**SG Academies South-East Asia Fellows Programme**

**Frequently Asked Questions for Applicants**

**1. If I am selected, can I take my family with me?**

SG Academies SEA Fellows will need to apply for either [Employment Pass](https://www.mom.gov.sg/passes-and-permits/employment-pass) or [S Pass](https://www.mom.gov.sg/passes-and-permits/s-pass) via the host institution. Please check the MOM website for the latest information regarding passes for family members. There will not be any additional financial benefits or housing allowance for SASEA Fellows or their dependents apart from what is stated in the letter of award.

**2. Does the Fellowship Scheme cover travel costs?**

The SASEA fellow may apply for a travel grant up to a maximum of S$ 4000 within 24 months. Under certain circumstances travel to and from home country may be approved. Fellows are strongly encouraged to apply for travel grants to present at overseas conferences. Fieldwork related travel costs may be covered at the discretion of the host professor and PI from his/her research grants.

**3. Will I be liable for paying income tax in Singapore?**

Yes, you will be liable to pay income tax in Singapore on your fellowship benefits depending on the duration of your stay here. Your tax residency and the amount of income tax to be paid will be determined by IRAS.

Once your tax residency has been determined by IRAS as tax resident, you will be charged at resident tax rates. For example, if you are awarded a stipend of S$ 4,000, your total annual fellowship income will amount to S$ 48,0001 and your estimated income tax (YA19) would be S$ 910.2 Any excess tax (if any) will be refunded back to you once IRAS has reassessed your tax residency from non-resident to resident. This is done on a case-by-case basis.

Please refer to the IRAS website for further details: <https://www.iras.gov.sg/IRASHome/Individuals/Foreigners/Learning-the-basics/Basic-Guide-for-New-Individual-Taxpayers--Foreigners-/>

For more information on Tax obligations for Non-Resident Professionals: <https://www.iras.gov.sg/IRASHome/Individuals/Foreigners/Working-out-your-taxes/Tax-Rates-for-Resident-and-Non-Residents/>

**4. After I am selected, when can I expect to start my Fellowship at the host institution?**

Your start date will depend primarily on two factors:

1. The availability of your host professor / PI and

2. Successfully obtaining an [Employment Pass (EP)](https://www.mom.gov.sg/passes-and-permits/employment-pass) or relevant pass to enter Singapore. Please note that EP application results can take up to 3 months.

**5. Do I have to leave my current job to participate in this Fellowship?**

This is a full-time postdoctoral fellowship for 2 years, so you should apply for Leave of Absence if your current job allows. This fellowship is intended to prepare you for a full-time position in any SEA countries.

Some local host institutions do not allow double appointments / employment for their staff, so you may wish to confirm with the host institution on the relevant guidelines before applying.

**6. Are Fellows required to stay in Singapore for the entire duration of the program?**

Yes. However, travel for fieldwork / data collection in connection with the fellowship will be allowed.

**7. Are SASEA Fellows considered staff in the host institution?**

The SASEA fellow will be a research staff in the host organisation.

**8. Are there any housing arrangements for SASEA fellows?**

The SASEA fellow should check if the host institution may provide on-campus housing rental. Otherwise, he/she will need to arrange for off-campus housing. No housing rental allowance will be provided.

**9. I am a South-East Asian researcher currently working / staying in Singapore. Can I apply?**

No. Researchers currently residing and/or working in Singapore are not eligible.

However, should you already have a confirmed job offer in a public-sector research entity in your home country with an appropriate start date (e.g. 2 to 3 years from now), you will be eligible to apply.

Kindly submit a scanned copy / e-copy of the Letter of Offer together with your Fellowship application as documentary proof.

**10. What is the Host Professor / PI’s in-principle approval with his/her official email ID, and how do I obtain it?**

For the in-principle approval, the PI just needs to state that he or she approves of your research proposal and agrees to host you at his or her lab for the Fellowship.

In view of this, either (i) an approval letter / letter of support with Host PI's official email included, or (ii) a screenshot of the PI’s approval with the email address, would suffice.

**11. My field of research is not on Infectious Diseases, Public Health, Environment and/or Water. Can I apply?**

Candidates from all fields of research are welcome to apply.

However, preference will be given to candidates working on the above-mentioned fields.

**12. Which countries are included under South-East Asia?**

South-East Asian countries include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Timor Leste.

\*Singapore citizens are not eligible.