UKRO Horizon 2020 Condensed

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)

What are the MSCAs?

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) are the successor schemes to the FP7 Marie Curie Actions. They support researchers establish a stable career path in Europe where mobility is a key requirement. The MSCAs are a 'bottom-up' scheme in that they are open to all research and innovation areas, except those covered by the Euratom programme. Applications can be submitted by researchers and innovation staff from universities, research institutions, research infrastructures, businesses and other socio-economic actors from the 28 EU Member States (MS), the Horizon 2020 Associated Countries (AC) and other third countries (TC).

The following schemes, often referred to as 'actions', make up the MSCA Work Programme (for full details please see the Work Programme text).

Innovative Training Networks (ITN)

ITNs aim to train a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial and innovative researchers by providing doctoral training of early-stage researchers (post-graduate researchers) through projects implemented by partnerships of universities, research institutions, research infrastructures, businesses, SMEs and other socio-economic actors from across Europe and beyond. There are three strands to the ITN scheme, the European Training Networks (ETN), the European Industrial Doctorates (EID) and the European Joint Doctorates (EJD).

Individual Fellowships (IF)

IFs aim to enhance the creative and innovative potential of experienced researchers (post-doctoral researchers) by diversifying their skill acquisition through advanced training and international and/or inter-sectoral mobility. There is also support for individual researchers to restart their careers after a break from research and to reintegrate researchers back into Europe where they have spent time elsewhere, as well as non-academic host organisations.

Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE)

RISE aims to promote international and inter-sectoral collaboration through research and innovation staff exchanges that enable knowledge sharing and advanced science and innovation development. The scheme supports staff exchanges between Europe and third countries (international) and/or between academic and non-academic partners (inter-sectoral). RISE supports exchanges for early-stage researchers, experienced researchers as well as administrative, managerial and technical staff.

Version: December 2019 - *This factsheet reflects information available on the date issued. UKRO factsheets are produced for the benefit of staff in UKRO sponsor and subscriber institutions only.*

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> ### Cofunding of regional, national and international programmes (COFUND)
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> COFUND aims 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 for the part-funding of multi-annual doctoral or fellowship programmes run at regional, national or international level.

> ### Researchers' Night (NIGHT)
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> NIGHT aims to increase public awareness of research and innovation activities. Research careers are promoted at NIGHT events to encourage young people to embark on studies and positions in this area. Funding is to support the implementation of public and media events all held on the European Researchers' Night, the last Friday of September.

Funding, eligibility and project details

The MSCAs are open to all research and innovation areas (except those covered by Euratom). The participation of non-academic actors, e.g. enterprise and SMEs, is encouraged.

The MSCAs fund projects using fixed 'unit costs' for the researcher and the institution. These 'unit costs' are flat rate EU contributions to support the researcher, research costs and institutional costs during the project. A country correction co-efficient applies to some unit costs supporting the researcher. Details of 'unit costs' for 2018-20 are available in the MSCA Work Programme.

Special Needs Lump Sum (SNLS)

Beneficiaries of ITN, IF, RISE and COFUND can apply for a dedicated special needs allowance (SNLS) to support the participation of a recruited researcher/seconded staff. The SNLS, takes the form of a Coordination and Support Action (CSA) and will contribute (up to €60,000 per researcher/staff member) to the additional costs faced by researchers/staff members with disabilities. Beneficiaries of eligible MSCA projects will contacted directly by the Research Executive Agency (REA) when the call opens with application details. The application period then be continuously open, with two cut-off dates.

Third Country Involvement

Individual Fellowships

Individual Fellowships are open to researchers of any nationality who fulfil the specific eligibility criteria as set out in the MSCA Work Programme, though the beneficiary/host institute must be in an EU MS or AC. Global fellowships specifically support researchers to spend between 12 and 24 months at a partner organisation based in a third county, followed by a mandatory 12-month return period at the beneficiary/host organisation.

Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE)

RISE projects encourage the involvement of organisations from the academic and non-academic sectors based in third countries, with specific funding rules for secondments to and from Third Countries. The coordinating organisation must be established in EU MS or AC.

Innovative Training Networks (ITN)

Organisations based in a third country are able to be involved in all of the types of ITN projects. It is recommended that those third country organisation not eligible for funded in H2020 participate as a partner organisations, providing secondments, or other training opportunities. However, the ITN

application form allows organisations based in non-eligible third countries to be listed as beneficiaries. They would need to provide their own funding.

COFUND

The beneficiary/coordinator of a Doctoral or Fellowship Programme must be a legal entity established in an EU MS or AC. However, partner organisations, who provide secondment or training opportunities, or recruit researchers can be based in a third country eligible for Horizon 2020 funding (listed in Annex A to the work programme). Participants from third countries not eligible for EU funding can host, provide secondments or other training opportunities.

Call timings

For each scheme, there is a yearly call, except for NIGHT where the call is every two years.
Call opening and closing times for 2020:

Call identifier	Publication date	Deadline	Call budget, €M
MSCA-SNLS-2019*	26 February 2019	24 April 2019 7 November 2019	1.0
MSCA-ITN-2020	12 September 2019	14 January 2020	530.13
MSCA-RISE-2020	05 December 2019	28 April 2020	80.00
MSCA-IF-2020	08 April 2020	09 September 2020	328.00
MSCA-COFUND-2020	08 April 2020	29 September 2020	100.00
MSCA-NIGHT-2020	08 October 2019	08 January 2020	8.00

MSCA 2019 calls results (where published) are available in the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal (under 'Call updates').

Relevant EU policy areas and developments

The MSCAs support the implementation of the following Europe 2020 Flagship Initiatives: 'Innovation Union', 'Youth on the Move' and 'An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs'. The MSCAs also contribute to the development of the European Research Area (ERA) through 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 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions also significantly contribute to achieving the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Principles of research integrity apply throughout all MSCAs. They also endorse Open Science and the Horizon 2020 Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) cross-cutting issues, including engaging society, integrating gender and ethical dimensions, ensuring access to research outcomes and encouraging formal and informal science education.

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).

More information:

- European Commission Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal for:
ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home
- MSCA Web Page
ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/msca-actions_en
- MSCA Section on Horizon2020 Page
ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/marie-sklodowska-curie-actions
- MSCA How to Manage My Project
ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/how-to/manage-your-project_en
- The MSCA Statistics
ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/msca-numbers_en
- EURAXESS - Researchers in Motion: euraxess.ec.europa.eu/
- Sign up to the UKRO Portal to stay up to date on MSCA under Horizon 2020: ukro.ac.uk
- UKRO MSCA Pre-award factsheet:
www.ukro.ac.uk/subscriber/Factsheets/factsheet_msca_pre_award.pdf
- UKRO MSCA Post-award factsheet:
www.ukro.ac.uk/subscriber/Factsheets/factsheet_msca_post_award.pdf
- For specific questions, contact your assigned UKRO European Advisor.
- UK NCP Helpdesk:
  - Email: **mariecurie-uk@bbsrc.ac.uk**
  - Phone: + 32 2 230 0318
  - **Twitter:** @_UKRO_
  - **UK National Contact Point (NCP) events**
    https://www.ukro.ac.uk/mariecurie/Pages/events.aspx