European Funding Opportunities for Postdocs in Horizon 2020

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships and ERC Starting and Consolidator Grants

Dunja Hofmann & Martin Winger, KoWi
KoWi – EU Liaison Office of the German Research Organisations

Information, consulting & training on EU research & innovation funding

“one-stop-shop” for Horizon 2020

Service platform for our supporting association* focussing on universities

financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG)

Connected on European level offices in Bonn & Brussels

* “Association for the Promotion of European and International Cooperation in Science e.V.”
Content

1. Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships
2. European Research Council (ERC)
3. KoWi Services
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships

Part I – Excellent Science

1. European Research Council (ERC)

2. Future and Emerging Technologies (FET)

3. Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)

4. European Research Infrastructures, including e-infrastructures

Part II – Industrial Leadership

1. Leadership in Enabling & Industrial Technologies (LEIT)
   - Information and Communication Technologies
   - Nanotechnologies, Advanced Materials, Advanced Manufacturing and Processing and Biotechnology
   - Space

2. Access to Risk Finance

3. Innovation in SMEs

Part III – Societal Challenges

1. Health, demographic change and wellbeing
2. Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy
3. Secure, clean and efficient energy
4. Smart, green and integrated transport
5. Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials
6. Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies
7. Protecting freedom and security

Part IV – Spreading excellence & widening participation

Part V – Science with & for Society

Non-nuclear direct actions of the Joint Research Centre (JRC)

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)
Horizon 2020 Budget – Excellent Science

Source: REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the European Fund for Strategic Investments

Total: ~ 24,3 billion
Individual Fellowships – Principles

Who?
- Postdocs or experienced Researchers with at least 4 years of research experience ("experienced researchers – ERs")

What?
- Implementation of an independent research project in Europe (MS or AC) or in a Third Country (TC)

How?
- Fellow writes individual application jointly with Host Institution; proposal is submitted jointly with supervisor
- Research & skills training at Host Institution
- Optional secondment(s)
Country Categories in Horizon 2020

- **Europe:**
  - 28 EU Member States (MS), including their overseas departments
  - 16 associated countries (AC): Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia, Armenia

- **Third countries:** all other countries
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Mobility Rule

Fellow has lived or worked $\leq 12$ months within the last 3 years in the potential host country

A French researcher has lived in Germany for the last 4 years

Not eligible for a Fellowship in Germany!

Eligible for a Fellowship in France and other countries
Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Individual Fellowships

Global Fellowship

European Fellowship
## European Fellowships (EF)

Research project in Europe  
(EU Member State or FP-Associated Country)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible</th>
<th>Postdocs or researchers with at least 4 years of research experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility rule</td>
<td>May not have lived/worked more than 12 months within the last 3 years in host country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Secondments      | • Optional for 3 to 6 months to the academic or non-academic sector in Europe  
                    • Can be split (e. g. 2 x 3 months)                                      |
| Project          | 1 – 2 years                                                          |
MSCA Evaluation Criteria and Panels

- **Excellence**
  - (weighting: 50%)
  
- **Impact**
  - (weighting: 30%)
  
- **Implementation**
  - (weighting: 20%)

- **Standard Panel**
  - scientific areas
  
  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)
European Fellowships (EF): Multidisciplinary Panels

- **CAR - Career Restart**
  - Researchers who have not been active in research for **at least 12 months** within the **last 18 months** before the call deadline

- **RI - Reintegration**
  - Researchers **returning to Europe** after a research phase in a Third Country

- **SE - Society & Enterprise**
  - Applicants with a **non-academic Host Institution**

Fellow has lived or worked **≤ 3 years** within the last **5 years** in the potential host country
# Global Fellowships (GF)

Research project in a Third Country and Europe (MS/AC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible</th>
<th>Postdocs or researchers with at least 4 years of research experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nationality</strong></td>
<td>MS/AC nationals and long-term residents (must have lived/worked ≥5 years in MS/AC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility rule</strong></td>
<td>May not have lived/worked more than 12 months within the last 3 years in host country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Secondments**   | • Optional for 3 to 6 months to the academic or non-academic sector **in Europe**
                  | • Can be split (e.g. 2 x 3 months) |
| **Project**       | 1 – 2 years
                  | + 1 year mandatory return phase to Europe |
MSCA Basic Contracts IF

EC/REA

Grant Agreement

Beneficiary

Host Institution (MS/AC)

Partnership Agreement

Partner organisation(s) (MS/AC/TC)

Work contract (100%)

Fellow
## IF Financing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Fellow</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living allowance ER</td>
<td>4,880</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>5,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(*country correction coefficient)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility allowance</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>1,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family allowance (if applicable)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research, training and networking costs</td>
<td></td>
<td>800</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management &amp; overhead</td>
<td></td>
<td>650</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5,880</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>7,330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employer’s gross**

- e. g. Belgium (*100 %) = 5,980 EUR/M
- e. g. Germany (*correction co-efficient 97.0 %) = 5,833.60 EUR/M

**NEW: Special Needs Allowance (max. 60,000€ per Fellow)**

EUR 89,160 /y
How is the IF application process organised?

- Calls for proposals
  - Annually
  - Specific deadline
- The proposal
  - Submission by the Host Institution (supervisor)
  - Jointly with the researcher
- Online submission
  - Participant Portal of the European Commission:
    ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
MSCA Evaluation Process

- Each proposal will be evaluated by at least three reviewers (selection by Research Executive Agency, REA)
- Each criterion will be scored from 0 to 5
  - Excellence
  - Impact
  - Implementation
- 3 phases of evaluation:
  1. Individual evaluation (Individual Evaluation Report + comments and points for each criterion)
  2. Consensus meeting (Agreement of the experts + Consensus Report)
  3. Panel review (Evaluation Summary Reports + Panel Ranked List)
Preparation of the proposal

- Work Programme
- Guide for Applicants
- Templates

From Submission to Funding (IF)

- Call opening (~ April)
- Deadline (~ September)
- Results (~ February)
- Signature Grant Agreement (~ May)

Key stages:
- Information
- Proposal preparation
- Evaluation
- Grant preparation

Estimated duration: ca. 8 months
# IF Success Rates 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSCA</th>
<th>Proposals retained for funding</th>
<th>Success rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EF (ST)</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td>14.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF (RI)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>14.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF (CAR)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF (SE)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>28.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GF</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>16.4 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quelle: KOM
### MSCA Calls 2018/2019*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Budget (million)</th>
<th>Opening</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITN</td>
<td>EUR 470</td>
<td>13 Sep 2018</td>
<td>15 Jan 2019*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RISE</td>
<td>EUR 80</td>
<td>04 Dec 2018</td>
<td>02 Apr 2019*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COFUND</td>
<td>EUR 80</td>
<td>12 Apr 2018</td>
<td>27 Sep 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF</td>
<td>EUR 273</td>
<td>12 Apr 2018</td>
<td>12 Sep 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information online
KoWi Services on Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Information
- Information events and workshops
- Newsletter „Active Information Service“ (AiD), factsheets, MSCA Host Offers, etc.

Consulting
- Individual consulting and support for applicants
- Tailored advice for small groups
- Advice on legal and financial project management

Training
- Workshops on application and grant management
- Workshops on legal and financial project management
European Research Council

**Part I – Excellent Science**

1. **European Research Council (ERC)**
   - Future and Emerging Technologies (FET)
   - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)
   - European Research Infrastructures, including e-infrastructures

**Part II – Industrial Leadership**

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**Part III – Societal Challenges**

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**Part IV – Spreading excellence & widening participation**

**Part V – Science with & for Society**

**Non-nuclear direct actions of the Joint Research Centre (JRC)**

**The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)**
Some (key) messages first

Overall, it doesn’t look like fun…

- External factors mostly discouraging (high decision-making pressure, low success-rates)
- Am I ready? Will my profile/CV be competitive (enough)?
- What is my level of “frustration tolerance”?

Survival tips…

- Nurture a big idea (why & how) – and face its risks
- Believe in your idea – and shape it for your audience
- Still: Try to enjoy writing your application
ERC Underlying Principles

- European funding of basic research ("frontier research")
- Open to all fields of research: bottom-up, investigator-driven, annual calls for proposals
- Open for researchers of any age and nationality
- Funding of individuals: Principal Investigator + project
- Funding: 100 % direct + 25 % indirect project costs

- Scientific excellence is the sole criterion for evaluation
Successful ERC Applicants – Some Observations

- ERC Grantees usually have longer (and often several) “mobility experiences”
- Previous third-party funding (DFG, BMBF, EU etc.)
- Publications in high-ranking international journals
- Memberships in academies and editorial boards, review activities
- Distinct (inter)national research cooperation with leading scientists
ERC Funding Schemes

Starting Grant
2 – 7 years after PhD

Consolidator Grant
7 – 12 years after PhD

Advanced Grant
10 years track record

Proof of Concept
Preparing ideas from ERC Grant for the market

Synergy Grant
Teams of 2-4 PIs pursuing highly ambitious research goals
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview:</th>
<th>Starting Grant</th>
<th>Consolidator Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target group</strong></td>
<td>2-7 years after PhD</td>
<td>7-12 years after PhD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>extensions possible in exceptional cases; special rules for MD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
<td>max. EUR 1.5 million (exception: + EUR 500,000)</td>
<td>max. EUR 2 million (exception: + EUR 750,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for a max. duration of 5 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Host institution</strong></td>
<td>in EU Member State or Associated Country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time commitment</strong></td>
<td>≥ 50%</td>
<td>≥ 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>≥ 50% in Europe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application procedure</strong></td>
<td>single submission of full proposal, two-step evaluation (incl. interview)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Call</strong></td>
<td>annually, restricted resubmission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ERC application process

- Calls for proposals
  - Annually
  - Specific deadline
- The proposal
  - submitted by the PI
  - together with a Host Institution (Host Support Letter)
- Online submission
  - Participant Portal of the European Commission:
    ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
Proposal Parts

Part A

Administrative Forms/Proposal Submission Forms

1 - General Information
2 - Participants & Contacts
3 - Budget
4 - Ethics
5 - Call-specific questions

Part B

B1

Extended synopsis
CV
Track record

B2

Scientific proposal

Annexes

- Host Support Letter (Host Institution Binding Statement of Support)
- PhD-Certificate
- Ethics Self-Assessment (if applicable)
- Further documents (if applicable)
Evaluation Criteria Project

- Ground-breaking research?
- Beyond the state-of-the-art?
- Important challenges?
- Novel concepts?
- Approaches across disciplines?
- High risk/high gain?
- Feasibility:
  - Methodology appropriate?
  - Timescales, resources (and PI commitment) adequate?
Evaluation Criteria PI

- Ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- Creative independent thinking?
- Required scientific expertise and capacity?
Prolonged Eligibility

- Calculation of the eligibility time window:
  - Time elapsed between date on the PhD certificate and 1 January of call year
- Prolonged eligibility for documented parental leave
  - Mothers 18 months per child
  - Fathers documented time of leave taken
- Other reasons after PhD:
  - Documented elapsed time for long-term illnesses (> 90 days)
  - Clinical training
  - National service
Eligibility of Medical Doctors (MD)

- Principal Investigators who are MDs have to have:
  - Additional PhD
  - OR
  - Appointment that requires doctoral equivalency (postdoc fellowship, professorship, …)

- Eligibility time-window:
  - 4-9 years past MD for Starting Grants
  - 9-14 years past MD for Consolidator Grants
Evaluation (StG, CoG, AdG)

- Peer-review: Evaluation panels (10-15 members)
- Applicants choose panel(s)
- Up to 3 reviewers can be excluded in advance
- Three scientific domains:
  - Physical Sciences & Engineering (PE): 10 Panels
  - Life Sciences (LS): 9 Panels
  - Social Sciences & Humanities (SH): 6 Panels
- Reviewers give marks for PI and project, respectively
# ERC Success Rates 2015-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call Year</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting Grants</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
<td>13.3 %</td>
<td>12.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidator Grants</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>13.8 %</td>
<td>13.2 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Grants</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>9.6 %</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STG 2016-2017 Funded proposals by years since PhD and success rate

Source: ERC
COG 2017 funded proposals by years since PhD and success rates

Source: ERC
Success Rate by HI Country & Domain (2017)

Source: ERC
From Submission to Funding

- Submission (Deadline)
  - Proposal preparation
  - Evaluation ~ 90 days

- Result step 1
  - Evaluation ~ 110 days

- Result step 2
  - Grant preparation ~ 100 days

- Signature GA

~ 10 months
# Calls for Proposals 2019

Publication of Work Programme: 7 September 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding line</th>
<th>PhD reference date</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Deadline*</th>
<th>Budget (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting Grants</td>
<td>1 Jan 2019</td>
<td>14 September 2018</td>
<td>17 October 2018</td>
<td>580 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidator Grants</td>
<td>1 Jan 2019</td>
<td>24 October 2018</td>
<td>7 February 2019</td>
<td>602 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Grants</td>
<td>21 May 2019</td>
<td>29 August 2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>391 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synergy Grants</td>
<td>14 September 2018</td>
<td>8 November 2018</td>
<td></td>
<td>400 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 5 pm Brussels time!
Nationale Kontaktstellen (NKS)

Der Europäische Forschungsrat (ERC)

Die Nationale Kontaktstellen zum Europäischen Forschungsrat (European Research Council, ERC) wird gemeinsam von KOWI (Kooperationsstelle EU der Wissenschaftsorganisationen) und der Kooperationsstelle EU der Wissenschaftsorganisationen (GWU) betrieben.

Was wird gefördert?


- Starting Grants für Nachwuchswissenschaftler und -wissenschaftlerinnen (0–7 Jahre nach PhD) mit bis zu 1,5 Mio. Euro über maximal fünf Jahre
- Consolidator Grants für Wissenschaftler und -wissenschaftlerinnen (7–12 Jahre nach PhD) mit bis zu 2,5 Mio. Euro über maximal fünf Jahre
- Advanced Grants für erfahrene ausländische Forscher und -forscherinnen mit bis zu 3,5 Mio. Euro über maximal fünf Jahre

Personen berufen einen ERC-Grant abgewiesen haben und die aus dem Projekt erzielten Daten in Ermangel einer deren Öffentlich machen, können zusätzlich über die „Proof of Concept“-Ausschreibungen auf einem Wettbewerb angewiesen werden.

European Research Council (ERC)

SUPPORTING TOP RESEARCHERS FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

OPEN CALLS

- Proof of Concept | ERC-2017-PoC Information for applicants FAQ
- Timeframe ongoing calls
- Deadline: 25.04.2017 / 04.06.2017

The official deadlines are only those indicated on the Participant Portal.

NEWS

- 07.04.2017 ERC Advanced Grants: €46 million from EU to 231 senior researchers
- 07.04.2017 ERC President’s Keywords: Looking beyond 60 Years of Rome Treaty - a Scientist View
- 07.04.2017 ERC Advanced Grants 2018 Highlighted projects
- 07.04.2017 Speech ERC President “ERC 10 Years, a Successful Story for Europe with a view on the future”

ALL ABOUT ERC FUNDING

- ERC STARTING GRANTS
  - Grants up to 1.5 million € for 5 years
  - For promising early career researchers with 2 to 7 years experience after PhD
- ERC CONSOLIDATOR GRANTS
  - Grants up to 2 million € for 5 years
  - For established researchers with 7 to 12 years experience after PhD
- ERC ADVANCED GRANTS
  - Grants up to 3 million € for 5 years
  - For established research leaders with an outstanding track record of research achievements
- ERC PROOF OF CONCEPT
  - This grant should be relaunched in the ERC Work Programme 2016
- SYNERGY GRANTS
  - For researchers wanting to work or gain experience in an ERC grantee’s team
- OTHER ERC OPPORTUNITIES

National Contact Point (NCP)
Important Documents

- ERC Work Programme
- ERC Rules for Submission and Evaluation
- Information for Applicants
- Research Proposal Template

ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
KoWi Services on the ERC*

Information
- Information events and workshops
- NCP ERC website, incl. ERC-FAQs): nks-erc.de
- Newsletter: eubuero.de/newsletter

Consulting
- Individual consulting and support for applicants
- Tailored advice for small groups
- Advice on legal and financial project management

Training
- Interview trainings for Starting und Consolidator Grants in Bonn + on-site support in Brussels
- Workshops on application and grant management

* Cooperation with the EU-Bureau of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (EU-Büro des BMBF)
Some reflections on your proposal

- Can you explain your project idea briefly and concisely?
- Which important challenges will you tackle?
- Which are the ground-breaking or novel aspects?
- What is the expected impact on your research field?
- Why are you the right person to carry out the project?
Contact

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Martin Winger

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+32 2-54802-21