Drafting competitive proposals for MSCA Individual Fellowships (IF)

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Director de la OGPI
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OBJECTIVE

- To enhance the creative and innovative potential of experienced researchers wishing to diversify their individual competence in terms of skill acquisition through advanced training, international and intersectoral mobility.

- IF provide opportunities to acquire and transfer new knowledge and to work on research in a European context (EU Member States and Associated Countries) or outside Europe.

- Particularly support to the return and reintegration of researchers from outside Europe who have previously worked here.

- Help to restart the careers of individual researchers that show great potential, considering their experience.
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **Researchers may be of any nationality.** Researchers receive support on the condition that they move from one country to another to broaden or deepen their competences.

- Global Fellowships and the Reintegration Panel in IF are open to nationals or long-term residents of EU Member States and Associated Countries. Long-term residence means a period of full-time research activity of at least 5 consecutive years.
Experienced researchers (ER) shall, at the time of the relevant deadline for submission of proposals, be in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience.

Full-time equivalent research experience is measured from the date when a researcher obtained the degree which would formally entitle him or her to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the researcher is recruited or seconded, irrespective of whether or not a doctorate is or was ever envisaged.
Support is foreseen for individual, trans-national fellowships awarded to the best or most promising researchers for employment in EU Member States or Associated Countries.

A joint application by the researcher and host organisation in the academic or non-academic sectors.

Host organisation is located in an EU Member State or Associated Country and employs researcher.

**European Fellowships or Global Fellowships.**

- European Fellowships are held in EU Member States or Associated Countries and are open to researchers either coming to Europe or moving within Europe.
- Duration of Support for EF: 12-24 months
Global Fellowships are based on a secondment to a third country and a mandatory 12 month return period to an European host.

Duration of Support for GF 12-24 months for the outgoing phase plus 12 month return phase in Europe

Return and reintegration of researchers into a longer term research position in Europe, including in their country of origin, is supported via a separate multi-disciplinary reintegration panel of the European Fellowships.

Support to individuals to resume research in Europe after a (at least one year) career break, e.g. after parental leave, is ensured via a separate multi-disciplinary career restart panel of the EF.
The secondment phase can be a single period or be divided into shorter mobility periods.

- The secondment should significantly add to the impact of the fellowship.
- Meaningful and appropriate involvement of non-academic sector.
- A Letter of Intent should be signed before deadline.
IFs are expected to add significantly to the development of the best and most promising researchers active in Europe, in order to enhance and maximise their contribution to the knowledge-based economy and society.

The action will also strengthen the contact network of both the researcher and the host organisation.

The fellowship will contribute to realising the full potential of researchers and to catalysing significant development in their careers in both the academic and non-academic sectors.

Some researchers will be resuming a research career in Europe after a break, or reintegrating within Europe after living abroad.
MOBILITY RULES

- At the time of the relevant deadline for submission of proposals, researchers shall not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of their host organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the reference date.

- Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.

- In the Career Restart Panel and the Reintegration Panel in IF, researchers shall not have resided or carried out their main activity in the country of their host organisation for more than 3 years in the 5 years immediately prior to the deadline.
EVALUATION PANELS

Eight main panels with ranking list of proposals:

1. Chemistry (CHE),
2. Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC),
3. Economic Sciences (ECO),
4. Information Science and Engineering (ENG),
5. Environment and Geosciences (ENV),
6. Life Sciences (LIF),
7. Mathematics (MAT),
8. Physics (PHY).

Separate multidisciplinary panels will be created for the Career Restart Panel (CAR) and the Reintegration Panel (RI).

Help for choosing the panel:
## ALLOWANCES AND COST STRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher unit cost person / month</th>
<th>Institutional unit cost person / month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living allowance</td>
<td>Research, training and networking costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility allowance</td>
<td>Management and indirect costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4650*</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**INSTITUTIONAL UNIT COSTS**

- **Research, training and networking costs**
  - This unit cost amounts to **€800** per person/month (24 months = 19,200 €) and is managed by the beneficiary to contribute to expenses related to, for example:
    - the participation of researchers in training activities
    - expenses related to research costs
    - execution of the training/partnership action

- **Management and indirect costs**
  - This refers to a unit cost of **€650** per person/month (24 months = 15,600 €) that is to be used for the management and indirect costs of the action.
DEFINITIONS

- The **Beneficiary** is the **host organisation** who recruits, supervises and provides training for the researcher, taking complete responsibility for executing the proposed action.

- The **Supervisor** is the scientist appointed at the host organisation to supervise the researcher during the whole duration of the action. S/he will be the main contact person for the Research Executive Agency (REA) between the submission of the proposal and the conclusion of the Grant Agreement.

- **Partner organisations** do not sign the Grant Agreement and do not employ the researchers within the action. Partner organisations provide additional training and host researchers during secondments.
MORE DEFINITIONS

The **Academic sector** consists of public or private higher education establishments awarding academic degrees, public or private non-profit research organisations whose primary mission is to pursue research, and international European interest organisations as they are defined in Article 2 of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation.

The **Non-Academic sector** includes any socio-economic actor not included in the academic sector and fulfilling the requirements of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation.
The **Experienced Researcher** should write in the proposal a concrete plan of training-through-research at the host organisation’s premises.

- Aim to reach a realistic and well-defined objective in terms of career advancement (by attaining a leading independent position for example).
- The action should be created with the final outcome to develop and significantly widen the competences of the Experienced Researcher, particularly in terms of multi/interdisciplinary expertise, inter-sectoral experience and transferable skills.
OVERVIEW OF IF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS</th>
<th>EUROPEAN</th>
<th>GLOBAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard EF</td>
<td>CAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>ANY</td>
<td>ANY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>From ANY country to MS or AC</td>
<td>&lt; 36 months in the last 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career break in research</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>≥ 12 months prior to call deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
<td>MS or AC</td>
<td>MS or AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Organisation</td>
<td>MS or AC (optional secondments)</td>
<td>MS or AC (optional secondments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURATION (months)</td>
<td>12 - 24</td>
<td>12 - 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC PANELS/AREAS</td>
<td>8 panels</td>
<td>8 areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF RANKING LISTS</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BUDGET**

EUROPEAN: €211.5 million
GLOBAL: €29 million
PROPOSAL DRAFTING
– INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS
INDEX – PROPOSAL DRAFTING

AWARD CRITERIA

PART B (Scientific proposal)

1. SUMMARY
2. EXCELLENCE
3. IMPACT
4. IMPLEMENTATION

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------

5. CV OF THE EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER
6. CAPACITIES OF THE PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS
7. ETHICAL ASPECTS
8. LETTERS OF COMMITMENT OF PARTNER
AWARD CRITERIA

Excellence
Quality, innovative aspects and credibility of the research (including inter/multidisciplinary aspects)
Clarity and quality of transfer of knowledge/training for the development of researcher in light of the research objectives
Quality of the supervision and the hosting arrangements
Capacity of the researcher to reach or re-enforce a position of professional maturity in research

Impact
Enhancing research- and innovation-related human resources, skills, and working conditions to realise the potential of individuals and to provide new career perspectives
Effectiveness of the proposed measures for communication and results dissemination

Implementation
Overall coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including quality management and risk management
Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure)
Competences, experience and complementarity of the participating organisations and institutional commitment

Weighting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>50%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>20%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Priority in case of ex aequo

NB: An overall threshold of 70% will be applied to the total weighted score.
SCORING

Scores must be in the range 0-5.

Interpretation of the score:

0 – The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

1 – Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

2 – Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.

3 – Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well but with a number of shortcomings

4 – Very good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well but with a small number of shortcomings

5 – Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.
The maximum total length of sections 1 to 4 of Part B of the proposal is 10 pages.

The minimum font size allowed is 11 points.

Literature references should be listed in footnotes, font size 8 or 9. However, regardless of the format used, all footnotes will count towards the page limit.

Part B of your proposal carries as a header to each page the proposal acronym and the implementation mode to which you are applying (i.e. Standard EF, CAR, RI, GF).

Please note that the REA takes the issue of scientific misconduct very seriously.
Please provide a short summary of the proposal which could be the same as the proposal abstract, built around a research/innovation project.

Please include:
- Objective of the proposal (need)
- Background (current level of knowledge and competition)
- Results and impact (benefit)
- Methodology (Work packages) (approach)
2.1 Quality, innovative aspects and credibility of the research (including inter/multidisciplinary aspects)

- Introduction, state-of-the-art, objectives and overview of the action
- Research methodology and approach: highlight the type of research and innovation activities proposed
- Originality and innovative aspects of the research programme: explain the contribution that the project is expected to make to advancements within the project field. Describe any novel concepts, approaches or methods that will be employed.
**QUALITY**

Questions to consider:

- Does the proposal address a well formulated problem? Is it an important problem or just an interesting scientific challenge?
- Objectives of your project. Are they achievable and feasible within the lifespan of the project? If your proposal is over-ambitious, the evaluators will find it unrealistic. If it is too modest, the evaluators will find it not ambitious enough.
- The proposal must explain the idea in sufficient detail to convince the evaluator that the idea has some substance, and should explain why there is a reason to believe that it is indeed a good idea. It is absolutely not enough merely to identify wish-list of desirable goals. There must be technical substance to the proposal.
EXAMPLE – BASIC STRUCTURE

1. Scientific and Technological quality
   NEED
   Project idea & concept
   Objective 1
   Objective 2
   Objective 3
   Objective 4

2. Implementation
   Work Package 1
   WP2
   WP3
   WP4
   Deliverable 1.1
   Deliverable 1.2
   Deliverable 2.1
   Deliverable 3.1
   Deliverable 8.1
   MILESTONE 1
   MILESTONE 2

3. Impact
   Expected result 1
   Expected result 2
   Expected result 3
   Indicator 1
   Indicator 2
   Indicator 3
   Expected impact 1
   Expected impact 2
   ...
2.2 Clarity and quality of transfer of knowledge/training for the development of the researcher in light of the research objectives

- The text must show how the Experienced Researcher will gain new knowledge from the hosting organisation(s) during the fellowship through training.

- These organisations may also benefit from the previous experience of the researcher. Outline the capacity for transferring the knowledge previously acquired by the researcher to the host organisation(s).

- For Global Fellowships explain how the new acquired skills and knowledge in the TC will be transferred back to the host institution in Europe.
Transfer of knowledge

- Researcher
  - What new knowledge, skills, competences, networks will you gain in light of your research objectives
  - Remember to define the objectives for training (research and transferable skills)

- Host organisation
  - What added value (networks, contacts, methods, knowledge, experiences) can you bring and your research project for the host organisation?
2.3 Quality of the supervision and the hosting arrangements

- Qualifications and experience of the supervisor(s)
- Information regarding the supervisor(s) must include the level of experience on the research topic proposed and document its track record of work, including the main international collaborations. Information provided should include participation in projects, publications, patents and any other relevant results.
- To avoid duplication, the role and profile of the supervisor(s) should only be listed in the "Capacity of the Participating Organisations" tables (see section 6 below).
- The text must show that the Experienced Researcher should be well integrated within the hosting organisation(s) in order that all parties gain the maximum knowledge and skills from the fellowship.
- The European Charter for Researchers should be respected and career development plan envisaged.
Examples about supervisor

- Positions, international collaboration, total number of publications and H-index, numbers of papers with high impact factor, project portfolio, main scientific results, size of group, expectations for this project, etc.

Examples of activities to integrate researcher within hosting organisation

- Education offered for PostDocs
- What kind experience does the department have with international staff and what kind of services?
- Practical help for new researchers (mentoring, meetings, etc.?)
- Who are the members of the research team, what kind of research are they doing and how your research compliments the whole team?
2.4 Capacity of the researcher to reach and re-enforce a position of professional maturity in research

- Please keep in mind that the fellowships will be awarded to the most talented researchers as shown by their ideas and their track record, where it is a fair indicator given their level of experience.
  - What kind of research track record do you have? Why this idea and you? What will you reach if you get this funding?
  - What are you ambitions? What does this grant mean to you? Where do you see yourself in 5 years, 10 years? Why do you need international mobility to reach these goals?
3.1 Enhancing research- and innovation-related human resources, skills, and working conditions to realise the potential of individuals and to provide new career perspectives

In this section, please explain the impact of the research and training of the Experienced Researcher’s career.

The fellowship, including any secondments in Europe should maximise the impact on the researcher’s activity on European society, including the science base and/or the economy, in a manner appropriate to the research field.
The importance of the grant to your career?

What new networks will you establish (scientific and non-scientific)?

Please explain what will you benefit from the secondment?

Who else will benefit from this project and why?

What kind of research results do you have, what kind of impact they will have and how will you ensure these impacts will realise?
3.2 Effectiveness of the proposed measures for communication and results dissemination

- Required sub-headings:
  - Communication and public engagement strategy of the action
  - Dissemination of the research results
  - Exploitation of results and intellectual property
- Concrete plans for the above must be included in the Gantt Chart
B1 – IMPACT

Effectiveness of the proposed measures for communication and results dissemination

- Communication and public engagement strategy of the action (Marie Curie ambassador, visits to local schools, writing to newspapers, open days activities for public, etc., explain also the key message and target groups)
- Dissemination of the research results
  - What conferences could be good for you, give examples
  - What are relevant journals for you, give examples
  - To whom else in addition to academia do you have to tell about the results and how will you do that?
  - Open Access (Compulsory for H2020 projects)
- Exploitation of results and intellectual property
  - IPR?
  - What are your results and who is interested in them and why. How will you ensure that they will get information about the results?
B1 – IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Overall coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources

- The proposal should be designed in the optimal way to achieve the desired impact. A Gantt Chart should be included in the text where the following should be listed:
  - Work Packages description;
  - List of major deliverables;
  - List of major milestones;
  - Secondments if applicable.

- The schedule should be in terms of number of months elapsed from the start of the project.
4.2 Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures, including quality management and risk management

- Develop your proposal according to the following lines:
  - Project organisation and management structure, including the financial management strategy, as well as the progress monitoring mechanisms put in place;
  - Risks that might endanger reaching project objectives and the contingency plans to be put in place should risk occur.

- The following could be also included in the Gantt Chart:
  - Progress monitoring;
  - Risk management;
  - Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).
4.3 Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure)

- Give a description of the legal entity/ies and its main tasks (per participant).
- Explain why the fellowship has the maximum chance of a successful outcome.
- NB: Each participant is described in Section 6. This specific information should not be repeated here.
4.4 Competences, experience and complementarity of the participating organisations and institutional commitment

Here describe how the fellowship will be beneficial for both the Experienced Researcher and host organisation(s).

Commitment of beneficiary and partner organisations to the programme (for partner organisations, please see also section 6 and 8)

Partner organisations: The role of partner organisations in Third Countries for GF and their active contribution to the research and training activities should be described. A letter of commitment shall also be provided in Section 7 (included within the PDF file of part B, but outside the page limit).
B1 – CV - TRACK RECORD

1. **Publications** in major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals and/or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals, peer-reviewed conference proceedings and/or monographs of their respective research fields, indicating also the number of citations (excluding self-citations) they have attracted.

2. Granted **patent(s)**.

3. **Research monographs, chapters** in collective volumes and any translations thereof.

4. **Invited presentations** to peer-reviewed, internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools.

5. **Research expeditions** that the *Experienced Researcher* has led.

6. **Organisation of International conferences** in the field of the applicant (membership in the steering and/or programme committee).

7. Examples of **leadership in industrial innovation**.

8. **Prizes and Awards**.
B1 – CV

- EDUCATION
- CURRENT POSITION(S)
- PREVIOUS POSITIONS
- FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS
- SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS
- TEACHING ACTIVITIES (if applicable)
- ORGANISATION OF SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS (if applicable)
- INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (if applicable)
- COMMISSIONS OF TRUST (if applicable)
- MEMBERSHIPS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES (if applicable)
- MAJOR COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)
REMAINING ISSUES…

B1. CAPACITY OF THE PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS
B1. ETHICS ISSUES
B1. LETTERS OF COMMITMENT

A FORMS

GOOD LUCK!!!!
Thank you!