

TRAINEESHIP – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Human Capital Services Unit



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1. General questions

1.1. How many people work at EFSA?

EFSA currently employs around 600 staff members and works alongside over 1500 external experts.

1.2. What is the working language of EFSA?

The working language in EFSA is English.

1.3. Where are trainees based?

All trainees are based at the EFSA's seat in Parma.

1.4. How many traineeship places are offered?

Depending on EFSA's needs and budget available there are around 120 traineeship places offered each year.

1.5. How long is the traineeship?

Traineeships shall last a minimum of five (5) months and a maximum of **twelve (12) months**.

1.6. What does the traineeship program entail?

The content of the traineeship depends on the Unit/Team the trainees are assigned to according to their preference and qualifications. The work might be in the field of Plant Health, Food Ingredients, Pesticides, GMO, Communications, Human Resources, Legal Affairs, etc.

Under the supervision of a traineeship adviser within the assigned Unit, a trainee will have the opportunity to:

- Get a **first-hand experience** into the work of an European Union (EU) Agency, developing **new competencies and skills** in line with your personal interests and career goals;
- Contribute to the Unit agenda by supporting in drafting documents and reports, **analysing data**, handling scientific and/or administrative tasks, and ensuring prompt communication of outcomes;
- Contribute to inspiring projects and specific activities with **innovative ideas and solutions**;
- Contribute to the planning and monitoring of the Unit's activities;
- Grow through **on-the-job learning** and participate in **various development initiatives**.

2. Eligibility

2.1 What are the eligibility criteria?

1. Have already obtained a university degree of at least 3 years by the closing date of application;
2. Have a very good knowledge of English (minimum level: B2 according to CEFR);
3. Have never been an EFSA trainee or employed by EFSA in any capacity, receiving any sort of remuneration.



2.2 I am a national of a country that is not a Member State of the EU, am I eligible?

The Traineeship call is **open to both EU and non-EU candidates**. Should they be selected, non-EU candidates will have to obtain a relevant VISA prior to the start of their traineeship at EFSA.

2.3 I have already done a traineeship in another European body, can I still apply?

Yes. The candidates who have already started or completed their traineeships in another European body (i.e. [European institution, European Union \(EU\) body, EU Agency](#)), EU delegations or working for Members of Parliament (MEPs) or Advocates General at the EU Court of Justice (EUCJ) **are eligible** to apply for EFSA Traineeship.

2.4 I have not yet graduated from my university (i.e. bachelor's degree), can I still apply?

No, in order to apply you must have already obtained a university degree of at least 3 years by the closing date of application.

2.5 Is there an age limit for applying?

No, age is not an eligibility criterion. Thus, all candidates who fulfil the eligibility criteria (regardless of age) are welcome to apply for the traineeship programme.

2.6 What language requirement are necessary for EFSA Traineeship? Do I have to provide a certification?

Having a good knowledge of English (minimum level: B2 according to [CEFR](#)) is one of the eligibility criteria to be qualified for EFSA Traineeship. You are required to indicate your level in your application form without attaching any certificates. The language skills in English are assessed during the online interview.

2.7 Is work experience necessary? What kind of work experience may I declare in the application form?

Work experience is not considered an eligibility criterion, but it can be an asset.

You can declare all types of work experience, also holiday or student jobs, as well as activities carried out on a casual basis.

2.8 I have applied for a traineeship call but I have not been selected. Can I apply again for the next call?

Yes. It is necessary, though, to submit a new application form.

3. Application

3.1 What is the application deadline?

The deadline is available in the relevant call.

3.2 How can I apply for a traineeship at EFSA?

You can apply to our call through the online recruitment tool found on [EFSA Careers](#) page.



3.3 Are spontaneous applications considered?

No. All applications for a traineeship position must follow the application procedure described on the [EFSA Careers](#) page.

3.4 How do I know when a call is open for application?

From the main page of [EFSA Careers](#), you have the possibility to access the different career sections where you can browse specific job opportunities. EFSA Careers offers also the opportunity to sign up for job alerts and receive email updates whenever a new professional opportunity matching the selected interests is posted.

3.5 Can I choose areas of interest for my traineeship?

Yes, you can specify – in order of preference – two areas of interest that will be the basis for your application screening. In addition, you will be able to elaborate on your choice, providing examples on relevant knowledge, experience, and qualifications. For detailed information about the main activities of our departments and units, you can consult [EFSA Organisational Structure](#) and [EFSA at a glance](#) on EFSA's website.

3.6 Do I need to send any supporting documents when applying?

No, you should not send any supporting documents when you submit your electronic application form. Supporting documents will be requested only if you are offered a traineeship at a later stage.

3.7 Should I contact EFSA to check the status of my application?

No, there is no need to contact the EFSA to check the status of your application. You will be informed if you have been selected for a traineeship at EFSA.

4. Selection process

EFSA applies a policy of equal opportunities and accepts applications without bias on the ground of gender, race, colour, ethnic, or social origin, genetic features, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth or sexual orientation. The selection is made based on the eligibility criteria and of the candidates' qualifications with due regard to an appropriate balance of nationality and gender.

4.1 Which are the steps of the selection procedure?

1. Candidates apply electronically via the online recruitment tool (selecting 2 areas of interest in order of their preferences). Candidates can update or withdraw their applications at any time until the closure of the Call.
2. Applications are screened against the eligibility criteria defined in the Traineeship Call.
3. Eligible candidates will be screened by EFSA's Units, considering the candidates' preferences indicated in the application and their competencies. EFSA may also use online tools to assess specific skills of the eligible candidates.
4. Shortlisted candidates are required to undergo a further assessment, an online interview, to evaluate their suitability for a role and discuss mutual expectations.



5. As a result of the previous assessment, candidates can be selected, rejected, or placed in a reserve list for future positions.
6. Successful candidates will receive a Traineeship placement offer, stating a starting date, a Unit they will be placed in, the duration of the traineeship up to 12 months and the list of documents to be submitted.
7. Successful candidates must ensure timely submission of all requested supporting documents as outlined in the traineeship placement offer. Failure to provide these documents by the specified deadline may result in the revocation of the offer.

Please note that EFSA Units can contact trainees placed in a reserve list at any time during the traineeship period, either due to last minute withdrawal of a candidate or early termination of the traineeship.

4.2 Can I postpone my traineeship offer to the next traineeship intake?

No. If you cancel your traineeship you need to apply again for the next intake and there is no guarantee that you will be selected again.

4.3 I would like to know more about the tasks involved in my traineeship.

Some tasks are already communicated to you in the placement offer. If you are shortlisted for interview, your interview is an opportunity for you to clarify tasks and responsibilities in more detail. Once selected, the advisor is responsible for setting and monitoring your tasks and expected results.

4.4 When does the traineeship start?

Successful candidates will receive a Traineeship offer, stating a starting date, a Unit they will be placed in, the duration of the traineeship up to 12 months and the list of documents to be submitted before the starting date. The starting date is always the first working day of the month. The candidate during the interview can express his/her preference for the starting date in case there are two or more intakes.

5. Financial aspects

5.1 Do I get paid?

Yes. Trainees receive a monthly maintenance grant corresponding to 27% of AD5 step 1 and weighted using the correction coefficient for Italy. The amount of the grant shall be decided by the Appointing Authority on a yearly basis, on the basis of budget availability. The amount of the basic grant shall be indicated in the traineeship call. In addition, trainees also receive a contribution to their travel expenses at the beginning and the end of the traineeship should they travel at least 200 km from the place of recruitment to the seat of the Agency.

5.2 What does the traineeship stipend include?

The monthly grant covers your expenses. The only additional payment you might receive from the Agency is the travel contribution.

5.3 When do we receive our travel contribution?

You will receive your travel contribution after starting your traineeship the Agency. Please be aware that this is a contribution to your travel costs when joining and leaving and may not cover



your actual costs. It is a flat rate depending on the kilometric distance between your place of residence, as stated in the placement offer, and Parma and is only paid if your place of recruitment is further than 200 km from EFSA. No change to the place of residence shall be granted, once the placement offer has been sent.

6. Working at EFSA

6.1 What are the working hours and what days I am supposed to be in the office?

Working hours EFSA are between 9:00 to 19:00 Monday to Friday (one hour lunch break to be taken after 12:00 and return from your break no later than 14:30). The normal working week is 40 hours, a full working day counts for 8 hours and a half day 4 hours.

6.2 Can I telework?

Yes, trainees are allowed to telework from their residence in Parma or from a place allowing to come to the office within 3 hours. Trainees must work from the office at least two days a week and have the right to come daily on a voluntary basis.

6.3 Does EFSA provide medical insurance coverage for trainees?

No, each trainee should take care of his/her medical insurance. A medical insurance coverage is compulsory for the entire duration of your traineeship period. Proof of this insurance will be requested prior to start of the traineeship (e.g. [S1 form](#)). Trainees are responsible for taking out health insurance covering Italy, for registering with their local General Practitioner (GP) or making other private arrangements.

During the traineeship, the trainee is personally insured against the risk of accidents according to the EFSA insurance policy.

6.4 Does EFSA provide relocation support for trainees?

No, but we do provide accommodation advice and guidance. Should you need support with any administrative and practical questions to interact with local/necessary administrative services (e.g. interpreting requirements, explaining templates, guidance on compilation of forms) you may take advantage of the Helpdesk Line made available by EFSA's relocation services company.

6.5 Does EFSA have an equal opportunities policy?

EFSA is an equal opportunities employer and refrain from any form of discrimination based on any ground, including disability and to ensure it, we uphold the following principles and work towards the following objectives:

- ✓ **increase diversity** in the talent pool and ensure selected trainees are representative of the diverse EU citizens we serve
- ✓ put special measures in place to **maximise equal opportunities**, treatment and access to all candidates regardless of their sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, membership of a national minority, disability, age or sexual orientation
- ✓ **respect inclusion** in selection procedures and provide all candidates with an equal opportunity to fully demonstrate their competencies by identifying and eliminating their blocking factors, possible biases and risks of discrimination



- ✓ promote equal opportunities and engage with various stakeholder groups and expert organisations to reach out to more diverse talent
- ✓ pay the utmost attention to eliminate all forms of discrimination during the traineeship

Moreover, regarding disability, EFSA applies the same policy as the European Commission, going from granting special adjustments in the selection procedures to providing reasonable accommodation to enable the person who is proposed for recruitment to perform the functions of the assigned job. The same general principles apply in the context of traineeship at EFSA.

Ultimately, EFSA decision on the traineeship at EFSA provides that, upon presentation of the proper justification, disabled trainees may receive a **supplement up to a maximum of 50%** of the amount of their grant.

6.6 How can I connect with EFSA and my new colleagues on social media?

There are specific Facebook Groups for Trainees, created and moderated by trainees.

- [European Food Safety Authority \(EFSA\) – Trainees](#)

EFSA has also profiles on the following social media:

- www.linkedin.com/company/efsa
- www.youtube.com/user/EFSAchannel
- www.twitter.com/efsa_eu
- www.pinterest.com/EFSAeu

Make sure you follow us in order to get informed with the latest information! Also, update your LinkedIn profile with your professional experience at EFSA to expand your network and to get connected with your new colleagues.
