



# Horizon Europe Programme

## Guide for Applicants

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF)

Version 2.1 - 2023

11/05/2023

### Disclaimer

This guide aims to support potential applicants to the PF 2023 call. It is provided for information purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation of any applicable legal sources. Neither the European Commission nor the European Research Executive Agency (or any person acting on their behalf) can be held responsible for the use made of this guidance document. Note that the guidance provided in the Annotated Model Grant Agreement shall prevail in case of discrepancies.



<b>HISTORY OF CHANGES</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.0	22 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial version (2021 call)</li> </ul>	
1.1	11 May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of definition of Gender Equality Plan</li> <li>Revision of definition of Associated Partners for submission purposes</li> <li>Addition of procedure for the evaluation of resubmitted proposals</li> <li>Revision of eligibility of non-compliant non-academic placements</li> <li>Addition of Doctoral degree as eligibility criterion</li> <li>Clarification on how to encode secondments and non-academic placements</li> <li>Clarification on short visits</li> <li>Clarification on secondments for GF</li> <li>Clarification on description of secondments and non-academic placements in part B2</li> <li>Clarification on how to apply for EURATOM funding</li> <li>Clarification on part B2 content</li> <li>Clarification on abstract content</li> <li>Link to 8-years research experience calculation tool added</li> <li>Link to FAQs</li> </ul>	4 4 6 7 7, 9 10 11 11 11-12 12 13 14 15 16
1.2	06 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarification on the conditions for a successful PhD defence</li> </ul>	7, 8, 9
2.0	03 April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link to Horizon Europe general Annexes updated to 2023-2024 version</li> <li>Statement on the evaluation of eligible resubmissions</li> <li>Removal of the requirement to include a letter of commitment for non-academic placements</li> <li>Secondment and non-academic placement table divided into "general principles" and "how to fill in the application/submission forms"</li> <li>Rephrasing of secondment at the start of the fellowship for Global fellowship</li> <li>Reference to Part A, section 5, question on secondment removed</li> <li>Reference to the new section on "Environmental considerations in light of the MSCA Green Charter" added.</li> </ul>	5 6 6,12 11,12 11 12 15
2.1	11 May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beneficiary definition improved</li> <li>Beneficiary's role specified better</li> <li>"physical" mobility added</li> <li>Footnote 8 added – and consequent change of following footnotes</li> <li>Copyright/IPR matters added</li> <li>Supervision during secondment and non-academic placement specified</li> </ul>	4 5 5 5 7 11

#### Note

National Contact Points (NCPs) have been set up across Europe and beyond by the national governments to provide information and personalised support to Horizon Europe applicants in their native language. The mission of the NCPs is to raise awareness, inform and advise on Horizon Europe 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 [National Contact Points page](#).

## Table of Contents

<b>Postdoctoral Fellowships – A Few Definitions</b> .....	4
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	5
<b>2. Admissibility and Eligibility Conditions</b> .....	6
<b>3. Secondments and Non-Academic Placements</b> .....	11
<b>4. ERA Fellowships</b> .....	13
<b>5. Euratom funding for the MSCA-PF call</b> .....	14
<b>6. Instructions for Completing Parts A and B of the Proposal</b> .....	15
<b>7. Technical Aspects of Proposal Submission</b> .....	16
<b>8. Calculation of 8-years research experience in Postdoctoral Fellowships under Horizon Europe</b> .....	17
<b>9. Frequently Asked Questions</b> .....	17

## Postdoctoral Fellowships – A Few Definitions

**Academic sector** means public or private higher education establishments awarding academic degrees, public or private non-profit research organisations<sup>1</sup> and International European Research Organisations (IERO).<sup>2</sup>

**Associated partners** are entities, which participate in the action,<sup>3</sup> but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions. They contribute to the implementation of the action, but do not sign the grant agreement. Associated partners may not employ the researchers under the action.<sup>4,5</sup>

**Beneficiary** is the legal entity that signs the grant agreement (either directly or through an accession form) and has the responsibility for the proper implementation of the action at all times, including during the periods of the outgoing phase of the Global Fellowships, all secondments and non-academic placements. They contribute directly to the implementation of the research, transfer of knowledge and training activities. This involves recruiting, supervising, hosting, training and, where appropriate, seconding the researcher.

**Gender Equality Plan:** Having a gender equality plan is an eligibility criterion for Public bodies, Higher education establishments and Research organisations from Member States and Associated Countries. Be aware that if the proposal is selected, having a Gender Equality Plan will be necessary before the grant agreement signature (applicable on calls with deadlines in 2022 and beyond). Please refer to the [Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans](#).

**Long-term residence** means a period of legal and continuous residence within EU Member States or Horizon Europe associated countries of at least five consecutive years. Periods of absence from the territory of the EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country will be taken into account for the calculation of this period where they are shorter than six consecutive months and do not exceed in total ten months within this period.

---

<sup>1</sup> If requested by the granting authority, institutions with self-declared research organisations status must provide evidence that their main objective is to carry out research and/or technological development. An assessment will be made on the basis of indicators such as share of research budget, volume of scientific publications and/or registered patents.

<sup>2</sup> 'International European Research Organisation' (IERO) means an international organisation, the majority of whose members are EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe (see Article 2(14) of the Regulation establishing Horizon Europe - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination.

<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of Horizon Europe, each specific project receiving funding is referred to as an "action." In the present document, the terms "project" and "action" are therefore used interchangeably.

<sup>4</sup> In the framework of MSCA-PF-2023, only the following associated partners should be included in the proposal Part A (refer also to section 3): host organisations where the outgoing phase of GF or a non-academic placement are taking place. Other associated partners (such as those implementing secondments) should be included only in the Part B.

<sup>5</sup> For Global Postdoctoral Fellowships outgoing phase, this restriction does not apply. The associated partner hosting the outgoing phase can conclude an additional employment contract with the researcher to ensure adequate medical/social insurance in the outgoing country.

**Non-academic sector** means any socio-economic actor not included in the academic sector and fulfilling the requirements of the Horizon Europe (HE) Rules for Participation.<sup>6</sup>

**Non-associated Third Countries** (TC) are countries that are neither EU member states (MS), nor countries associated to Horizon Europe (AC).

The **supervisor** is the senior researcher appointed by the host institution (beneficiary) to supervise the postdoctoral researcher throughout the whole duration of the action. For Global Postdoctoral Fellowships, an additional supervisor must be appointed at the associated partner for the time spent during the outgoing phase<sup>7</sup>. However, the beneficiary is responsible towards the granting authority for the correct implementation of the proposed project.

## 1. Introduction

This call for proposals offers fellowships to researchers holding a PhD wishing to undertake physical mobility either to or between EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries (European Postdoctoral Fellowships), or to a non-associated Third Country (Global Postdoctoral Fellowships) in order to undertake an original and personalised research and innovation project. The objective is to improve researchers' employability and career prospects within academia and beyond, with a strong focus on interdisciplinarity and intersectoral experience.

Applications are made jointly by the researcher and a beneficiary in the academic or non-academic sector, which must be established in an EU Member State (MS) or Horizon Europe Associated Country (AC). However, the submission of the proposal and other actions that follow this procedure (such as withdrawal or, if successful, grant agreement signature) fall solely under the responsibility of the beneficiary<sup>8</sup>.

All domains of research and innovation are eligible for funding, including those covered by the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom)<sup>9</sup>. Applicants are therefore free to choose the field(s) of their proposed research in a fully bottom-up manner.

Proposals may include an additional period of up to six months ("non-academic placement period") at a non-academic sector organisation established in a MS or an AC.

---

<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of 28 April 2021 (OJEU 12.05.2021, L170, p.1).

<sup>7</sup> Please see also [MSCA Guidelines on Supervision](#)

<sup>8</sup> "Applications must be submitted by a single independent legal entity, established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country." MSCA Work Programme 2023-2024, p. 92

<sup>9</sup> Special conditions and eligibility criteria apply for EURATOM, please refer to section 5 of this document.

Before preparing your application, you are strongly advised to consult the following documents:

- [MSCA Work Programme 2023–2024](#) and [General Annexes](#) to the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024
- [Standard Application Form](#): Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – Postdoctoral Fellowships
- [MSCA list of keywords](#)

Links to other official documents, including the [Horizon Europe Programme Guide](#), are provided on the [call page](#) on the Funding and Tenders Portal and are also accessible via the REA [website](#). Briefing videos for Horizon Europe evaluators, including on “how to evaluate Open Science in Horizon Europe proposals”, are also available on the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#).

## 2. Admissibility and Eligibility Conditions

Applicant researchers must meet all eligibility criteria (see relevant sections below) on the day of the call deadline. The proposed beneficiary must ensure compliance with the admissibility and eligibility criteria before submitting the proposal and must maintain all supporting documentation.

Before completion of the formal admissibility and eligibility checks, REA cannot answer questions related to the admissibility and eligibility of a specific proposal. Guidance can be provided by NCPs.

No documents for proof of eligibility need to be uploaded with the application. However, REA may request supporting documents to assess the eligibility after the call deadline.

**Resubmissions:** please note that under the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2023 call, proposals involving the same recruiting organisation (and for Global Postdoctoral Fellowships also the associated partner hosting the outgoing phase) and individual researcher submitted for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 call and having received a score of less than 70% must not be resubmitted.

Please note that all eligible resubmitted proposals will be evaluated independently of any previous evaluation(s).

<b>IMPORTANT</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The individual researcher and the supervisor must be two different people.</li></ul>

<p><b>EUROPEAN and GLOBAL</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications must be complete and contain all parts and supporting documents. The applicant must fill in the submission forms online that will become part A of the proposal and upload parts B1 and B2.</li> <li>• A non-academic placement may take place at the end of the project for an additional period of up to 6 months in an organisation from the non-academic sector established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country. In this case, additional budget can be requested in the proposal for the duration of the non-academic placement.</li> <li>• The applicant must ensure that any copyright/IPR matters related to the content of the proposal are settled in accordance with the applicable national legislation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional for GLOBAL</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The associated partner for the outgoing phase must provide an up-to-date letter of commitment, to be submitted with the application, confirming their precise role and active participation in the proposal.</li> </ul>
<p>If one or more of the above conditions are not met, the proposal will not be evaluated.</p> <p>However, if the non-academic placement is ineligible (academic organisation or organisation not established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country), the proposal will be evaluated without taking into consideration this part.</p>	

**Please note that:**

- Only one proposal per individual researcher can be submitted. In case of several proposals involving the same individual researcher, only the last submitted proposal will be considered eligible. However, please note that the same supervisor and a host institution can be involved in more than one proposal in the same call.
- If proposals with the same research objectives and work plan are submitted by the same host organisation for different researchers, only the first submitted proposal will be considered eligible.

Postdoctoral Fellowships can be of two types, European or Global, as detailed below.

<b>EUROPEAN POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS</b>		
<b>STANDARD DURATION</b>	From 12 to 24 months	
<b>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</b>		
<b>RESEARCHER</b>	<b>Doctorate degree</b>	The researcher must be in possession of a doctoral degree or have successfully defended their doctoral thesis before call deadline. The successful defence must be unconditional (no further requirements/corrections that need to be addressed) and take place before the call deadline. Supporting documentation may be requested. <sup>10</sup>
	<b>Nationality</b>	Any
	<b>Mobility</b>	The researcher cannot have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the beneficiary for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately prior to the call deadline. <sup>11 12</sup>
	<b>Research experience (full-time equivalent)</b>	<b>Maximum 8 years</b> from date of award of the (first) doctoral degree. This limit can be extended (in days) for the following reasons: – <b>Maternity leave</b> (18 months – i.e. 548 days per child born after the PhD award date, or the exact duration of maternity leave taken, whichever is longest); – <b>Paternity leave</b> (exact duration per child born after the PhD award date); – <b>Compulsory national service</b> ; – <b>Time spent not working in research</b> ;

<sup>10</sup> Applicants who have successfully defended their doctoral thesis but who have not yet formally been awarded the doctoral degree will also be considered as postdoctoral researchers and will be considered eligible to apply. The successful defence must be unconditional (no further requirements/corrections that need to be addressed) and take place before the call deadline. Supporting documentation may be requested. A medical doctor degree will be accepted only when it corresponds to a doctoral degree or if the researcher can demonstrate his/her appointment in a position that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g. professorship appointment). Medical doctor degrees corresponding to basic medical training as defined in Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC will not be considered a doctoral degree.

<sup>11</sup> The following periods are not taken into account: a) compulsory national service; b) time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention; c) short stays (such as holidays), i.e. the researcher did not reside or did not have their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country during that period.

<sup>12</sup> In case of International European Research Organisations, international organisations with headquarters in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country or entities created under Union law, the researchers must not have spent more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately preceding the call deadline, in the same appointing organisation.



		<p>– <b>Long-term sick leave</b> (periods &gt; 30 days)</p> <p>– <b>Research in a non-associated TC</b> (only for nationals or long-term residents of MS or AC, wishing to reintegrate in Europe);<sup>13</sup></p> <p>More information on the calculation of the 8 years research experience is available in section 8.</p>
<b>PARTICIPATING ORGANISATION</b>	<b>Beneficiary</b>	Single independent legal entity established in an EU MS or HE AC. <sup>14</sup>

<b>GLOBAL POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS</b>		
<b>STANDARD DURATION</b>		<p>From 24 to 36 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outgoing phase of minimum 12 and maximum 24 months in a non-associated Third Country;</li> <li>• Mandatory 12-month return phase in MS / AC.</li> </ul>
<b>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</b>		
<b>RESEARCHER</b>	<b>Doctorate degree</b>	The researcher must be in possession of a doctoral degree or have successfully defended their doctoral thesis before call deadline. The successful defence must be unconditional (no further requirements/corrections that need to be addressed) and take place before the call deadline. Supporting documentation may be requested. <sup>15</sup>
	<b>Nationality</b>	Nationals or long-term residents of MS or AC.

<sup>13</sup> Researchers reintegrating to Europe from a non-associated TC must be based in the TC at the call deadline or have directly moved to Europe (i.e. any EU MS or Horizon Europe AC) within the 12-month period immediately prior to the call deadline.

<sup>14</sup> The same conditions are applicable to *Associated partners linked to a beneficiary* (see also MSCA Work Programme, Definitions section).

<sup>15</sup> See footnote 10.

	<b>Mobility</b>	The researcher cannot have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the associated partner hosting the outgoing phase for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before the call deadline. <sup>16 17</sup>
	<b>Research experience (full-time equivalent)</b>	<p><b>Maximum 8 years</b> from date of award of the (first) doctoral degree.</p> <p>This limit can be extended (in days) for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Maternity leave</b> (18 months – i.e. 548 days per child born after the PhD award date, <u>or</u> the exact duration of maternity leave taken, whichever is longest);</li> <li>- <b>Paternity leave</b> (exact duration per child born after the PhD award date);</li> <li>- <b>Compulsory national service</b>;</li> <li>- <b>Time spent not working in research</b>;</li> <li>- <b>Long term sick leave</b> (periods &gt; 30 days).</li> </ul> <p>More information on the calculation of the 8 years research experience are available in section 8.</p>
<b>PARTICIPATING ORGANISATION</b>	<b>Beneficiary</b>	Single independent legal entity established in MS or AC. <sup>18</sup>
	<b>Associated partner hosting the outgoing phase</b>	Single independent legal entity established in a non-associated Third Country. It <b>MUST be encoded</b> as a participating organisation (= <b>associated partner</b> ) in Part A.

## Refugee Status

Note that researchers who are refugees in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country according to the Geneva Convention may also apply to both European and Global Postdoctoral Fellowships, irrespective of whether they are long-term residents (see definitions above) or not, if they fulfil the other eligibility conditions.

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 11.

<sup>17</sup> See footnote 12.

<sup>18</sup> See footnote 14.

### 3. Secondments and Non-Academic Placements

Proposals may **include** an optional secondment during the fellowship and/or **add** an optional non-academic placement period (see explanation in the [MSCA Work Programme](#)), provided they are in line with the project objectives and add significant value and/or impact to the fellowship. The organisations hosting secondments or placements should provide supervision of the fellow during that period.


The relevance and added value of these periods will be assessed by the evaluators and may therefore impact the final score awarded to the proposal. Proposals will not be penalised for not including a secondment or non-academic placement period.

Secondments and Non-Academic Placements are different in nature and follow different rules as explained in the table below.

	Secondment	Non-Academic Placement
<b>General principles</b>		
<b>Maximum Duration</b>	<p><u>European Postdoctoral Fellowships:</u> Up to 1/3 of the standard project duration<sup>19</sup>.</p> <p><u>Global Postdoctoral Fellowships:</u> Secondments are permitted for up to 1/3 of the outgoing phase<sup>20</sup>.</p>	Up to 6 months duration.
<b>Timing</b>	<p><u>European Postdoctoral Fellowships:</u> at any time <b>during</b> the standard project duration.</p> <p><u>Global Postdoctoral Fellowships:</u> secondments cannot take place during the mandatory 12 month return period to the host organisation in a MS or AC. However, a maximum of three months of such secondments can be spent at the start of the project at the beneficiary (or associated partners linked to the beneficiary) before going to the associated partner for the</p>	<b>Additional period</b> that takes place <i>after</i> the standard duration of the fellowship.

<sup>19</sup> The standard project duration of European Postdoctoral Fellowships must be between 12 and 24 months. This duration does not include any additional period for a non-academic placement.

<sup>20</sup> The standard duration of Global Postdoctoral Fellowships outgoing phase must be between 12 and 24 months.

	<p>outgoing phase. This period is counted as an integral part of the outgoing phase.</p> <p>Note that <u>secondments</u> can be divided into several shorter periods.</p>	
<b>Mobility</b>	Any country worldwide	MS or AC
<b>Sector</b>	Any sector	Non-academic sector only <sup>21</sup>
<b>How to fill in the application forms</b>		
<p><b>Part A</b> Section 2 Participants</p> 	<p><b>Do NOT encode</b> the secondment organizations as a participating organisation.</p>	<p>The organization hosting the placement <b>MUST be encoded</b> as a participating organisation (= <b>associated partner</b>).</p>
<p><b>Part A</b> Section 3 Budget</p>	<p><b>Do NOT encode</b> (as no additional budget is allowed for secondments).</p>	<p><b>ADD the number of months</b> requested for the non-academic placement as a separate line (up to 6 months are allowed).</p>
<p><b>Description in Part B-1</b></p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> Secondments should be described in part B1 and the evaluators will assess their relevance and quality in the respective criterion.</p> <p>Secondments should be included in the <b>Gantt chart</b>.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> Non-academic placements should be described in part B1 and the evaluators will assess their relevance and quality in the respective criterion.</p> <p>Non-academic placements should be included in the <b>Gantt chart</b>.</p>
<p><b>Description in Part B-2</b></p>	<p>Secondment hosts <b>must be listed</b> in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 within part B2 template as an associated partner.</p>	<p>Non-academic placements hosts <b>must be listed</b> in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 within part B2 template as an associated partner.</p>
<p><b>Supporting Document in Part B-2</b></p>	<p>None Letter of commitment not required.</p>	<p>None Letter of commitment not required.</p>

<sup>21</sup> For proposals with the host organization in the non-academic sector, the placement is allowed only if implemented at a different non-academic organization

## Short Visits

Note that secondments and non-academic placements are to be distinguished from short visits. Short visits imply mobility to another location outside the physical premises of the beneficiary, including internationally. However, the work done there continues to be supervised directly by the supervisor of the beneficiary. Short visits can only represent a small part of the project duration.

When a secondment or short visit to a TC takes place, the beneficiary shall ensure compliance with the applicable Horizon Europe ethical framework and the corresponding provisions of the Grant Agreement. Short visits must not be encoded as participating organisations in the submission forms.

## 4. ERA Fellowships

The ERA Fellowships (ERA-PF)<sup>22</sup> aim at mobility and brain circulation in Widening Countries.<sup>23</sup> The scheme is open to individual researchers of any nationality holding a PhD who wish to engage in R&I projects in a host institution located in a Widening Country coming from any country in the world.

The scheme will fund proposals submitted to the MSCA-2023-PF call with a beneficiary located in a Widening Country, which failed to score high enough to receive funding under this call. Only European Postdoctoral Fellowships can qualify for the ERA-PF call (Global Postdoctoral Fellowships are excluded). All eligibility and admissibility rules applicable to the MSCA-2023-PF call will apply.

Applicants can only be considered for this additional funding opportunity by ticking **"YES"** to the question *"Do you wish to participate to the ERA Postdoctoral Fellowships and thus increase your chances of being funded?"* in the application form.

Applicants who do not reply, or tick "No" to the above question, will not be considered for the ERA-PF call (but will be evaluated and ranked under the MSCA-PF call, if eligible).

The only implementation difference with MSCA-PF is that researchers supported by the ERA Fellowships will not formally be considered as MSCA fellows.

---

<sup>22</sup> A budget of EUR 8 million has been earmarked under the [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024 "11. Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area"](#).

<sup>23</sup> As defined in Article 2(17) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe and laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, from the Member States, those countries are Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, for the whole duration of the Programme; for associated countries, it means the list of eligible countries as defined based on an indicator and published in the Work Programme. Legal entities from outermost regions as defined in Article 349 TFUE shall be also fully eligible as coordinators under this component.

Host organisations from Widening Countries will be informed simultaneously about the results of the evaluation for both MSCA-PF and the ERA-PF call, i.e. all applicants eligible for transfer to the ERA-PF call will receive a standard MSCA-PF evaluation result letter and an attached ERA-PF evaluation result letter. There will be a single centralised evaluation review procedure for both MSCA-PF and ERA-PF.

## 5. Euratom funding for the MSCA-PF call

A novelty under Horizon Europe is that MSCA-PF proposals in the following European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) domains of research will be eligible for funding:

- Improve and support nuclear safety, security, safeguards, radiation protection, safe spent fuel and radioactive waste management and decommissioning, including the safe and secure use of nuclear power and of non-power applications of ionizing radiation.
- Maintain and further develop expertise and competence in the nuclear field within the Community.
- Foster the development of fusion energy as a potential future energy source for electricity production and contribute to the implementation of the European fusion roadmap.
- Support the policy of the Union and its Member States on continuous improvement of nuclear safety, safeguards and security.

Applicants in these domains of research wishing to be considered for Euratom funding under MSCA-PF (either European Postdoctoral Fellowships or Global Postdoctoral Fellowships) **must indicate** this by ticking "**YES**" to the following question in the application form:

*"Are the research and training activities proposed addressing topics related to nuclear sciences and technology, as outlined in the Guide for applicants for this call and the Euratom Research and Training Programme (ERTP)?"*

and **ONLY IF** the additional **eligibility criteria** listed hereunder are met:

- The researcher must be a national or long-term resident (see definitions) of an EU Member State or Euratom Associated Country.<sup>24</sup>
- The beneficiary and (if applicable) the associated partner hosting the additional non-academic placement must be based in an EU Member State or Euratom Associated Country.

### Ranking of proposals in the Euratom domains

---

<sup>24</sup> For Euratom Associated Countries, please see the [Euratom Research and Training programme 2023-2025](#).

The proposals will be ranked in the same scientific panel ranking lists as other proposals, although the funding will be provided by the Euratom programme.

## 6. Instructions for Completing Parts A and B of the Proposal

A proposal consists of an administrative part (**Part A**, filled in online via the submission forms) and a narrative **part B** composed of two separate PDF files (Part B1 and Part B2), which must be uploaded as separate PDF files:

1. **Part B1**, containing a maximum of 10 (ten) A4-sized pages. Any excess pages (i.e. numerical page 11 and beyond) will not be available to the evaluators;
2. **Part B2**, with no strict page limit for A4-sized pages.

**Part B1** is the core part of the proposal; it should contain the details of the proposed research and training activities along with the practical arrangements proposed to implement them.

**Part B2** contains: the CV of the researcher, the capacity of the participating organization(s), additional information on ethics, security screening (in case there was not sufficient space in the dedicated sections in part A), and environmental considerations in light of the MSCA Green Charter<sup>25</sup>, as well as the letter of commitment from the associated partner hosting the outgoing phase in case of Global Fellowships.

In the framework of MSCA-PF-2023, only the following associated partners should be included in the proposal Part A: host organisations where the outgoing phase of GF or a non-academic placement are taking place. Other associated partners (such as those implementing secondments) should be included only in the Part B.

The documents<sup>26</sup> will be used by the independent evaluators to assess how well the proposal addresses the award criteria (see section 2.4 of the MSCA Work Programme). Only the highest scoring proposals will be selected for funding (within the limits of the available call budget).

Applicants must use the **Part B template available on the call page** on the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#). Please follow all instructions in the template.

 **Templates are call specific – make sure you use the template for MSCA PF-2023.**

---

<sup>25</sup> Please see the [MSCA Green Charter](#) | Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (europa.eu)

<sup>26</sup> With the exclusion of the section on MSCA Green Charter

**⚠ Abstracts in part A should not contain sensitive information, as they will be made publicly available if the project is retained for funding.**

## **7. Technical Aspects of Proposal Submission**

Proposals must be submitted electronically using the European Commission's Online Submission Service accessible via the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#). You will need a stable internet connection for the submission process. Please verify your own computer's configuration against the [recommended system configuration](#).

We encourage you to submit your proposal as soon as possible. It remains possible to reopen, edit and resubmit your proposal as many times as required before the call deadline. Only the last submitted version will be evaluated. Prior to the call deadline, it is strongly advised to re-download parts B-1 and B-2, to ensure the PDF files are correct, complete, and not corrupted.

Each participating entity in Horizon Europe (beneficiaries and associated partners) must have a Participant Identification Code (PIC) which identifies the institution(s) taking active part in the project and which must be included in Part A of the proposal. Please contact the relevant representative of each participating entity to be sure to use the correct PIC.

### **What if your submission failed due to a technical problem?**

If you believe that the submission of your proposal was not successful due to a technical error **on the side of the European Commission**, you may lodge a complaint via the [IT Helpdesk](#), within four calendar days after the call deadline.

*You should secure a PDF version of all the parts B and annexes of your proposal holding a time stamp (file attributes listing the date and time of creation and last modification) that is prior to the call deadline, as well as any proof of the alleged failure (e.g. screen shots). You may be requested by the IT Helpdesk to provide these items. Any information regarding the proposal will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.*

You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt the same or next working day, and you will be notified about the outcome of the complaint within the timeframe indicated in the message.

If a complaint is upheld (i.e. the investigation has demonstrated technical issues on the European Commission side which prevented (re)submission of the proposal), the secured files provided to the IT helpdesk will be used for the evaluation. In the absence of such documents, the version present in the IT system will be evaluated.



## **8. Calculation of 8-years research experience in Postdoctoral Fellowships under Horizon Europe**

A document and a self-assessment tool aiming to guide the applicants towards calculating the possible deductions of their 8 years Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) experience in research can be found on the REA website following this [link](#), under the Postdoctoral Fellowships section.

## **9. Frequently Asked Questions**

An extensive list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to assist the applicant in how to complete properly parts A and B is available [here](#).

### **Scientific Misconduct and Research Integrity**

Issues of scientific misconduct and research integrity are taken very seriously. In line with the Horizon Europe Rules for Participation, appropriate action such as termination of the Grant Agreement Preparation phase or, if the Grant Agreement has been signed, the implementation of liquidated damages and financial penalties, suspension of payments, recoveries and termination of the Grant Agreement, will be taken against any applicants/beneficiaries found to have misrepresented, fabricated or plagiarised any part of their proposal. The applicants will also be required to make a "Declaration on Honour" in Part A of the proposal.