

Horizon Europe – Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

What is Horizon Europe?

Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion for the period 2021-2027. It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and boosts European competitiveness and growth.

The programme facilitates collaboration and strengthens the impact of research and innovation in developing, supporting and implementing EU policies while tackling global challenges. It supports the creation and better sharing of knowledge and technologies.

It also creates jobs, fully engages Europe's talent pool, boosts economic growth, promotes industrial competitiveness and optimises investment impact within a strengthened European Research Area.

On 1 January 2024 the UK associated to Horizon Europe, following a period of negotiation, UK-based researchers are now able to participate in the EU research and innovation programme on the same terms as researchers from other associated countries and have access to Horizon Europe funding. For more information on what this means for UK participation in the programme, see UKRO's [dedicated factsheet](#).

What are the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) in Horizon Europe?

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), along with the European Research Council (ERC) and Research Infrastructures (RI), is situated within [Pillar 1 - Excellent Science](#). Pillar 1 aims to promote scientific excellence and attract highly skilled researchers and innovators to Europe. Specifically, the various MSCA funding opportunities set out to support the training needs, career development, and knowledge exchange of researchers, thereby helping them establish a stable career path within Europe.

MSCA are committed to the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, the Innovative Doctoral Training Principles, as well as the principles of Open Science and Responsible Research & Innovation (RRI). MSCA actions also contribute to the European Research Area (ERA) and European Education Area (EEA).

What is funded by the MSCA?

All MSCA opportunities are 'bottom-up' in nature and therefore open to all research and innovation areas and prompt the international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary mobility of researchers. MSCA also enhances training and career development systems, thereby having a structuring impact on institutions.

Applications can be submitted by researchers and innovation staff from universities, research institutions, research infrastructures, businesses, as well as other socio-economic actors from EU Member States (MS), the Horizon Europe Associated Countries (AC) and other third countries (TC).

Areas of funding

MSCA Doctoral Networks

Doctoral Networks (DN) aims to support the training of a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial, and innovative researchers by funding doctoral training programmes. The doctoral programme is

implemented through partnerships of universities, research institutions, research infrastructures, businesses, SMEs and/or other socio-economic actors from across Europe and beyond.

Co-funding of regional, national and international programmes - COFUND

Co-funding of regional, national and international programmes (COFUND) aim to stimulate regional, national, and international programmes to foster excellence in international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary researcher training, mobility, and career development through the co-funding of new or existing programmes. Support is provided for the co-funding of multi-annual doctoral programmes with a renewed emphasis on developing sustainable structuring effects and spreading best practices.

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) set out to enhance the creative and innovative potential of post-doctoral researchers by diversifying their skill acquisition through advanced training, international, and/or inter-sectoral, as well as interdisciplinary mobility in all subject areas. Incentives are provided to support individual researchers wishing to restart their careers after a break from research or to reintegrate back into Europe after spending time abroad, as well as to increase the involvement of the non-academic sector.

MSCA Staff Exchanges

Staff Exchanges (SE) promote international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration through research and innovation staff exchanges and encourages knowledge sharing as well as the advancement of science and innovation. The scheme supports new and existing staff exchanges between Europe and third countries (TC) (*international*) and/or between academic and non-academic partners (*intersectoral*) and/or between academic partners (*interdisciplinary*). The action supports exchanges for researchers at all career stages, as well as administrative, managerial, and technical staff.

MSCA and Citizens

MSCA and Citizens (CITIZENS) builds on the Researchers' Night (NIGHT) activities to increase public awareness of EU-funded research and innovation activities. The dedicated events and outreach initiatives are designed to highlight the excellent research and innovation being undertaken within Europe. It also aims to encourage young people to embark on studies and positions in this area. Funding will be provided to support the implementation of public and media events, normally held at the end of September, as well as for other regional or national science festivals and outreach activities with EU-added value, including going into schools throughout the year.

MSCA Choose Europe for Science

MSCA Choose Europe for Science is a pilot scheme that builds on the MSCA COFUND and is part of the EU's wider Choose Europe programme. The action supports projects in which academic and non-academic organisations recruit postdoctoral researchers, with a view to offering longer-term employment beyond the project period. The offering of the host organisation on the long-term professional perspective for the researchers will be taken into account for the selection of projects.

Funding, eligibility, and project details

The MSC Actions are open to applications in all research and innovation areas. The participation of non-academic actors, e.g. SMEs, NGOs, policy organisations and cultural institutions is highly encouraged. Support is also provided to encourage diversity and inclusion with dedicated funding

available to support the involvement of researchers with disabilities and families (MSCA Doctoral Networks and MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships). Part-time work within MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships, MSCA Doctoral Networks and the COFUND Fellowship Programme might be supported in certain circumstances such as family, professional or personal reasons.

The MSC Actions fund projects using fixed “unit costs” for the researcher and the institution. Exceptionally, the CITIZENS call uses the Lump Sum funding model.

MSCA “unit costs” are flat rate EU contributions to support the researcher, research costs and institutional costs during the project. A country correction co-efficient, to account for differences in the cost of living, is applied to the living allowance that directly supports the researcher (MSCA Doctoral Networks and MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships).

Relevant EU policy areas and developments

The MSC Actions support the implementation of several European initiatives, including but not limited to the Digital Skills Agenda, European Skills Agenda, and the Zagreb Call for Action on Brain Circulation. They also contribute to the development of the European Research Area (ERA) and the European Education Area (EEA) by promoting the principles of the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”, which encourage open recruitment and attractive working conditions.

Although a bottom-up programme, the MSCA part of Horizon Europe also significantly contributes to achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the European Green Deal objectives.

Principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) apply throughout all MSC Actions. They also endorse Open Science and other cross-cutting issues, including engaging society, integrating gender and ethical dimensions, ensuring access to research outcomes and encouraging formal and informal science education.

Moreover, there are synergies between MSCA and other programmes that support these EU policy areas, such as Erasmus+ and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). Synergies with other parts of Horizon Europe as well as regional and national research and innovation funding programmes are also highly encouraged.

More information

- [Horizon Europe website](#)
- [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions website](#)
- [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions UK NCP website](#)
- [MSCA Radiance](#)
- [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Work Programme 2023-2025](#)
- [MSCA Green Charter](#)
- [MSCA Guidelines on Supervision](#)
- [The European Charter & Code for Researchers](#)
- [Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training](#)

Horizon Europe's legal basis:

- [Regulation establishing Horizon Europe](#)
- [Decision establishing the Specific Programme of Horizon Europe](#)
- [First Strategic Plan for Horizon Europe \(2021-2024\)](#)
- [Second Strategic Plan for Horizon Europe \(2025-2027\)](#)

UKRO Portal

- [UKRO Portal](#)