



# Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions in Horizon Europe

## MSCA COFUND

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2022**

# The MSCA under Horizon Europe



## Pillar 1 Excellent Science

European Research Council

**Marie Skłodowska-Curie  
Actions**

Research Infrastructures



## Pillar 2 Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness

Clusters

- Health
- Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry and Space
- Climate, Energy and Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

Joint Research Centre



## Pillar 3 Innovative Europe

European Innovation Council

European innovation  
ecosystems

European Institute of Innovation  
and Technology

## Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area

Widening participation and spreading excellence

Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I system

## Key figures (2014-2020)

**+65,000**

Researchers,  
including  
25,000 PhD  
candidates

**37%**

Researchers  
from outside  
of the EU

**6.2 billion €**  
Under  
Horizon 2020

**+1,000**

Doctoral  
programmes

**+4,500**

Companies  
supported

**42%**

Female  
researchers

# Introduction to the MSCA

- EU's **reference programme for doctoral and postdoctoral training**, contributing to:
  - A highly skilled research-based human capital able to detect and tackle upcoming challenges, communicate scientific evidence to policy-makers and the public, and work across disciplines
  - Provide researchers with skills needed in the labour market, to innovate and to convert knowledge and ideas into products and services for economic and social benefit
  - Develop excellent doctoral programmes enhancing the global attractiveness and visibility of institutions involved in them
  - Promote the EU's global attractiveness for talents
- Budget under Horizon Europe: **6.6€ billion**
- Geographic coverage

# Key features



**Researchers' training, skills and career development (all stages of career)**



**Excellent research in all domains (bottom-up approach)**



**International, cross-sectoral & interdisciplinary mobility**



**Attractive working and employment conditions**



**Structuring impact on organisations through excellent programmes**



**Strong collaboration with industry and SMEs**

# Policy background, principles and priorities

- Contribution to the **European Research Area** (ERA) and **European Education Area** (EEA)
- Contribution to the **EU external policy** objectives
- Committed to the **European Charter for Researchers** and the **Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers** + Innovative Doctoral Training Principles
- Underlying Principles: **Open Science, Responsible Research & Innovation**
- New publishing platform and open peer review: <https://open-research-europe.ec.europa.eu/>

# Principles and novelties

- **Streamlined actions**, clearer identity
- **Simpler rules**, harmonised conditions
- Demand management to maintain high quality
- Reinforced **synergies** within Horizon Europe and with other EU funding programmes
- New guidelines on **supervision** to ensure that researchers are adequately supervised
- Towards “**greener MSCA**” to promote sustainable behaviors and policies, support policy and decision making, through MSCA Green Charter, Green Deal thematic clustering events...

# More gender-friendly and inclusive MSCA

- Horizon 2020: 41% of female fellows (from 38% in RISE to 44% in ITN)
- In line with the Charter and Code, all MSCA projects are encouraged to embrace diversity
- **In the interest of non-discrimination and equal opportunities:**
  - ✓ Family allowances will be accessible to all, even if their parental status changes during the duration of the project
  - ✓ Long-term leave allowance in case of the researchers' leave, including maternity, paternity, parental, sick or special leave
  - ✓ Broader definition of family to ensure full access to these allowances (recognised LGBTI+ couples)



# Academia - nonacademia collaboration

- Encourage **inter-sectoral exposure** through incentives
- With the aim to develop transferable skills (e.g. innovation, entrepreneurship) leading to improved **employability and career prospects within and outside academia**
- Incentives:
  - ✓ **Industrial Doctorates:** max 540 person-months instead of 360 for standard doctoral networks; academic and non-academic organisations jointly supervising can be in the same country
  - ✓ **Postdoctoral Fellowships:** incentive: additional 6 months for placements in the non-academic sector at the end of the project

# The Actions

## Doctoral Networks

*Doctoral programmes in and outside academia incl. joint & industrial doctorates*

## Postdoctoral Fellowships

*Support to excellent postdoctoral researchers*

## Staff Exchanges

*Support for research and innovation staff exchanges*

## COFUND

*Co-funding doctoral and postdoctoral programmes*

## MSCA and Citizens

*Public outreach events (Night)*

# MSCA COFUND

**Mono-beneficiary action** to **co-fund** new or existing national, regional, institutional schemes for **doctoral** training and **postdoctoral** fellowships.

## Focus

- Spread **best practices** of the MSCA by promoting **high standards** in the recruitment process and **excellent working conditions**
- Introduce **sustainable structuring effects**, by promoting excellent and sustainable research training, international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation and mobility
- Encourage **synergies** with Cohesion policy funds as well as the Recovery and Resilience Facility. Programmes could focus on specific disciplines, notably when based on Smart Specialisation Strategies.

# MSCA COFUND

## Modalities:

- **Doctoral Programmes:** offer research training activities to allow doctoral candidates to develop and broaden their skills and competences. They will lead to the award of a doctoral degree in at least one EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country. The training activities should be based on the EU Principles on Innovative Doctoral Training.
- **Postdoctoral Programmes:** fund individual advanced research training and career development fellowships for postdoctoral researchers. The programmes should offer training to develop key transferable skills and competences common to all fields, foster innovation and entrepreneurship and promote and (where appropriate) reward Open Science practices.

# MSCA COFUND

## Who can apply?

- **Single legal entity established in an EU Member State or HE Associated country.**
- **All beneficiaries must recruit at least three researchers.**  
They are required to host at their premises and supervise recruited researchers, or use implementing partners linked to them to do so

# MSCA COFUND

## Academic and non-academic sectors

### Academic sector

- ✓ public or private higher education establishments
- ✓ public or private non-profit research organisations
- ✓ International European Research Organisations

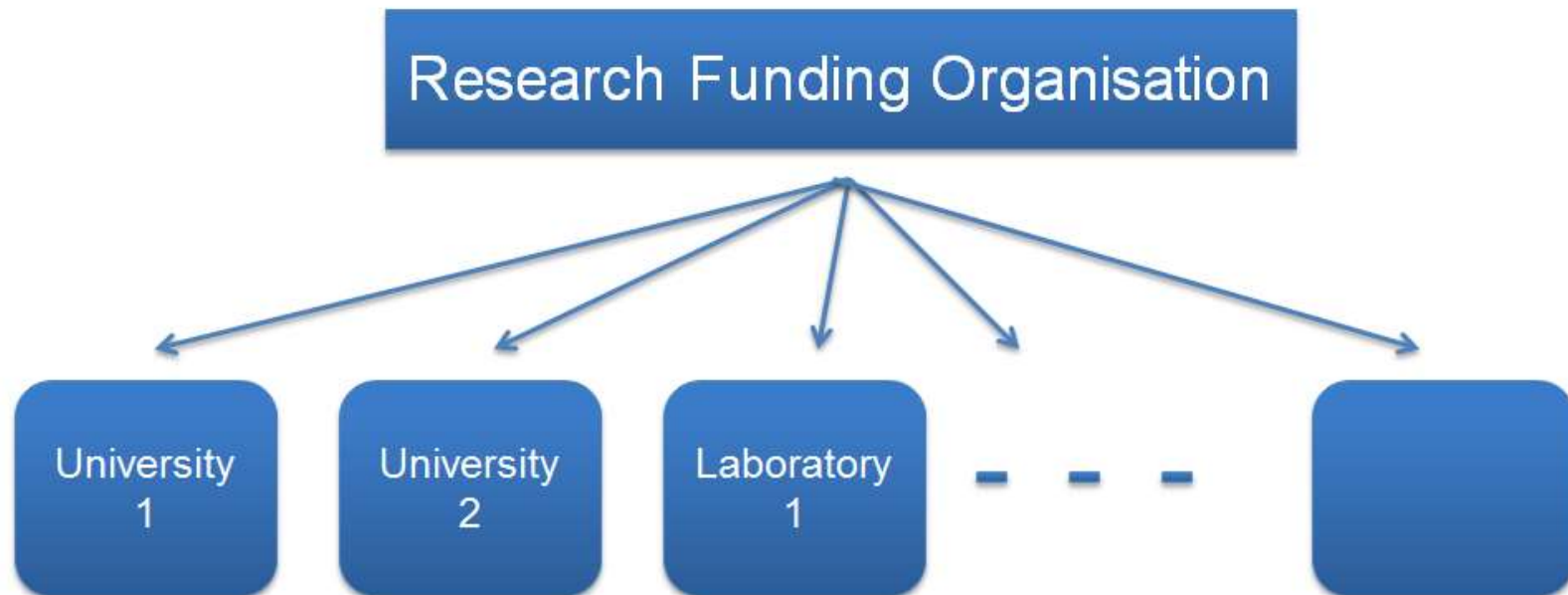


### Non-academic sector

- ✓ any socio-economic actor not included in the academic sector

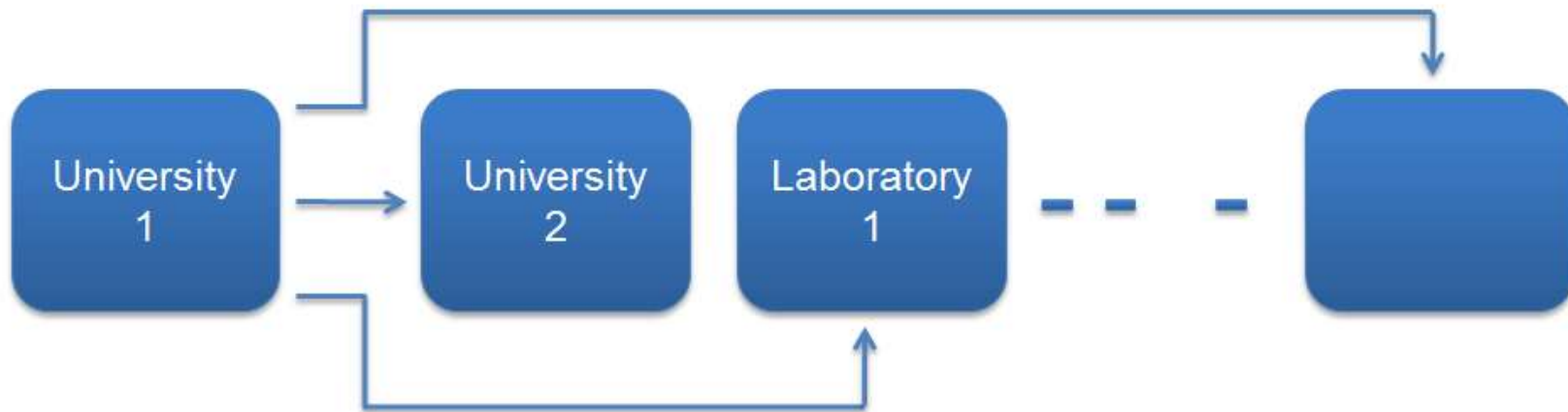
# COFUND – Possible structures

## 1-Hierarchical



# COFUND – Possible structures

## 2-Horizontal





# MSCA COFUND

- **Types of partners:**

- **Implementing partners:** are legal entities receiving financial support from the beneficiary and implementing the MSCA COFUND Doctoral or Postdoctoral programme. Implementing partners can employ researchers.
- **Associated partners:** are entities which participate in the action (e.g. providing training or secondments), but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions.

# MSCA COFUND

- **Co-funding**
  - Max **10 M€** per beneficiary per call (unchanged)
- **Duration**
  - **Programme:** max. 60 months (unchanged)
  - **Fellowship:** min 3 months (unchanged)
- **Recruitment**
  - **Fellows:** min 3 fellows must be recruited
  - **Euraxess**

# MSCA COFUND

## Eligible researchers:

- **Doctoral programmes:** researchers without a doctoral degree at the deadline of the co-funded programme's call; mandatory enrolment in a doctoral programme
- **Postdoctoral programmes:** researchers with a doctoral degree at the deadline of the co-funded programme's call
- **Any nationality**
- **Mobility rule:** must not have resided or carried out their main activity in the country of the recruiting beneficiary or implementing partner for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before the deadline of the co-funded programme's call

# MSCA COFUND

## Main differences compared to H2020-COFUND:

- Researcher eligibility: **full time equivalent research experience no longer applies**
- **The EU contribution covers minimum remuneration required** and can be used **more flexibly**
- There will be possibility to apply **for long-term leave allowance or special needs allowance.**
- Secondments: **up to 1/3 of the fellowship duration**
- Introduction of an **MSCA Cofund Seal of Excellence** for applications scoring  $\geq 85\%$

# MSCA in HE – COFUND

## Award criteria

# MSCA COFUND: award criteria

Excellence	Impact	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
<p>Quality and novelty of the <b>selection / recruitment process for the researchers</b> (transparency, composition and organisation of selection committees, evaluation criteria, equal opportunities, the gender dimension and other diversity aspects) and quality and attractiveness of the <b>appointment conditions, including competitiveness of the salary</b> for the standards of the hosting countries</p>	<p>Strengthening <b>human resources good practices</b> at institutional, regional, national or international level, in particular through aligning the practices of participating organisations with the principles set out by the EU for human resources development in research and innovation</p>	<p>Quality and effectiveness of the <b>work plan, management structures</b>, assessment of <b>risks</b> and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages</p>
<p>Quality and novelty of the <b>research options offered by the programme</b> in terms of science, interdisciplinarity, inter-sectorality and level of transnational mobility. Quality of <b>open science practices</b></p>	<p>Credibility of the proposed measures to <b>enhance the career perspectives and employability</b> of researchers and contribution to their <b>skills development</b></p>	<p>Quality and capacity of the host institution(s) and participating organisations (where appropriate), including <b>hosting arrangements</b> and extent to which they bring together the necessary expertise to successfully implement the research training programme</p>
<p>Quality, novelty and pertinence of the <b>research training programme</b> (including transferable skills, inter/multidisciplinary, inter-sectoral and gender as well as other diversity aspects)</p>	<p>Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise the expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities</p>	
<p>Quality, novelty and pertinence of the <b>supervision, career guidance and career development</b> arrangements</p>		
<p><b>50%</b></p>	<p><b>30%</b></p>	<p><b>20%</b></p>

# MSCA in HE – COFUND

## Budget structure & Project implementation

# MSCA COFUND – Unit contributions

## Novelties compared to H2020: new cost categories

### Contributions for recruited researchers and institutional contributions

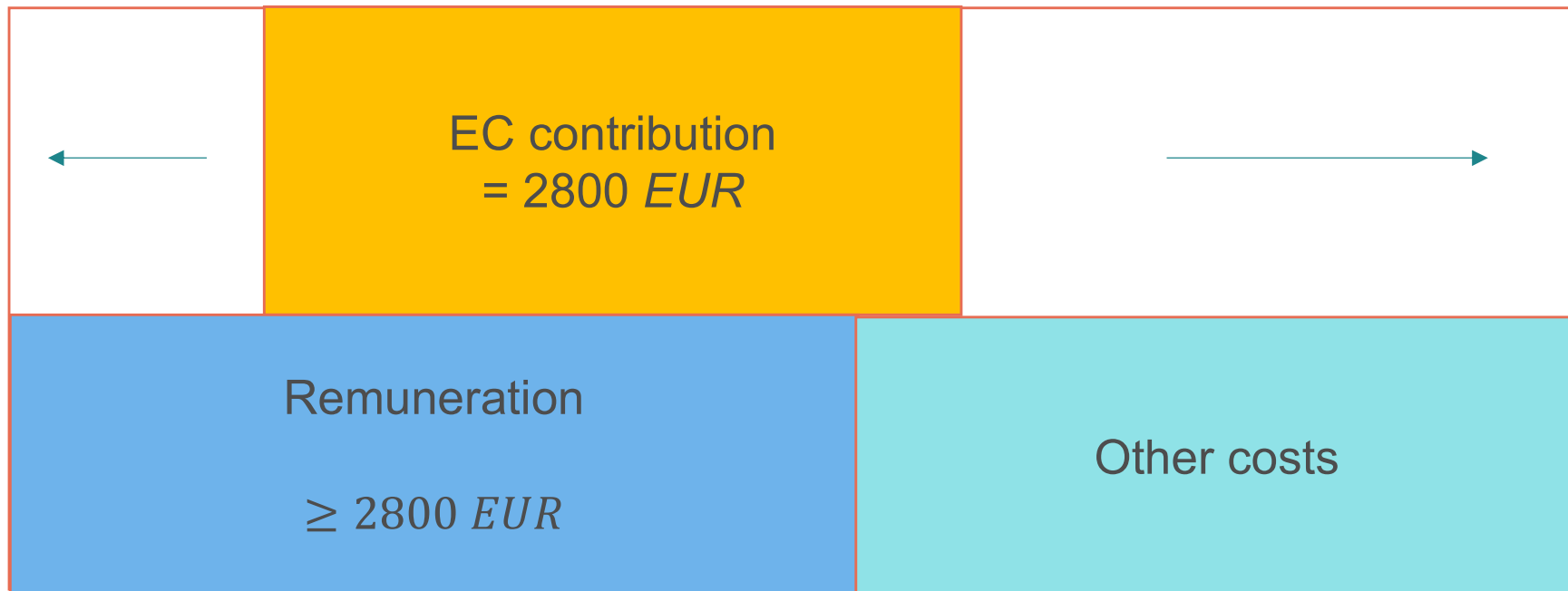
Per person-month

	COFUND allowance	Long-term leave allowance (if applicable)	Special needs allowance (if applicable)
Doctoral Programmes	EUR 2 800	EUR 2 800 x % covered by the beneficiary	Requested unit <sup>1</sup> x (1/number of months)
Postdoctoral Programmes	EUR 3 980	EUR 3 980 x % covered by the beneficiary	Requested unit <sup>1</sup> x (1/number of months)

Minimum remuneration applies:  
 EUR 2 800 for Doctoral researcher, EUR 3 980 for Postdoctoral researcher  
 (including both fellow's and employer's social contributions)



# For example: Doctoral programme



# COFUND – Total budget of the co-funded programme

- Applicants must specify in their proposal **the total cost of their proposed programme** and in particular the amounts that will be provided for the benefit of the researchers and for the organisation(s) that will implement the programme.

# COFUND

## Novelties compared to H2020 – new cost categories

- The EU contribution covers minimum remuneration and can be used more flexibly
- **NEW** - **A long-term leave allowance** to cover personnel costs incurred by the beneficiaries in case of the researchers' leave, including maternity, paternity, parental, sick or special leave longer than 30 consecutive days.
- **NEW** - **A special needs allowance** to contribute to the additional costs for the acquisition of special needs items and services for researchers with disabilities, e.g. assistance by third persons, adaptation of work environment, additional travel/transportation costs.
- Both long-term leave and special needs allowances should be requested **when the need arises**.

# COFUND – project implementation

- Each beneficiary/ implementing partner must recruit each eligible doctoral/postdoctoral researcher under an **employment contract or equivalent direct contract** with full social security coverage.
- When an employment contract cannot be provided (due to national legislation), the beneficiary may exceptionally recruit the doctoral/postdoctoral researcher under a **'fixed-amount fellowship'**. In this case, the living allowance will be halved and the beneficiary must ensure that the doctoral/postdoctoral researchers enjoys minimum social security coverage.

# COFUND – project implementation

- **The selection of the researchers** must follow an open, transparent, merit-based, impartial and equitable selection procedure, with vacancies internationally advertised and published, including on the EURAXESS website. Selection must be based on international peer review for the postdoctoral programmes.
- **The training programme** shall offer a wide variety of opportunities for researchers to experience secondments (including intersectoral ones), to benefit from training in research or transferable skills, as well as from innovative and interdisciplinary elements of the proposed programme.
- Doctoral/Postdoctoral researchers should devote them on a **full-time basis** to the project.
- **Part-time** is allowed for personal or family reasons, with a prior agreement of the REA. Part-time work due to professional reasons can be requested by Cofund postdoctoral researchers only.

# MSCA in HE – COFUND

## 2022 - Call details

# COFUND – call details

Call	2022	
	Opening Closing	Budget (M€)
COFUND	11/10/2022 09/02/2023	95

Thank you