

UKRO Horizon 2020 Condensed

MSCA Pre-Award Factsheet

Application process

The four main Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) schemes Innovative Training Networks (ITN), Individual Fellowships, Research and Innovation Staff Exchanges (RISE), and Co-funding of regional, national and international programmes (COFUND) have annual calls. The Coordination and Support Actions supported through Researchers' Night have a biannual call which will run in 2020. Below you can find the deadlines and relevant budget for the calls in 2020;

Call identifier	Publication date	Deadline	Call budget, €M
MSCA-ITN-2020	12 September 2019	14 January 2020	530
MSCA-RISE-2020	5 December 2019	28 April 2020	80
MSCA-IF-2020	8 April 2020	9 September 2020	328
MSCA-COFUND-2019	8 April 2020	29 September 2020	100
MSCA-NIGHT-2020	8 October 2019	9 January 2020	8

As is the case for all Horizon 2020 opportunities, MSCA calls for proposals are published on the Funding and Tenders Opportunities Portal (FTOP) and the entire application process should be completed online.

Before starting to draft the proposal, applicants should take the time to read all the call documents and familiarise themselves with the specific rules related to each MSC Action. In addition to the Work Programme, the European Commission publishes detailed Guides for Applicants for each MSCA call and makes Frequently Asked Questions available in the online database.

UKRO, in its capacity as the UK MSCA National Contact Point, organises information events for UK applicants before the call deadlines. Participation is free of charge and information is published in advance on the UKRO Portal. UKRO subscribers can contact their European Advisor with specific queries and ask them to cover MSCA during their UKRO Annual Visit as well.

Participation options

Applications have to be submitted by legal entities based in an EU Member State or a Horizon 2020 Associated Country, though participation from other third countries is also possible and encouraged. There are different entities involved in projects, with different roles and obligations:

Beneficiaries are signatories to the Grant Agreement, receive funding, claim costs, and take complete responsibility for executing the proposed programme. They contribute directly to the implementation of the project, depending on the scheme, by recruiting, supervising, sending on secondments and hosting and training researchers. Individual Fellowships and COFUND projects are **mono-beneficiary** projects, whereas RISE and ITNs are **multi-beneficiary** schemes, where beneficiaries form a consortium led by the coordinator.

In all types of MSCA projects it is possible to involve **Partner organisations** that are not signatories to the Grant Agreement, but complement the project, usually by offering training and secondment opportunities to researchers. The eligibility criteria, which may cover where the Partner organisations can be based, are described for each action in the call documents. Partner organisations cannot directly claim any costs from the project. Instead, the beneficiaries would need to reimburse the partner organisations for their activities in the research training programme.

Fellows are central to most MSCA projects. These are individuals recruited as Early Stage Researchers or Experienced Researchers. In RISE projects it is also possible to involve technicians and administrative/managerial staff in the secondments. It is never possible for individuals to apply

directly for MSCA, even in Individual Fellowships they always need a host institution who will be the formal applicant.

MSCA encourage collaborations of academic and non-academic organisations. The MSCA definition of the **academic sector** includes universities and higher education institutions (public and private) awarding degrees, as well as non-profit research institutions (public and private), and international European interest organisations. The **non-academic** sector in MSCA includes all non-academic workplaces of researchers, from industry to business (including SMEs), government, civil society organisations (such as non-profit or charitable organisations), cultural institutions, museums, hospitals, and international organisations. The status of an organisation is ultimately determined by the legal validation of the entity by the Commission services, and can be viewed through the Participant Portal.

Financial rules

The financial support for MSCA projects is calculated on the basis of eligible person-months and takes the form of grants covering up to 100% of the costs. Funding is exclusively in the form of **unit costs**. The MSCA grants are split into:

- Researcher unit costs – to cover salary costs (or secondment costs in RISE projects); and
- Institutional unit costs – to cover research, training, management and overheads costs.

The MSCA budget is automatically calculated in the online proposal system and is based on the number of person-months indicated in the application. More details on MSCA unit costs are available in UKRO MSCA Post-Award Factsheet.

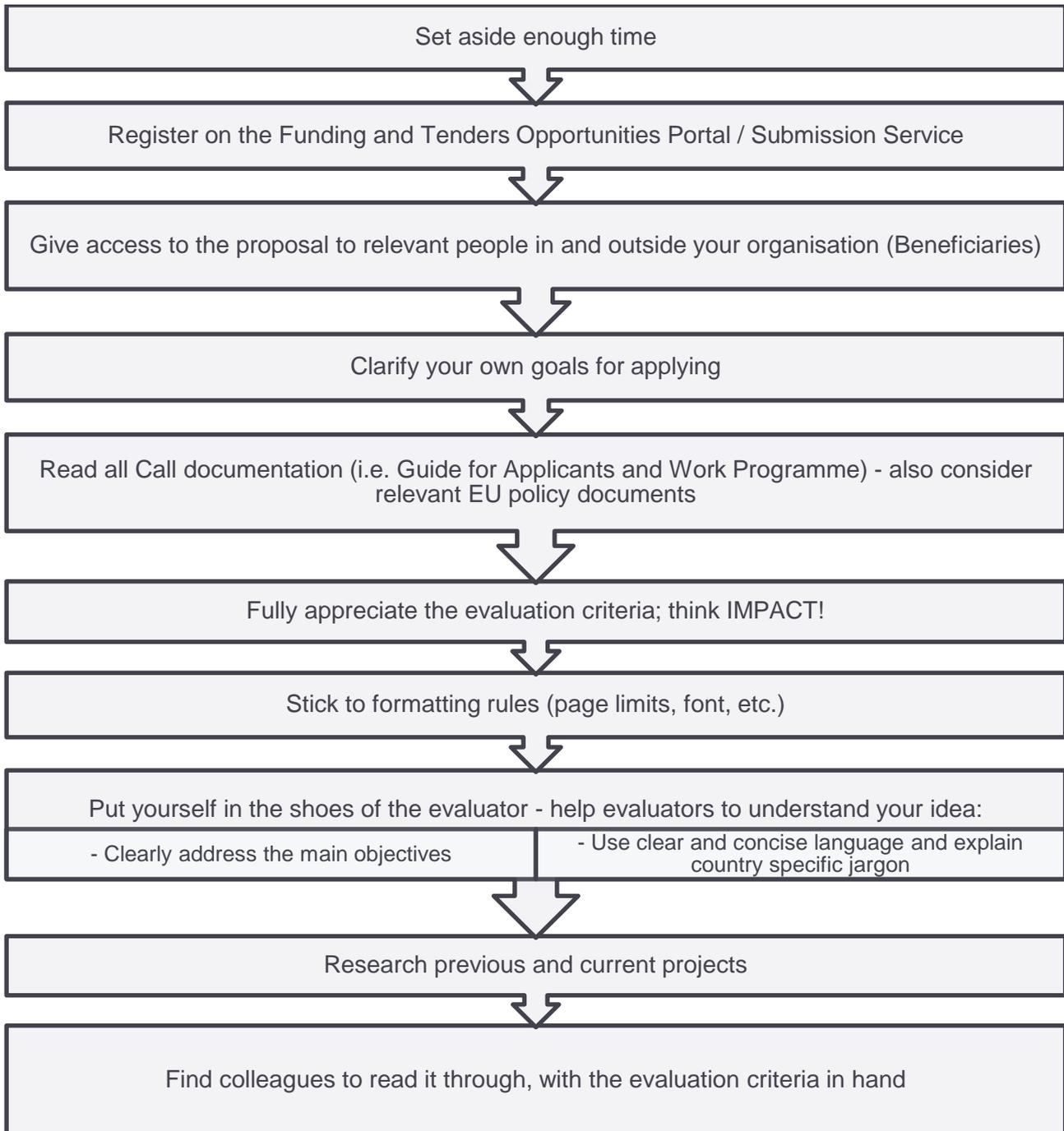
Evaluation process

The evaluation of proposals is carried out by the Research Executive Agency (REA) with the assistance of independent experts. Each proposal would normally be assessed by at least three evaluators. Proposals need to be submitted to one of eight scientific panels and are evaluated against the pre-determined evaluation criteria: Excellence, Impact and Implementation. Weighting factors and thresholds are also applied. The evaluation process is explained in detail in the Guide for Applicants. Applicants are notified of the results within five months of the deadline. The **success rates** in previous years were as follows:

MSCA-ITN	~7%
MSCA-RISE	~25%
MSCA-IF	~16-17%
MSCA-COFUND	~25%

Hints and tips for writing a successful proposal

Below some advice on how to maximise your chances of submitting a successful proposal for MSCA. Proposal writing for MSCA can be addressed during the UKRO Annual Visit to your institution, and your UKRO European Advisor can answer general questions you might have on drafting and submitting a successful proposal.



More information:

- European Commission Funding and Tenders Opportunities Portal for:
 - **Calls for proposals**
<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>
 - **Work programmes**
<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/reference-documents>
 - **MSCA Specific Work Programme**
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-msca_en.pdf
- **MSCA Web Page**
https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/msca-actions_en
- **MSCA Section on Horizon2020 Page**
<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/marie-sklodowska-curie-actions>
- **H2020Online Manual**
- http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/index_en.htm
- **MSCA How to Manage My Project**
http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/how-to/manage-your-project_en

- **The UK National Contact Point (NCP) events**
<https://www.ukro.ac.uk/mariecurie/Pages/events.aspx>

- Sign up to the UKRO Portal to stay up to date on the MSCAs: ukro.ac.uk
- For specific questions, contact your UKRO European Advisor.