



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

### **Individual Fellowships (IF)**

Call identifier: H2020-MSCA-IF-2015

Closing Date: 10 September 2015 at 17:00:00  
(Brussels local time)

Batch number: 1  
Date: 25/03/2015

Note: National Contact Points **NCPs** have been set up across Europe by the national governments to provide information and personalised support to H2020 applicants in their native language. The mission of the NCPs is to raise awareness, inform and advise on H2020 funding opportunities as well as to support potential applicants in the preparation, submission and follow-up of the grant applications. For details on the NCP in your country please consult the website at [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/national\\_contact\\_points.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/national_contact_points.html)

## General Aspects<sup>1</sup>

### **Q1: What are the IF opportunities for SMEs and companies?**

A: SMEs and other companies can apply to host the fellowship and thus benefit from the services and valuable experience of a highly talented, fully funded researcher for at least a year. In addition, IFs, which are often carried out at academic institutions, may include secondments of a limited duration to other organisations in a Member State or Associated Country if this increases the impact of the project on European science, competitiveness, innovation capacity, or society. For many research fields this may imply undertaking a secondment to a company, fully funded by the IF grant. Planned secondment(s) must be stated in the research proposal (in particular, the sector of the organisation, the timing and duration of the secondment) but the precise organisation can be chosen at a later stage.

### **Q2: Can the researcher undertake the outgoing phase of Global Fellowships in any third country?**

A: In principle yes, however some entities from certain third countries are covered by Council sanctions (restrictive measures) in place and might not be eligible to participate in EU programmes. Please see the consolidated list of persons, groups and entities subject to EU financial sanctions, available at [http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/consol-list\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/consol-list_en.htm).

## Eligibility

### **Q3: Can researchers of any nationality participate in IF?**

A: Researchers of any nationality can participate in IF. However, the Global Fellowships and the Reintegration Panel of the European Fellowships are restricted to nationals or long-term residents of Member States or Associated Countries. Long-term residents are defined as researchers who spent a period of full-time research activity of at least five consecutive years (without breaks in research) in one or more Member States or Associated Countries.

In addition, it should be noted that there are EU sanctions (restrictive measures) in place which can prohibit the participation of and/or provision of technical training to entities or individuals resident in certain countries in specific research fields. The beneficiaries are under an obligation to ensure compliance with these restrictive measures; an overview thereof can be found under [http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/docs/measures\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/docs/measures_en.pdf).

### **Q4: I have not yet obtained my PhD. How is the four years of full-time equivalent research experience calculated?**

A: Experience is calculated from the "...date when a researcher obtained the degree which would formally entitle him or her to embark on a doctorate..." This may vary from country to country.

Only postgraduate research experience is relevant for this purpose. Other professional activities are not taken into account, no matter when these took place.

### **Q5: Is a Medical Doctor (MD) degree equivalent to a PhD?**

A: In the context of Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, Medical Doctor (MD) studies are not taken as equivalent to PhD studies. For MDs, the requirement of 4 years of full-time research experience applies.

### **Q6: I have been living in country A (Member State) for approximately one year. Am I eligible for a European Fellowship there?**

A: The application of the eligibility criteria is very strict including the compliance with the mobility rule. For example, if you had an employment contract lasting 12 months and one day with an institution based in country A during the last three years, you cannot undertake a fellowship in country A.

### **Q7: I have already participated in a project funded under FP6 or FP7. Am I eligible to participate in the Individual Fellowship action funded under H2020?**

A: Yes, if you fulfil the eligibility conditions for the Individual Fellowship. In case you have already

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<sup>1</sup> Please also refer to the IF [Guide for Applicants](#).

benefited from a previous Marie Curie action, in your proposal you must explain the added value of your research activity under the new project.

## Beneficiaries and Partner Organisations

### **Q8: Can a fellow have multiple supervisors within the same host organisation?**

A: No. There should be only one supervisor per host organisation, who is named in the table 'List of Participants' in Part B of the proposal. European Fellowships of course only have one host organisation, while Global Fellowships have two (one of them being in a third country).

The role of the supervisor(s) is to integrate the researcher properly within his/her organisation in order that all parties gain the maximum knowledge and skills from the fellowship. This includes ensuring that the foreseen training-through-research takes place, as well as providing support and guidance for the personal and professional development of the fellow.

### **Q9: What is the difference between International Organisations and International European Interest Organisations?**

A: An International Organisation is defined<sup>2</sup> as an inter-governmental organisation other than the European Community, which has legal personality under international public law. Any specialised agency set up by such international organisations is also considered an 'International Organisation'.

International European Interest Organisations on the other hand are defined<sup>3</sup> as International Organisations, the majority of whose members are EU Member States or Associated Countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe.

### **Q10: Must an International European Interest Organisation be located in a Member State or Associated Country?**

A: No. As stated in the preceding answer, the H2020 Rules for Participation define International European Interest Organisations not on the basis of their location, but on their membership and principal objective.

### **Q11: What is the status of Switzerland under this Call?**

A: Subject to the conclusion of the International Agreement associating Switzerland to parts of Horizon 2020 in 2015, Switzerland participates from 15 September 2014 with an associated country status in actions that include the topics of this call.

For more information see: [Information on Swiss participation in Horizon 2020](#).

### **Q12: Can a Global Fellow go to another organisation in a third country during his/her outgoing phase there?**

A: It is only possible to add an optional secondment of up to 6 months to an organisation in Europe. However, Global Fellows may go on short visits within third countries for a specific purpose, for example to attend conferences. During the project the REA will assess whether a visit is reasonable in terms of activity and duration. It should not be an attempt to circumvent the rule on the location of secondments.

## Project Implementation

### **Q13: Is the fellowship portable so that the fellow can change host organisation during the project?**

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<sup>2</sup> [Unique Registration Facility User's Guide \(version 5 of 7 March 2014\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/legal\\_basis/rules\\_participation/h2020-rules-participation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/legal_basis/rules_participation/h2020-rules-participation_en.pdf)

A: The rules for the transfer of a grant to a new beneficiary are indicated in the MSC [IF Model Grant Agreement](#), Article 56a. The key point is that the request to transfer the research training activities can only be made by the beneficiary of the grant, meaning the host organisation located in a Member State or Associated Country. To request the transfer there must be serious reasons affecting the capacity of the beneficiary to implement the action.

**Q14: Can the researcher during an IF remain under his/her existing contract at the host institution?**

A: If the fellow is already employed at the host institution at the start of the fellowship, an additional contract is not required provided that all of the conditions of the Grant Agreement are respected. These include in particular remuneration amounts, social security coverage, employment under a full-time regime and that the researcher must be fully dedicated to the action. Furthermore, please note in particular Article 32.1 of the MSC [IF Model Grant Agreement](#) which requires the contract to state *inter alia* the start date and duration of the action.

**Q15: Can EU funds be transferred to a third country, including the funding intended to cover indirect costs?**

A: The EU contribution must be directly managed by the host organisation established in a Member State or Associated Country (beneficiary of the grant). However, in the case of the Global Fellowships and under the responsibility of the beneficiary, parts of the EU contribution can be transferred to the host organisation in a third country (partner organisation). It is highly encouraged to define these financial arrangements in a partnership agreement according to the needs of the project.

Arrangements between the beneficiary and the partner organisation in a third country are an internal matter for the partnership. However, in case of an audit the beneficiary will need to demonstrate that the researcher was working on the action and that the expected allowances (living, mobility and family allowances) were fully paid to him/her. Details on management or indirect costs will not be requested.

## Proposal

**Q16: Which scientific panel should I choose for my proposal? Does it have to be in the field of my highest degree diploma?**

A: Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions have a bottom-up approach, meaning that proposals from all scientific areas (except those covered under [Annex I of the EURATOM Treaty](#)) can be funded. Your proposal should be submitted to one of the 8 main scientific areas defined in the IF Guide for Applicants in which your proposal best fits.

It is not compulsory to choose the same field as your PhD. For example, if you have a PhD in chemistry and your proposal is mainly focusing on bio-chemistry you can freely choose to submit your proposal in CHE (chemistry) or LIF (life sciences). The List of descriptors published on the IF call page of the Participant Portal, in which descriptors are associated to a scientific area, can help with your choice.

**Q17: I think I am eligible for both panels, i.e. the standard EF and CAR (or Standard EF and RI) under the EF. Which panel should I choose?**

A: It is not possible to advise on such choice, and in either case the proposal will be reviewed by the most appropriate expert evaluators. However, bear in mind that the mobility rule applied to each of these options is different.

**Q18: Will all sections of the proposal Part B be evaluated, or only those sections to which the page limit is applied (sections 1-3: Excellence, Impact, Implementation)?**

A: All sections of the proposal form part of the evaluation. The 10-page limit is applied to sections 1 to 3 combined in order not to disadvantage, for example, researchers with more experience and hence a longer CV with reduced space to write sections 1 to 3.

**Q19: Why should a researcher not submit the proposal on his/her own?**

A: This is because the legal responsibility lies with the host organisation in a Member State or Associated Country (future beneficiary) and only the supervisor, appointed by this organisation, can act on its behalf until the signature of the Grant Agreement. As such, only the supervisor should press the submit button and take any other actions in the name of the organisation (e.g. initiate the “review process” that for Horizon 2020 replaces the redress procedure) until the Grant Agreement is signed.



The electronic submission system will still however allow the researcher to submit the proposal. He/she should consider the implications of this carefully before doing so.