

Application guidelines

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Application deadlines:

1 March and 1 July annually

EMBC/EMBO Partners:		
A	Member States	Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, and United Kingdom
B	Global Partners	Chile, India, Singapore, Taiwan
C	EMBO The Company of Biologists (COB)	Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea

EMBO subject areas

Cell Cycle, Cell & Tissue Architecture, Cellular Metabolism, Chromatin & Transcription, Development, Differentiation & Death, Evolution & Ecology, Genome Stability & Dynamics, Genomic & Computational Biology, Immunology, Membranes & Transport, Microbiology, Virology & Pathogens, Molecular Medicine, Neuroscience, Plant Biology, Proteins & Biochemistry, RNA, Signal Transduction, Structural Biology & Biophysics, Systems Biology

Contact: courses_workshops@embo.org

EMBO Course Committee Spring 2025

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1. Application guidelines for organizers of EMBO Practical Courses

Applications to organize an EMBO Practical Course are accepted twice a year and must be submitted via the EMBO [online system](#).

Application deadlines are **1 March and 1 July annually**.

Selections for funding are made by the EMBO Course Committee in April/May and in September/October.

Please check the eligibility criteria before applying.

Should you have questions regarding your application, please contact courses_workshops@embo.org.

2. Eligibility

Applications must meet the following criteria to be accepted:

- Applications for practical courses must cover a topic from the life sciences (see EMBO subject areas on [page 3](#)).
- Scientists from anywhere in the world are eligible to apply, independent of their nationality.
- The scientific organizing committee must be geographically and gender diverse and come from more than one institute i.e., an international grouping representing the topics covered in the meeting.
- While organizers can be based anywhere, practical courses must take place in one of the following (see list on [page 3](#)):
 - A. An EMBC Member State
 - B. Chile, India, Singapore, Taiwan
 - C. A Country eligible for co-funding by EMBO and The Company of Biologists
- At least 80% of the invited speakers must be confirmed at the time of submitting the application.
- At least 40% of the speakers must be of the underrepresented genders.

Please note: For repeating practical courses, a new application is required for each individual course. Please remember to download the latest offline application form.

For resubmissions: A new application is required. Please note that there will be a new offline application form every year that must be used.

3. Application process

Applications to organize an EMBO Practical Course must be submitted online.

First call opening	1 December 2024
First deadline for application	1 March 2025, 12:00 noon CET
Committee meeting	April 2025
Results announced to applicants	May 2025
Second call opening	1 May 2025
Second deadline for application	1 July 2025, 12:00 noon CEST
Committee meeting	September 2025
Results announced to applicants	Early October 2025

Applications to fund events in the same calendar year will not be considered.

Applications can only be for the following calendar year e.g., applications in 2025 can only be for an event taking place in 2026.

Organizers are advised to apply as early as possible in the calendar year before the proposed date of the practical course to ensure sufficient time for the proper advertising and promotion of the meeting if the application is accepted for funding.

4. Application forms

The application must be submitted [online](#) and consist of an online and an offline form (MS Word format).

In the [online form](#), you will be asked to provide:

- Proposed title of the practical course
- Proposed date and location of the course
- Format of the meeting i.e., in-person only, virtual only, or hybrid
- A list of the organizers, specifying their role, e.g., main organizer, co-organizer, administrative or financial contact
- An estimate of the number of participants that you expect
- Information on speakers and instructors
- An abstract describing the principal themes and objectives of the meeting (max 200 words)
- Subject areas and keywords
- A draft budget

In the [offline form](#) (MS Word format) please provide:

- A description of the reasons to hold a practical course on the proposed topic
- Information on any competing or similar practical courses held in the past, current, or following year
- The list of speakers, tutors, and trainers
- The draft programme
- A description of the practical work planned
- A description of the networking activities
- If you are organizing a hybrid meeting, a short description of the virtual component
- The criteria for selecting event participants
- The expected number of participants
- A list of the scientific organizers, including links to their respective institutional home pages
- Information on organizers' experience in organizing meetings
- A short description of the event location
- A list of planned environmental sustainability measures of the course
- For repeat course applications, indicate improvements that you have made based on feedback from previous meetings.
-

This form must be saved in PDF format and uploaded via the [online application site](#).

4.1. Meeting type

When completing your online application form, please ensure you choose the correct type of meeting from the drop-down menu:

EMBO Practical Course (*within EMBC Member States*)

EMBO Practical Course (*in Chile, India, Singapore, Taiwan*)

EMBO | The Company of Biologists Practical Course (*see eligible countries on [page 3](#)*)

EMBO Practical Courses promote the transfer of new methods and emerging techniques. The programme of a practical course should cover both theory and practice with the aim of enabling participants to implement novel techniques in their home laboratories.

A practical course typically will train 15 – 25 participants (for computational topics a greater number of participants can be accepted) and lasts between 4 and 15 days.

Participants are generally early-stage postdoctoral researchers and advanced PhD students. For core facility staff training courses, more advanced scientists are expected.

The ratio of instructors to participants should be sufficient to allow all participants to get good tutoring in the techniques/subject presented, normally the ratio should be around 1:5.

When planning the course, organizers should:

- Encourage participants to bring their own samples or data (where appropriate)
- Well in advance of the course, provide participants with the course programme and theoretical background material including selected references
- Ensure that speakers/instructors give a briefing at the beginning of each day
- Ensure that speakers/instructors stay for the entire duration of the course
- Include round table discussions in the programme
- Include poster sessions and/or participants' presentations in the programme
- Ensure that at least 40% of the programme comprises practical sessions
- Include training on responsible conduct of research
- Ensure that accommodation for speakers/instructors and participants is at the same venue.

4.2. Proposed title of meeting

The (main) title of the practical course should not mention sponsors', organizations' or institutes' names. Organizers should refrain from using excessively long titles and numbers referring to previous meetings.

4.3. Meeting format and location

Please indicate the proposed format and location of your meeting by selecting the format and entering the venue details on where the meeting will be held or run from (for virtual meetings).

The meeting format can be either:

- In-person meeting
- Hybrid meeting or

- Virtual meeting

4.3.1. Hybrid format

EMBO conducted a study on virtual and hybrid conferences, interviewing, and surveying scientists about their experiences with virtual scientific conferences. The full report can be [downloaded here](#).

EMBO encourages organizers to experiment with hybrid meeting formats and will offer €10,000 on top of the core funding to assist with the additional costs incurred. The funds can go towards paying for a virtual platform technical/AV support and the rental of technical equipment, as well as additional administrative support that organizers might need to set up the virtual component.

Please see Hybrid Conferences for a summary of options and points to consider.

In the offline form, please describe what you plan to offer to virtual participants (e.g., access to the talks and possibly other activities). It is understood that the final format may differ from the description initially provided.

The costs associated with the delivery of the virtual part of the event should be reported in the dedicated financial statement to be submitted to EMBO. Please note that EMBO funding cannot be used to purchase technical equipment associated with running the meeting.

4.3.2. Virtual format

EMBO funds virtual meetings. Organizers may use an online platform or event management tool of their choice. Please note that EMBO does not take responsibility for nor endorse any online platforms or services. EMBO funds can be used to pay for online meeting platform, tools, or software necessary to host a virtual meeting.

The costs associated with the delivery of the virtual meeting should be included in the final financial reports to be submitted to EMBO.

Please note that EMBO funding cannot be used to purchase technical equipment associated with running the meeting.

Please see Hybrid Conferences for a summary of options and points to consider.

4.4. Abstract, keywords, topic

Please provide a short **abstract** (max. 200 words), stating the principal themes and objectives of the practical course.

Describe the practical course with five scientific keywords and choose a primary and secondary subject area from the EMBO subject areas (listed on [page 3](#)).

Describe the reasons for holding a practical course on the proposed **topic** (max. 200 words), describing recent developments in the field and how the practical course would contribute to the advancement of the field. For repeating EMBO Practical Courses, please state why the course should be repeated, i.e., what are the new developments in the field that would justify a repeat at this stage.

Similar courses

Please mention any courses on the same topic held in the past, current or following year and outline how the course you are proposing will differ from those. Please consider any overlap with other EMBO Practical Courses, or those organized by others (max. 200 words).

If applicable - Feedback from previous EMBO-funded Course(s) or resubmission

For Practical Courses previously funded by EMBO, describe any improvements, or changes you propose to implement based on the experience and feedback from the previous meeting(s) (max. 200 words). Also, please list the names of the organizers of the three previously EMBO-funded Practical Courses in this series.

Please include the ID number of the previous EMBO funded Course

Note that the committee receives feedback from the previous courses and takes this into account when evaluating a resubmission.

For **resubmission** of a previously unsuccessful application, please provide the ID number of the previous application and list the main adjustments that you have introduced.

4.5. Speakers

Organizers are expected to apply with a list of **at least 80%** confirmed invited speakers/instructors. If **less than 80%** of the speakers/instructors are confirmed, the application is ineligible for review.

You should also list additional supporting personnel, such as teaching assistants, for the practical sessions.

Updates introduced to the speaker list after the application deadline will not be considered.

Please consider the following:

Number	The number of speakers and instructors should be adequate to cover the topic in sufficient depth without making the programme overly dense.
Expertise	Speakers and instructors should be experienced researchers with significant expertise in the course subject.

Gender distribution	At least 40% of the speakers must be of the underrepresented genders. If the percentage is lower than 40%, the application is ineligible.
Geographical diversity:	
Meetings held in EMBC Member States (A – see list on page 3)	at least 50% of the invited speakers should be working across a variety of European countries. The inclusion of speakers from Asia-Pacific, Africa and South America is strongly encouraged.
Meetings taking place in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, India, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Singapore, or Taiwan	at least 33% of the invited speakers should be from Europe. The inclusion of speakers from Asia-Pacific, Africa and South America is strongly encouraged.
While EMBO specifies targets of gender and geographic participation to promote inclusivity and diversity in EMBO Courses and Workshops, we strongly encourage organizers to enable diversity across the spectrum, thus ensuring that EMBO Courses and Workshops are a safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning space for all speakers and participants regardless of individual beliefs or characteristics.	

Please list the speakers in the following format:

1. First Name, Last Name, Institute, City, Country. Please list in alphabetical order by Last Name.
2. Please add:
 - C (for confirmed)
 - W (for woman)
 - M (for man)
 - NB (for non-binary)
 - R (for repeat speaker)
 - O (for overseas speaker i.e., depending on location of meeting. For meetings held in EMBC Member States, add O for speakers based outside Europe and Israel. For meetings held outside EMBC Member States, add O for speakers not based in the host continent),
 - E (for early-stage researchers up to 7 years of independence)
3. Add a link to a relevant publication that led to their invitation.
4. Add a link to the homepage of the speaker's research group.

Please do not change the format speaker list table.

Please see example below:

No.	Name and affiliation.	Status (C, W, M, NB, E, O, R)	Describe the expertise that is relevant to their contribution to the course. Please
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	Include link to lab home page (ensure that the links to the speaker home page are active.)		provide a reference and a link to a relevant publication.
1.	John Bloggs (Institute, City, Country) https://www.XY.JohnBloggsLab/uxy.xy	C, O	John Bloggs is the developer of software to analyse EM data. John Bloggs et al, Molecular Systems Biology, 2019; The systems biology of cancer stroma; PubMed link
2.	Jane Doe (Institute, City, Country) https://www.XY.JaneDoeLab/uxy.xy/	C, W	Jane Doe has developed xy application in STORM. Jane Doe et al, EMBO J, 2020; Ras signalling in melanoma; PubMed link
3.			

You will be requested to provide the number of **invited** speakers in each category in the online form, the percentages will be calculated automatically. Check that the numbers you provide are accurate i.e., they correspond with what is listed in the offline form.

4.5.1. Tutors/Trainers/Instructors

List the tutors/trainers/instructors, i.e., those persons involved in the teaching (it is understood that their names may not be known at the time of application, but please indicate how many persons will be involved in the teaching). If some of the speakers stay for supervision of a specific part of the course, please also list them here.

Please see example below:

Name and affiliation	List the practical sessions that they will be guiding
XY from (University/Institute) and 4 scientists from their team	Practical session 1 on xy topic 4 groups of 4 participants supervised by 1 tutor each Duration: 2 x 3h
VVV from (University/Institute) and 4 scientists from their team	Practical session 2 on z topic 2 groups of 8 participants supervised by 2 tutors each Duration: 1 x 5h
...	

4.6. Programme

4.6.1. Practical work

Please describe the practical work including:

- Details of the practical or experimental work to be undertaken
- Description of the laboratory facilities
- Number and role of the teaching staff involved in the practical sessions. If their names are already known at the time of application, please include them too

Example of practical work description:

“Practical session 1. Expression of membrane proteins in HEK293/insect cells via transient transfection using GFP-fusion proteins
 Duration: 2 x 3 hours
 Tutors/trainers: XY and **4 people of her team**
4 groups of 4 participants supervised by 1 tutor

Practical session 2. Quality control of purified membrane protein preparations: nanoDSF and Blue Native PAGE
 Duration: 1 x 3 hours
 Tutors/trainers XY and **3 people of his team**
2 groups of 4 participants supervised by 2 tutors

...

Labs for practical courses (including access to beamlines, cryo-EM facility and the lecture hall) are all within the two buildings ...

All participants will be informed about the relevant safety measurements before the start of the practicals and will be supervised by the tutors to assure they conduct themselves accordingly. Inappropriate or unsafe laboratory behavior will not be tolerated.

Several areas of Responsible Conduct of Research will be addressed at several levels during the course. During the practicals, the tutors will be role models demonstrating the professional responsibility of scientist to mentor less-experienced researchers. In addition, appropriate and inappropriate data representation (responsible conduct of research and research misconduct), documentation practices and data deposition according to the FAIR principles will be discussed here. We have asked the respective lecturers dealing with animal experiments, e.g., those generating antibodies, to address animal welfare.

DRAFT PROGRAMME:

Please ensure that the programme is legible by adding empty lines between days. Add in a few words what the invited speakers will contribute to that session, final titles are not expected at such an early stage. Please also list the networking activities in the programme.

E.g.

Day	Time	Programme category	Speaker/Instructor/Tutors/Teaching Assistants/Contributions and topic of talk or session
Day 1			
	12:00	OPENING	

	12:15 – 13:15	COURSE OVERVIEW	John Bloggs
	13:15 – 13:45	BREAK	
	13:45 – 15:30	THEORY I	Basic optical principles crucial for advanced light microscopy
	13:45 – 14:30	LECTURE 1	Jane Doe: Diffraction, Point Spread Function
	13:45 – 14:30	LECTURE 2	Jane Doe: STORM
	14:30 – 15:30	EXERCISE 1	Jane Doe: Photon counting efficiencies
	15:30 – 16:00	BREAK	
	16:00 – 18:00	PRESENTATIONS	Participants: presenting their research projects (5 min each)
Day 2			
	9:00 – 12:00	PRACTICAL SESSION 1	John Bloggs, Jane Doe, 4 tutors. Preparation of cell lines for later analysis

4.6.2. Responsible conduct of research

EMBO considers responsible conduct of research as an integral part of researchers' training. Organizers of EMBO Practical Courses are requested to dedicate a section of the course programme to discuss ethical issues, good research practices, and problems researchers may face when designing experiments (with the technologies covered during the course).

Course participants should learn how to design reproducible experiments with appropriate sample sizes resulting in statistically relevant results. They should be made aware of the importance of validating reagents, including antibodies, cell lines, and animal models.

Digital technologies, such as image processing software, statistical packages, and data-mining techniques should be introduced in a way that informs the participants of their potential as well as their limits.

Course participants should learn responsible practices in relation to confidentiality, informed consent, and responsible handling of research subjects and materials.

Please describe in the offline application form how you will address the issues above during the course.

4.6.3. Networking activities

EMBO believes that networking is a vital component of every scientific meeting. Organizers are expected to facilitate networking through dedicated activities during the course. These should include, but not be limited to, poster sessions, joint meals, meet-the-speaker sessions, flash talks.

Please describe how discussion and interaction between participants and speakers/instructors will be stimulated. The committee welcomes creative ideas regarding the facilitation/promotion of networking (max. 400 words).

EMBO will not fund a separate "speakers' dinner" during the course.

The networking activities should be listed in the programme.

If organizing a hybrid course, please describe how you will involve the virtual participants in the practical aspects of the course (max. 400 words).

4.6.4. Poster sessions (if applicable)

Poster sessions should be held at a time that encourages maximal attendance, ideally not during lunch or coffee breaks, with no other activities taking place in parallel, and should be held in a room with sufficient space, for a duration of at least 90 minutes.

The form requires you to tick if the following applies to your poster session:

- The venue for the poster session is close to the lecture hall;
- The posters will be available for viewing throughout the entire meeting;
- In case multiple poster sessions are planned, participants will be assigned to a specific session;
- A social event will be incorporated (e.g., drinks and snacks).

4.7. Participants

The approximate number of participants for EMBO Practical Courses should be as follows:

- Not more than 25 participants (excluding speakers), although computational courses can have more participants.

Further requirements:

- Early career researchers should have the opportunity to attend and present their research;
- Participants should not be restricted to a pre-defined group, such as an EU network or other defined groups;
 - o **Participant criteria for meetings taking place in EMBC Member States** (A - see list on [page 3](#)): a maximum of 25% of the participants should be from the host country;
 - o **Participant criteria for meetings taking place in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, India, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Singapore, or Taiwan:** EMBO wants to foster interactions between scientists from Europe and other continents. It is expected that the wider local community benefits from the meeting taking place in a country outside Europe. 75% of the participants should be based in the continent where the meeting takes place;
- EMBO is committed to gender diversity in all activities, so please ensure that this is the case in the proposed practical course;
- Organizers are asked to enable diversity across the spectrum, thus ensuring that EMBO Courses and Workshops are a safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning space

for all speakers and participants regardless of individual beliefs or characteristics.

Provide an estimate of the number of participants you plan to accept and the percentage of participants who are based in the country where the meeting is taking place.

Please describe what criteria will be used to select the participants.

Please indicate the names and the role of those who will select the participants (e.g., organizers, speakers, instructors etc.).

You may want to consider organizing satellite meetings that are open to the local scientific community. You can apply for additional funding of up to €2,000 by contacting courses_workshops@embo.org

4.7.1. Travel, childcare and accessibility grants

Organizers receive an additional €7,500 for their events to cover the following support for participants:

Type of grant	Amount allocated	Available for registered participants working in laboratories in	Explanatory notes
Travel grants and registration fee waivers	€2,500	All countries	Applicants should specify their needs in the registration form. Maximally €500 per participant can be allocated.
Childcare grants	€1,000	All countries	To cover additional childcare costs incurred by participants or speakers when participating at any EMBO meeting including virtual and hybrid meetings. Eligible costs include fees for a baby-sitter or child-care facility, travel costs for a caregiver, or travel costs for taking the child to the meeting, etc. Applicants should specify their needs in the registration form. Maximally €500 per participant can be allocated.
Special travel grants & registration fee waivers	€3,000	Chile, India, Singapore, and Taiwan	Exclusively for participants of any nationality working in laboratories in Chile, India, Singapore, Taiwan. Registration fee waivers and travel grants should cover the cost of attendance for participants who need it. Applicants should specify their needs in the registration form. Maximally €1,000 per participant can be allocated.
Accessibility Grants	€1000	All countries	For supporting participants or speakers with any access needs. These grants

			<p>cover additional costs e.g. to adapt the conference environment, or to be accompanied by someone to assist the participants where necessary.</p> <p>Participants with access needs may apply for a grant via the registration system of the event, or by emailing the organizers directly. Maximally €500 per participant can be allocated.</p>
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Please note that the budgets allocated to each category are non-transferable.

4.8. Organizers

There can be only one main organizer, and the number of co-organizers should not exceed four (4). For each organizer, list their respective experience in organizing courses (please restrict to the last three relevant events).

The **main organizer** is the primary scientific contact for all correspondence after submission of the application. **Co-organizers** are scientists who have major scientific/technical involvement in the planning and execution of the course.

The **scientific organizing committee** must be **geographically and gender diverse** and come from more than one institute i.e., an international grouping representing the topics covered in the meeting.

The **administrative contact** will be copied on all email correspondence related to the application. Additionally, you may add a **financial contact** who can be contacted for budgetary issues.

Multiple roles for one person are acceptable, e.g., one of the organizers may also be the administrative or financial contact.

4.9. Location

Provide the address of the proposed location and a short description of the venue (e.g., capacity and equipment of the laboratory facilities, accommodation, and catering (max. 200 words)). The venue should have suitable facilities and preferably accommodation should be onsite or close by. Participants and speakers should be accommodated in the same location or in a limited number of locations.

Accommodation should be reasonably priced. If all participants cannot be housed together, make sure that low-priced accommodation is available in the vicinity.

Please note availability of wireless internet access and how the location can be reached.

4.10. Budget (to be provided in the online form)

Expenses

The form requests your estimates for travel, accommodation costs, local transport, or shuttle services that you want to provide, catering, expenses related to the venue, promotion, and organization. The sums are automatically calculated.

EMBO funds can be used to cover:

For in-person meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Economy travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs of the speakers- On-site catering for the meeting- Administration costs up to €4,000.- Room hire, audio-visual, and IT facilities essential for the meeting- Social activity (e.g., excursions) costs up to €3,000.
For virtual meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rental of online platform to run a virtual meeting- Administrative costs up to €8,000- Room hire, audio-visual, and IT facilities rental essential for the meeting.
For hybrid meetings (An additional grant of €10,000 will be provided)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rental of a virtual platform to host the virtual part of the meeting- Rental of additional AV equipment and personnel costs- Additional administration costs up to €8,000.

EMBO funds do not cover overheads or purchase of equipment or gifts for speakers and participants, honoraria and dinners/meals exclusively organized for the speakers.

EMBO will create a website (including an online registration system), design a poster and abstract book cover at no additional charge for your Practical Course. EMBO funds cannot be used to pay for alternative website providers.

Income

Registration fees

The maximum registration fee for an EMBO Practical Course should not exceed:

- €550 (> 5 days in length) and €385 (< 5 days in length), including accommodation
- Participants from industry should be charged a minimum of €1,100;
- Reduced registration fees can be charged to virtual participants. Discounts for group registrations should be considered.

Funding and Sponsorship

Please state the amount of funding requested from EMBO. A maximum of €35,000 of core funding may be provided. **If the meeting is organized as a hybrid event, an additional €10,000 will be allocated to your event. You do not have to request these additional funds in your application.**

An additional €7,500 will automatically be allocated to fund travel grants, registration fee waivers, childcare grants and accessibility grants to participants.

You do not have to request funds for travel grants, registration fee waivers, childcare grants and accessibility grants in your budget; these will automatically be allocated to your event if funded. Details on how these grants should be distributed to participants can be found in the guidelines for organizers.

Please also state other funding sources or sponsorship that you expect and list any non-monetary support. Ensure that all funders and sponsors understand that they cannot be mentioned in the title of the meeting but can be acknowledged on the website and the poster. Sponsors and funders who provide €20,000 or more towards the meeting can also be recognized as co-sponsors.

State the name of the funder or sponsor, the status of sponsorship (confirmed, pending, not yet approached) and special conditions linked to the sponsorship.

Budget balance

Total expenses should match the total expected income. Please explain if this is not the case.

5. Selection procedure

- All incoming applications are screened by the EMBO Courses & Workshops Office to ensure eligibility requirements are met (see section 2. Eligibility). If the application does not meet the eligibility requirements it is rejected by the EMBO office and is not sent to the committee for review. No modification to the application is accepted after the application deadline has closed.
- Each application is assigned to at least two members of the EMBO Course Committee for evaluation.
- Final funding decisions are made by the entire EMBO Course Committee in April/May and September/October each year. **Please note that committee decisions are final and**

cannot be appealed.

- All applicants are informed of their application outcome by email shortly after the committee meeting.

Please do not contact the committee members directly. This may lead to your application being excluded from the review process.

6. Selection criteria

The EMBO Course Committee is looking to fund practical courses that cover the latest developments and gather the best international experts.

Applications should be as complete as possible, and the proposed course should not overlap with other meetings in the same year.

The committee will pay special attention to the following aspects:

A. TOPIC

Relevance	Significant new developments in a field should be addressed. Application for courses that serve to teach newly emerging and important topics and methodologies will be given priority. Courses in areas that are not of sufficient general interest will not be funded. EMBO will not fund basic student courses that are traditionally offered by universities.
Selection of the techniques	The course should not focus on a single (proprietary) technique but rather present a range of relevant techniques and methods.
Overlap with similar courses	The overlap with similar courses should be minimal.

B. INSTRUCTORS AND SPEAKERS

Expertise	The speakers should be leading experts in the topic, and instructors must have sufficient experience to lead the experimental sessions.
Gender distribution	At least 40% of the instructors should be of the underrepresented sex.
Status	At least 80% of the invited speakers/instructors must be confirmed.

C. PROGRAMME/SCHEDULE

Structure	The time dedicated to lectures, practical work and discussions should be appropriate to the topic
Practical sessions	Practical sessions should comprise at least 40% of the programme.
Duration	Depending on the topic and techniques, a practical course should last between three and fifteen days.
Networking	Participants should be given the opportunity to present their research.
Participants' presentations	Participants should be given the opportunity to present their research.
Participants' samples or data	If possible, participants should have the opportunity to bring their own samples or data.
Previous feedback (only for repeat EMBO events)	If the application is for a repeat of a previously EMBO-funded course, the committee will consider the feedback received from the previous. Therefore, relevant issues raised by participants, especially negative comments, should be addressed.
Responsible conduct of research	Issues concerning responsible conduct of research should be addressed.

D. INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOCATION

Equipment and materials	The equipment and materials should be state-of-the-art and appropriate to the topic.
Housing	Instructors and participants should be housed together if possible.

7. San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

EMBO is a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment ([DORA](#)) and as such does not use publication metrics such as the Journal Impact Factor during the assessment process. Applicants are asked NOT to include publication-based metrics when listing invited speakers' and co-organizers' publications.

8. Additional guidelines for EMBO | The Company of Biologists Practical Courses

EMBO | The Company of Biologists Practical Courses are meetings taking place in countries eligible for co-funding by EMBO and The Company of Biologists (C – see list on [page 3](#)).

- The website and poster of the course will be designed by EMBO.
- The organizers should acknowledge EMBO and The Company of Biologists in equal measure to EMBO in all materials produced.
- Any use of The Company of Biologists' name and logo shall be in accordance with the brand guidelines of The Company of Biologists, which is sent as a separate document.
- Organizers authorize EMBO to provide to The Company of Biologists the following documents:
 - o A copy of each successful application, where funding was approved by EMBO; and
 - o A copy of the final documents submitted by organizers to EMBO.
- Organizers shall allow a representative of The Company of Biologists to attend each meeting for the purpose of writing reports which The Company of Biologists may publish on its websites or in its journals, in such form as it may determine at its sole discretion.

9. Confidentiality

All applications are treated in confidence and the practical course only publicized following acceptance of the funding conditions by the organizer.

Contacting members of the EMBO Course Committee to influence the decision process will result in disqualification of the application.

Should you have any questions concerning your applications, contact the EMBO Courses & Workshops office.

10. Organizing hybrid conferences

Conferences in hybrid format allow scientists to participate when they are unable to attend in person. Possible reasons include health-related issues, care obligations, lack of funding, or difficulty to obtain a visa.

One of the goals of EMBO is to stimulate scientific exchange across a broad audience. We therefore encourage the organizers of EMBO Courses and Workshops to opt for a hybrid format. Additional funding of up to 10,000 € is provided for expenses related to a hybrid set-up for e.g., AV support, virtual platform, administrative support, etc.

EMBO works with a third-party conference management service that can provide a virtual meeting platform as well as a mobile app.

Based on feedback from previous organizers of hybrid EMBO meetings, below some suggestions for setting up a hybrid meeting:

- Designate someone as responsible for interacting with the virtual participants
- Invite and support participation of virtual participants in the Q+A session: Appoint an additional session chair to monitor questions from the virtual participants
- Consider selecting virtual participants for short talks
- Enable online networking activities, such as online poster and discussion sessions, or flash talks, amongst virtual participants. These can be hosted via Zoom breakout rooms or other social networking platforms*, for e.g., Wonder.me, Gather.Town, SpatialChat, Topia, and others

- Support participation of virtual participants in discussion sessions or other on-site sessions
- Speakers must be informed and asked for consent if talks are recorded
- Recording of the talks helps, virtual participants to deal with the time difference and screen fatigue, they should be available as soon as possible on a dedicated platform or website. Talks should be recorded individually, not as a full session. This will make viewing and excluding talks that are not to be recorded easier
- Advertise activities for virtual participants in the meeting

**Disclaimer: These are merely suggestions. EMBO does not endorse any software or services and does not take any responsibility for third-party services that the organizer may choose to use.*

For more information on how to implement these suggestions, please see the [EMBO Virtual and Hybrid Meeting Organizer Guidelines](#).

11. Appendix I – Encouraging sustainable meetings

EMBO encourages organizers of EMBO Courses and Workshops to implement measures that reduce the environmental impact of their meetings.

We hope that this initiative will create awareness and help change many people’s minds and behaviours. Only together can we make a difference for the environment, climate, and future generations on the planet.


EMBO Courses & Workshops awards points to meetings that implement sustainability measures. Implementation of various measures qualify the meeting for points ranging between one and five as listed in the table below. The accumulated points will rank the meeting on one of three levels, recognizing the organizers’ efforts towards increasing the sustainability of their course or workshop:

- Level 1 – Meeting with moderate sustainability: 18–23 points
- Level 2 – Meeting with high sustainability: 24–29 points
- Level 3 – Meeting with very high sustainability: 30 points or more

Below are measures you could choose to implement to acquire a sustainable meeting label:

Measure	Points
Venue	
Choose a certified environmentally friendly venue e.g., EU Ecolabel, Green key	5
Choose a venue that takes energy efficiency measures, but is not (yet) certified, e.g., uses solar energy, including for heating water, gets green electricity, participates in waste sorting and local recycling etc.	4
Choose a centrally located venue with good public transport connections, close to major transport hubs to reduce additional travel	4
Use only plastic-free badges	2
Virtual or Hybrid participation	
Enable some participants to attend the meeting virtually, thus increasing participation without significantly increasing the overall environmental impact	3
Organize a session or panel discussion on sustainability in science at your meeting	3
Catering	
Serve only vegetarian food throughout the meeting	3
Serve only vegetarian food on at least one day of the meeting	1
Serving locally sourced food	1
No bottled water, opt for water fountains/tap water in jugs	1
No single-use wares such as disposable cutlery, cups, plastic bottles or cans	1
Travel	
Require at least 4 invited speakers/organizers travelling within Europe to travel by train	3
Require some invited speakers from other continents to give their talks remotely. The funds saved on travel (€1,500 per speaker) can be used to fund train travel incentives for participants (see below)	2 for 1 3 for 2
Offer a discount on registration fees for participants traveling by train, or otherwise incentivize train travel with rewards. You could use the €1,500 that were saved on travel for invited speakers from other continents to fund train travel incentives for participants	2
CO2 Offsetting	
Offset the CO ₂ footprint of your meeting by donating to off-set projects*	1
Innovative ideas to offset the CO ₂ footprint of your meeting. * We would encourage organizers to implement creative ideas that go beyond what is listed above, as these can serve as inspiration for others.	5

* EMBO funding cannot be used towards offsetting CO₂ footprint. External sources of funding should be explored for this.

 moderate sustainability	18-23
 high sustainability	24-29

 very high sustainability	30 and above

Additional steps that you can take for a more sustainable meeting:

Electronic programme and abstract book: Organizers are encouraged to distribute the abstract book in electronic format via the meeting website and print only a minimum number of hard copies, if necessary. Organizers can export the abstract book in electronic format via the meeting website provided by EMBO. The abstract book can then be made available on the meeting website as a password-protected PDF document.

Promotional material: EMBO offers promotional materials for your EMBO funded course or workshop. We have aimed to source sustainably as much as possible and provide material that is useful beyond the meeting. Please order the minimum quantities you would need and encourage participants to re-use the bags and notebooks after the meeting.

Advertising: Organizers are encouraged to opt for digital advertising using the poster EMBO provides and use the social media handles set up for you.

Reduce the environmental impact of traveling: Organizers may encourage speakers and participants to donate to CO₂ offset projects.

Provide participants with information and directions for local public transport and encourage its use,

Organize joint activities at locations that can be reached on foot or by public transport.

Raise awareness: Inform participants about the sustainability measures you are adopting for your meeting.

Ask participants for feedback and suggestions on your sustainability measures at the end of the meeting.