MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2023

Internal selection process & guidance for applicants

The Research Strategy & Development team would like to invite Intention to Submit from applicants wishing to apply to the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships scheme. This is a highly competitive scheme, with a lengthy application process. If you would like to receive support with your application, please notify your Research Development Manger no later than 30th June 2023. Please note that we cannot guarantee support for notifications received after this date.

Overview

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) fund excellent research and innovation and equip researchers at all stages of their career with new knowledge and skills, through mobility across borders and exposure to different sectors and disciplines. The MSCA also fund the development of excellent doctoral and postdoctoral training programmes and collaborative research projects worldwide. By doing so, they achieve a structuring impact on higher education institutions, research centres and non-academic organisations.

The objective of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships (PFs) is to support research career and foster excellence in research, by enhancing the creative and innovative potential of researchers holding a PhD and who wish to diversify their individual competences and acquire new skills through advanced training and international, interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral mobility, while implementing excellent research projects across all sectors of research.

MSCA PFs target researchers holding a PhD and with a maximum of 8 years full-time postdoctoral experience. The scheme is open to all domains of research and innovation, at all stages – from basic frontier research to near market uptake.

There are two types of Postdoctoral Fellowships:

- European Postdoctoral Fellowships are open to researchers of any nationality who wish to engage in R&I projects by either coming to Europe from any country in the world or moving within Europe. The standard duration of these fellowships must be between 12 and 24 months.
- Global Postdoctoral Fellowships are open to European nationals or long-term residents who wish to engage in R&I projects with organisations outside EU Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries. These fellowships require an outgoing phase of minimum 12 and maximum 24 months in a non-associated Third Country, and a mandatory 12-month return phase to a host organisation based in an EU Member State or a Horizon Europe Associated Country.

Please note: UK candidates will still be eligible to apply for both European and Global PFs. All MSCA calls are covered by the UK Government guarantee; the 2023 MSCA calls are not currently included in the guarantee, as it currently applies to calls with a deadline on or before 30th June 2023, but our understanding is that UKRI will extend the guarantee if UK association continues to be delayed.

Assessment criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by experts on the basis of the award criteria 'Excellence', 'Impact' and 'Quality and efficiency of the implementation'. The weighting is 50% Excellence, 30% Impact and 20% Quality, and each is marked out of 5. Proposals scoring equal to or above 70% will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available call budget.

More detailed information can be found in Section 2.4 (pages 94-95) of the Work Programme document available at this link: https://rea.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-04/Guide%20for%20applicants_MSCA%20PF%202023.pdf

Process

If you are interested in applying to the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship and would like support in the preparation of your application, please notify your Research Development Manager of your Intention to Submit no later than **30th June 2023**. By this point, you should have already engaged the prospective KCL supervisor, and they should be familiar with the proposal and with the inputs they will need to provide to assist you in its competitiveness. You should also contact the relevant department/school and make sure that all local processes have been adhered to. (Though there is no limit to the number of applications the College will support, some departments might operate an internal triage to ensure quality and oversight of the applications.)

Please note the deadline of 30th June 2023 is final and non-negotiable.

Expressions of Interest: what to include

All candidates interested in applying via King's should submit a formal Expression of Interest (EoI) by <u>30th June 2023.</u> Expressions of interest should include:

1. A 2-page CV including selected publication list, please include (expected) PhD award date.

2. A Statement of eligibility including whether the European/Global fellowship is being applied for. Should follow structure of eligibility criteria in [Guide for Applicants](#) pp. 7-9. For Global Postdoctoral Fellowships only, also include who your associated partner for the outgoing phase of the project will be (if known).

3. A Personal statement (up to 1-page) covering key contributions to research, wider contributions to research community (supervision/mentoring, ED&I, public engagement, research culture etc.), choice of host environment (i.e., why King's, why proposed supervisor), and training plans. If you already know that you want to do a non-academic placement and/or a secondment, please explain why and identify the host(s) (if known); or write 'N/A' if not applicable. (NB Placements and secondments are optional; applicants to the MSCA scheme are not penalised for not including a placement or secondment.) Include your future career plans and ambitions.

4. A 2-page Research proposal including:

    a. Excellence (up to 1-page)
        i.   What are your project objectives?
        ii. How does the project go beyond the state of the art?
        iii. What is your methodology and how will it help you deliver your project objectives?
    b. Impact (up to ½ page)
        i.   What skills do you want to develop?
        ii. How do you think your research and training activities will enhance your career prospects, whether inside or outside academia?
        iii. With which target groups will you communicate or engage about your project?
        iv. Which target groups (e.g., scientific community, end users, financial actors, public at large) would benefit from your project, and what kinds of impact are you hoping to make?
    c. Implementation (up to ½ page of A4)
        i.   What are your key deliverables and milestones?
5. Email confirmations from KCL supervisor and their Head of Department or Head of School to confirm that they support the application and (in the supervisor's case) have seen and had

appropriate input into the EOI being submitted, and have planned the training and development activities required with the applicant.

Please complete all expression of interest materials as one PDF document, in Arial size 11 and then submit to your Faculty Research Development Manager by **30th June 2023** – see contact list at the end of this document.

Finances / Length of award

Postdoctoral Fellowships typically offer funding for:

- Living allowance
- Mobility allowance
- Family allowance (if applicable)
- Research, training and networking costs
- Management and indirect costs

Please have a look at the Pre-Award Factsheets on the scheme which includes information on finance aspects and Excel spreadsheet calculators for calculating the unit costs and totals for each category and the grant as a whole: https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/grants-contracts/pre-award/how-to-apply/pre-award-costing-factsheets

European PF awards are between 1 and 2 years. Global PF awards are between 2 and 3 years, with 1-2yrs outgoing phase, and 1yr mandatory return phase in Europe.

Internal selection process timeline

The timeline for the application process is set out below.

Date	Action	Notes
30th June 2023	Notification of Intention to Submit to RDMs	*This deadline is final and non-negotiable.* *Please also inform the relevant department/school and make sure that all local processes have been adhered to.* Please send your EoI to your Faculty Research Development Manager
	Agreement of King's support from HoD	RDMs to consult with VDRs to confirm candidates that are ready and suitable to apply
July – 29th August 2023	Application development; standard costings & Worktribe process	Research Development Managers available to give feedback to applicants during development.
29th August 2023	King's internal outline submission deadline for applicants	

13th September 2023, 5pm Brussels time (TBC)	External Funder Outline Application Deadline	

The Research Strategy & Development team has run an information session for applicants & mentors. The recording for the session can be found at this link: https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/strategy-development/research-development/events/workshops-training-events

Contact details

Please contact your local RDM with any queries about the process above.

Useful links

- MSCA website: https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/actions/postdoctoral-fellowships
- MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships Guide for Applicants
- MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships Application Form
- Funding & Tender opportunities portal (includes useful FAQs and once the call opens from 12 April 2023 will have all the relevant application and guidance links).

Research Development Managers

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