

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 Call Information

Webinar Series: Virtual Q&A

The information for the sessions and the information contained in this document are based on the 2021 MSCA work programme. **It is very important that applicants read and refer to the information and the updated guidance documents provided on the [2022 MSCA PF Call webpage](#), when developing their proposal.**

Where can I find all documents necessary, including the proposal template, for the application to the 2022 MSCA PF Call?

The European Commission is providing all necessary documents for the application, including a proposal and evaluation template on their [2022 MSCA PF Call](#) Webpage. Applicants should read and refer to the documentation on this webpage when developing their proposal.

How can I reach the UK MSCA National Contact points?

You can reach us under mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk.

I am looking for a supervisor/Postdoctoral Fellow for a joint application? Can you help?

Please refer to the following matchmaking resources:

- MSCA are inviting universities, research institutions and businesses who are interested in hosting postdoctoral researchers under the 2022 MSCA PF call to publish their hosting offers (Expressions of Interest) on the [EURAXESS platform](#).
- In the framework of the MSCA-NET project, MSCA National Contact Points (NCPs) have set up the [MSCA Matchmaking Platform](#). Interested postdoctoral researchers and supervisors can publish their research profile and interests, their expression of interest and hosting offers, and also book meetings with each other.
- The [2022 MSCA PF call webpage](#) also includes the "Partner search announcements" , which allows universities, research institutions and businesses to publish their hosting offers for postdoctoral fellows under the 2022 MSCA PF Call.

Is there any number of times applicants can apply for the MSCA PF Scheme, and what do I need to consider when re-applying?

How important is it for an applicant to show a cv that has a track record of having other past funding grants secured?

Please refer to session 2.

Does the mobility rule for 2022 MSCA Global Fellowships apply for both the sending and the host institution, or only for the host institution in the outgoing phase?

For the 2022 MSCA Global Fellowship, the mobility rule only applies to the host institution of the outgoing phase. This mobility rule for the MSCA Global Fellowships is clarified on Page 87 of 107 of the [2021-22 MSCA Work Programme](#).

Can you clarify the 8-year maximum rule - if the researcher was not gainfully employed in research, does that period count?

Researchers can have a maximum 8 years of full-time research experience from date of award of the (first) doctoral degree in order to be eligible to apply to the MSCA Global PF. This limit can be extended (in days) for the following reasons:

- Maternity leave (18 months – i.e. 548 days per child born after the PhD award date, or the exact duration of maternity leave taken, whichever is longest);
- Paternity leave (exact duration per child born after the PhD award date);
- Compulsory national service;
- Time spent not working in research;
- Long term sick leave (periods > 30 days)

Please see session 2 of our UKRO information webinars and the MSCA Guide for applicants on the application page.

Does the definition of research experience under the 8-year maximum relate to whether the applicant was funded for the research?

Please refer to [EC FAQ 16644](#) and the MSCA Guide for applicants on the application page.

Is it possible to include multiple PIs and research groups in my application?

You can only have one main supervisor for the European Fellowship. You can have two main supervisors on a global fellowship, one for the outgoing and return phase

Based on the needs of the project, additional individuals can be included in mentoring /supervisor roles. The individuals can be located in the same institution, or elsewhere.

Does COFUND also work for Postdoctoral positions outside of the EU?

The MSCA COFUND Programme is a separate MSCA scheme, which also allows for the recruitment of postdoctoral candidates. For more information, please refer to the [MSCA 2022 COFUND Call webpage](#).

Could you please share statistics on the nationality and the sectors (industry/SME) of the winning fellows from previous rounds of MSCA IF/PF?

The European Commission provides this [website with the main sources for statistics and data on projects and proposals funded under MSCA Calls](#).

For the Global Fellowships, does the outgoing host institution need to be an academic institution?

The outgoing host institution does not need to be an academic institution. However, this institution must be a “single independent legal entity established in a non-associated Third Country” ([Guide for MSCA PF Applicants](#), p. 8 of 13).

Could you clarify what qualifies as a ‘secondment’ and ‘a placement’?

The difference is outlined in the [EC FAQ ID 16411](#), as well as session 2 and 3.

Are there guidelines for the letter of commitment for the non-academic placement we can share with these organisations?

A list for the minimum requirements for the letter of commitment is provided in Part B - Page 13 of 14 of the [2022 MSCA PF “Project proposal – Technical description \(Part B\)” template](#).

How many PFs do you expect to be funded under this 2022 call? What is the ratio of applications and successful awards for European and Global Fellowships?

Under the [2021 MSCA PF Call](#), 1.156 projects were retained for funding. Of these 1.156 projects, 1.025 and 131 researchers were supported through the MSCA European PF and the MSCA Global PF respectively. We anticipate that this trend will also continue for the 2022 MSCA PF Call.

Is additional funding available for postdoctoral candidates from Widening countries? What does ERA stand for in this context of widening participation?

Applicants for the MSCA PF Call who intend to apply to undertake their fellowship in a widening country, will also be considered for the 2022 ERA Fellowship Call. The ERA call aims to help spread excellence and contribute to fostering balanced brain circulation in widening countries.

For eligible applicants, there is no need to submit a separate application for the widening call as described on p.56 of the [2021-2022 Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area Work programme](#). Please also refer to session 1 of our UKRO information webinar series.

What is the ideal time to contact potential PIs, how important is to get the support of PIs to write an excellent research proposal?

Please refer to Dr. Sven Anderson’s presentation in session 2.

Is it possible to suspend the fellowship after it is started? If yes, how and for how long?

It is possible to suspend the fellowship, if the project officer and your supervisor agree. The exact timeframe would have to be agreed upon with the project officer and your supervisor.

Is it necessary to know the language of the host institution?

While it is not necessary to know the language of the host institution, the proposal should give the evaluators confidence as to how the applicant will be supported at the host institution. This could take various forms, such as prior experiences with international candidates, an international environment. The MSCA Research, Training and Networking Costs unit contributions could also be used to pay for language courses for the researcher.

What should be in place to support the integration with the institution's country? What kind of support we needed from the host institute beside supervisor's input in the research proposal?

The host organisation (and partner organisation in Global Fellowships) should have (or will have by the time of implementation) sufficient professional competencies and qualifications to implement the action.

In addition, if the host institute offers specialised training relevant to the MSCA fellow's long-term career development, e.g. for developing scientific and/or transferable skills, then this should be clearly highlighted in the proposal.

Lastly, the following hosts would need to provide a letter of Commitment for the application:

- partner organisations in a third country hosting the outgoing phase of a Global Fellowship;
- the host of the optional non academic placement

For further information, please refer to session 2.

My project is interdisciplinary (PHY, CHEM, ENG) but I must select only one. Will the success depends on the search field that is selected, or is it irrespective of the fields selected?

Please refer to session 3.

Does the success of a proposal depend on the panel I select?

The success of the applicant's proposal is irrespective of the selected panel as the available funding is split proportionally between the different evaluation panels based on the number of eligible proposals. This is outlined on p. Page 95 of 107 of the [2021-22 MSCA Work Programme](#).

There will obviously be many potential host institutions have similar infrastructure to fulfil the project needs. Then How can we REALLY stress that the HOST selected is the BEST place for doing the project?

Please refer to Dr. Sven Anderson's presentation in session 2.

Is a letter of commitment required for short-term visits/ collaborations/ secondments/placements? Who needs to provide these letters?

The letter of commitment is only required for:

- partner organisations in a third country hosting the outgoing phase of a Global Fellowship;
- the host of the optional non academic placement

The host organisations must provide these letter of commitments, which need to be included in the proposals. Ideally, applicants should contact potential supervisors and the institutions as early as possible to request this letter. These letters need to be signed by someone with the authority to sign on behalf of the institution. Please refer to slide 53 of session 2 for more information.

Is there some sort of a checklist (on the website) that you have to confirm you have included every form/ every step of the application?

The European Research Executive Agency is providing a list of useful resources on their [website](#). However, all the documents necessary for a successful application are provided on the [2022 MSCA PF Call webpage](#). The proposals are also validated before submission, and applicants can submit and re-submit as many times they want before the call deadline.

Are international applicants that are not residents of the UK or EU eligible to apply?

For the European Fellowships, anyone, regardless of nationality, can apply. For the Global fellowships, you would have to be a National or long-term residents of an EU Member State or Associated Country. A list of the eligibility criteria for the European and Global MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships are provided on p.7 and 8 of the [MSCA Guide for Applicants](#).

Should placement and secondment have the same objective?

Please refer to session “Practical Matters” (Session 2).

Can the secondment period (so 1/3 of the fellowship duration) be taken in different parts and at different institutions?

All secondments can be divided into smaller parts and take place at different institutions anywhere in the world. Please refer to [the MSCA PF Guide for Applicants](#).

Does the ethics self-assessment get reviewed as part of the evaluation process, or only if awarded?

All proposals above threshold and considered for funding will undergo an Ethics Review carried out by independent ethics experts– please refer to p. 21 -25 of the [Horizon Europe Programme Guide](#) for more information. The European Commission also provide an [Horizon Europe Self-Assessment document](#), designed to help applicants and beneficiaries of EU projects make their proposal ethics-compliant.

In terms of locations, are there restrictions on where the secondment and the non-academic placement can take place?

Yes, there are restrictions. Please refer to slides 35 and 37 of the presentation “Practical Matters” (Session 2)

Should be the data management platform listed in the work plan/deliverables in the proposal?

Yes. Please refer to slide 6 in session “Further Points for Consideration in Proposal Development” (Session 3).

How close should the researcher’s and the supervisor’s research (topics, methods) be?

This will depend on the individual needs of both the researcher and the supervisor.

Please refer to session 2 for more information.

Do we also consider gender dimension between PI and the fellow? (women=PI/man=fellow)?

The gender dimension between the PI and the fellow will not be considered during the evaluation process. Information on the inclusion of gender in the evaluation process can be found in the [2021-22 MSCA Work Programme \(p.90\)](#).