

## Singapore-Southeast Asia Fellowship (S-SEAF) Factsheet

### OVERVIEW

1. The Singapore–Southeast Asia Fellowship (S-SEAF) aims to strengthen research networks between Singapore and Southeast Asia (SEA) and contribute to regional capability-building through talent mobility, knowledge exchange, and collaborative research. By focusing on selected thematic areas, S-SEAF supports deeper and longer-term collaborations.
2. The Singapore-Southeast Asia Fellowship (S-SEAF) is an ecosystem fellowship programme that supports research talent mobility between Singapore and Southeast Asia. Fellows receive up to two years of support, including salary, living allowance, and airfare. There are two modalities under S-SEAF:
  - a. **Inbound S-SEAF:** Supports outstanding researchers from Southeast Asia to work on projects at Singapore host institutions.
  - b. **Outbound S-SEAF:** Supports Singapore-based researchers to work on projects at host institutions in Southeast Asian countries outside Singapore.

### RESEARCH THEMES

3. Each fellowship cycle will feature key theme(s) identified in alignment with national priorities and regional research needs. Proposals addressing these themes will be prioritised. **Infectious Diseases** is a standing theme across all cycles, while additional theme(s) will be announced at the launch of each fellowship cycle.
4. In addition, S-SEAF welcomes applications across all four [Research, Innovation and Enterprise \(RIE\)](#) domains:
  - a. Manufacturing, Trade and Connectivity (MTC)
  - b. Human Health and Potential (HHP)
  - c. Urban Solutions and Sustainability (USS)
  - d. Smart Nation and Digital Economy (SNDE)

## HOST INSTITUTIONS

5. Eligible host institutions in Singapore and Southeast Asia include public research and higher education institutions with demonstrated research capabilities in the relevant thematic areas. For inbound S-SEAF, these would include A\*STAR research institutes, autonomous universities, academic medical centres, and national research or clinical centres.

## FELLOWSHIP ELIGIBILITY

6. Applicants must:
  - a. Hold a PhD degree in a STEM discipline
  - b. Be fluent in written and spoken English
  - c. Meet the relevant nationality requirements:
    - i. **Inbound S-SEAF:** Must be a citizen of an ASEAN country (Singapore PRs are not eligible)
    - ii. **Outbound S-SEAF:** Must be a Singapore Citizen or Singapore PR (Singapore PRs who are nationals of an ASEAN country are not eligible to undertake the fellowship in their country of nationality.)
  - d. Be employed by a Singapore research performer for the entire duration of S-SEAF. The Singapore research performer must serve as:
    - i. The host institution for inbound S-SEAF fellows, or
    - ii. The home institution for outbound S-SEAF fellows

## FELLOWSHIP DURATION

7. For **inbound S-SEAF**, the fellowship duration shall be two years. Shorter-duration attachments, with a minimum of six months, may be considered for proposals in Infectious Diseases.
8. For **outbound S-SEAF**, the fellowship duration can be between 6 months to two years.
9. S-SEAF fellows are expected to commence their fellowship promptly, within one year of the award date.

## FELLOWSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS

10. Fellows are expected to:

- a. Conduct research at the host institution in accordance with the approved proposal
- b. Actively participate in research group activities and institutional programmes
- c. Contribute to knowledge exchange and collaboration between Singapore and Southeast Asia
- d. Comply with host institution policies, including research integrity and IP requirements

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) & PUBLICATIONS

11. Intellectual property, data management, and publication matters will be governed by the policies of the host institution and any applicable agreements between collaborating institutions. Fellows are expected to acknowledge S-SEAF support in publications and outputs arising from the fellowship

## VISA AND RELOCATION MATTERS

12. Inbound fellows will be hosted under appropriate employment or attachment arrangements in accordance with Singapore regulations.
13. Visa and relocation matters will be supported by the host institution, subject to prevailing policies.
14. Fellows are responsible for ensuring compliance with immigration and employment requirements.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

15. **Engagement with Host Institution:** Applicants are required to identify and engage a suitable host institution in Singapore (for inbound S-SEAF) or a Southeast Asian country (for outbound S-SEAF) prior to submission. Applicants should work with their proposed host to co-develop the research proposal and obtain the required institutional endorsement.
16. **How to Find a Host Institution:** Applicants may identify a host institution through the following avenues:
  - a. Review S-SEAF research themes to identify areas of alignment.

- b. Consult institutional websites, research centre pages, and recent publications to identify relevant research programmes and ongoing work.
- c. Reach out directly to principal investigators, research centres, or programme leads at prospective host universities, public research institutes, or research hospitals whose expertise aligns with the proposed project.
- d. Leverage existing research networks, including prior collaborations, former supervisors, conference contacts, or institutional partnerships between Singapore and Southeast Asia.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to initiate contact early, as host confirmation and endorsement are required at the point of application.

17. **Online Submission:** Applicants must submit a complete application through the online [S-SEAF application submission portal](#) by the stated deadline. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

18. **Submission Requirements:** A complete application must include:

- a. Completed S-SEAF Application Form endorsed by the proposed host institution
- b. Details of two referees familiar with the applicant's research and professional capabilities
- c. Supporting documents
  - i. Passport
  - ii. Curriculum Vitae (CV)
  - iii. Bachelor's, Master's (if applicable), and PhD academic transcripts and degree certificates

19. **Institutional Funding Arrangements:** Applicants are advised to discuss funding arrangements with their host institution (for inbound S-SEAF) or home institution (for outbound S-SEAF) prior to submission. S-SEAF funding will be disbursed as reimbursement to the Singapore host or home institution, which will be responsible for paying the fellow's salary and allowances upfront. Institutions should ensure they are able to support this arrangement before endorsing the application.

## EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

20. Proposals are assessed by judges from across Singapore's research ecosystem and their assessments will then be presented to the S-SEAF Executive Committee. The decision of the S-SEAF Executive Committee is final, and no appeal will be accepted.

21. S-SEAF applications will be assessed primarily for:

No.	Criteria
1	Novelty, innovative merit, and feasibility
2	Academic qualifications and track record
3	Relevance of proposed research to Singapore and Southeast Asia
4	Alignment with S-SEAF research theme(s)
5	Leadership potential
6	Research impact and potential for follow-on work

## AWARD COVERAGE

22. The S-SEAF award covers the following costs. Salary and allowances will be paid by the Singapore host institution (for inbound fellows) or home institution (for outbound fellows), and S-SEAF funding will be reimbursed to the respective institution upon submission of the required claims.

Item	Details
Monthly Salary	Set by the host (for inbound fellows) or home (for outbound fellows) institution, funded by S-SEAF up to a specific cap
Monthly Living Allowance	S\$2,000
Airfare	One return economy-class ticket between the fellow's country of residence and the host institution's country

*Note: Award terms are subject to periodic review.*

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

23. Fellows on two-year fellowships are required to submit a progress report to A\*STAR at the midpoint (after **one year**) and upon completion (after **two years**) of the fellowship. Fellows on shorter-term fellowships (less than one year) are required to submit a progress report at the end of the fellowship. The progress report should detail research progress and demonstrate that proposed milestones and deliverables are on track for successful completion

## TIMELINE FOR S-SEAF

<b>Applications Open</b>	April
<b>Application Deadline</b>	1 August
<b>Award Results</b>	November

## CONTACT US

24. Please write to [SSEAF@a-star.edu.sg](mailto:SSEAF@a-star.edu.sg) if you have further queries.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Eligibility and Employment

#### 1. Who should apply for S-SEAF?

S-SEAF is open to post-PhD researchers in STEM disciplines who have strong research potential and are interested in building and sustaining long-term research collaborations between Singapore and Southeast Asia.

#### 2. Can I apply for outbound S-SEAF if I am not currently employed by a Singapore research institution?

Applicants for the outbound S-SEAF must be employed by a Singapore research performer for the full duration of the fellowship. Prospective applicants who are not currently employed by one should first secure employment with an eligible Singapore research institution before seeking their employer's support in applying for outbound S-SEAF.

#### 3. Can Singapore Permanent Residents apply for the fellowship?

Singapore Permanent Residents working in Singapore research institutions may apply for the outbound S-SEAF fellowship. However, those who are nationals of an ASEAN country are not eligible to undertake the fellowship in their country of nationality. Singapore PR are not eligible for inbound S-SEAF Fellowship.

#### 4. Can researchers working outside Southeast Asia apply?

Yes. Researchers who are citizens of ASEAN countries but currently based outside Southeast Asia may apply for the inbound S-SEAF, provided they meet the eligibility criteria and their proposed research aligns with the programme's objective of strengthening research collaboration between Singapore and Southeast Asia.

### Host Institution and Proposal Development

#### 5. Can I apply without prior collaboration with the host institution?

Prior collaboration is not required. However, applicants must reach out to potential hosts and co-develop the proposal before submitting the application.

**6. Can I apply to more than one host institution?**

Applicants may engage multiple potential hosts during proposal development, but only one host institution may be indicated in the final application.

**7. Can applicants propose projects that involve collaboration between multiple institutions?**

Yes. While a primary host institution must be identified, projects may involve collaboration with other institutions where relevant.

**8. Can applicants change their host institution after the fellowship has been awarded?**

Changes to the host institution after the award are generally not expected and would require approval from the programme administrators and relevant institutions.

**9. Must the research proposal fall under the defined S-SEAF themes?**

Applications are encouraged to align with the S-SEAF research themes. Alignment with the themes will be taken into account during the evaluation process.

**10. Does the host institution need to provide a supervisor or mentor?**

Yes. Applicants are expected to work with a host supervisor or principal investigator who will support the development of the proposal and provide mentorship during the fellowship.

**Fellowship Structure**

**11. Can fellows split their fellowship across multiple institutions or countries?**

The fellowship is typically hosted at a single primary host institution. Collaborations with other institutions may be included in the project, but the fellowship appointment must remain anchored at the approved host institution.

**12. Can the fellowship be undertaken part-time?**

No. S-SEAF is intended to support full-time research.

**13. Can the two-year fellowship attachment be split into multiple shorter periods at the host institution?**

S-SEAF fellowships are typically undertaken as a continuous research attachment at the host institution. However, for outbound S-SEAF fellows, the attachment may be structured into

multiple stints at the host institution to allow greater flexibility. Such arrangements are subject to approval by the programme administrators and the relevant institutions.

**14. Can fellows defer the start of the fellowship?**

Fellows are expected to commence their fellowship within one year of the award date. Requests for deferral beyond this period would require special approval.

**15. Can fellows take on teaching, supervision, or other professional activities during the fellowship?**

Such activities may be permitted if they are aligned with the fellow's professional development and approved by the host institution, provided they do not interfere with the primary research objectives of the fellowship.

**16. Can fellows apply for other grants or funding during the fellowship period?**

Yes. Fellows may apply for other research grants or funding opportunities, subject to the policies of the host institution and any relevant funding conditions.

**17. Can fellows travel for conferences or fieldwork during the fellowship?**

Yes. Fellows may travel for conferences, collaboration meetings, or fieldwork if these are relevant to the fellowship project and approved by the host institution. Such travel expenses are expected to be supported by the host institution or other funding sources.

**Funding and Administration**

**18. Are research project costs covered under the fellowship?**

S-SEAF provides salary support, a monthly living allowance, and airfare. Research expenses and other project-related costs are expected to be supported by the host institution or through other funding sources.

**19. Do applicants need to secure research funding for the project before applying?**

No. Applicants are not required to secure separate research funding prior to applying. However, applicants should ensure that the proposed host institution has the necessary resources and facilities to support the research.

**20. Are dependants or family relocation costs covered?**

The fellowship only covers the fellow's airfare and living allowance. Additional relocation costs, including those for dependants, are not covered.

### **Application and Selection**

#### **21. Can applicants submit more than one proposal in a cycle?**

Applicants may submit only one proposal per application cycle.

#### **22. Can applicants reapply if they are not successful?**

Yes. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply in future application cycles, provided they continue to meet the eligibility criteria.

#### **23. Will applicants receive feedback on their applications?**

Due to the competitive nature of the programme, detailed feedback may not be provided for unsuccessful applications.

#### **24. When will award results be announced?**

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application after the evaluation process is completed, by November each year.