

European Talent Academy 2024 for independent research fellows and newly appointed lecturers

Call to participate in UK-EU networking and training opportunity with the Technische Universität München (TUM) and Politecnico di Milano (PoliMi)

2024 theme: Climate, energy and mobility for a Sustainable Society.

[Application deadline: 25 January 2024](#)

This programme provides newly appointed group leaders at Imperial, TUM and PoliMi working in one or more of the following areas **climate, energy or mobility for a sustainable society** to meet each other across disciplines, to make international research connections, and to participate in a series of online and in-person training sessions, focused on both individual career development (eg abstract and impact, proposal writing, policy-influencing) and collaborative research skills (eg understanding UK and EU research funding and policy landscapes). The programme also aims to help researchers develop interdisciplinary project teams and develop proposals for further research collaboration.

Independent research fellows or newly appointed lecturers who are within 2-7 years of experience since completion of PhD*, from engineering, natural sciences, medicine and/or business, who are working on topics that fit into the larger theme of climate, energy or mobility for a sustainable society are encouraged to apply.

Participation offers the opportunity to:

- Connect with other Imperial, Poli Milano, and TUM researchers doing work in complementary research areas and form important networks for future collaboration.
- Attend training and gain information about research funding available to support UK-EU research collaborations.
- Start thinking early in careers about accessing research funding to support career and research goals.
- Increase your visibility and your networks
- Seed potential Horizon Europe and other funding proposals.

Each institution will pay for the costs of its selected early career researchers to participate in the programme, including travel for in-person sessions. We anticipate having 5-8 participants from each institution, maximum 20-21 participants total. The three institutions share the costs of other common training and programme costs.

Background

[Imperial and TUM formed a strategic partnership in 2018](#). [TUM and PoliMi formed a strategic partnership in 2022](#). As entrepreneurial universities focused on science and technology and with strong connections to industry, the three universities are well-positioned to collaborate. All three universities are committed to supporting early career researchers in establishing UK-EU networks for research and innovation.

TUM launched the European Talent Academy in 2020-21, and the programme has thus far had over 64 ECRs participate from the three institutions. Previous themes were the EU Green Deal, Trustworthy AI, and Lifelong Health.

Theme for 2024

To guarantee that the participants have a thematic research link and that the presented funding instruments are tailored to their needs and interests, the European Talent Academy will be based on an annual challenge / topic. This also will give the possibility to integrate match-making sessions at the end of the Talent Academy to explore collaboration and joint projects.

The theme for 2024 is: “Climate, energy and mobility for a sustainable society”. Eligible researchers working on these topics from any disciplinary area are encouraged to apply. At Imperial, this means we welcome applications from across our four faculties, as long as the research connects to the programme’s theme.

Key words: climate science and solutions, energy supply, energy systems and grids, buildings and industrial facilities in energy transition, communities and cities, industrial competitiveness in transport, clean, safe and accessible transport and mobility, smart mobility, energy storage, climate change, economy, batteries, hydrogen, citizen engagement, carbon capture and storage, greenhouse gas emissions, long-term energy storage, digitalisation, passenger and goods transport, cities, renewable energy, circular economy, climate neutral economy, sustainable economy, climate sciences, Earth, nature, climate change impacts on health, sustainable lifestyles, sustainable resources for a health environment.

Programme and Timeline

The programme takes place February - October 2024. Participants must commit to attending all of the **following online and in-person mandatory sessions**, which are:

- **27th of February** – 9am-12pm (UK time) - Virtual – **Online introduction**
- **8th of March** – 9-11.30am (UK time) - Virtual – **Storytelling workshop**
- **19-21st of March** - **In Person Kick off London – Networking and finding collaborators**
- April/May/June (dates TBC) – Virtual workshops in **Abstract and Impact workshop & Idea project clinic**
- **26-28th of June** – **In Person retreat in Milano - Project Development** (proposal writing + training)
- July-June (dates TBC) – Virtual session(s) **Project Idea Review clinic**
- **22-24th of October** - **Closing session in München – Impact and Dissemination**

In addition to the above required modules:

- participants will be offered the opportunity to visit potential colleagues and partners immediately after the Kick off session in London. £500 per Imperial researcher is allocated for the in-person exploratory research visits, for use within College travel guidelines.
- participants will be offered optional virtual training sessions. A minimum of 5 participants will need to register for an optional session for us to run them. Optional sessions will be detailed after participant selection.

How to Apply and Who is Eligible?

- Applicants must be independent fellows or newly appointed lecturers who are within 2-7 years of experience since completion of PhD*.
- Applicants' contracts with Imperial must be active until December 2024, and their research must connect to the theme for this year.
- Applicants must commit to exploring EU research collaboration and funding opportunities.
- Applicants should ideally discuss their intent to participate in this programme with their research leads or line managers.

*These periods exclude any career break, for example due to:

- family care
- health reasons
- reasons related to COVID-19 such as home schooling or increased teaching load.

Apply by the deadline of 25 January 2024 by submitting an [online application form](#).

Notes:

The PFDC and the International Relations Office will be monitoring the expressions of interest. In order to offer the opportunity to a wide range of people if you have been put forward for previous programs (eg. World Economic Forum, Wilbe Ventures course, Broadening horizons) you will not be eligible to apply.

Workshop Funding

- Up to 7-8 Imperial participants will be selected for this programme to participate with TUM and Poli Milano counterparts.
- Imperial will pay for train and air travel, meals and accommodation (according to College guidance on [overseas travel rates](#)) for Imperial participants to attend in-person workshops and research visits. £500 per Imperial researcher is allocated for the in-person exploratory research visits, for use within College travel guidelines.
- Imperial, PoliMi, and TUM are all contributing equally to the costs of delivering the training and networking sessions, both online and in-person. At Imperial, funding is made possible for this programme via the Research England, Enhancing Research Culture Fund.

Participant Commitment – must agree to this to apply

As the three university partners invest significant funding and staff time to this competitive programme to support early career researchers, all researchers who apply to the programme must agree to the following should they be selected:

- To ensure at the time of application availability on the mandatory session dates (both in-person and online) commit to joining these sessions for the duration of the programme.
- To bring an enthusiasm for meeting and engaging with other researchers and establish relationships.
- To prepare and submit any necessary pitch or other materials in advance of training and networking sessions.
- To discuss participation in the programme with your line manager to ensure support for your participation in the programme.
- Engage with other researchers to develop initial ideas for collaborative research projects.
- Be available to host researchers from other institutions in your lab/facilities.
- Be proactive and invest time to work collaborative and create new research proposals / papers / research outcomes.
- Produce interim / final reports to the programme team.
- Provide feedback on the programme that we can use to improve it.

When the programme ends:

- As an alumnus of the programme, to act as an ambassador & mentor for the programme to help us promote the programme to others, so more people might benefit from the opportunity.
- To periodically engage with new participants and other alumni e.g. in alumni gatherings, funding networking sessions, and similar.