



Webinars on MSCA Individual Fellowship 2020 19 and 20 May 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

Description and definitions

Q- Sorry, I am confused about the 4 years of experience. I hold the PhD from 2018 and I publish from 2017. Is it ok?

A- The eligibility rule is either 4 year of research experience or holding a PhD title.

Q- What are specific requirements to prove 4 years of research? Publication? Master's degree? To clarify, 4 years up to the application deadline? Or the beginning of the research?

A- It is 4 years up to the call deadline. Experience in research can be proven by e.g. a work contract, a scholarship, a study certificate.

Q- Could the residency program after a master's degree in medicine and surgery be considered as the research for at least four years?

A- In the context of Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, Medical Doctor (MD) studies are not considered as equivalent to PhD studies. For MDs, the requirement of at least 4 years of full-time research experience applies. Researcher without a PhD degree at the Call deadline must clearly explain how the full-time equivalent research experience is calculated by filling in the specific Table reported in Part B2.

Q- What is the definition of "Long-Term resident of EU"? What is the minimum duration?

A- Long term EU resident is a person that was legal resident in a European Country (either Member state or Associated country) for 5 consecutive year in the past. Periods of absence from the territory of the Member

State or Horizon 2020 Associated Country are into account for the calculation of this period where they are shorter than 6 consecutive months and do not exceed in total ten months within this period of five years.

Q- Is UK considered Europe now or extra UE?

A- UK is still considered under the European countries eligible as host countries.

Q- Is it our choice - 12 o 24 months for the outgoing phase? Or does it depend on the allocated funding?

A- It is your choice; outgoing phase can go from a minimum of 12 to a maximum of 24 months (it can also be any number in-between).

Q- For a Global fellowship, it is necessary to have already passed time in third country?

A- No. In fact, it is better if you did not spend time there, because of the mobility rule which, in case of GF, applies to the third country of the outgoing phase).

Q- For the returning country, could it be in any European country? or do you need to be affiliated with the returning country

A- Yes, it can be any European Country, but you need to decide it in the application phase.

Q- Can UNIVR be my “return destination” (in case of GF) even if I’m currently a UNIVR fellow?

A- Yes, it can.

Q- Do widening countries work also for Individual fellowships?

A- Yes, any European country can be chosen for Individual fellowships. If the European country is one of the defined widening countries, when you apply for the MSCA-IF-2020 call, you can also choose to be evaluated under the widening call, in case your proposal is not retained for funding under the MSCA_IF 2020. Only European Fellowships can qualify for the Widening Call. Global Fellowships are excluded.

Q- What is exactly a secondment?

A- Secondments are temporary transfers of the experienced researcher in partner organization.

Q- Can a secondment take place in the United Kingdom?

A- At the moment yes, it can.

Q- Can we spend secondment 3 months e.g. in Spain and 3 months in Italy?

A- Yes, it is possible if the duration of the Individual fellowship is more than 18 months.

Q- For GF, can we have a secondment in a non-European country?

A- No, secondments can occur only in a European country, either a Member State of the European Union (UK included) or in an Associated country.

Q- For Global Fellowships: is it possible to plan an outgoing phase composed by a 3 months secondment period in Europe plus 9 months in a Third Country?

A- Yes, it is possible.

Q- Can I make the secondment period in Italy, being a post-doc of the university of Verona?

A- Yes, you can.

Q- Is eligible to apply for GP and EF simultaneously with the same project?

A- No, it is not possible.

Q- Are we able to hold two fellowships at once?

A- No.

Q- Can I apply as current granted post-doc (governmental funding)?

A- Yes, you can.

Q- Please, if we used the funding like INVITE students (part under MSCA funding) can we apply next year for individual fellowship?

A- If someone has already received a MSCA fellowship (e.g. within an ITN project or Cofund project like INVITE), he or she can apply for an individual fellowship. He or she has just to be eligible, i.e. to have a PhD title or at least 4 years of experience in research at the call deadline

Q- If I obtain the grant, when will I be supposed to start the mobility time?

A- The mobility time will start together with your project. The starting date is defined by the Grant Agreement and will be agreed with an appointed Project Officer.

Q- If I have a regional fellowship ending next year can I apply for Marie curie?

A- In principle yes, depending on the timing (see timetable on page 5 of the Guide for applicants). In any case your regional fellowship must be ended or suspended before you get the MSC Individual fellowship.

Q- Is there any online platform where host institutions do recruit? so we can see if there is some research group of interest?

A- Yes, you can check Euraxess: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>

How to apply

Q- Is the PIC ID unique per application or organization?

A- The PIC number is specific of the host institution. You need to ask for it at the host institution itself.

Q- What are descriptors in the Part A?

A- Descriptors are a list of disciplines and sub-disciplines used to label your proposal and identify the most suitable reviewers.

Q- If a child is about to be born after the deadline submission, are we eligible for the family allowance?

A- The family status of a researcher will be determined at the date of deadline of the call (i.e. 09 September 2020) and will not be revised during the lifetime of the action.

Q- About military services in Greece, I have not completed yet, but I have a document proofing that as a researcher I can work or study. Is it ok? Will I need a formal document to submit?

A- You can just fill in the administrative form with the information about your military service. You do not need any document at that stage. If necessary, the Research Executive Agency will ask you for further information or supporting documents

Q- Is it not necessary to submit any document?

A- If you refer to PhD title or any other document, you do not need to upload anything. All information required is included either in Part A or B

Evaluation and Statistics

Q- What does it mean “above threshold but not retained” (since it is the greatest percentage)? no way of knowing which criteria I did not meet?

A- Your proposal was good but not enough to get funded. You will receive an evaluation report with comments on each criterion

Q- If I don't get selected, can I reapply the year after?

A- Yes you can. Maybe in the new funding programme some restrictions could be introduced, but not for the call 2021 as far as we know.

Scientific Proposal

Q- Do you need to have more than one objective?

A- There is no standard rule in choosing the number of objectives. They must be only consistent to the activities and the time of the project. In general, they are between 2 and 4, but be realistic and coherent. Remember the SMART rule for objectives: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound

Q- Is any methodology more “appreciated” than others (qualitative vs quantitative)?

A- As for the objectives, there is no specific rule for the methodology either. It needs to be well motivated with respect to the activities of the project.

Q- In the medical field there are a lot of disciplines: can we say that the project is interdisciplinary, if I team up some of those disciplines?

A- Yes, it is interdisciplinary to the extent the two medical disciplines are very different from each other.

Q- What does "gender dimension" refer to?

A- It refers to the sex and gender factors that might influence the research outputs.

Q- If gender issues are not related to proposal, should at least a statement be provided?

A- It is not necessary, if you need to save space! But it would be appreciated to show that you thought about it.

Q- How can you prove the involvement of the supervisor in your application?

A- In sections 1.2 and 1.3 you need to explain how the supervisor is involved in your project, how the research you will perform with him/her is related to his/her research and how you will be involved in the research group of the supervisor. It is really evident, in these sections, if the supervisor was collaborating to the writing of the proposal!

Q- How can we foresee what are the outcomes (benefits) for our career? I believe that is the experience itself that improves one's skills-set.

A- For sure, but you need to have a clear idea of what your proposal will bring to you personally, in terms of new skills and opportunities. For example, if you have no experience in managing a project, you will learn it with your Marie Curie Fellowship!

Q- Open access publication should be free of charge for all scientific journals to be FAIR for all.

All publications on peer-reviewed journals must be accessible to everybody free of charge, following either the gold road (publication on open-access journals) or green road (deposit on institutional repository with open access after the embargo period).

The concept of FAIR refers indeed to research data: you are required to store your research data on a repository which is easy to find (findable), it should be accessible to everybody in way that can data can be used with different software (interoperable) and thar can be re-used for other research activities (reusability).

Q- Communication starts before the dissemination. Is it correct?

A- Communication activities starts at the beginning of the project, while dissemination activities starts when the results are produced, so during the project.

Q- In case of projects in the Humanities, if I understood correctly, articles and publications are a good way to structure the work packages and provide a timetable. Is it correct?

A- Many applicants in Humanities feel comfortable to think of their project as a monograph to be prepared, and therefore they tend to think of research work packages as chapters of this final monograph. Maybe it works for you too as a heuristic to analyse the 'parts' (I.e. work packages) of your research plan.

However, just consider this point. Are you able to reconstruct the actual work done by a thinker starting from their monograph? Probably you would not: usually a monograph just presents the achieved results and it barely explains the steps followed and even the wrong tracks.

So, even if you figure out your research work plan as the table of contents of a publication, make sure that the description of your work plan works without any reference to a final monograph.

Q- Can you make an example of risks in case of projects in the Humanities (with a very theoretical approach), please?

The analysis of the risks depends on the specific project. Here we can just give some examples.

For instance, if you need to visit an archive or a library, you must be sure you can access them. Sometimes, archives or libraries are closed for maintenance, or do not allow for access to antique collections, volumes, etcetera.

If you need to develop a classification to be used in a next phase of your research, the classification might turn out not to be complete or applicable.

Q- What about covid19 related risks in relation to fieldwork?

There is for sure a risk, you need to find an appropriate countermeasure, depending on the fieldwork. You might decide to postpone the work on field, or to substitute this type of activity with another activity (e.g. instead of interview people on the field you might decide to send an online questionnaire). Any change must be agreed with your supervisor(s) and with the European Commission.

Q- What about if the fellow cannot go to the host institution because of COVID-19?

This is not properly a risk to be included in the risk management plan since it would occur not during the fellowship but before it.

In any case, you can delay the start of your fellowship, or you can work for home, always under the supervision of your supervisor. You will need to discuss with the European Commission.

Q- My nationality is Greek and I was abroad for long period, can I apply to a host institution in Greece?

For a European Fellowship Standard, you can choose a Greek host institution only if you comply with the mobility rule, i.e. if you have not lived / worked in Greece for more the 12 months in the 3 years before the call deadline.

For the specific panels Career Restart (CAR), Reintegration (RI) and Society and Enterprise (SE), the mobility rule slightly changes: not more than 36 months in the 5 years before the call deadline.

For a Global Fellowship, the mobility rule refers to the chosen third country. So, your host institution for the return phase can be located in Greece.

Check the mobility rule in the Guide for applicants, page 19 for a general explanation and page 11 to 17 for the specific types of fellowship.

Q- Apart from social media involvement or project's presentation to stakeholders, what public engagement should include?

A- You can ask the host institution what activities are usually foreseen for public engagement. For instance, at UNIVR we have an event for children where we show research results.

Q- How is it the estimated time to complete the application?

A- It obviously depends on your experience in grant writing, on your tasks (e.g. teaching or publications to be prepared). In any case, 3 to 4 months before the deadline is a good average estimation. So, start right now!

Q- Do I need to provide short CV of supervising person at a secondment institution?

A- No, you do not need it, as a separated file, but you mention why you choose him/her in Part B1 Section 3.1. In addition, in Part B2 Section 5 you need to describe the host organisation for the secondment, where you can describe the expertise of the supervisor.

Q- What budget items are covered by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship?

The budget category “B1 – Research, training and networking costs” covers:

- costs for training and networking activities that contribute directly to the researcher’s career development (e.g. participation in conferences, trips related to the project, training, language courses, seminars, lab material, books, library records, publication costs),
- costs for research expenses,
- costs for visa-related fees and travel expenses,
- additional costs arising from secondments (e.g. travel costs, accommodation costs for optional secondments).

As of the Global Fellowship, this budget category covers also the travel costs to reach your host institution in the third country the first time. In any case, any other travel which are not related to research and training activities are to be covered with your fellowship: e.g. the travel to go on holiday.

For details, see the Guide for applicant, page 24.

Q- Does the fellowship also cover the cost of experimental material?

A- Yes, it does. You can see the voice of budget related to Research, training and networking costs

Q- Can I buy software licences?

A- Yes, it is possible. However, UNIVR has many software licences already available for all the UNIVR research staff.

Q- Does Marie Curie research funding covers field work such as population-based studies?

Yes, why not! The MSC Individual fellowship has a bottom-up approach: it is open to any discipline and any research subject or topic.

Q- Can you make amendments to the budget or is it fixed?

A- No, you cannot, it is fixed.