internationally competitive salary (min. 76'986 EUR gross) and full social security coverage
- Open, collaborative, interdisciplinary research environment
- Enabling framework in which to develop interdisciplinary skills; dual mentorship
- [Teaching within ISTA](#) encouraged (but not required), aiming to create the most conducive environment for the creation and transfer of knowledge
- Research integrity and leadership training, as well as career development support
- Joining ISTA's and NOMIS Foundation's global networks of exceptional, pioneering researchers

Eligibility Requirements

- At the time of recruitment (i.e. within 8 months of the application deadline), applicants must have been awarded their PhD and *preferably* have acquired their first postdoctoral experience and/or interdisciplinary training. However, the NOMIS Fellowship Selection Panel will also consider exceptionally promising candidates who fall outside the above criteria.
- Applicants must have an existing affiliation to an academic/research institution (note: internal applicants must not have been employed at ISTA before January 1, 2026).
- Following the initial evaluation round, top-ranked candidates must be available for a remote interview between November 1, 2026 and November 21, 2026.
- If successful, the NOMIS Fellowship must commence within six months of notification.

Application Process: Overview

1. Create an account at <https://apply.app.ist.ac.at>.
2. Verify your account by following the instructions contained within the email sent to you.
3. Complete the application by entering all required information and uploading all required documents (more information on this below).
4. Submit your application.

General notes on the application process

Your application must contain all required information and documents (**including the reference letters from your referees**) and have been submitted to our online system by 14:00 CEST on the date of the application deadline.

Applications that are incomplete or ineligible will not be considered by the Selection Committee.

Application Form – Requirements

Personal Data: This section of the application requests standard personal information¹ (e.g., your name, address, date of birth) as well as the (anticipated) date of PhD award.

PhD Education: Details on your PhD program.

Additional Education: This section is optional.

Current affiliation: Current academic/professional affiliation. If currently on leave/unemployed, please enter details of your latest employment.

Host Supervisors: Please provide the names of the professors (supervisors) with whom you plan to work at ISTA. You will need to identify both a primary and a secondary supervisor. You may also nominate a professor external to ISTA as a secondary supervisor if the specific scientific expertise required is not available at ISTA. In this case, the selection of an external secondary supervisor must be briefly justified in the research proposal (see below). Details on faculty, their research interests, and contact details can be found here: <https://ista.ac.at/en/research/>

Project Keywords: Please select up to five disciplines that are closely related to your proposal from the dropdown list.

Project Information: Using the online forms, provide:

Project title (max. 100 characters including spaces)

Project scientific summary (max. 300 words). This summary should be understandable and accessible to a scientific audience with a background in your field.

Project lay summary (max. 300 words). Provide a concise summary of the research project in a manner that is understandable and accessible to a broad scientific audience. Please briefly explain the project's interdisciplinary dimensions and how it fits with the NOMIS-ISTA Fellowship scheme.

In this section, you must also upload the following documents (pdf format) for your application to be considered complete and eligible:

1. **Research Proposal** (max. 5 pages)

Your research proposal should contain 2 parts: Part 1 (max. 3 pages) and Part 2 (max. 2 pages), using the exact given section headings. References should be included at the end, and are not included in the page count. *Formatting rules*: min. 11pt font; min. 2 cm page margins.

Part 1 (max. 3 pages):

- A. **Project Vision:** *Provide an introduction that sets the context of your study, describes the scope and purpose of the study and states the project objectives.*
- B. **Methodology/Approach:** *Outline the overall strategy and a work plan for the three-year fellowship to achieve the proposed research aims with predicted outcomes and potential pitfalls.*

¹ **Data Privacy Statement:** ISTA processes your personal data in accordance with the statutory data protection regulations. For more information including processing for the purpose of application and quality management and your rights as a data subject please refer to our data privacy statement: <https://ista.ac.at/dataprotection/>

Part 2 (max. 2 pages):

NOMIS Statement: This statement should address cross-disciplinary aspects of the research proposal and include the following points:

- A. **Impact, innovation, and cross-disciplinary nature of the project:** *explain how the project will address an unresolved and important question at the intersection of two or more scientific disciplines. Explain how integrating perspectives and approaches from different fields will generate new insights.*
- B. **Choice of host groups:** *Describe the rationale for selecting the host research groups and explain how their combined expertise will support the project's objectives. Clarify how the project aligns with your research interests and experience.*
- C. **Contribution to the host groups' research:** *Explain how the proposed research extends the research bounds of both host groups.*

2. CV (max. 2 pages) **and publication list.**

The CV should include: education and training, previous and current employment, and if applicable: research experience, awards and prizes, collaborations, career breaks. The publication list should include your full list of publications and research outputs, in a format that includes the full author list, publication title, journal title, volume/issue/page (or equivalent identifier) and year. DOI numbers with hyperlinks are encouraged. For publications with >20 authors, please list the first and last author, yourself, and "et al".

3. Summary of previous achievements (1 page) detailing up to 3 of your most significant academic achievements with selected works across your career. Please provide concrete examples of contributions and explain their significance. These could include, but are not limited to:

- Generation of knowledge, innovation, and advancement of (interdisciplinary) research
(*e.g., research outputs, code, software, data sets, patents,...*)
- Development and support of peers and the wider research community
(*e.g., teaching, training, editorial work, expertise provided in collaborations, ...*)
- Broader society
(*e.g., outreach activities, open- and citizen science initiatives, ...*)

Please note that your academic achievements do not have to be directly associated with your current application and the proposed research project.

Ethics Self-Assessment Form. The Ethics Self-Assessment Form must be fully completed.

Other information:

(optional): Upload diplomas and transcripts related to degrees listed in the fields PhD Education and Additional Education in the Online Application Form (see above). These documents can be added using the “other files” field.

Referees: **Submit the name and contact information for three referees.** These referees should be former professors or other senior scientists with whom you have worked. Your potential host at ISTA may not be listed as one of the referees on your application.

You do not have to wait until you have fully submitted your application in order to notify your referees. *Once you have entered your referees’ information and saved the application, a ‘contact referees’ button will appear at the bottom of the page. Clicking this button will notify your referees that you have requested a letter of reference and they will receive an email from our application system informing them how to upload their reference letter. It is highly recommended to **click this button as soon as you have decided upon your referee choices**. We recommend you additionally contact your referee by email to inform them.*

You may check on the status of these letters and, if needed, send reminders to your referees by logging into the system and viewing your submitted application. **A minimum of two reference letters must be received no later than the application deadline.** Applications with less than two reference letters at the application deadline will be rejected as incomplete. No exceptions will be made.

Selection and Evaluation

Complete applications passing the initial eligibility and prescreening check by program management are evaluated by the NOMIS Fellowship Selection Panel based on the following criteria:

Scientific Excellence: *Proposal*

The quality, innovative aspects, impact and feasibility of the research outlined in the proposal will be evaluated, with a specific focus on Part 1 and Part 2. Evaluators are looking for a clear research vision combined with a creative, feasible, cross-disciplinary approach.

Scientific Excellence: *Applicant*

The scientific expertise, credibility, and leadership potential of the applicant will be assessed based on the CV, summary of previous achievements, and the reference letters provided by external professors/senior scientists who know the candidate well.

Added Scientific Value

Potential for the project and applicant to extend the boundaries of research in both the host groups, based on the research proposal Part 1 and Part 2.

Top-ranked candidates after the initial selection-panel ranking meeting will be invited for a remote interview with selected selection panel members between November 3, 2026 and November 21, 2026. Final fellowship offers will then be made following a selection panel confirmation meeting.

All candidates will be notified of the outcome of their applications no later than four months after the application deadline.

Questions? Should you have further questions about the NOMIS-ISTA Fellowship application process, please see the [webpage](#), or contact nomis-fellowship@ista.ac.at

About NOMIS

The NOMIS Foundation supports and enables insight-driven science across all disciplines, focusing on researchers who put forth bold new ideas, exhibit a pioneering spirit and seek to inspire the world around them. The foundation's vision is to "create a spark" in the world of science by enabling pioneering research in the natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities that benefits humankind and our planet.

The foundation serves as a catalyst for scientific and human progress by supporting interdisciplinary research, establishing collaborative research networks and developing strategic partnerships. In addition to providing financial support, NOMIS endeavors to develop and strengthen the conditions conducive to the pursuit of high-risk basic research.

To learn more about the [NOMIS Foundation](#) and the research they support, please visit their [website](#).



About ISTA

The Institute of Science and Technology Austria (ISTA) is a cross-disciplinary research institution that combines basic science with graduate education. Our scientists perform theoretical and experimental research in Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, and Information and System Sciences. They are organized in small to medium-size research groups that interact with each other across the boundaries of traditional disciplines. Each research group of ISTA is headed by a tenured or tenure-track professor. The Scientific Service Units (SSUs) at ISTA provide cutting-edge equipment and expert services, thereby acting as an interdisciplinary platform that maximizes the sharing of equipment among multiple research groups.

To learn more about ISTA and the research undertaken there, please visit our [website](#).

