# SWTFTT Application Form

Description:

The SPOKES Wellcome Trust Funded Think Tank (SWTFTT) is a group of ~10 early career researchers (ECRs) from the BIH research community who will work together over the period of one year to develop and complete a project that aims to improve the quality of translational research in Berlin. The SWTFTT team will receive a grant of up to 20,000 Euros for the development and execution of their project. Selection will be based on applicants’ previous engagement with improving research, project ideas, commitment to the SWTFTT and possible role in the group. The funds allocated to the SWTFTT may be used for organizing events, developing resources, communicating about the project and so on.

During the 12 months of the SWTFTT, participants will develop and roll out a project. The group will evaluate possible projects based on feasibility, common interest, and impact before selecting one project to complete as a team. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to work closely with members of the QUEST Center, and provide valuable ECR perspectives on other ongoing initiatives.

Target population:

* Early-career researcher (graduate student or junior postdoc) working in the BIH research community (i.e. research conducted at the BIH, Charité or Max Delbrück Center). Medical doctoral students and MSc candidates may also apply, as long as they can show that they are heavily involved in ongoing research for the period of the SWTFTT.
* Planning to continue in lab/research center until at least November 2021; participation in the Think tank possible until November 2021
* Comfortable with group work and basic communication in English

Selection Procedure

Proposals will be graded by at least 2 members of the SPOKES Review Board on the basis of the following criteria:

Applicant Experience and Motivation (total = 30%)

Project Ideas (total = 30%)

SWTFTT Impact (total = 20%)

Time Management and Group Dynamics (total = 20%)

For more detailed information, please see page 6 of this document.

During the evaluation process, those who will grade the application will not be aware of the name and gender of applicants. The grades will be used to find a highly motivated, well-balanced team.

SWTFTT Expectations

* If selected, SWTFTT members are responsible for informing and acquiring permission from their supervisors to attend meetings and related events
* SWTFTT members are expected to work collaboratively on the team’s project and keep fellow members up to date on ongoing work
* SWTFTT members must be available for monthly conference calls hosted by the SPOKES team to discuss projects
* Information on the SWTFTT Project and participants will be publicized via the Charité and BIH, on the webpage e.g.

For further information, see <https://www.bihealth.org/en/research/quest-center/projects/>, or contact [wellcome-spokes@charite.de](file:///C:\Users\sohlraun\AppData\Local\Temp\wellcome-spokes@charite.de)

**Part 1: Applicant Details**

**Name:**

**Current Position and Affiliation:**

**Main Research Keywords:**

**How many years have you been working at your current position?**

**Additional comments (optional):**

**Part 2: Experience and Ideas for SWTFTT:**

For the SWTFTT, the SPOKES Team is interested in recruiting students who have experience with other programs that increase the value of research. This means initiatives that aim to improve quality, reproducibility, generalizability and validity of science. For example, this could include student advocacy groups, science communication initiatives, preprint journal clubs, introduction of open science practices in your research group etc. But you can also apply if you have no experience yet.

1. **Please describe your most meaningful experience with an activity/initiative that aims to improve the value of research. Which hurdles did it aim to address? What was your role? Did you experience any major challenges? Use 200 – 300 words.**

***OR***

1. **If you have no experience with such an activity/initiative, please briefly explain what motivates you to improve the value of research using specific examples. Why do you think that the SWTFTT would be a good fit for a first experience in this area? Use 200 – 300 words.**

The main goal of the SWTFTT is to collaboratively develop and execute a project that aims to improve the quality of research in Berlin. The SPOKES Team is open to all ideas, particularly those that emphasize ambassadorship, innovation, education and sustainability. Not all details need to be fully-planned, but ideas should be within the scope of a group project conducted over the course of one year.

1. **(a) Given one year and 20,000 Euros, what is your Big Idea for improving the quality of translational research in Berlin? What challenge could this idea address? (150 words)**

**(b) What challenges do you imagine you will face when putting your idea into practice? How will you address these? (125 words)**

No matter what type of project the SWTFTT selects, it is important that participants can use their experience in the SWTFTT to leverage change in their own research environments.

1. **No matter whether your project is selected by the group or not, how do you believe your participation in the SWTFTT could directly contribute to improving research in your lab/clinic/field? (50 – 100 words)**
2. **How will you balance the time needed for the SWTFTT with your other responsibilities? For example, do consider how much time you can realistically commit to the SWTFTT including flexibility regarding group meetings and whether your supervisor supports your participation in the project (max. 50 words).**

The SWTFTT will be composed of a group of motivated participants with diverse backgrounds and skills. We are looking for team members who complement one another`s strengths and can work together well.

1. **When you are working in a team, please describe what role(s) you typically play and give specific examples (max 50 words).**

**Part 3: Skills**

This part of the application will **not** be graded, but will help reviewers and the SPOKES Team get a better idea of the candidate for building a balanced group.

1. **On a scale of one to five (see below), please place an ‘x’ in the following table to rate yourself on different skills. Please be realistic: no-one is an expert in everything, and we are simply looking to have a mix of skills in the group.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Skill* | ***1***  *I am a complete novice* | ***2*** | ***3***  *Some experience, ready to learn more* | ***4*** | ***5***  *Expert; I can lead parts of a project related to this topic* | *Optional Comments* |
| *Writing for non-scientific audiences* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Graphic design* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Web design* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *General coding* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Multimedia projects (videos, podcasts, etc.)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Social media management* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Metaresearch* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Teaching and curriculum design* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Knowledge and access to open science resources* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Advocacy* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Experience with BIH/Charité/MDC organizational structure* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Business development* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *English/German translation* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Translation to other languages (please specify)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Other skills (please specify)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Other skills (please specify)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Evaluation**

SWTFTT applicants will be marked according to the following criteria. These ratings will be used to rank candidates and determine selection of the final group.

**Applicant Experience and Motivation (total = 30%)**

If the applicant has previous experience:

* The applicant describes the goal of a previous initiative aiming to improve research quality
* Their role in this project is described concretely
* The applicant can describe challenges faced over the course of this project

If the applicant does *not* have any previous experience:

* The applicant describes why they are motivated to improve the quality of research
* This description includes specific examples
* The applicant can describe why they feel the SWTFTT is a good fit for a first experience in this field

**Project Ideas (total = 30%)**

* The applicant describes a challenge that affects the quality of research in the BIH research community
* The project is feasible in a group setting over the course of one year
* The applicant provides a realistic description of challenges they could face in carrying out their idea

**SWTFTT Impact (total = 20%)**

* The applicant provides a realistic description of how Think Tank participation can improve research in their current environment
* From this description, it is clear that this benefit is not solely tied to the applicant’s own project suggestion

**Time Management and Group Dynamics (total = 20%)**

* The applicant provides a concrete description of how they will manage their existing responsibilities to make time for Think Tank activities, addressing aspects such as available hours, flexibility in scheduling group meetings and supervisor support
* The applicant describes what role(s) they typically play in a group (with specific examples)