One thing recent years have made clear as day is the urgent need for independent science journalists who can accurately interpret and communicate complex scientific findings. Knowing that such journalists are more vital than ever in a rapidly changing world, the EU-funded FRONTIERS project created a residency programme for journalists wanting to experience an immersive period in a European research institution. The project has just opened the first of four planned annual calls for residencies.

The FRONTIERS residencies will give science journalists the opportunity to spend 3 to 5 months at a host institution, delving into frontier research across diverse disciplines, including physical sciences and engineering, life and health sciences, and social sciences and humanities. Applications will remain open until 5 March 2024 (17:00 CET).

Who is eligible

The residency programme is available to science reporters, writers, editors, producers, illustrators, filmmakers and photojournalists producing independent journalistic content across various media. The content can have any format: audio, video, text, pictures and mixed formats. Applicants – who can be at any stage of their
career – must submit a detailed project proposal, work samples and recommendation letters, as well as commitment letters from them and the host institution.

Successful applicants will be able to pursue independent reporting ideas or delve into specific frontier research fields. They will have unrestricted access to diverse research areas, and will also have the opportunity to take part in networking and training activities and cross-institutional experiences. According to a FRONTIERS news item, fellows will receive an allowance of up to EUR 6 000 during the residencies.

Hosts and applicants, take action

Science journalists who have found a potential host institution can apply through the FRONTIERS website. Research institutions and research centres interested in hosting science journalists are also invited to express their interest in becoming host institutions through the website.

Through these residencies, FRONTIERS aims to enhance journalists’ professional development, as well as hone their skills in critical thinking and ethical reporting. It further strives to strengthen mutual learning between scientists and journalists, while also promoting curiosity about frontier research. Importantly, in a world where misinformation and disinformation are becoming more and more prevalent, it aims to cultivate trained and independent science journalists who can help to build public trust in science and scientific institutions.

The FRONTIERS website explains its investment in science journalists: “By investing in their professional growth, Europe ensures that its citizens have access to reliable and accurate scientific reporting, which is essential for a resilient, healthy and democratic society. This investment not only benefits the field of journalism but also enhances public understanding and engagement with science, ultimately contributing to more informed policymaking and a more scientifically literate society.”

Another three calls for residencies are envisaged until the end of 2026. FRONTIERS (Fellowship Residencies Offering science News professionals Tools and training for Independent and Ethical Reporting on Science) ends in May 2027.

For more information, please see: FRONTIERS project website.

Keywords

FRONTIERS, science, journalism, journalist, residency, research, reporting, frontier research
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