

# EFPT EXCHANGE GUIDELINES

*A guide for applicants and coordinators*



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*In this document, you will find all answers to these questions:*

- **What is the EFPT Exchange Programme?**
- **What is the 'Exchanges Beyond Europe' initiative?**
- **What is the aim of the EFPT Exchange Programme?**
- **Who can apply to the EFPT Exchange Programme?**
- **How to apply to the EFPT Exchange Programme?**
- **What is expected from the trainee once in the host institution?**
- **Is there financial aid for participating in the EFPT Exchange Programme?**
- **How is the EFPT Exchange Programme structured?**
- **What is the role of the Exchange Programme Coordinators?**
- **Where can I get more information about the EFPT Exchange Programme?**

*Do you need further information?*

*Please contact the Exchange Programme Chairperson directly at [exchange@efpt.eu](mailto:exchange@efpt.eu)*

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## What is the EFPT Exchange Programme?

The EFPT Exchange Programme is an initiative of the **EFPT Exchange Programme Working Group**. The Working Group is a part of the activities of the **European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees (EFPT)**, a European Not-For-Profit-Association that aims to improve psychiatric training in Europe<sup>1</sup>.

The EFPT Exchange Programme was established in 2011 by the first Exchange Working Group at the EFPT Forum in Prague. The pilot phase took place in **January 2012**.

The EFPT Exchange Programme is a platform that provides a possibility to realise **2 to 6 weeks observational internships** organised by local trainees for trainees from other member countries of the EFPT.

So far, the EFPT Exchange Programme offers around **60 vacancies across 17 countries** in all major fields of clinical psychiatry, including general adult psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, old age psychiatry, liaison psychiatry, addiction psychiatry, forensic psychiatry, eating disorders psychiatry, perinatal psychiatry, psychiatry of learning disability, psychotherapy, rehabilitation and social psychiatry as well as other specified fields of psychiatry like simulation training in psychiatry and sleeping disorders.

Each programme takes place in a psychiatric department and can include a placement in one or several units. Depending on particular circumstances and availability, the programme can be **tailored** to one's individual needs and wishes. The host countries provide various opportunities within areas of clinical work, research and teaching. The programme may contain visits to geographically different institutions and encourage a variety of social and cultural activities in the host country. Several programmes can exist per country and per city.

**Two exchange phases** take place each year, from March to August and from September to February, with a **one-month online application window** in May and November respectively.

### Summary of EFPT Exchange Programme

- **Free of fees:** the participating trainee is responsible just for travel and accommodation costs,
- **Strictly observational:** the trainee is an observer, and does not provide any direct patient care during the exchange.
- **Unpaid:** the trainee does not receive any salary from the host organisation.
- **Friendly:** the programme is also about social exchange!
- Unfortunately, the EFPT Exchange Programme is not (yet!) considered for formal accreditation in most of the European training schemes.

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<sup>1</sup> [Statements of the European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees \(EFPT\) 2016](#)

## What is the 'Exchanges Beyond Europe' initiative?

In the 2020 Virtual-Romanian Forum, the Exchange Working Group has announced '**Exchanges beyond Europe**' initiative. Through this programme trainees in countries outside Europe can develop exchange programmes. Once this is done, a **bilateral exchange programme** is set up, thus allowing trainees from the non-European country to attend exchanges in Europe while allowing trainees from EFPT Member countries to attend the exchange in the non-European country. The places available within European countries for non-European trainees, will match the number of places available outside Europe.

The programme does not allow for exchanges between non-European countries.

## What is the aim of the EFPT Exchange Programme?

The aim of the programme is to provide trainees with the **opportunities** to:

- Get involved in clinical, research and teaching activities abroad - Experience another mental health care system
- Experience a different training programme
- Socialise with European colleagues
- Learn about transcultural psychiatry
- Exchange ideas and information on psychiatric practices across Europe.

## Who can apply to the EFPT Exchange Programme?

Trainees from **EFPT Member Countries** can apply to the program<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, **trainees from countries outside Europe offering an exchange programme**, within the 'Exchanges beyond Europe' initiative can also apply for an exchange. It is the responsibility of the trainee applying for an exchange programme to ascertain that his or her country VISA allows travel to the host country.

Trainees are able to apply for internships and participate in the Exchange Programme more than once. For unfilled placements trainees from non member countries could be considered.

## How to apply to the EFPT Exchange Programme?

Application to the EFPT Exchange Program is **online** and is open twice a year, starting on **1st of November** and **1st of May**, with an application period of one month. This corresponds to the two exchange period phases: March to August and September to February. Each applicant can only apply for one country each application period. If a candidate applies for multiple countries only the last successful completed application will be considered.

The selection of candidates is made by the Local and National Coordinators, in cooperation with the supervisors of the host institution, on the basis of a **Curriculum Vitae**, **Motivation Letter** and **Letter of Recommendation**, according to predetermined marking criteria.

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<sup>2</sup> [EFPT Member Country List](#)

The applicant will have to make arrangements with his or her own institution to go on exchange. The EFPT Exchange Working Group can provide documents to support this process, if needed.

### What is expected from the trainee once in the host institution?

The trainee participates as an **observer**, and can be involved in research projects depending on the opportunities available in the host institution and his or her interests.

EFPT Exchange Programme participants must adhere to the **Medical Ethics Guidelines** produced by his or her country's Medical Council and those of the host country. This includes maintaining respect for patient confidentiality. If the trainee doesn't respect these principles, the exchange may be stopped and the trainee may be subject to disciplinary measures.

The EFPT Exchange Programme Working Group and the EFPT Association does not bear any responsibility for what happens between the trainee and the host institution during the exchange.

Once in the host institution, the trainee is encouraged to give an **oral presentation** on arrival at the host institution as a way to share knowledge. This presentation should contain information about the participant's country, such as structure of psychiatric services, training pathways and areas of best practice.

When the trainee returns, he or she is expected to send a **testimonial** to the Local Coordinator and fill in a **feedback form**. The applicant is strongly encouraged to present his or her experience at home institution. Once the feedback form and testimonial is sent to [exchange@efpt.eu](mailto:exchange@efpt.eu), the applicant will be issued a **certificate**.

### Is there financial aid for participating to the EFPT Exchange Programme?

Since 2016, the EFPT board provides funds for **two 500€ bursaries** each year, one for each application phase. Current requirements for bursary application can be found on the webpage at <http://efpt.eu/exchange/bursary/>.

Unless covered by a bursary, all expenses including transport, accommodation, food, visa, insurance etc. must be covered entirely by the applicant. One should check whether local funds are available to support his or her exchange.

We strive to offer accommodation to applicants in student hostels or hospital premises at the lowest possible price, however this is not always available. Occasionally one may be hosted by a local trainee. Accommodation possibilities are stated under each programme description.

## How is the EFPT Exchange Programme structured?

The EFPT Exchange Programme Working Group is composed of a Chairman, Co-Chair(s) and other members with individual responsibilities such as expansion of the programme and the information campaign. All National and Local Coordinators of each country are members of the Working Group as well. The group has physical meetings once a year at the EFPT Forum, and communicates the rest of the year through ASANA, Facebook, Zoom and e-mail.

## What is the role of the Exchange Programme Coordinators?

For each country, one National Coordinator is responsible for the programme, and coordinates the actions of one or more Local Coordinators in each city offering a programme.

The National Coordinator is the contact person with the Chair for his country, and is responsible for developing the actions of the EFPT Exchange Working Group at a national level (for example, seeking to identify funding possibilities). National Coordinators are also asked to promote the exchange programme to national colleagues together with the Local Coordinator.

The Local Coordinators are responsible for processing applications to their programmes, selecting and contacting the applicants, organising the trainee's stay and ensuring the collection of feedback once the exchange is completed (by helping the trainee to plan time to fill in the feedback form and write the testimonial). Trainees have 30 days to complete the feedback form and testimonial after leaving the host country. Local Coordinators also update Asana during the selection process and when the trainee leave the host country. Local Coordinators and National Coordinators are active in updating the programme information before every application period.

## Where can I get more information about the EFPT Exchange Programme?

All information on the EFPT Exchange Programme, including descriptions of the available Exchange Programmes and application procedure can be found on the EFPT Exchange website: <http://efpt.eu/exchange/>

You can subscribe to the **EFPT Facebook Group** to get more updates on the EFPT Exchange Programme and on the other activities of the EFPT Association.

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