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Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships 2023

Frequently Asked Questions

mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk

The Call Timeline

All information for a successful proposal is available on the Call Webpage: MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2023 (HORIZON-MSCA-2023-PF-01)

Action	Date
Invitation to Submit Proposal	12 April 2023
Deadline for Submission	13 September 2023 17:00 Brussels Time
Evaluation of Proposals	October - December 2023
Information on Outcome of Evaluations	February/March 2024
Indicative Date for Signing the Grant Agreement	April –May 2024
Prospective Start Date	May 2024 - September 2025

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Submit Early, Submit Often

Commission collects proposals at Deadline

Reminders

Read all the documentation and access all available support.

Most UK universities have dedicated EU research support teams

Many have dedicated communications, and public relations teams, open access specialists, innovation managers, leading and development teams

It is important to talk to them about what opportunities/support they can provide

May be able to provide examples

READ all the call documentation – keep it with you during writing

Get people to read your proposal

Visa and Tax questions email mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk and or talk to the HR team at your host organisation

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More than Just a Research Project

Bringing together the researcher, the supervisor(s) and host institution(s) and research and training

- Developing research skills (core skills related to your project and skills to advance your competencies)
- Developing transferable and complementation skills
- Knowledge exchange between the researcher, the institutions involved and the supervisor
- Training through research

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Letters of Commitment

Requirement for partner organisations in a third country hosting the outgoing phase of a **Global Fellowship**

The letter must be up-to-date and on headed paper

It should confirm real and active participation in the proposed action

General guidelines are given in Standard Application Template

They can take time to get signed

Failure to include a letter of commitment when required will make your proposal ineligible

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Letter of Commitment not necessary for Secondments and Non-academic Placements in 2023 MSCA PF Call.

See: Guide for applicants_MSCA PF 2023 rev 2.1 .pdf (europa.eu), 'Section 3. Secondments and Non-Academic Placements', Page 12 of 17.

Eligibility Criteria – In Brief

No nationality requirements

Questions on eligibility contact
mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk

The Fellow

- **Be in possession of a doctoral degree** (or have successfully defended tones doctoral thesis)
- Have a **maximum of 8 years full-time equivalent research experience** (there are extensions to the criteria)
- Those applying for a Global Postdoctoral Fellowship or who wish to reintegrate to Europe, must be nationals or long-term residents of MS or AC
- **Cannot have resided or carried out his/her main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the host institution (European Fellowship), or host of the outgoing phase for a Global Fellowship) for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the call deadline**
- Researchers wishing to reintegrate from a third country, must have a direct mobility to a MS or AC within the last 12 months before the call deadline

Beneficiary

- Host of the European Fellowship and Return Phase of Global Fellowship
- must be located in a MS or AC or Euratom AC
- Any legal entity within or outside academia
- Recruits the postdoctoral researcher

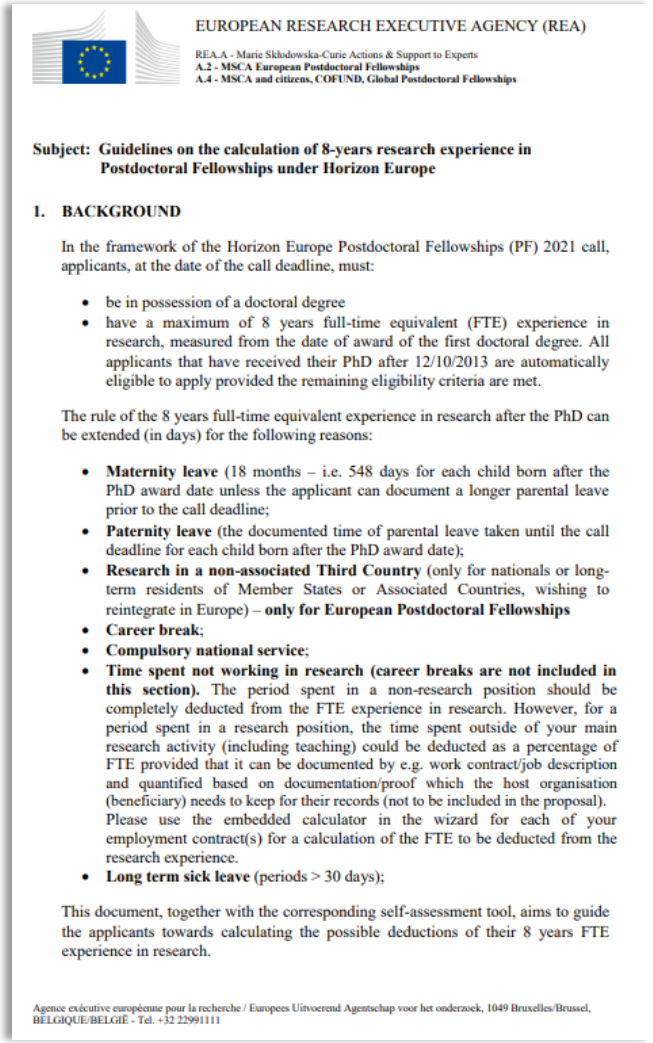
Associated Partner

- Host of the outgoing Phase of the Global Fellowship
- Secondment and Placement Host
- Any legal entity within or outside academia
- Located anywhere in the world

❖ To be considered a successful, the PhD award must be unconditional with no further requirements, such as corrections, needing to be addressed

What do we mean by full-time equivalent research experience

- **Applicant must be active in research (EC FAQ)**
  - Be employed or holding a scholarship in research
  - Parental leave, unpaid leave, sick leave do not count as periods of active engagement in research
    - even if a formal employment relationship exists during these periods
  - Publication activities or mere association to a university (i.e. any other link to the university that is not considered as an employment contract or a fellowship agreement) are not considered as periods of active engagement in research
  - Time spent teaching or undertaking admin activities are also not considered periods of active research
  - Must be documented by e.g. work contract/job description and quantified based on documentation/proof which the host organisation (beneficiary) needs to keep for their records



EUROPEAN RESEARCH EXECUTIVE AGENCY (REA)

REA.A - Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions & Support to Experts
A.2 - MSCA European Postdoctoral Fellowships
A.4 - MSCA and citizens, COFUND, Global Postdoctoral Fellowships

Subject: Guidelines on the calculation of 8-years research experience in Postdoctoral Fellowships under Horizon Europe

1. BACKGROUND

In the framework of the Horizon Europe Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) 2021 call, applicants, at the date of the call deadline, must:

- be in possession of a doctoral degree
- have a maximum of 8 years full-time equivalent (FTE) experience in research, measured from the date of award of the first doctoral degree. All applicants that have received their PhD after 12/10/2013 are automatically eligible to apply provided the remaining eligibility criteria are met.

The rule of the 8 years full-time equivalent experience in research after the PhD can be extended (in days) for the following reasons:

- **Maternity leave** (18 months – i.e. 548 days for each child born after the PhD award date unless the applicant can document a longer parental leave prior to the call deadline;
- **Paternity leave** (the documented time of parental leave taken until the call deadline for each child born after the PhD award date);
- **Research in a non-associated Third Country** (only for nationals or long-term residents of Member States or Associated Countries, wishing to reintegrate in Europe) – **only for European Postdoctoral Fellowships**
- **Career break**;
- **Compulsory national service**;
- **Time spent not working in research (career breaks are not included in this section).** The period spent in a non-research position should be completely deducted from the FTE experience in research. However, for a period spent in a research position, the time spent outside of your main research activity (including teaching) could be deducted as a percentage of FTE provided that it can be documented by e.g. work contract/job description and quantified based on documentation/proof which the host organisation (beneficiary) needs to keep for their records (not to be included in the proposal). Please use the embedded calculator in the wizard for each of your employment contract(s) for a calculation of the FTE to be deducted from the research experience.
- **Long term sick leave** (periods > 30 days);

This document, together with the corresponding self-assessment tool, aims to guide the applicants towards calculating the possible deductions of their 8 years FTE experience in research.

Agence exécutive européenne pour la recherche / Europees Uitvoerend Agentschap voor het onderzoek, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111

https://rea.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-grants/horizon-europe-marie-sklodowska-curie-actions/horizon-europe-msca-how-apply_en#ecl-inpage-293

Researcher Unit Cost – Gross Salary

Researcher Unit Costs (Contributions for recruited researchers Per person-month)					Institutional Unit Costs (Institutional unit contributions Per person-month)	
Living Allowance	Mobility Allowance	Family Allowance	Long-term Leave Allowance	Special Needs Allowance	Research, training and networking contribution	Management and indirect contribution
EUR 5 080	EUR 600	EUR 660	EUR 5 680 x % covered by the beneficiary	Requested unit x (1/number of months)	EUR 1 000	EUR 650

Institutions strongly advised to explain how the salary will be calculated

UK institution apply a conservative exchange rate - protects the institution and fellow from exchange rate fluctuations

Estimate your Income Tax for the current year - https://www.gov.uk/estimate-income-tax

Living Allowance subject to Country Correction Coefficient - 136,9%% for the UK (Global fellowships will have 2 ccc)

Family allowance requested when/if the need arises

- Living Allowance, Mobility Allowance and if relevant family allowance contribute to the annual salary and are subject to ALL national deductions (both employees and employers)

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Researcher Unit Cost – Other Allowances

Researcher Unit Costs (Contributions for recruited researchers Per person-month)					Institutional Unit Costs (Institutional unit contributions Per person-month)	
Living Allowance	Mobility Allowance	Family Allowance	Long-term Leave Allowance	Special Needs Allowance	Research, training and networking contribution	Management and indirect contribution
EUR 5 080	EUR 600	EUR 660	EUR 5 680 x % covered by the beneficiary	Requested unit x (1/number of months)	EUR 1 000	EUR 650

Long-term leave allowance

Only when leave exceeds 30 days for reasons other than annual leave

Requested when/if the need arises

All other allowances and contributions are set to '0'

% covered by the beneficiary will depend on national legislation and internal policies

Special Needs Allowance

Contributes to the additional costs for the acquisition of special needs items and services for researchers with disabilities, whose long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment(s) are certified by a competent national authority, and of such nature that their participation in the action may not be possible without them

Requested when/if the need arises

Managed by the beneficiary and claimed according to internal policies

e.g. assistance by third persons, adaptation of work environment, additional travel/transportation costs

Cannot have been funded from another source (e.g. social security or health insurance)

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Institutional Unit Costs

Researcher Unit Costs (Contributions for recruited researchers Per person-month)					Institutional Unit Costs (Institutional unit contributions Per person-month)	
Living Allowance	Mobility Allowance	Family Allowance	Long-term Leave Allowance	Special Needs Allowance	Research, training and networking contribution	Management and indirect contribution
EUR 5 080	EUR 600	EUR 660	EUR 5 680 x % covered by the beneficiary	Requested unit x (1/number of months)	EUR 1 000	EUR 650

Eligibility of the institutional costs is conditional on the eligibility of the researcher unit costs

The host will want records that prove eligibility

Research, Training and Networking costs (RTN)

Covers costs related to professional activities

Managed by the host institution according to usual internal policies e.g. Travel policy, Purchase policy etc.

Management and Indirect Costs

Covers general costs of the host institution, connected to organising and implementing the fellowship

Agreement in place to set out redistribution of funds to associated partners (secondment hosts, placement hosts, research visit hosts)

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Formatting

Use and follow the Template provided by the European Commission

Min font size 11 points*

All margins at least 15mm**

Reference font is Times New Roman (Windows platform), Times/Times New Roman (Apple platforms) or Nimbus Roman No. 9 L (Linux distributions)

Literature references should be listed in footnotes

The page formatting will be systematically checked by the REA

Information provided through hyperlinks will be disregarded

Text elements other than the body (headers, foot/end notes, captions) may deviate from 11 points, but must be legible and not be less than 8 points.

Headers and page numbers as specified

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*Except for the Gantt chart and footnotes (min. font size 8)
** Not including any footers or headers

Resubmissions

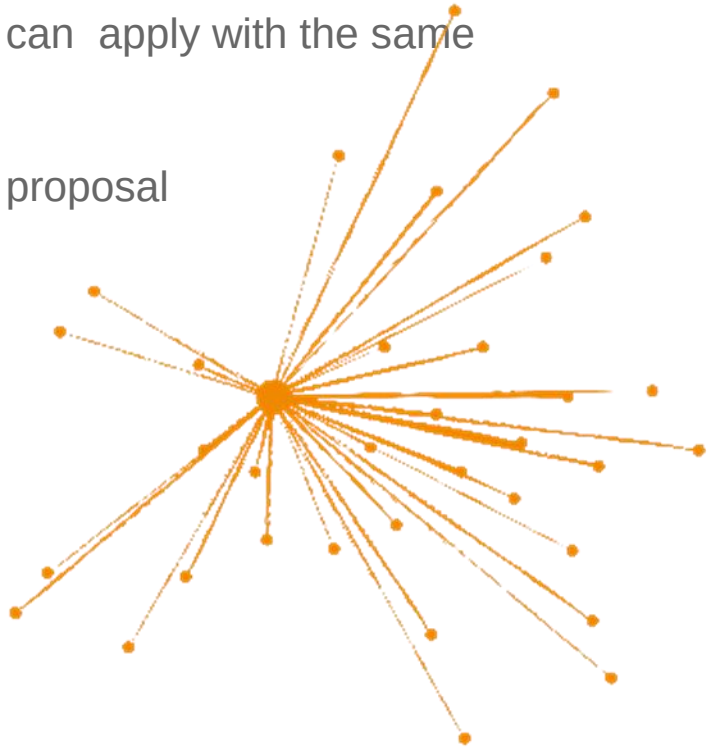
"Proposals involving the same recruiting organisation (and for Global Postdoctoral Fellowships also the associated partner hosting the outgoing phase) and individual researcher submitted to the previous call of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships under Horizon Europe and having received a score of less than 70% must not be resubmitted the following year."

- Applicants who scored less than 70% when applying for the EF scheme in the 2021 call can apply with the same recruiting organisation to the 2022 MSCA GF scheme.
- Applicants who scored less than 70% when applying for the GF scheme in the 2021 call can apply with the same recruiting organisation to the 2022 MSCA EF scheme.
- Applicants cannot reapply with the same recruiting institution, but with a completely new proposal

❖ Applicants resubmitting must tick the box in part A

❖ Each application is evaluated as if it was a new application

❖ Evaluators are only told it is a resubmission after the consensus phase



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What is considered “well-explained” or “fully justified” in a proposal?

Is there a specific “amount” of justification or is related to other topics of the proposal

Need to be precise and well explained

Proposal should be linked throughout

Activities should be linked to other relevant sections of the proposal

E.g. fellow is going to do media training – why is the media training needed against the activities to be undertaken in the fellowship

Not a question of quantity

Need to use clear and concise language

Should be able to link back all decisions/activities on the research and training needs/objectives

Proposed Activities	Research Needs	Training Needs
Activity 1		X
Activity 2	X	
Activity 3		
Activity 4	X	X

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Is the proposal written it the first or third person?

Some organisations, countries and disciplines have expected norms

No specific rule

The choice is yours

Though in the majority of cases we know that the fellow is responsible for the majority of the writing

However it is important that the supervisor(s) are heavily involved

If the supervisors has written it, or has been heavily involved in writing it, it may make more sense to write it in the third person

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Organisational Capacity – Part A Section 2

The beneficiary (host organisation) as well as any associated partners must provide:

- a list of up to 5 publications, widely-used datasets, software, goods, services, or any other achievements relevant to the call content;
- a list of up to 5 most relevant previous projects or activities, connected to the subject of this proposal; and
- description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment, relevant to the proposed work.

The information can pertain to the individual supervisor, unit, department, school, organisation etc., but does not relate to the researcher.

Projects do not need to be EC funded

The information may compliment or be a duplication of information provided in Part B2 Section 5.

List of up to 5 publications, widely-used datasets, software, goods, services, or any other achievements relevant to the call content.

Type of achievement	Short description (Max 500 characters)

List of up to 5 most relevant previous projects or activities, connected to the subject of this proposal.

Name of Project or Activity	Short description (Max 500 characters)

Description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment, relevant to the proposed work.

Name of infrastructure of equipment	Short description (Max 300 characters)

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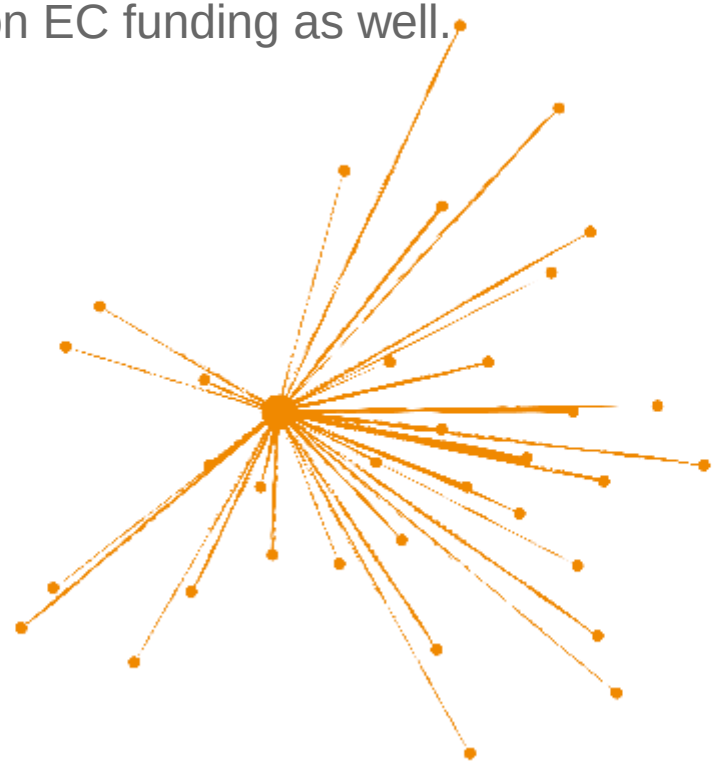
Organisational Capacity – Part B

- **Part B1. Section 3.2 Quality & capacity of the host & participating organisations**
  - **Describe the active participation of the Host to the research and training project**
  - Global Fellowship: Describe this for the outgoing host and specify the measures planned for the successful (re)integration of the researcher
  - Describe the **main tasks and commitments**
  - Remind the evaluator about the contribution & commitment of participating organisations
  - **Detail hosting arrangements, integration in the team/institution**, support services etc.
  - Briefly describe the infrastructure, logistics, facilities offered in relation to the project R
  - Refer other sections as necessary
  - Include any support from HR services
  - Must include details on all associated partners

- **Part B2. Section 5**
  - **Allows the expert to determine if the participating organisations have - or will have - the resources and capacity to implement the action**
  - Must be completed for the host and all associated partners
  - Specifically mentions EC funded projects, but can include non EC funding as well.



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What is the difference between the "challenges" that should be mentioned in Methodology (1.2) & the "risk management" in Implementation (3.1)?

- **Section 1.2**
  - **Explain any challenges you may have identified in the chosen methodology and how you intend to overcome them**
    - You are choosing the challenge
    - Do you have the necessary research skills
    - Do you have access to the right infrastructure
    - Does the methodology have any short comings?
    - Is it based on outdated theories/ideals/ technologies?
    - Is the project doable in the timeframe
    - Explain how these challenges will be addressed
    - Link to training, research visits, secondments, host organisation/supervisor expertise, infrastructure etc.
    - Do the challenges relate to any of the original and innovative aspects of the proposal

- **Section 3.1**
  - **Detail the mechanisms in place to assess and mitigate risks**
    - Generally outside of your control
    - Explain what the research and/or administrative risks that might endanger reaching the action objectives
    - What are the consequences that may happen if certain tasks/activities are not carried out as expected
    - Detail the contingency plans to be put in place should the risk occur
    - If needed, indicate information on the support services provided by the host institution and partner organisations
    - Link to training, research visits, secondments, host organisation/supervisor expertise, infrastructure etc.

How do I address risk

Risk = Generally outside of your control

Explain what the research and/or administrative risks that might endanger reaching the action objectives

What are the consequences that may happen if certain tasks/activities are not carried out as expected

Detail the contingency plans to be put in place should the risk occur

If needed, indicate information on the support services provided by the host institution and partner organisations

Link to training, research visits, secondments, host organisation/supervisor expertise, infrastructure etc.

Your supervisor can help with this section

Some examples of risks	unable to recruit enough people to a study
	methodology chosen doesn't give the expected outcome
	unexpected results
	ethical clearance doesn't come through
	visa takes longer to obtain
	samples don't arrive when expected
	something takes longer than expected jeopardising the next steps of the project
	archive doesn't have the documents expected

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Short Stay vs Secondment

Supervisor arrangements and duration are they key differences

Short Stay (research visits, field work etc.)

- No definition of ‘short stay’
- No defined duration, can take place anytime and anywhere
- **No defined supervisor arrangements**
- Can be planned in the proposal, or arranged during the project in line with the research and training needs of the fellow
- Should only represent a small part of the action

Secondments

- Can occur anywhere, and no mobility requirement but encouraged
- **Specific rules on duration depending on European Fellowship or Global Fellowship**
- **Defined supervisory arrangements**
- Encouraged as a tool for inter-sectoral experience, knowledge transfer and career development
- Quality and degree of involvement of partner organisations and the impact of the secondments will be assessed
- Organistion does not need to be identified in the proposal but must provide much information as possible
- Have clearly defined and agreed supervision arrangements
- Must be planned in the proposal, and are an integral part of the research proposal (Gannt Chart)

Is there any limitation on the number of industrial and academic secondments?

No. Secondments can take place anywhere and in any sector.

Maximum Duration

European Postdoctoral Fellowships: Up to 1/3 of the standard project duration.

Global Postdoctoral Fellowships: Secondments are permitted for up to 1/3 of the outgoing phase.

Timing

European Postdoctoral Fellowships: At any time during the standard project duration.

Global Postdoctoral Fellowships: secondments cannot take place during the mandatory 12 month return period to the host organisation in a MS or AC.

However, a secondment can take place at the start of the action, at the beneficiary, for a maximum of 3 months (to be included within the 1/3 maximum duration), before going to the associated partner for the outgoing phase.

- ❑ secondments can be divided into several shorter periods

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Working Time Commitment

Expected that researchers will work 100% of their time on the project activities

Part time working

- Researchers may opt to work part-time for professional or personal reasons
- Requires approval from REA
- Requests at any stage of the grant implementation
- Not included in the proposal

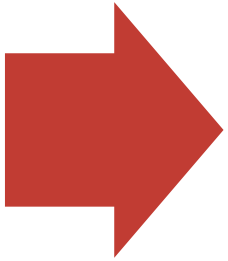
Career breaks

- Possible to suspend the project at any point for personal or profession reasons
- For professional reason suspension can be no more than 30% of the duration
- Requires approval from REA
- Not included in the proposal

What do they mean by novelty in relation to the state of the art

State of the Art

- **The identification of previous knowledge - also known as the 'Literature Review'**
- Demonstrates that you have built a solid knowledge of the field, that you are familiar with the main issues and that have critically identified and evaluated the key literature
- Allows one to put into perspective the new direction that one proposes to explore
- Where is the field right now



Novelty

- **What are the innovative aspects of the project**
- E.g. new idea, new method, the application of an existing method in a new way or to a different research area, new product, application of better solutions that meet new or exiting requirements/needs
  - Use of equipment, technique, method to investigate a piece of research in novel way
  - Advancement in research being carried out in the host
  - New analysis, concept, method that will be implemented
  - Next stage of development
  - Working with a mix of disciplines beyond the field
  - Non-academic & academic collaboration

Novelty is one way to advance the state of the art.

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What can the research training and networking costs be used for?

- Research expenses such as consumables, specialist equipment, material, books, library records, publication costs
- Open science, such as costs for data management plans, open access journals fees, etc
- Costs for training and networking activities that contribute directly to the researcher's career development
- Cost for participation in conferences, seminars, trips related to the work of the action
- Costs for other training, such as language courses, professional memberships, certifications
- Costs for visa-related fees, NHS surcharge and relocation costs related to starting the fellowship (for the fellow)
- Travel expenses
- Additional costs arising from secondments, research trips, optional placement

- Expected that host(s) will provide the necessary equipment to undertake the research
- If specialist equipment is needed it can be purchased
- The host purchasing the equipment will retain ownership rights – i.e. they will be able to keep it after the fellowship.

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Typical Training Examples

Examples of transferable skills	Examples of advanced research skills
• Entrepreneurship & innovation • Grant writing • Patent applications • IPR Management and Patenting • Leadership/Influencing courses, • Project management • Gender training • Presentation skills • Public engagement • Ethics in Research (RRI) • policy • CV preparation • interview skills • etc.	• Training in new techniques • Open science, Big data, • Scientific writing • Experimental design • Qualitative & quantitative methods • User design • gender • etc

➢ Teaching can be included as a training activity, provided it is a small amount of the fellows time.

How do I break down my research into work packages and deliverables?

- **Work Package**
  - The steps necessary for completion of the project (work plan)
  - Sequence of activities that lead to milestones and deliverables
  - Directly linked to research objectives/research question(s)
  - It is up to you to define and justify your work packages (WP) in accordance with the needs of your project
- **Milestone**
  - Control points to help chart progress
  - Up to you to define
- **Deliverable**
  - Document/output providing information to ensure effective monitoring of the project
  - Up to you to define
- **The Gantt chart (included in the page limit)**
  - Should complement the description of the work plan
  - Add as much detail as needed for your proposal

Examples of work Packages	Interdisciplinary literature review. Desk research, seminar & conference
	Archival research. Identification, collection, and analysis of primary sources
	Training
	Writing, editing, review
	….
Examples of Deliverables	Career development plan
	Data management plan
	Dissemination and Exploitation plan
	Submit article 1
	research presentations
	…
Examples of milestones	
	training needs analysis
	literature review
	draft article 1
	Workshop programme
	…

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How much detail should I include in the Gantt chart?

It is up to you to define and justify your work packages (WP) in accordance with the needs of your project

All WP should be included in the GANTT chart

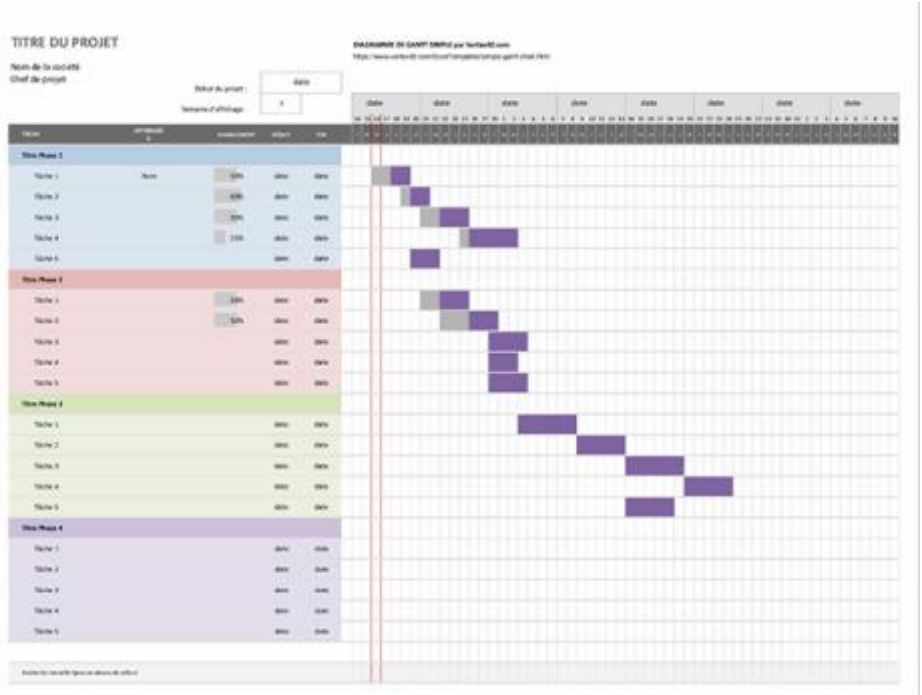
Would recommend a WP for training

Set out in terms of the number of months from the start of the project

Start at month 1 as opposed to an exact start date

Needs to include (at least):

- Work Packages titles (there should be at least 1 WP)
- Indicate all major deliverables, including required deliverable
- Indicate all major milestones
- Include secondment(s), if applicable
- Include non-academic sector placement, if applicable
- Include planning for dissemination, exploitation and communication activities



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How to address Open Science in my Proposal

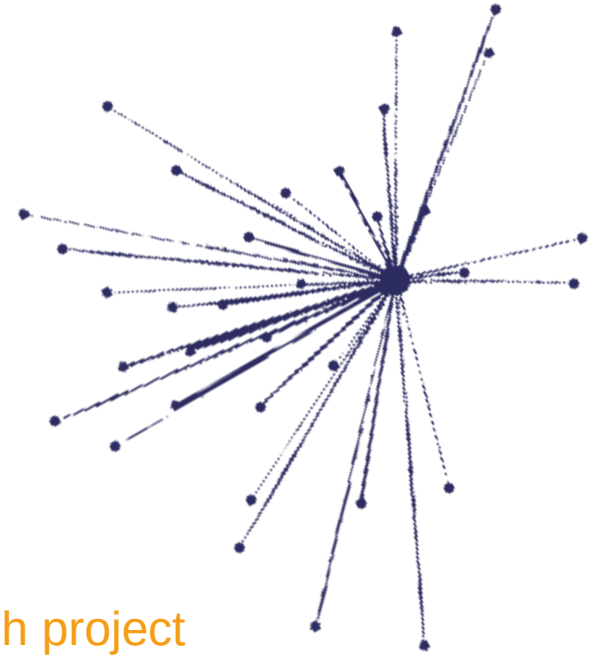
Throughout the entire life cycle

OpenScience.eu
Open Science
Digital Creation Centre
How to evaluate open science in Horizon Europe Proposals

- Methods, Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation
- Publications, research data and other forms of research output
- Use of appropriate licensing
- Activities include but are not limited to:
  - Preregistration of research protocols and processes provides transparency and avoids bias during data collection, selection and analysis
  - Registered reports: Peer review before results are known to align scientific values and practices
  - Share Data, materials, or code during project implementation not just at the end
  - Need to be well documented, curated and managed
  - Crowed sourcing
  - Posting a preprint (pre-review manuscript)
  - Published findings are available together with analysis code, metadata, a data dictionary, codebook etc to ensure reproducibility of results
  - Publish in open access journals
  - Using publishers that allow for open access monographs
  - Open access to data – use trusted data repositories
  - Data management (Data management plans are a mandatory deliverable)

❖ Providing researchers with the skills and competencies they need to practise Open Science
❖ Strongly encouraged to use European Open Science Cloud (ESOC) federated repositories, and or Open Research Europe open access publishing platform, but not mandatory

Open Science and Ethics



When sharing data you need to follow the FAIR principles

Also need to consider data protection and privacy

- EC pages on data protection
- Ethics and data protection
- Guidelines, Recommendations, Best Practices on Data Protection

Data management plan

- Specifies how research data will be handled both during and after a research project
- identifies key actions and strategies to ensure that research data are of a high-quality, **secure**, sustainable, and accessible and reusable (to the extent possible)
  - Will need to think about what can be shared and what can't be shared (and why)
  - Are there steps that could be taken/need to be taken to be able to share the data?

❖As open as possible, as closed as necessary

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Ethics & Security questions

UK applicants should answer ‘yes’ on questions about non-European activity

Follow Horizon Europe guidance document:
‘How to complete your ethics self-assessment’

This will not affect eligibility.

Answering ‘yes’ on certain questions in Part A may require a brief text response from the applicant in Part B

Applies to work being done at the host organisation and any associated partners, as well as on research trips

Applicants may be requested to upload documents related to particular questions.

Page references to relevant sections of proposal for each issue if you answer ‘Yes’

All funded projects will go through an Ethical review

EC guidance:

- Identifying serious and complex ethics issues in EU-funded research
- How to ensure research projects meet EU ethics standards : a guidance document for researchers complying with requests from the European Commission Ethics Reviews

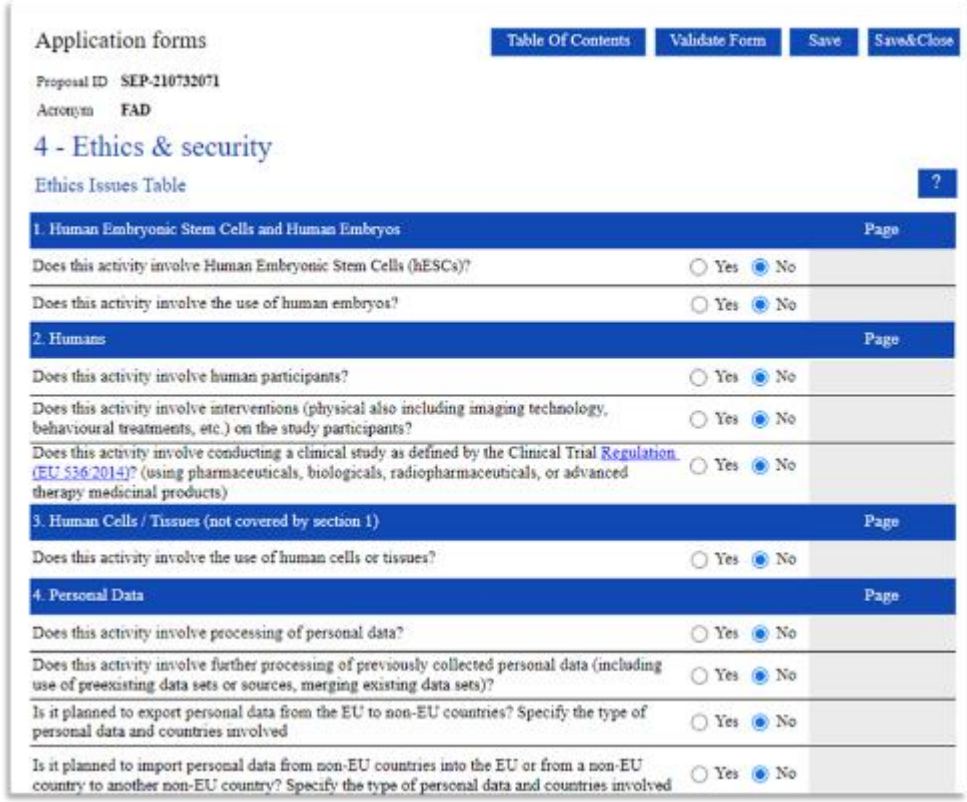
Application forms

Table Of Contents | Validate Form | Save | Save&Close

Proposal ID SEP-210732071

Acronym FAD

4 - Ethics & security

Ethics Issues Table ?

1. Human Embryonic Stem Cells and Human Embryos		Page
Does this activity involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?	○ Yes ◉ No	
Does this activity involve the use of human embryos?	○ Yes ◉ No	
2. Humans		**Page**
Does this activity involve human participants?	○ Yes ◉ No	
Does this activity involve interventions (physical also including imaging technology, behavioural treatments, etc.) on the study participants?	○ Yes ◉ No	
Does this activity involve conducting a clinical study as defined by the Clinical Trial Regulation (EU 536/2014)? (using pharmaceuticals, biologicals, radiopharmaceuticals, or advanced therapy medicinal products)	○ Yes ◉ No	
3. Human Cells / Tissues (not covered by section 1)		**Page**
Does this activity involve the use of human cells or tissues?	○ Yes ◉ No	
4. Personal Data		**Page**
Does this activity involve processing of personal data?	○ Yes ◉ No	
Does this activity involve further processing of previously collected personal data (including use of preexisting data sets or sources, merging existing data sets)?	○ Yes ◉ No	
Is it planned to export personal data from the EU to non-EU countries? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	○ Yes ◉ No	
Is it planned to import personal data from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	○ Yes ◉ No	

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Expected Impact

Steps towards the achievement of the expected impacts of the project over time

- Begins with the results, through to dissemination, exploitation and communication
- Maps the contribution to the expected outcomes in the destination and wider work programme
- Depending on the project may address only 1 or more of the three expected impacts

How to address the impact section

MSCA Expected Impact

- **Long term impact**
  - Impact on your research area and related research areas
  - long term effects on society
  - Foster the culture of open science, innovation and entrepreneurship
- **Researcher Level**
  - Increasing skills and employability
  - Increasing research output
  - Greater contribution to the knowledge-based economy and society
- **Organisational Level**
  - Enhanced cooperation and stronger networks.
  - Better transfer of knowledge between sectors and disciplines.
  - Boosting of R&I capacity among participating organisations
- **Systems Level**
  - Increase mobility of researchers
  - Strengthen Europe's human capital base in R&I
  - more entrepreneurial and better trained researchers
  - Better communication of R&I results to society
  - Increase quality of research and innovation in Europe

Section 2. Impact

- **The Researcher**
  - How will the project enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher?
  - How will the project increase the skills, creativity and innovative capacity of the researcher?
- **The research area**
  - How will the project advance the field?
  - What impact, if any will the project have on related research areas?
  - Will the project stimulate now collaborations?
- **Societal Impact**
  - Link to any relevant EU policy priorities & global challenges?
  - How will the project impact the life of citizens in the EU now or in the future?
  - How will the project strengthening the uptake of R&I in society?
  - Will the project contribute towards the SDG?
- **Economic Impact**
  - How will the project contribution to the knowledge-based economy
  - How will the project strengthen links with the non-academic sector
- **The organisation(s)** – includes the supervisor
  - How will the project increase cooperation, collaboration and networks

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- ❑ Not an exhaustive list
- ❑ No expectations that all projects will have societal and or economic impact

Questions about evaluation

Based on Excellent, Impact and Implementation

- Evaluators guidance document is available on the How to Apply Page

Evaluators

- Will be experts but not necessarily expertise in your exact area of research
- Like to use people that have experience with MSCA
- Evaluators can spend between 3-5 hrs per applications from initial read through to writing the individual ESR, not including the time spent on the consensus report
- They are under **VERY tight deadlines**

CV of the researcher

- Fellowships will be awarded to the most talented researchers as shown by the proposed research and their track record (Curriculum Vitae, section 4), **in relation to their level of experience**.
- CV may also be relevant for other aspects of the evaluation. For example:
  - *Clarity and quality of transfer of knowledge/training for the development of the researcher in light of the research objectives*

Evaluation Criteria: Applicant and Supervisor

- Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills
- Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host
- Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher and contribution to his/her skills development
- Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements

Excellence	Impact	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)	Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher and contribution to his/her skills development	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages
Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the quality of open science practices)	Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities	Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements
Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts	
Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills		
50%	30%	20%
Weighting		

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CV of the researcher

Provide FULL dates that match Part A !

Use and READ the template in the proposal!

Include your Researcher ID

Think carefully about the evaluation criteria

Explain research career gaps and/or unconventional paths

Use narrative to help highlight key achievements

- Qualitative approach

Explain the importance /significance of your publications (qualitative)

- If you are not the first or lead author on publications, briefly explain your contribution
- Can include forthcoming and under review
- Some people include submitted

Can include activities done before the award of the PhD

Conference/seminar participation

- were you invited/did you organize the eventwere you selected via peer review/talk/poster presentation/panel member…

Include all your areas of experience:

- teaching, reviewing, consultancy, intersectoral experience, supervision, event organisation, public outreach, committee involvement etc.

Think about all your activities, including public engagement activities, that can help to demonstrate your:

- ability to reach and re-enforce a position of professional maturity in research,
- excellence and expertise
- ability to benefit from the fellowship
- to transfer knowledge
  - E.g. patents, research expeditions etc.

❖ Track record is evaluated against other researchers at your career stage, discipline and sector

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Two-Way Transfer of Knowledge

Includes previous knowledge accumulated before the start of the fellowship AND knowledge/opportunities generated through the fellowship

Describe the complementarity between the researcher, the supervisor(s) and the host organisation(s)

Outline previously acquired knowledge and skills that you will transfer to organisation

Rationale and added-value of the non-academic placement (if applicable) and secondments

Detail how any scientific (unique) expertise can be transferred to the host organisation(s)

Demonstrate, if relevant, how you will be providing new network opportunities for the host Institution(s).

How the researcher will receive knowledge at the host(s)?
How the researcher will transfer knowledge to the host(s)?
How will the researcher gain new knowledge during the fellowship at the hosting organisation(s).?
What knowledge does the researcher already have?
What knowledge does the researcher need from the host organisation(s)?
What new knowledge will be gained during the fellowship and how it will be acquired?

Researcher ⇔ Host Organisation	Other Organisations ⇔ Researcher
Knowledge gained before fellowship	Supervisor, lab/team, other members of the department, other members of the organisations, students etc Supervisor, lab/team, other members of the department, other members of the organisations, students etc. Knowledge gained before fellowship
Knowledge gained during the fellowship	Supervisor, lab/team, other members of the department, other members of the organisations, students etc. Supervisor, lab/team, other members of the department, other members of the organisations, students etc. Knowledge gained during the fellowship

Skill to be transferred	How it will be transfers	Audience (who it is being transferred to)	Benefit to host(s) or researcher

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It is better for the applicants to show the fellow will collaborate with one or more groups?

There is no requirement to include partner organisations or collaborators in a MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship application.

What resources/training/infrastructure/support is needed to successfully undertake the research project?

- Who/where is the best place to get this support?

What are the career aspirations of the researcher? What are the skills and experiences needed to achieve those goals?

- Who/where is the best place to get this support?

What are the best mechanisms to ensure that the fellow gets the necessary support and access to the necessary expertise?

- At the host organisation, through short research visits, going on a secondment(s), spending time in the non-academic sector (placement)? Or combinations of?

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❖ If the fellow is spending time outside of the host organisation, remember to think about the two-way transfer of knowledge. Hosting arrangements, quality of the supervision etc.

How do I address Gender Under Section 1.1?

Importance of gender in Horizon Europe

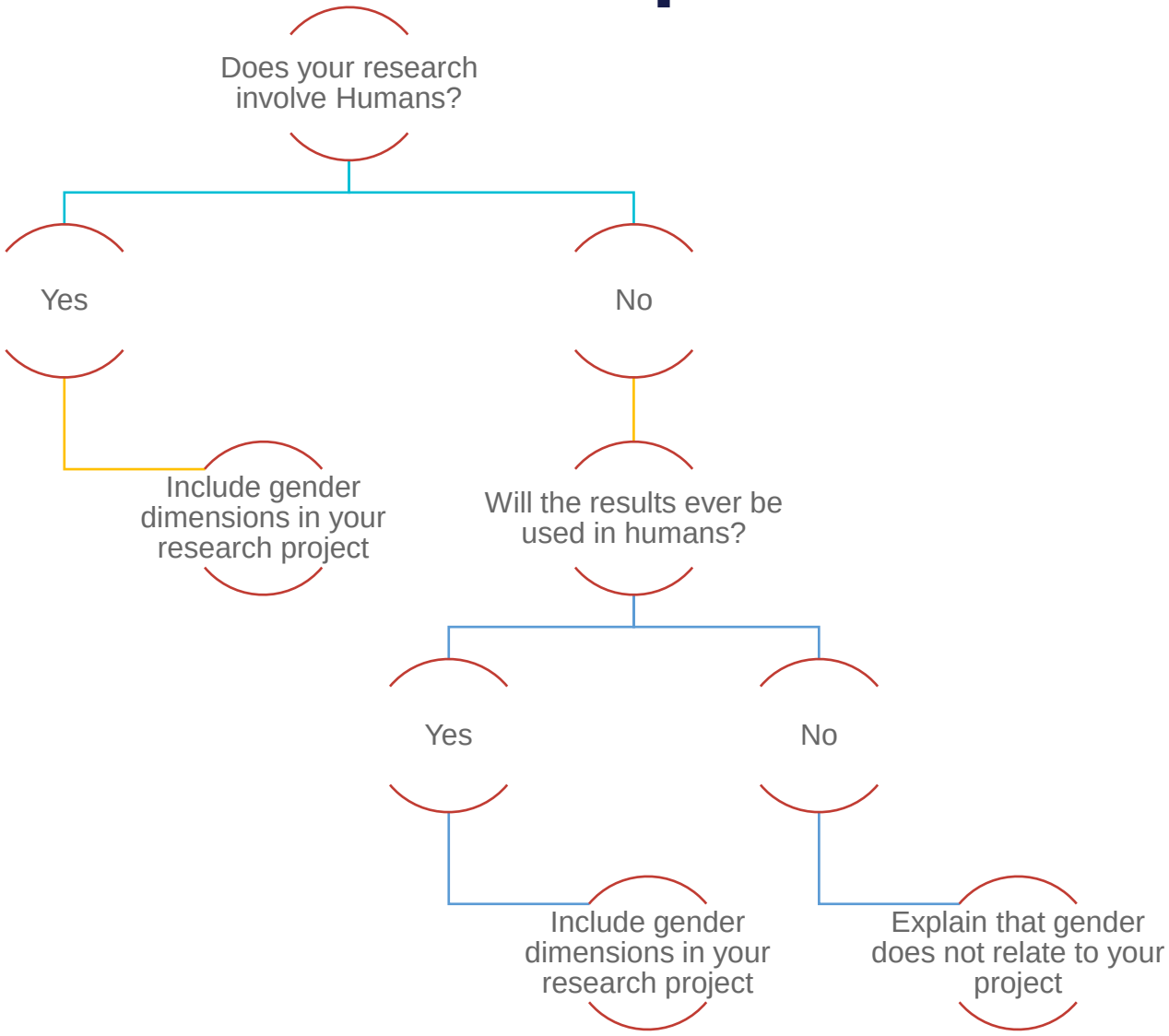
- Every cell is sexed and every person has a gender
- Adds a valuable dimension to research and can take it in a new direction
- Aims to eliminate gender inequalities and intersecting socio-economic inequalities
- Careful attention will be paid to ensuring gender mainstreaming throughout research and innovation activities
- Broader understanding of discrimination looking at the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender (intersectionality)
- Integration of the gender (and intersectionality) dimension of research and innovation

Evaluated under excellence

- Have you thought about how gender norms/assumptions influence the research area?
- Will the results of the project, now or at any time in the future, be applicable to people?
- Have you considered how gender and interconnected social categorizations, such as race, class etc., shape your research question and desired outcomes?
- Are gender norms embedded in the concepts, theories and models used by your research field?
- Do the chosen methodology(ies) ensure that gender, and other connected social characterisations are considered and investigated?

❖ Gender Innovations Subject Area Checklists , Gender in Research Toolkit , Gender Equality Strategy, Gender Equality in Research and Innovation

Addressing Gender In Your Proposal



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- If gender is not relevant to you project, this needs to be clearly explained – don't just leave it out.

How can applicant effectively demonstrate their capacity to complete the proposed work?

Have a well thought out and effective work plan as demonstrated in the text and in the Gantt chart

Clearly articulate the researchers professional experiences and skills (the CV)

Where there are known gaps in the researcher experience/skills against the needs of the project, clearly explain how those gaps will be addressed and in line with the proposed work plan

Having clear research objectives, and clearly link to the overarching research questions and detailed methodology

❖Be realistic

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Is it possible to act as supervisor for two different applicants?

A supervisor can support more than one MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship Application.

A Supervisor can host more than one MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship grant holder.

A researcher can only apply for one MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship.

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Methodology Vs Implementation

Implementation

- The phase where the project is actually undertaken (executed)
- Putting the project plan into action
- Also includes project monitoring, dissemination, communication and exploitation

Methodology

- A contextual framework for research
- Research design
- Set of procedures (experiments/ activities) that need to be undertaken in order to reach the research objectives/research question

Proposal Advice

Read all call documentation and the evaluation criteria

Make it easy for the evaluators to find the information

Use clear and concise language

Explain country/research area specific jargon

Include diagrams, images, tables if appropriate

Research previous and current projects

Find colleagues to proof read drafts with the evaluation criteria

Will take time to write

Consider any relevant EU policy documents

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Pitfalls To Avoid

- Progress beyond the state of the art poorly explained
- Highly complex proposal
- Unclear research objective
- Proposals not easy to read and no consistent
- IPR, Impact and Risk neglected
- Lack of interdisciplinarity
- Gender Aspects ignored
- Non-academic sector ignored
- Transferable skills neglected
- Training programme unfocused, or not clearly presented
- Training project is not integrated with the research project
- Lack of thought to future career prospects of the research
- Lack of detail with regards to integration into host organisation (s)
- Knowledge exchange is not clearly presented

Evaluators feedback

Strengths

- The proposal is ambitious and clearly goes beyond the state-of-the-art.
- The proposal foresees articulated strategy and methodology which are convincing and appropriate.
- The proposed open science practices are suitable for this kind of project and go beyond the mandatory
- Good interdisciplinarity of the proposal
- The hosting arrangements appear very strong and the high quality and capacity of the host are clear
- The impact of the new competencies and skills acquired during the fellowship for the future career of the researcher is adequately identified
- The measures to enhance career possibilities and employability are credible

Weakness

- The proposal fails to properly address aspects such as transferable or innovation skills
- Risk assessment is not properly addressed and the contingency plans are very generic.
- The proposal provides very limited and generic details about specific arrangements at the host institution
- The track record of the supervisor is not adequately described
- The expected broader scientific, societal and economic impacts and the overall impact of the results beyond the scope and duration of the
- The timing of the planned activities is not convincing
- The work plan is too broadly described and shows several inconsistencies

Important Documents and Resources

Can be found on the call page and the MSCA How to Apply page:

- MSCA Work Programme
- Guide for applicants
- Proposal template and instructions
- Guidance on how to calculate 8 years of research experience
- Horizon Europe Programme Guide
- MSCA Grant Agreement
- The evaluation form
- Dedicated FAQs

Other Resources

- MSCA Net Handbook
- Previously funded projects
- MSCA NCP Information for Applicants Events

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