MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS (MSCA) POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

Dr Brian Cahill

brian@scilink.eu

AGENDA
Friday 30th May

09:00

Welcome to the training session (by the University of Maribor Vice Rector for Science and Research).

09:05

Brief introduction to MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2025 call and the application process

- **Policy Level Objectives**
- **Anticipated Impact of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships**
- **Basic Information about MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships**
- **Eligibility Criteria**
- **Financial Aspects**

10:00

Methodological foundations to prepare a competitive application – The Logical Framework Approach

10:30

- **Evaluation Process**
- **Make it easy for the Evaluator**
- **Tips for clear concise writing**
- **Receiving Results of your Evaluation**

11:00 Break

AGENDA
Friday 30th May

11:05
Description of main elements of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship proposal structure

11:10 Key elements of Section A of the application form
- **Choosing a Title and Acronym**
- **Abstract**
- **Participants**
- **Budget**
- **Ethics**
- **Other Questions**

11:30 Break

11:35
Key elements of Section B of the application form
- **Excellence**
- **Impact**
- **Implementation**

13:00 Break

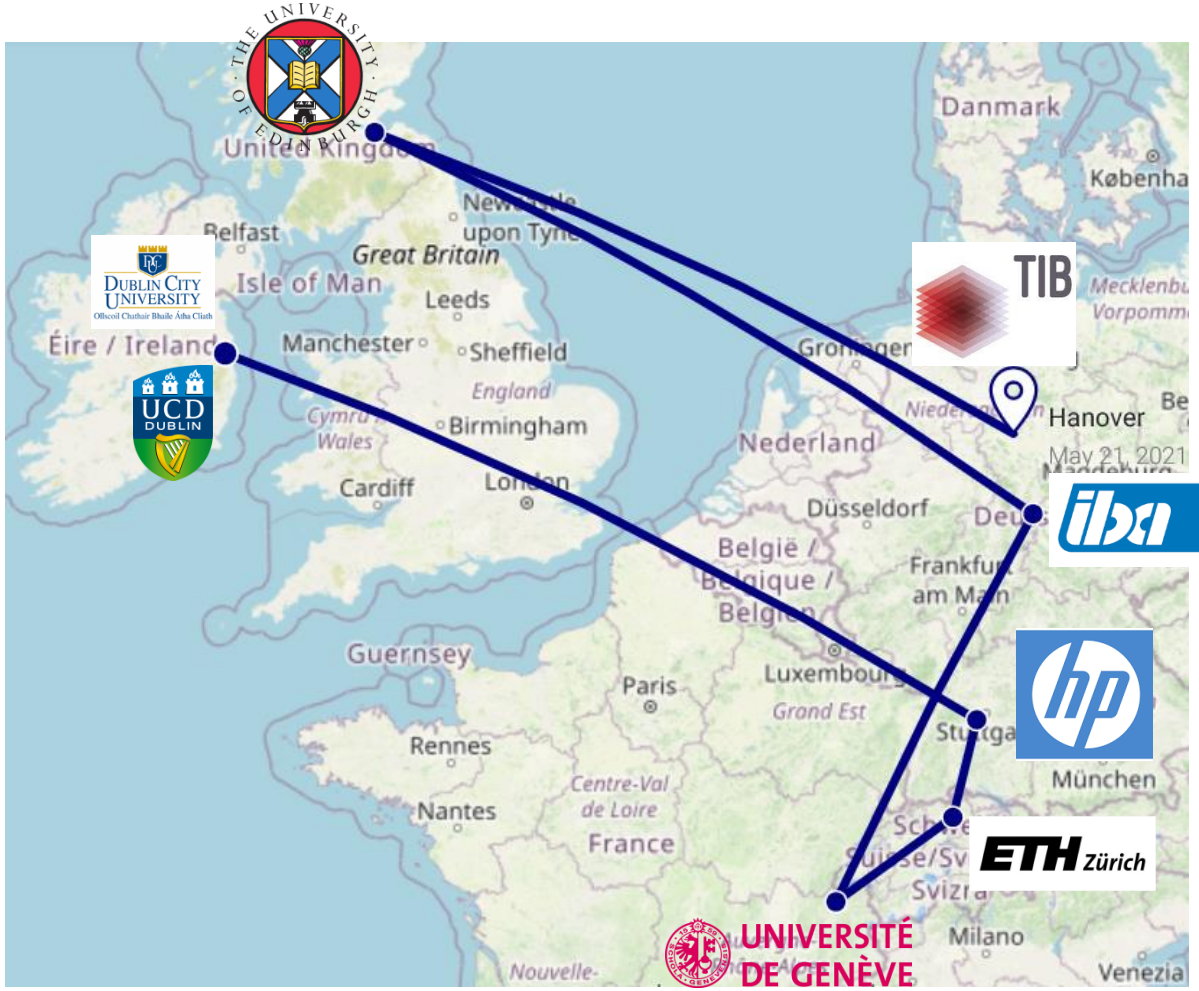
13:05
Critical aspects about researcher's profile
Develop yourself before submitting
Curriculum Vitae
Assessing your skills development needs
Considering your Career Development Plan

14:00 Conclusion, questions and remarks

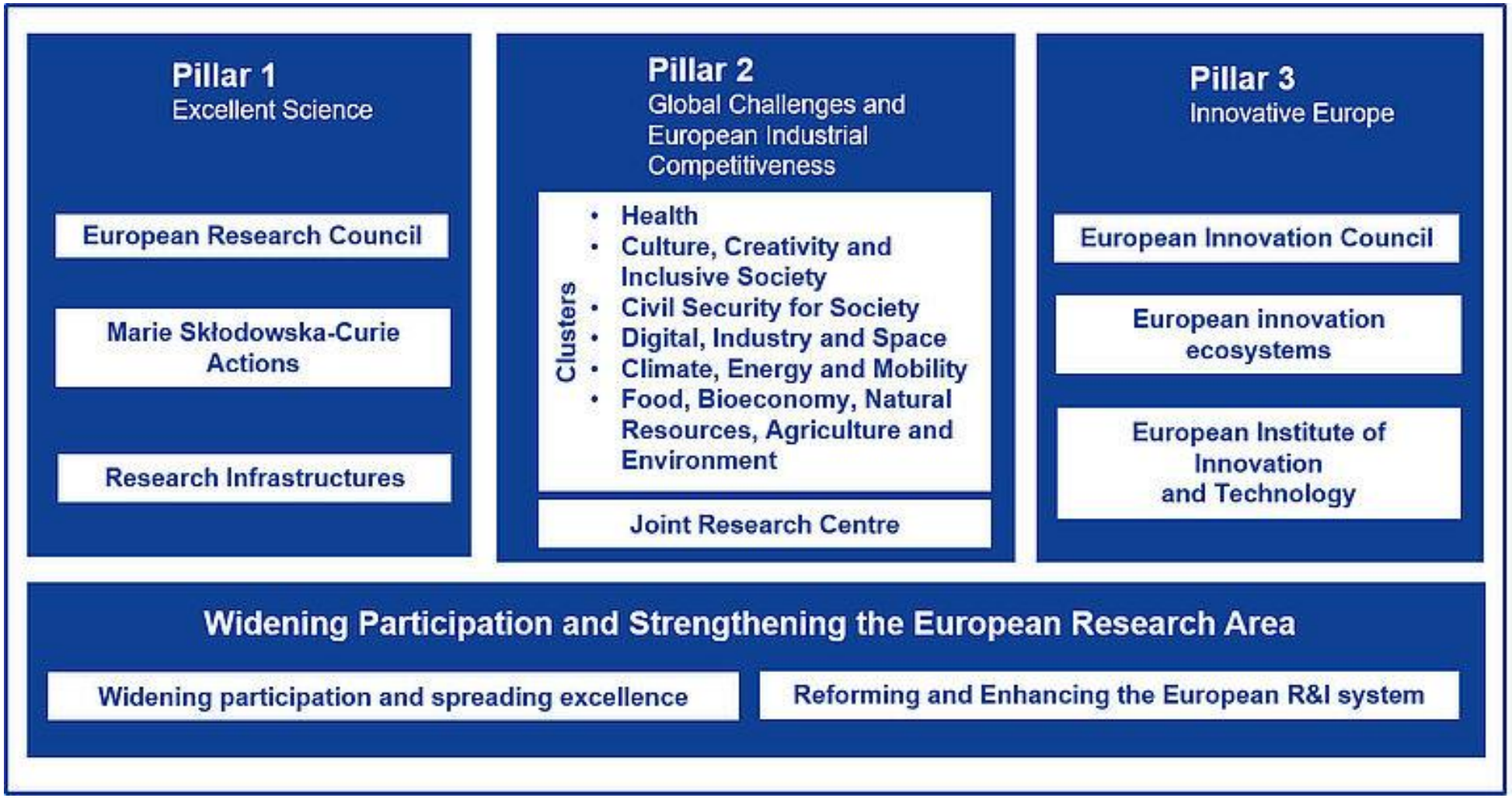
My International Mobility

1991-8: Engineering Studies in Dublin
1998-2000: Hewlett-Packard in Böblingen
2000-4: PhD in Nanotechnology at ETH Zurich
2005-7: Postdoc in Chemistry at Uni. of Geneva
2007-12: MSCA Fellow at iba Heiligenstadt
2013-8: Group Leader at iba Heiligenstadt
2018-9: Project Manager of MSCA COFUND at University of Edinburgh
2020-4: Project Manager at TIB Hannover
2024+: Managing Director of Career@BI Programme at Hochschule Bielefeld

2015: Chair of MCAA German Chapter
2016-8: Chair of MCAA
2018-24: Board Member of EuroScience
2019+: Evaluator MSCA IF, EIC Calls
2021: Board Member of SciLink Foundation



Horizon Europe



Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions

MSC Actions	
Doctoral Networks	Networks for training doctoral candidates
Postdoctoral Fellowships	Postdoctoral Researchers
Staff Exchanges	Any type of research staff
COFUND	Cofunding of training programmes
MSCA and Citizens	Public Outreach

Policy Objectives

- **Excellence**
  - The MSCA support **excellent researchers**. They also foster excellence in research and innovation **collaborations**, **knowledge transfer**, **methodologies** and **content**, as well as in **training**, **supervision** and **career guidance**.
- **Mobility**
  - The MSCA support the mobility of researchers between **countries**, **sectors** and **disciplines** to acquire new **knowledge**, **skills** and **competences**.

Policy Objectives

- **Bottom-up and open to the world**
  - The MSCA are **open to all domains of research** and innovation and encourage **international cooperation** to set-up **strategic collaborations**.
- **Excellent recruitment, working conditions and inclusiveness**
  - The MSCA promote the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers for the recruitment, working and employment conditions of researchers.

Policy Objectives

- **Effective supervision and career guidance**
  - The MSCA promote **effective supervision** and **adequate mentoring** and **career guidance**. This contributes to creating a **supportive environment** for the researchers to work. The Guidelines for MSCA Supervision provide recommendations in this regard.
- **Open science and responsible research and innovation**
  - The MSCA support **Open Science** and **Responsible Research and Innovation**.

Policy Objectives

- **European Green Deal**
  - The MSCA support bottom-up and frontier/applied research supporting the European Green Deal and tackling climate and environmental-related challenges.
  - The MSCA Green Charter provides recommendations to
    - reduce, reuse and recycle
    - promote green purchasing for project-related materials
    - ensure the sustainability of project events
    - use low-emission forms of transport
    - promote teleconferencing whenever possible
    - use sustainable and renewable forms of energy
    - develop awareness on environmental sustainability
    - share ideas and examples of best practice

Policy Objectives

- **Synergies**
  - The MSCA promote strong links with the Cohesion policy funds and the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

Eligible Countries

- All 27 EU Member States
- Associated Countries:
- Albania
- Armenia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Faroe Islands
- Georgia
- Iceland
- Israel
- Kosovo
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Serbia
- Türkiye
- Tunisia
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom

ERA Fellowships

- Aim to combat brain drain and support researchers to undertake their fellowship in a Widening Country (15 Member States, 14 Associated Countries)
- All non-funded MSCA European Fellowship application that pass the evaluation threshold (70%) will be automatically passed on tp the ERA Fellowships call
- Applications do not need to be submitted directly to this call
- Funded from the Widening Participation part of Horizon Europe
- A single multidisciplinary ranking decides funding
- Same conditions as MSCA PF apply

Seal of Excellence

- The MSCA Seal of Excellence is a quality label awarded to applicants under MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships and MSCA COFUND actions who scored 85% or higher in the assessment.
- The Seal of Excellence is a guarantee of the outstanding value of the research project, recognized by a comprehensive and thorough assessment process. Beneficiaries can use this award to apply for alternative funding for their research.
- Thanks to the MSCA Seal of Excellence, other funding bodies can use the Horizon Europe evaluation process if they wish. A proposal which has earned the MSCA Seal of Excellence may be supported by national and regional support programmes.

Call Budget

Call - MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2025

HORIZON-MSCA-2025-PF

Conditions for the Call

Indicative budget(s)[45]

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million)	Indicative number of projects expected to be funded
		2025		
Opening: 09 Apr 2025 Deadline(s): 10 Sep 2025				
HORIZON-MSCA-2025-PF-01-01	TMA Postdoctoral Fellowships - European Fellowships	343.65		Not relevant
HORIZON-MSCA-2025-PF-01-01	TMA Postdoctoral Fellowships - Global Fellowships	60.64		Not relevant
Overall indicative budget		404.29		

The goal of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships
For postdoctoral fellows

- Increased set of **research and transferable skills** and **competences**, leading to **improved employability and career prospects** of MSCA postdoctoral fellows **within academia and beyond**;
- **New mind-sets and approaches** to R&I work forged through international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary experience;
- Enhanced **networking** and **communication** capacities with **scientific peers**, as well as with the **general public** that will increase and broaden the research and innovation **impact**.

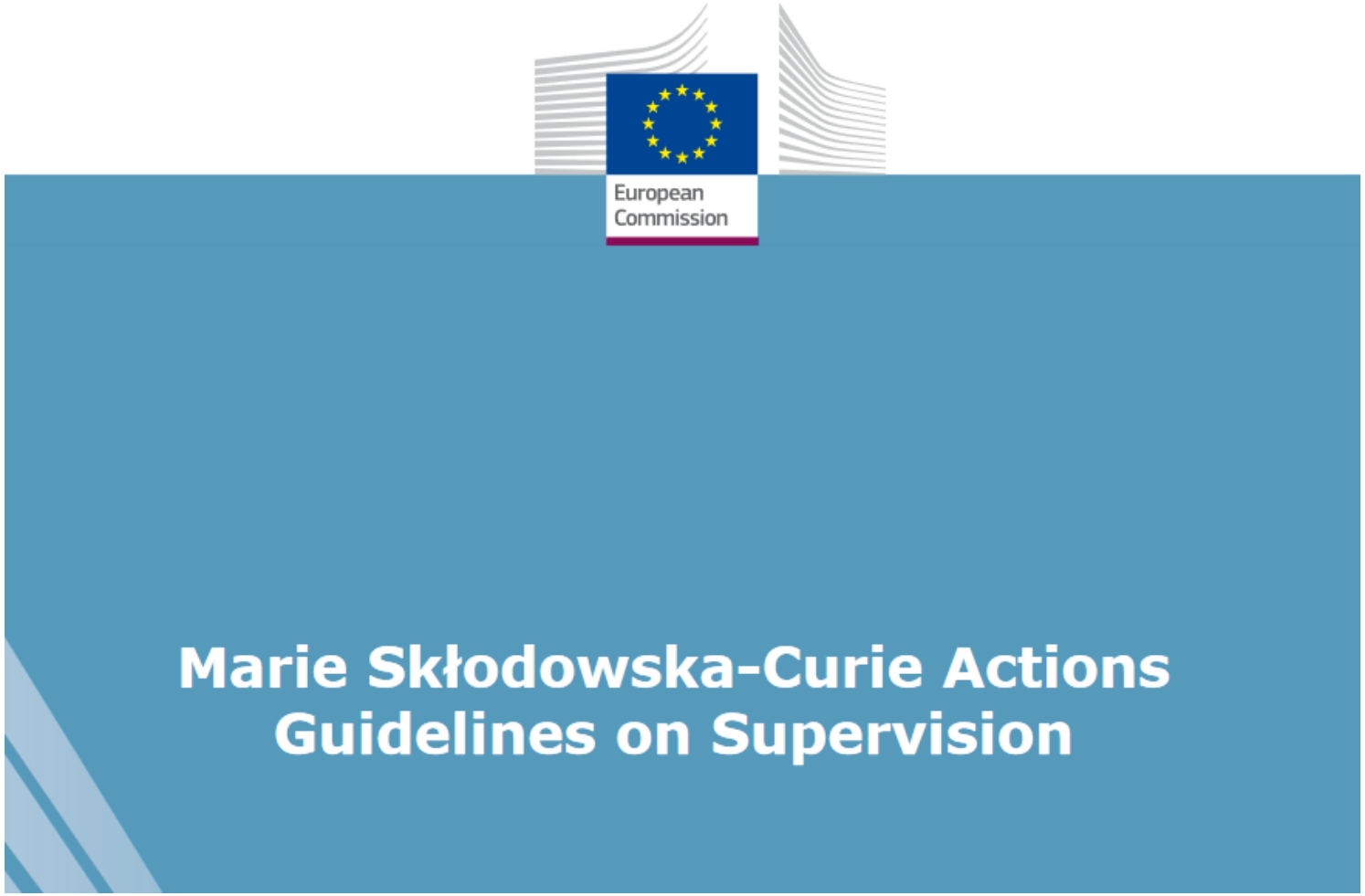
The goal of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships
For participating organisations

- Increased alignment of **working conditions for researchers** in accordance with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers;
- Enhanced quality and sustainability of **research training** and **supervision**;
- Increased global **attractiveness**, **visibility** and **reputation** of the participating organisation(s);
- **Stronger R&I capacity** and **output** among participating organisations; **better transfer of knowledge**;
- Regular **feedback of research results into teaching and education** at participating organisations.

Types of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

- European Fellowships
  - For coming to Europe form anywhere in the worls of moving within Europe
  - Duration 12-24 Months
- Global Fellowships
  - For going outside EU Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries
  - Duration 24-36 Months
    - 12-24 Months outgoing phase
    - 12 months mandatory return phase
- Optional secondments worldwide of up to 1/3 of the fellowship duration (or outgoing phase).
- Optional placement of up to 6 months in a non-academic European organiszation at the end of the regular duration of the Fellowship.

MSCA Supervision Guidelines



MSCA Supervision Guidelines

- You must secure support for your project from a supervisor, who is willing to support your work during the Fellowship and proposal writing before.
- You should have **mutual synergy** from a research point of view.
- Do you have **longer term perspective** at host institution?
- Supervisor/Institution with **experience of hosting international researchers** and MSCA is a big help to write proposal and manage grant
- The support your supervisor/institution for your project will be evaluated
- Academic institutions can act as host institutions but private sector entities are also eligible. Private sector can be big companies, small-to-medium enterprises or NGOs.
- Expressions of Interest for hosting MSCA fellows are published on the EURAXESS portal, Net4Mobility website, kowi.de website and others.

MSCA Supervision Guidelines

1. **Integration of Researchers**
   Institutions and supervisors should facilitate the seamless integration of researchers into their new research environments. This includes providing access to necessary resources, fostering inclusion, and encouraging participation in institutional activities.
2. **Research Support**
   Supervisors are expected to offer continuous guidance throughout the research project. This encompasses regular progress reviews, constructive feedback, and ensuring that researchers have the necessary tools and support to achieve their research objectives.
3. **Career Development**
   A core objective is to support the long-term career trajectories of researchers. Supervisors should provide mentorship, networking opportunities, and advice on career planning to help researchers navigate their professional paths effectively.

4. **Mentoring and Wellbeing**
   Supervision extends beyond academic guidance to include the overall wellbeing of researchers. Supervisors should be attentive to the mental health and personal development of researchers, creating a supportive environment that fosters growth and resilience.
5. **Communication and Conflict Resolution**
   Establishing clear communication channels is vital. Supervisors and institutions should proactively manage expectations and have mechanisms in place to address and resolve conflicts that may arise during the research period.
6. **Training and Professional Development of Supervisors**
   Institutions are encouraged to provide training programs for supervisors to enhance their mentoring skills and stay updated with best practices in research supervision. This ensures that supervisors are well-equipped to support researchers effectively.

Typical Role of Supervisor in Project

- **Mentoring** the candidate
- Take part in **regular meetings** to discuss the status and progress of the project.
- Provide **guidance for training-through-research**
- Draft the **Career Development Plan** together with the candidate. The plan should include
  - training in **transferable skills**,
  - **planning for publications** and **conference participation**,
  - training in **research specific skills**.
- Support **integration within host institution**
- Introduce to **international networks/stakeholders/industry partners**

Secondments

- Secondments are not compulsory
- Secondments must be relevant, feasible, and beneficial for the researcher and in line with the project objectives.
- Having a secondment at a partner organization allows you:
  - build international networks
  - include intersectoral experience, if this makes sense for you and your project idea: 3 months
- Maximum secondment duration depends on total duration of the fellowship:
  - ≤ 18 months project duration: maximum 3 months secondment
  - > 18 months project duration: maximum 6 months secondment

Develop yourself before submitting

In the years before submitting, build up evidence of your career development:

- Have you shown independent thinking
- Standard academic outputs: Publications, Presentations, etc.
- International Experience. Erasmus, COST, any short research stays abroad, research collaborations.
- Reviewing Experience
- Skill development, technical skills, writing skills, courses
- Science Communication
- Other grants/awards, even small ones

The project is a logical further development of your career.

Anticipated Impact of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

- Development of high quality individuals with talents in research and innovation, with an increased skill set (research and transferable), with better employability prospects in both industry and academia, who will contribute on a regional, national and international level
- Increased international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility of researchers in Europe
- Strengthened European Research Area via active involvement of industry, thereby contributing to Europe's competitiveness and growth

How do you and your research idea fit into this framework?

MSCA Financial Aspect 2025

Contributions for the recruited researcher per person-month					Institutional unit contributions per person-month	
Living allowance	**Mobility allowance**	**Family allowance** (if applicable)	**Long-term leave allowance** (if applicable)	**Special needs allowance** (if applicable)	**Research, training and networking contribution**	**Management and indirect contribution**
EUR 5 990	EUR 710	EUR 660	EUR 6700 x % covered by the beneficiary	requested unit x (1/number of months)	EUR 1 000	EUR 650

MSCA Financial Aspect 2025

Contributions for the recruited researcher per person-month					Institutional unit contributions per person-month	
Living allowance	**Mobility allowance**	**Family allowance** (if applicable)	**Long-term leave allowance** (if applicable)	**Special needs allowance** (if applicable)	**Research, training and networking contribution**	**Management and indirect contribution**
EUR 5 990	EUR 710	EUR 660	EUR 6700 x % covered by the beneficiary	requested unit x (1/number of months)	EUR 1 000	EUR 650

Be careful interpreting salary data:

These sums are the employer gross and payment of employer contributions to pensions, health insurance and other social contributions will be deducted before an employee gross salary is calculated.

Levels of taxation, pension and social security contributions differ greatly across host countries and can be quite large.

MSCA Financial Aspect 2025

Contributions for the recruited researcher per person-month

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Table 1: Country correction coefficients (CCC) for Doctoral Networks and Postdoctoral Fellowships living allowances[168]

For countries where the correction coefficient is not indicated, the Commission will decide on a case-by-case basis.

Country Code[169]	CCC
EU Member States	
AT	109,7%
BE	100%
BG	64,7%
CY	81,9%
CZ	94,1%
DE	101,2%
DK	132,8%
EE	92,7%
EL	86,8%
ES	95,6%
FI	118%
FR	118,1%
HR	80,1%
HU	76,7%
IE	136,4%
IT	95,3%
LT	86,6%
LU	100%
LV	83,8%
MT	92,4%
NL	111,6%
PL	74,1%
PT	93,7%
RO	70,7%
SE	125%
SI	87,7%
SK	80,9%

[168] These conditions only apply to the 2024 and 2025 calls of this Work Programme. For the conditions applying to the 2023 calls, please see the Work Programme version adopted on 6 December2022(European Commission Decision C(2022)7550).

[169] ISO 3166 alpha-2, except for Greece and the United Kingdom (EL and UK used respectively instead of GR and GB).

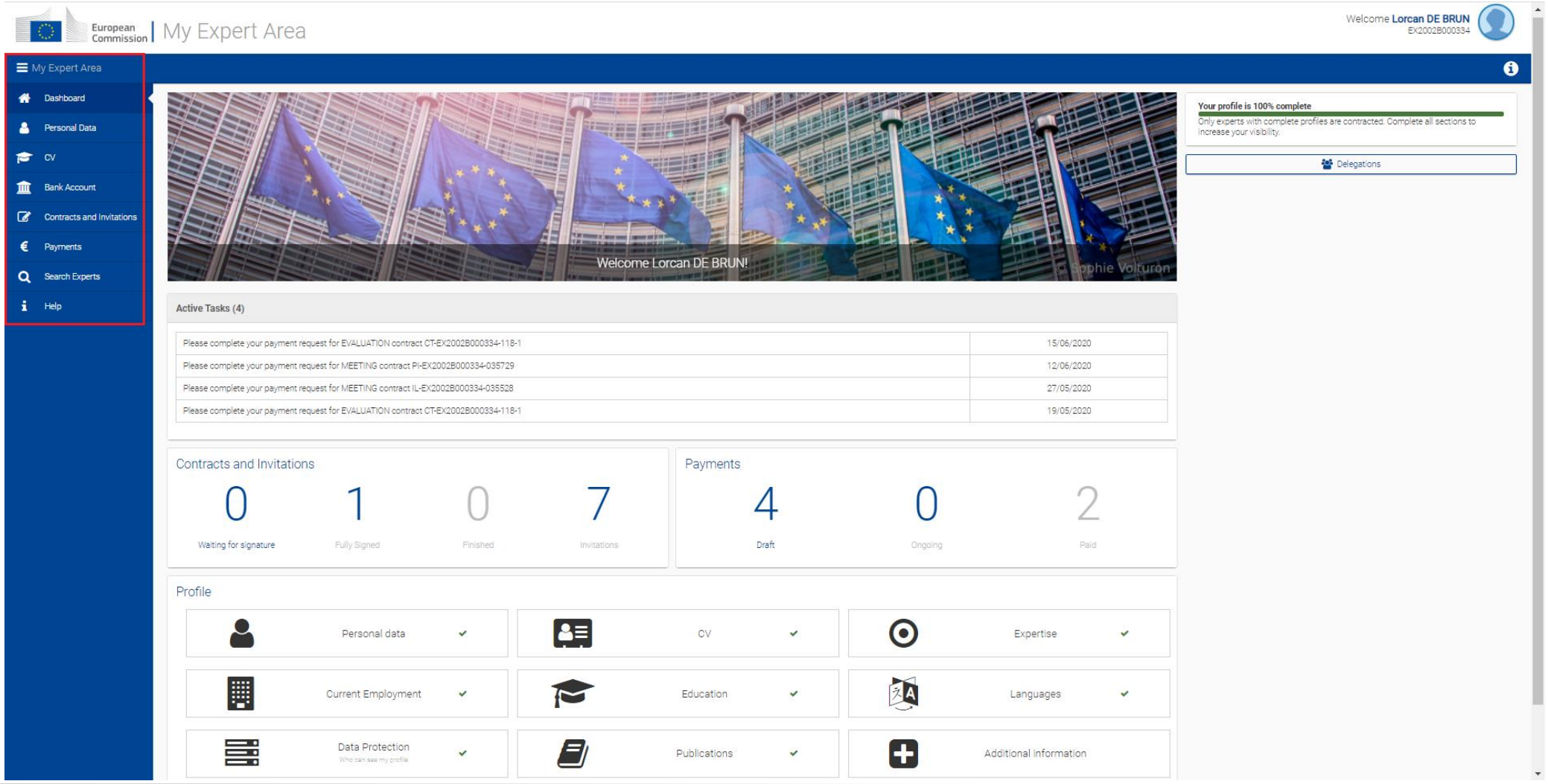
Eligibility Criteria

- **One Beneficiary (for European & Global Fellowships)**
  - Legal entity in an **EU Member State or HE Associated Country***
  - Signs the **grant agreement**
  - **Recruits** the researcher
  - Main host of the researcher for European Fellowships
  - Host of the return phase for Global Fellowships
- **One Associated Partner for Global Fellowships**
  - For Global Fellowships, it's the **host organisation in the 3rd country**
  - It must be a **legal entity** outside an EU Member States and HE Associated Country
  - It must submit a **letter of commitment**

Eligibility Criteria (non exhaustive)

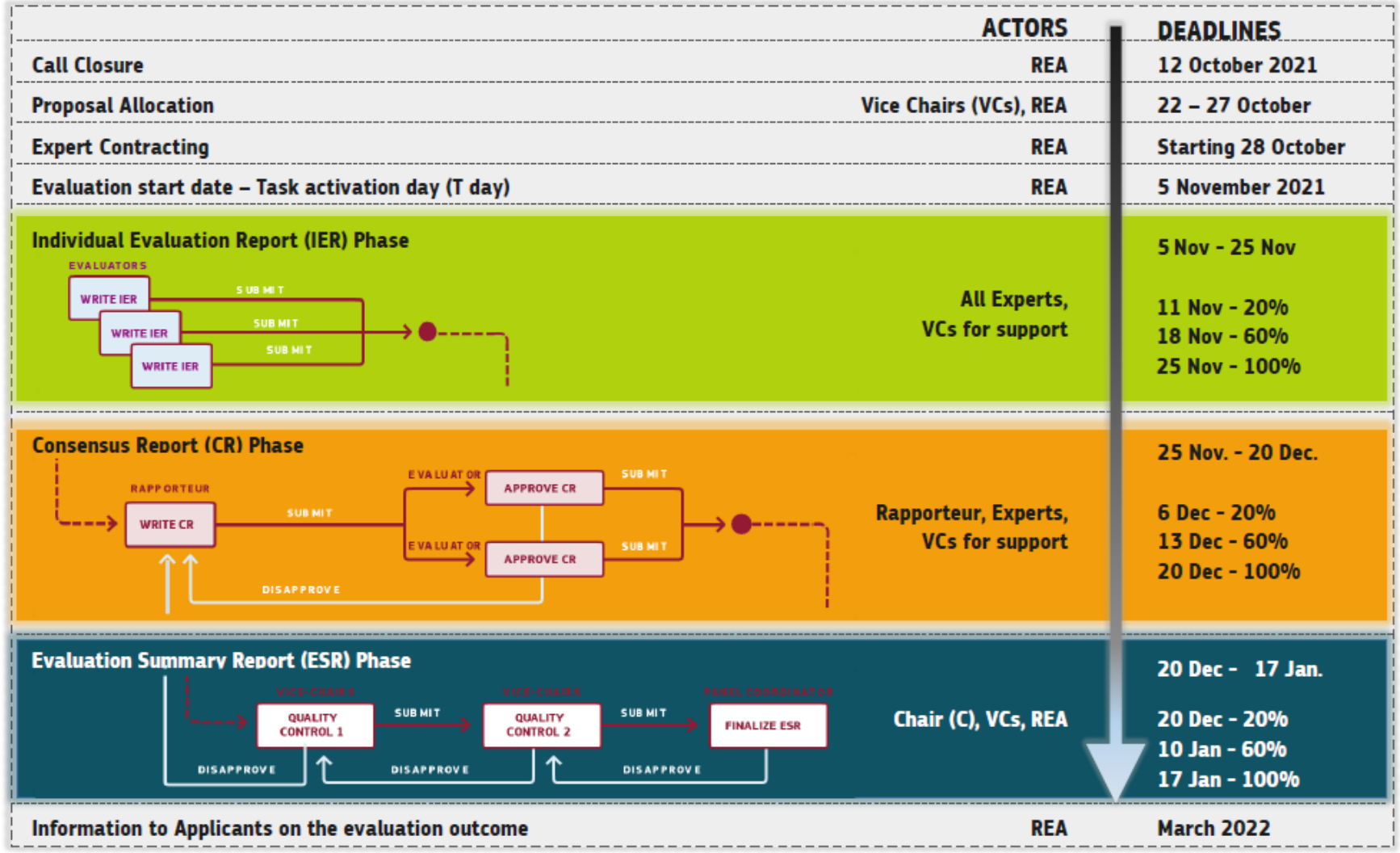
- **European Fellowships**: any nationality
- **Global Fellowships**: nationals or long-term residents of MS or HE AC (see definition of long-term residents in MSCA-PF GfA)
- At application deadline, the applicant must not have resided or carried out their main work activity (including studying) in the host country for more than **12 months in the past 3 years** (not counting holidays or short stays).
  - For GF, this applies to 3rd country
- At application deadline, have **no more than 8 years' experience** since defending **PhD** (career breaks for parental leave, sickness leave or army service, years of experience in research in 3rd countries)
- Calculator: https://rea.ec.europa.eu/document/download/c3487cd3-f595-407c-b87d-a2e2f2b0e2af_en
- At application deadline, must have successfully defended their doctoral thesis
- Resubmission restricted for proposals with score below 70% the previous year
- An individual researcher can only **submit one proposal**
- The REA makes the final decision on whether the application meets the eligibility conditions

Work as an Expert Evaluator for the EU



Register on the EU Funding and Tenders Portal
https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/work-as-an-expert

Evaluation Process



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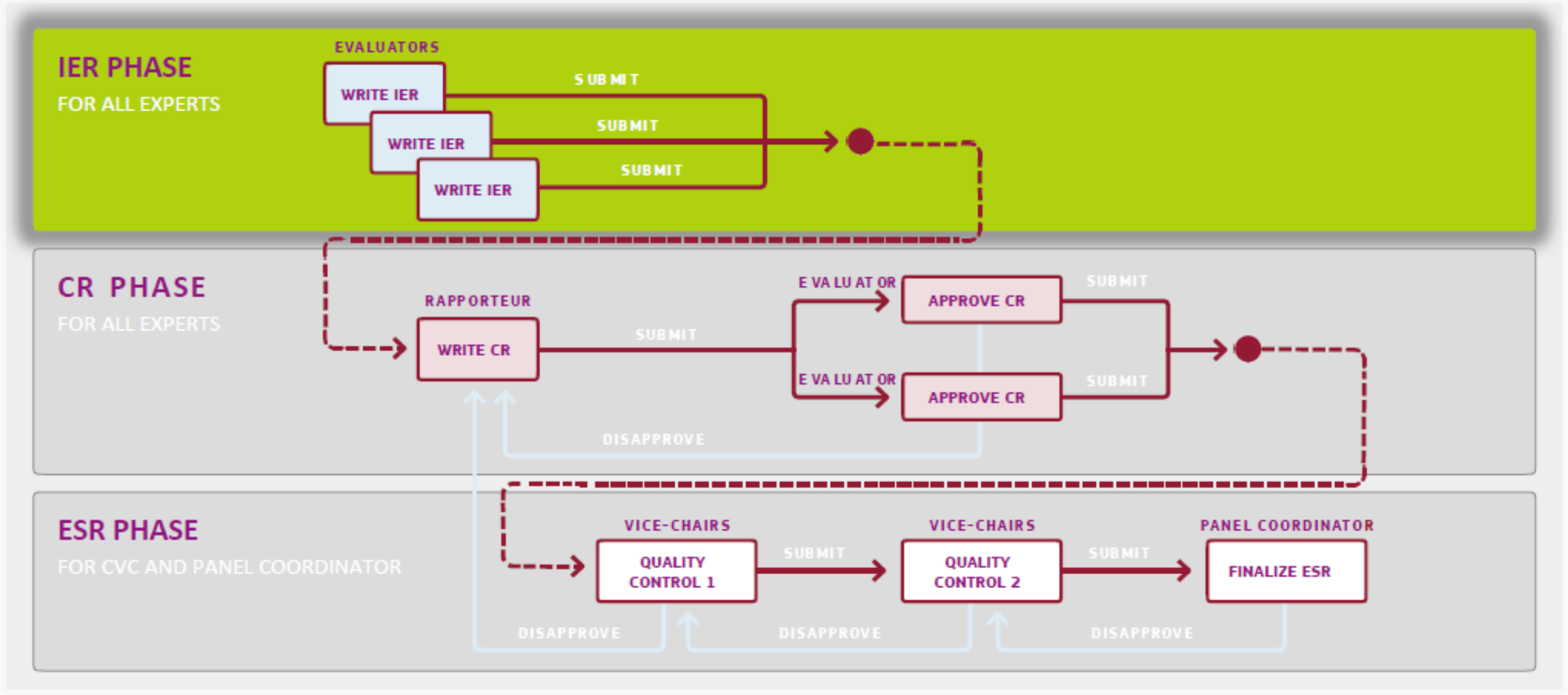

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Assessment Grid (from Evaluator's Manual)

INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS 2018 - ASSESSMENT GRID	PROPOSAL NUMBER/ACRONYM: _____	ASSESSMENT					
		Fail	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
EXCELLENCE	**1**						
Quality and credibility of the research/innovation project, level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects	**1.1**						
Are the state-of-the-art, specific objectives and an overview of the action provided and relevant?	1.1						
Is the proposed research methodology and approach credible (in view of the type of research / innovation activities proposed)?	1.1						
Is the planned research original and innovative? Will the action contribute to advance the state-of-the-art within the research field (i.e. new concepts, approaches or methods)?	1.1						
Where applicable, are there interdisciplinary aspects to consider?	1.1						
Where applicable, is the gender dimension in research content well addressed (i.e. in research activities where human beings are involved as subjects or end-users)?	1.1						
Quality and appropriateness of the training and of the two way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	**1.2**						
Is the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host institution oultined and credible?	1.2						
For Global Fellowships only, does the proposal explain how the newly acquired skills and knowledge will be transferred back to Europe?	1.2						
Are training activities described and relevant? [NOTE: do NOT penalize the proposal in case there is no Career Development Plan]	1.2						
Quality of the supervision and of the integration in the team/institution	**1.3**						
Are the qualifications and experience of the supervisor well described and adequate, taking into account their level of experience on the research topic and their track record of work (e.g. main international collaborations, experience in supervising/training especially PhD, postdoctoral researchers)?	1.3						
Do the hosting arrangements allow for a good integration of the researcher in the team/institution to maximize knowlegde and skills generated from the fellowship? Are the nature and the quality of the research group/environment as a whole outlined? Are international networking opportunities offered?	1.3						
For Global Fellowships only, are the hosting arrangements at the partner organisation adequate to accomodate the researcher?	1.3						
Potential of the researcher to reach or re-enforce professional maturity/independence during the fellowship	**1.4**						

Scoring

EXCELLENT The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.	5		Excellent
VERY GOOD The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.	4		Very Good
GOOD The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.	3		Good
FAIR The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.	2		Fair
POOR The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.	1		Poor
The proposal **FAILS** to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.	0		Fail

Research Proposal: Excellence
Sample Evaluator Comments

- The proposal **clearly** defines the current state-of-the-art, the research topic and objectives for the project.
- The innovative and multidisciplinary aspects are **very well described**.
- The two-way transfer of knowledge between the host and the researcher is **clearly demonstrated**.
- **High quality** of scientific and complementary training is provided by the host consistent with the researcher's background and expertise.
- The main supervisor is a **top-level scientific manager** at the host and has a very good profile for guiding the research.
- The hosting environment is **ideal** to guarantee the integration of the researcher and support to the project.

- The originality and innovative aspects of the project are **not sufficiently demonstrated**.
- The reasoning of why the interdisciplinary nature of the proposal is essential to provide excellence is **unclear and insufficiently substantiated**
- The gender dimension is **not sufficiently integrated** into the approach.
- How the training will be gained and knowledge transfer achieved is **not clear**, notably ways in which the researcher and applicant will interact.
- The training objectives for the researcher are **not sufficiently discussed**, it is **not clear** from the proposal what significant additional knowledge the researcher will learn at the host group.
- Integration of the researcher into the host institution is **not clearly elaborated**.

Report on evaluator comments: https://h2020.org.tr/sites/default/files/u387/n4mif_2017_esr_analysis_se.pdf

Research Proposal: Impact
Sample Evaluator Comments

- The positive impact on the researcher's career development is **convincingly argued**.
- Dissemination is **properly conceived** via publications, presentations and other activities of good impact.
- The commercial exploitation of the results and their protection will be **carefully and appropriately managed**. Patent applications are highly likely.
- The range of measures to communicate the research activities **properly addresses** various audiences with well-designed actions
- The existing networking structures of the beneficiary institution will be used to communicate to different target audiences.

- The career strategy is **not elaborated in detail** to translate the potential in a concrete path to enhance the future career prospects.
- There is **no clear strategy** for dissemination. The measures proposed only consider participation in a few conferences in the field.
- The IPR and exploitation issues are **not sufficiently considered**; this is highly inappropriate in view of the targeted commercialization of the device.
- Communication activities are **generic and basic**. No active measures are presented and the proposal lacks any concrete strategy for wider communication.

Report on evaluator comments: https://h2020.org.tr/sites/default/files/u387/n4mif_2017_esr_analysis_se.pdf

Research Proposal: Implementation
Sample Evaluator Comments

- The milestones are **well elaborated** and come at the right place in the plan.
- The work plan is very **thoughtfully designed** to reach the objectives aiming at a high impact results.
- Deliverables and milestones are **well listed** on the Gantt chart
- The allocation of tasks and resources is very **appropriate** for the execution of the project
- All technical tasks are **clearly defined** and well elaborated.
- The organization and management structures are **convincing and very well designed**.
- Possible risks are **well identified**. The mitigation measures are **convincing**.

- The WPs **lack the necessary detail** concerning when the analysis of results from the fieldwork would take place.
- Lists of milestones and deliverables are presented in **generic** fashion.
- The Gantt chart is very **poorly designed** and **not sufficiently** informative.
- Allocation of tasks and resources has **not been properly detailed**. There is no sufficient indication of specific person-months allocation to most activities proposed
- Risk management related procedures have been addressed to a **very limited extent** and a list of sound contingency plans **is missing**.
- The management structures and procedures are addressed to a very limited extent, a sound comprehensive description **is lacking**

Report on evaluator comments: https://h2020.org.tr/sites/default/files/u387/n4mif_2017_esr_analysis_se.pdf

Evaluation

Evaluators don’t have a lot of time!

- Evaluators are paid for 4 hours work to evaluate one proposal and generally have between 5 and 15 proposals to review in 3-4 weeks

Evaluation

Evaluators are not always experts about your specific research topic!

- Evaluators are chosen based by searching for keywords on the Commission Experts Database
- For interdisciplinary research: experts may only be expert in one of the disciplines covered by your research
- The evaluator wants to see you demonstrating that **you are the expert**
  - Communicate the novelty and relevance of the work very clearly

Make it easy for the Evaluators

- Make your text **interesting** and **easy to read**.
- Have your **English checked** before submitting.
- Be sparing with **references** – they take up space and evaluators are unlikely to read them. Choose only the most important ones.
- Use **bold**, *italic* and <u>underline</u> to highlight important points.
- Demonstrate that your chosen host and mentor will provide the **right environment** for **you** to be successful.
- **Be specific** about your supervisor, host institution and external partners. Describe why they are most suited to hosting your project and how they will **support** it. For example, access to infrastructure, IP support, training, institutional seminars, science communication support and so on.

Make it easy for the Evaluators

- The first pages should be **exciting**. State of the Art must be very closely linked to pitching your ideas and answering the questions ‘why is this research important’ and ‘how will your research ideas solve the problem?’
- A good abstract pitches the idea and creates **curiosity** and **excitement**.
- **Cover all the criteria** in the proposal template.
- A poorly structured proposal is difficult for evaluators to understand.
- Every word/sentence counts. **Don’t waste space** on anything irrelevant.
- **Clear** and **convincing** objectives.
- **Graphics** often illustrate concepts more clearly than words.
- Make sure you get **layout** and **readability** right.

Tips for clear concise writing

- **Be Clear About Your Meaning**. Choose unambiguous words.
- **Eliminate Unnecessary Words** and Phrases
  - there is, very, totally, completely, currently, actually, really
- Be **direct** and straight to the point
- Pitch the information at the **right level**: not too simple or too complex
- **Use the Active Voice** unless there's a good reason to choose passive voice
- Don't repeat yourself too much
- Write positively and reduce negativity
- **Avoid complexity**

Receiving Results of your Evaluation

- If the proposal is accepted, you proceed to the Grant Agreement Stage.
- If the proposal is not funded, there are other opportunities more suited to you and your background. All successful proposals are excellent, many excellent proposals are rejected.
- If the proposal is not funded, you may have the option to learn from the negative comments on the proposal and resubmit
  - Example of an MSCA fellow, who improved proposal on resubmission https://shannonchance.net/2020/08/03/msca-abstract/
- ERA Fellowships/Seal of Excellence are alternative routes to funding.

MSCA-PF-2024: Cumulative percentage of proposals above threshold

	MSCA-PF-2024: Cumulative percentage of proposals above threshold, with a given score or higher (funding range marked in green)															
Number of eligible proposals	1428 proposals	162 proposals	1560 proposals	966 proposals	1966 proposals	196 proposals	1032 proposals	1912 proposals	60 proposals	15 proposals	109 proposals	107 proposals	143 proposals	10 proposals	110 proposals	436 proposals
Cut off score for funding*	93.6	92.0	94.8	95.2	94.2	91.4	92.0	94.2	95.0	92.0	96.4	95.2	96.0	92.8	95.0	96.0
Score equal to or above	**EF-CHE**	**EF-ECO**	**EF-ENG**	**EF-ENV**	**EF-LIF**	**EF-MAT**	**EF-PHY**	**EF-SOC**	**GF-CHE**	**GF-ECO**	**GF-ENG**	**GF-ENV**	**GF-LIF**	**GF-MAT**	**GF-PHY**	**GF-SOC**
100	1.05%	0.62%	2.05%	1.76%	1.53%	1.02%	0.29%	1.73%	1.67%	0.00%	3.67%	1.87%	0.70%	0.00%	2.73%	2.75%
99	1.89%	1.23%	2.76%	3.73%	2.95%	1.02%	0.68%	3.19%	1.67%	0.00%	7.34%	5.61%	1.40%	0.00%	3.64%	4.36%
98	4.69%	3.09%	6.03%	7.87%	6.10%	3.06%	2.33%	6.69%	6.67%	0.00%	11.01%	8.41%	4.90%	0.00%	7.27%	10.09%
97	6.30%	3.70%	9.29%	9.94%	8.34%	4.59%	4.17%	9.26%	6.67%	0.00%	13.76%	12.15%	9.09%	0.00%	10.91%	13.53%
96	8.61%	6.17%	12.05%	13.87%	11.70%	6.63%	6.20%	11.98%	8.33%	0.00%	16.51%	14.95%	16.08%	0.00%	14.55%	17.43%
95	12.11%	8.64%	15.51%	17.49%	15.06%	10.71%	9.30%	14.64%	16.67%	0.00%	20.18%	19.63%	24.48%	10.00%	17.27%	21.10%
94	15.83%	10.49%	18.14%	20.81%	18.01%	12.76%	11.72%	17.73%	25.00%	0.00%	24.77%	23.36%	26.57%	10.00%	21.82%	23.39%
93	18.56%	13.58%	20.06%	24.74%	21.57%	14.29%	14.24%	20.08%	35.00%	6.67%	28.44%	26.17%	30.77%	10.00%	25.45%	25.69%
92	21.29%	17.28%	22.63%	28.36%	25.69%	16.33%	17.64%	23.17%	38.33%	20.00%	33.94%	32.71%	35.66%	20.00%	28.18%	27.52%
91	24.37%	21.60%	25.83%	30.95%	28.38%	19.90%	19.67%	25.78%	40.00%	20.00%	35.78%	34.58%	39.86%	30.00%	32.73%	31.19%
90	28.08%	25.31%	29.04%	34.89%	31.84%	23.47%	23.16%	27.51%	48.33%	26.67%	40.37%	40.19%	41.96%	40.00%	40.00%	34.17%
89	32.07%	26.54%	31.67%	37.78%	35.86%	26.02%	25.97%	29.92%	51.67%	33.33%	42.20%	42.06%	44.76%	60.00%	45.45%	36.47%

MSCA-PF-2024: Cumulative percentage of proposals above threshold

										marked in green)
Number of eligible proposals	1428 proposals	162 proposals					143 proposals	10 proposals	110 proposals	436 proposals
Cut off score for funding*	93.6	92.0					96.0	92.8	95.0	96.0
Score equal to or above	EF-CHE	EF-ECO					GF-LIF	GF-MAT	GF-PHY	GF-SOC
100	1.05%	0.62%					0.70%	0.00%	2.73%	2.75%
99	1.89%	1.23%					1.40%	0.00%	3.64%	4.36%
98	4.69%	3.09%					4.90%	0.00%	7.27%	10.09%
97	6.30%	3.70%					9.09%	0.00%	10.91%	13.53%
96	8.61%	6.17%					16.08%	0.00%	14.55%	17.43%
95	12.11%	8.64%					24.48%	10.00%	17.27%	21.10%
94	15.83%	10.49%					26.57%	10.00%	21.82%	23.39%
93	18.56%	13.58%					30.77%	10.00%	25.45%	25.69%
92	21.29%	17.28%					35.66%	20.00%	28.18%	27.52%
91	24.37%	21.60%					39.86%	30.00%	32.73%	31.19%
90	28.08%	25.31%					41.96%	40.00%	40.00%	34.17%
89	32.07%	26.54%					44.76%	60.00%	45.45%	36.47%

nature

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nature > career column > article

CAREER COLUMN | 04 November 2020

Four ways to fight science-funding cuts across Europe

Junior researchers need to engage with policymakers, institutions, funders and media outlets to argue against planned budget cut-backs, warn Brian Cahill and Marco Masia.

By Brian Cahill & Marco Masia

Methodological foundations to prepare a competitive application – The Logical Framework Approach

- Understand the Logical Framework Approach (LFA)
- Explore how LFA can strengthen funding applications
- Learn practical steps to develop a Logical Framework Matrix
- Tips for aligning your proposal with funder expectations

Why Use the Logical Framework Approach?

- Brings structure and clarity to project design
- Links activities to results
- Facilitates evaluation and monitoring
- Aligns project design with funder priorities
- Supports team collaboration and stakeholder communication

Key Principles of LFA

- Participatory and iterative process
- Focus on problem-solving
- Clear cause-effect relationships
- Use of measurable indicators
- Transparency and accountability

The Logical Framework Matrix – Overview

Hierarchy of Objectives	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Goal			
Outputs			
Purpose			
Activities			

The Hierarchy of Objectives

- Goal: Long-term impact beyond the project’s direct control
- Purpose: Direct effect of the project
- Outputs: Tangible products or services delivered
- Activities: Tasks needed to produce outputs

Logframe Matrix

Project Description		Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	What is the overall broader impact to which the action will contribute?	What are the key indicators related to the overall goal?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What are the external factors necessary to sustain objectives in the long term?
Purpose	What is the immediate development outcome at the end of the project?	Which indicators clearly show that the objective of the action has been achieved?	What are the sources of information that exist or can be collected? What are the methods required to get this information?	Which factors and conditions are necessary to achieve that objective? (external conditions)
Outputs	What are the specifically deliverable results envisaged to achieve the specific objectives?	What are the indicators to measure whether and to what extent the action achieves the expected results?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What external conditions must be met to obtain the expected results on schedule?
Activities	What are the key activities to be carried out and in what sequence in order to produce the expected results?	Means: What are the means required to implement these activities, e. g. personnel, equipment, supplies, etc.	What are the sources of information about action progress? Costs What are the action costs?	What pre-conditions are required before the action starts?

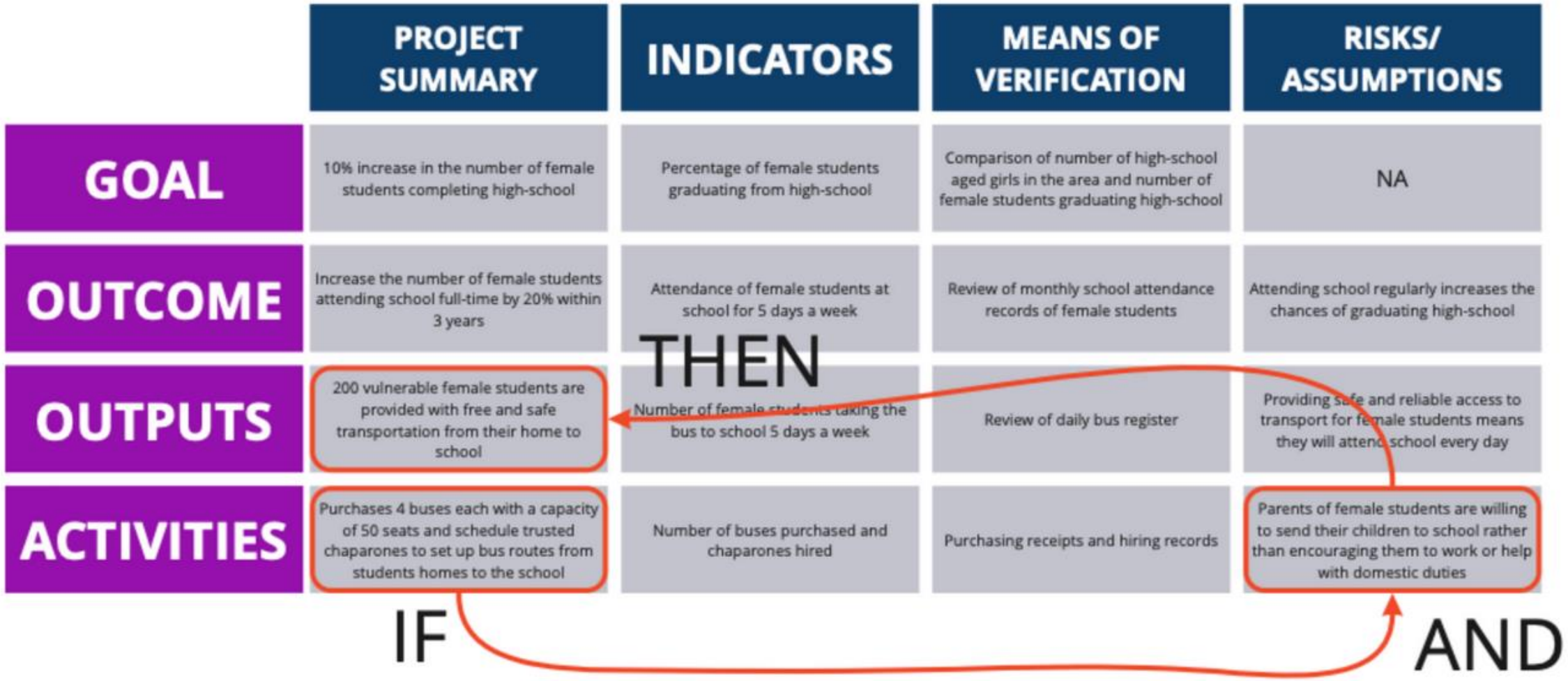
Indicators, Means of Verification, and Assumptions

- Indicators: How progress/success is measured
- Means of Verification: Where/how data will be collected
- Assumptions: External factors that can influence success

Step-by-Step Guide – Developing Your Logframe

- **Problem analysis** – What's the core problem?
- **Stakeholder analysis** – Who's affected and how?
- **Define objectives** – What change do you want to achieve?
- **Formulate hierarchy of objectives** – From activities to goal
- **Define indicators & means of verification** – Make it measurable
- **Identify assumptions/risks** – Acknowledge external factors
- **Review and refine** – Test logic and consistency

Example Logframe



Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them

- Vague or unmeasurable indicators
- Confusing outputs with activities
- Ignoring assumptions and risks
- Lack of stakeholder engagement
- Keep it clear, concise, and consistent
- Use simple language!

How LFA Strengthens Competitive Applications

- Shows clear project logic
- Provides measurable and verifiable outcomes
- Demonstrates responsiveness to stakeholders
- Identifies and addresses risks
- Aligns with funder evaluation criteria (impact, feasibility, sustainability)

Tips for Using LFA in Funding Applications

- Integrate logframe thinking early in proposal writing
- Use funder-specific templates if provided
- Explicitly link proposal narrative to logframe
- Show flexibility – logframe is a planning tool, not set in stone
- Use visuals (tables, diagrams) to clarify logic

Step-by-Step Guide – Developing Your Logframe

- **Problem analysis** – What's the core problem?
- **Stakeholder analysis** – Who's affected and how?
- **Define objectives** – What change do you want to achieve?
- **Formulate hierarchy of objectives** – From activities to goal
- **Define indicators & means of verification** – Make it measurable
- **Identify assumptions/risks** – Acknowledge external factors
- **Review and refine** – Test logic and consistency

Part A: Abstract

- What is the research problem?
  - Summarize the research problem or question and provide background information that describes the significance of the research. The statement of the problem should justify the importance of your research.
- What is your research idea to solve that problem?
  - Why is your approach new?
- Does it contribute to EU Policy Agenda/Competitiveness/Sustainable Development Goals/Similar?
- Why is now the right time?
- Why are you the right person?
- Avoid detailed background, abbreviations, citations, over-complication

Part A: Administrative Part

- Title of your proposal
- Project acronym: a simple acronym is an advantage during panel evaluation
- Keywords/Abstract: used to select evaluators
- Administrative data of participating organisations
- Information about your residence during the five years preceding deadline
- Budget: Automatically calculated based on the duration of your project
- Ethics: in Part you must complete an “Ethics Issues Table”.
  If ethics issues are flagged, the applicants complete a more in-depth Ethics Self-Assessment in Part B.
  Funded proposals must pass an Ethics review procedure.
- Choose discipline-specific panel

Ethics

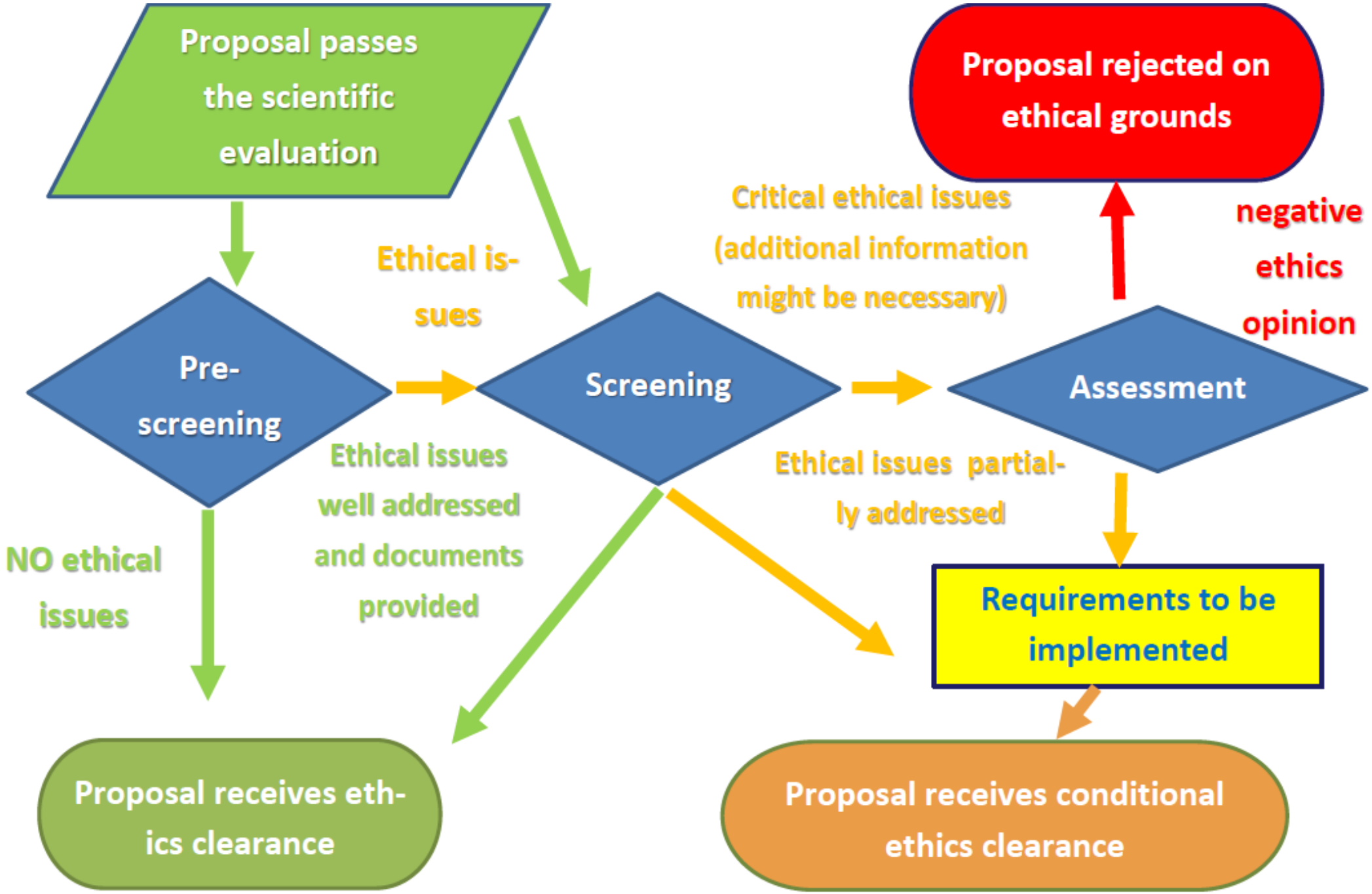
- Projects will be subject to **ethical scrutiny**, and applicants must submit a completed ethical issues form with their application.
- **Horizon Europe** has specific considerations regarding ethics that govern the **ethical scrutiny** of projects.
- Detailed information is provided on each area of the form.
- Some Life Sciences research raises ethical issues.
- Handling personal data is relatively common in many research disciplines
- Even if there are no ethical issues due to **Personal Data**, you can work with the **Research Data Service** at your host institution to implement a **Data Management Plan**.
- Work with the responsible **Ethics Committee** at your host institution to draft a description of the ethics issues involved for Part B.

Ethics

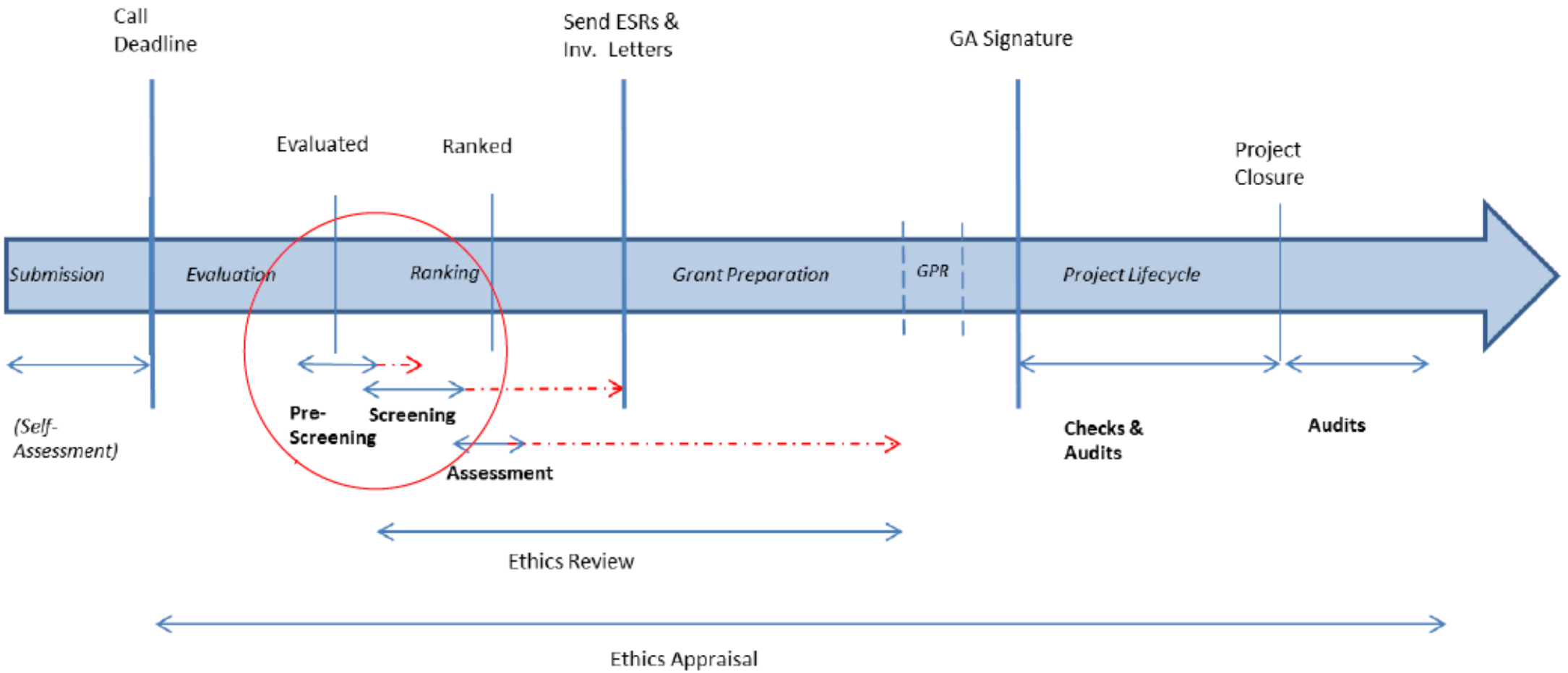
1. HUMAN EMBRYOS/FOETUSES i		Page
Does your research involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?	Yes ◉ No	
Does your research involve the use of human embryos?	Yes ◉ No	
Does your research involve the use of human foetal tissues / cells?	Yes ◉ No	
2. HUMANS		**Page**
Does your research involve human participants?	Yes ◉ No	
Does your research involve physical interventions on the study participants?	Yes ◉ No	
Does it involve invasive techniques?	Yes ◉ No	
3. HUMAN CELLS / TISSUES		**Page**
Does your research involve human cells or tissues? If your research involves human embryos/foetuses, please also complete the section "Human Embryos/Foetuses" [Box 1].	Yes ◉ No	
4. PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA ii		**Page**
Does your research involve personal data collection and/or processing?	Yes ◉ No	
Does your research involve further processing of previously collected personal data (secondary use)?	Yes ◉ No	
5. ANIMALS iii		**Page**
Does your research involve animals?	Yes ◉ No	

6. NON-EU COUNTRIES		Page
Does your research involve non-EU countries?	Yes ◉ No	
Do you plan to use local resources (e.g. animal and/or human tissue samples, genetic material, live animals, human remains, materials of historical value, endangered fauna or flora samples, etc.)?	Yes ◉ No	
Do you plan to import any material - including personal data - from non-EU countries into the EU? If you consider importing data, please also complete the section "Protection of Personal Data" [Box 4].	Yes ◉ No	
Do you plan to export any material - including personal data -from the EU to non-EU countries? If you consider exporting data, please also complete the section "Protection of Personal Data" [Box 4].	Yes ◉ No	
If your research involves low and/or lower middle income countries, are benefits-sharing measures foreseen?	Yes ◉ No	
Could the situation in the country put the individuals taking part in the research at risk?	Yes ◉ No	
7. ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION vi Directive 2001/18/EC - vii Directive 2009/41/EC - viii Regulation EC No 1946/2003 - ix Directive 2008/56/EC x Council Directive 92/43/EEC -xi Council Directive 79/409/EEC - xii Council Regulation EC No 338/97		**Page**
Does your research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to the environment, to animals or plants?	◉ Yes ○ No	36
Does your research deal with endangered fauna and/or flora and/or protected areas?	○ Yes ◉ No	
Does your research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to humans, including research staff?	◉ Yes ○ No	37
8. DUAL USE xiii		**Page**
Does your research have the potential for military applications?	Yes ◉ No	
9. MISUSE		**Page**
Does your research have the potential for malevolent/criminal/terrorist abuse?	Yes ◉ No	
10. OTHER ETHICS ISSUES		**Page**
Are there any other ethics issues that should be taken into consideration? Please specify	Yes ◉ No	

Indicates pages in Part B1 of the proposal


Proposal passes the scientific evaluation
Proposal rejected on ethical grounds
Critical ethical issues (additional information might be necessary)
negative ethics opinion
Ethical is-sues
Pre-screening
Screening
Assessment
Ethical issues well addressed and documents provided
Ethical issues partial-ly addressed
NO ethical issues
Requirements to be implemented
Proposal receives eth-ics clearance
Proposal receives conditional ethics clearance

Ethics


Call
Deadline
Send ESRs &
Inv. Letters
GA Signature
Evaluated
Ranked
Project
Closure
Submission
Evaluation
Ranking
Grant Preparation
GPR
Project Lifecycle
(Self-
Assessment)
Pre-
Screening
Screening
Assessment
Checks &
Audits
Audits
Ethics Review
Ethics Appraisal

Part B: Proposal

DOCUMENT 1 – Maximum 10 pages!

1. Excellence
2. Impact
3. Implementation

DOCUMENT 2 – no page limit

4. CV of the experienced researcher
5. Capacities of the participating organisations
6. Ethical aspects

Structure of Research Proposal

Excellence	Impact	Implementation
Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)	Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher	Overall coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the quality of open science practices)	Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results	Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures, including risk management
Quality of the supervision, training and of the two way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences	Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure)
Capacity of the researcher to reach or reinforce a position of professional maturity in research		
Weighting		
50 %	30%	20%

Structure of Research Proposal

Excellence	Impact	Implementation
Quality and **pertinence** of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are **ambitious**, and **go beyond the state of the art**)	**Enhancing** the potential and future career prospects of the researcher	Overall **coherence** and **effectiveness** of the work plan, including **appropriateness** of the allocation of tasks and resources
Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the **quality** of open science practices)	**Quality** of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results	**Appropriateness** of the management structure and procedures, including risk management
Quality of the supervision, training and of the two way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	**Quality** of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences	**Appropriateness** of the institutional environment (infrastructure)
Capacity of the researcher to reach or reinforce a position of professional maturity in research		
Weighting		
50 %	30%	20%

Structure of Research Proposal: Excellence

Excellence	Evaluation Criteria
Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)	• **quality and pertinence** of the research and innovation objectives • extent to which the proposed work is **ambitious** and **goes beyond the current state of the art** in the field • whether research and innovation objectives are **realistically achievable**, **measurable and verifiable**
Soundness of the proposed **methodology** (including **interdisciplinary** approaches, consideration of the **gender dimension** and other **diversity aspects** if relevant for the research project, and the quality of **open science** practices)	• **soundness** of the methodology, including the concepts, models and assumptions that underpin the project; whether important methodological challenges are identified and measures to tackle them proposed. • extent to which an **interdisciplinary** approach is relevant for the research; if relevant, evaluate how expertise and methods from different disciplines will be brought together and integrated; if not relevant, is this sufficiently argued in the proposal? • extent to which the **gender dimension** and other **diversity aspects** are relevant for the research; if relevant, evaluate how they are taken into account in the project's research and innovation content; if not relevant, is a proper justification provided? • how appropriate **open science** practices are implemented as an integral part of the proposed methodology. If not considered appropriate in the context of the proposed work, whether this is sufficiently explained and justified in the proposal;

Structure of Research Proposal: Excellence

Excellence	Evaluation Criteria
Quality of the **supervision**, **training** and of the **two-way transfer of knowledge** between the researcher and the host	• **quality of the supervision** considering the qualifications and experience of the supervisor(s), their level of experience on the research topic proposed and their **track record** of work, including main **international collaborations**, as well as the **level of experience** in supervising/training especially at advanced level • effectiveness of the **planned training activities** for the researcher (**scientific aspects, management/ organisation, horizontal and key transferrable skills**…?) • for European Fellowships: assess the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and host organisation • for Global Fellowships: assess the **three-way transfer of knowledge** between the researcher, host organisation, and associated partner organisation for outgoing phase • if applicable: the **rationale and added value of the non-academic placement**
Quality and appropriateness of the **researcher's professional experience, competences and skills**	• **curriculum vitae** of the researcher, their **professional experience**, **competences** and **skills**. • quality and appropriateness of the **researcher's existing professional experience** in relation to the research proposal.

Research Proposal: Excellence

First Paragraph: clearly state your project idea and goal. Bring attention of the evaluators to your project focus quickly.

State of the art, objectives and overview of the action:

- **Outline** key research on the topic: Keep the state-of-the-art part relatively focussed on your topic.
- Briefly outline how your proposed research relates to the body of knowledge in the research area.
- Evaluators may be experts in completely different aspects of the scientific panel: Do not expect them to be experts on your specific research topic. The state of the art should inform them of why your research idea is important.

Research Proposal: Excellence

State of the art, **objectives and overview of the action**:

Main Research Question:

- What specific issue or question will your proposed research examine?
- Why is it important?
- What is the **specific objectives** (aims or goals) of your project?
- What will be the **contribution** of the project to advances **within the field**?
- How will you achieve this goal through **specific objectives/aims/research questions**?
- Try to achieve a **balance between novelty and feasibility**

Research Proposal: Excellence
Objectives

Assess the project's objectives:

- Are they clear and pertinent to the topic?
- Are they measurable and verifiable?
- Are they realistically achievable?
- Is the proposed work ambitious and goes beyond the state-of-the-art?
- Does the proposal include ground-breaking R&I, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models?

Research Proposal: Excellence
Research Methodology and Approach

- What **methods** will you use to answer your research question?
- Describe the **soundness** and the **novelty** of the **concepts, approaches or methods** that will be employed
- Make reference to encouraging **preliminary results**
- Make reference to **synergies** with other research/projects/grants (at supervisor/collaborators)
- Evaluators decide if the proposed research is **credible and feasible**.

Research Proposal: Excellence
Research Methodology and Approach

- Assess the scientific methodology:
- Is the scientific methodology (i.e.the concepts, models and assumptions that underpin the work) clear and sound?
- Is it clear how expertise and methods from different disciplines will be brought together and integrated in pursuit of the objectives?
- If applicants justify that an inter-disciplinary approach is unnecessary, is it credible?
- Has the **gender dimension** in research and innovation content been properly taken into account?
- Are **open science** practices implemented as an integral part of the proposed methodology?
- Is the research data management properly addressed?

Research Proposal: Excellence

- Explain the **originality and innovative aspects** of the planned research as well as the contribution that the action is expected to make to advancements within the research field. Describe any **novel concepts, approaches or methods** that will be implemented.
- Discuss any **interdisciplinary aspects** of the action.
  - Very often this is the relation between the previous research of both the fellow and the supervisor and how these combine to fill a gap in the research

Research Proposal: Excellence
Gender Dimension

Why is gender dimension important?

It brings added value of research in terms of excellence, rigor, reproducibility, creativity and business opportunities

It enhances the societal relevance of research and innovation

- Why do we observe differences between women and men in infection levels and mortality rates in the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Does it make sense to study cardiovascular diseases only on male animals and on men, or osteoporosis only on women?
- Does it make sense to design car safety equipment only on the basis of male body standards?
- Is it responsible to develop AI products that spread gender and racial biases due to a lack of diversity in the data used in training AI applications?
- Is it normal that household travel surveys, and thus mobility analysis and transport planning, underrate trips performed as part of caring work?
- Did you know that pheromones given off by men experimenters, but not women, induce a stress response in laboratory mice sufficient to trigger pain relief?
- Did you know that climate change is affecting sex determination in a number of marine species and that certain populations are now at risk of extinction?

Research Proposal: Excellence
Open Science

Open Science

Open science is an approach based on open cooperative work and systematic sharing of knowledge and tools as early and widely as possible in the process, including active engagement of society.

Open science practices include:

- Early and open sharing of research (for example through preregistration, registered reports, pre-prints, or crowd-sourcing).
- Research output management including research data management (RDM).
- Measures to ensure reproducibility of research outputs.
- Providing open access to research outputs (e.g. publications, data, software, models, algorithms, and workflows) through deposition in trusted repositories.
- Participation in open peer review.
- Involving all relevant knowledge actors including citizens, civil society and end users in the co-creation of R&I agendas and contents (such as citizen science).

Mandatory OS practices

- **Mandatory in all calls**: Open access to publications; RDM in line with the FAIR principles including data management plans; open access to research data unless exceptions apply ('as open as possible as closed as necessary'); access and/or information to research outputs and tools/instruments for validating conclusions of scientific publications and validating/re-using data.
- Additional obligations specific to certain work programme topics.

Reflect both in lower score when not sufficiently addressed

Recommended OS practices

- All open science practices beyond mandatory

Evaluate positively when sufficiently addressed

When OS practices (mandatory and recommended) are duly justified as not appropriate for the project, do not lower score for not addressing those practices

Detailed guidance for proposers and evaluators in the HE Programme Guide

Research Proposal: Excellence

Training

- Which skills do you need to develop to **advance your career**?
- **Scientific skills:** techniques, research integrity, data skills, open science
- **Transferable skills:** entrepreneurship, leadership, negotiation, dialogue, communications, co-creation, proposal writing, intellectual property, project management and technology transfer
- Participation in the **research and financial management** of the project
- Organisation of scientific/training/dissemination **events.**
- Training dedicated to **gender** issues.
- Please consult training available at the host institution.
- Fellows have a research and training budget of €1000 per month.

Research Proposal: Excellence

Training

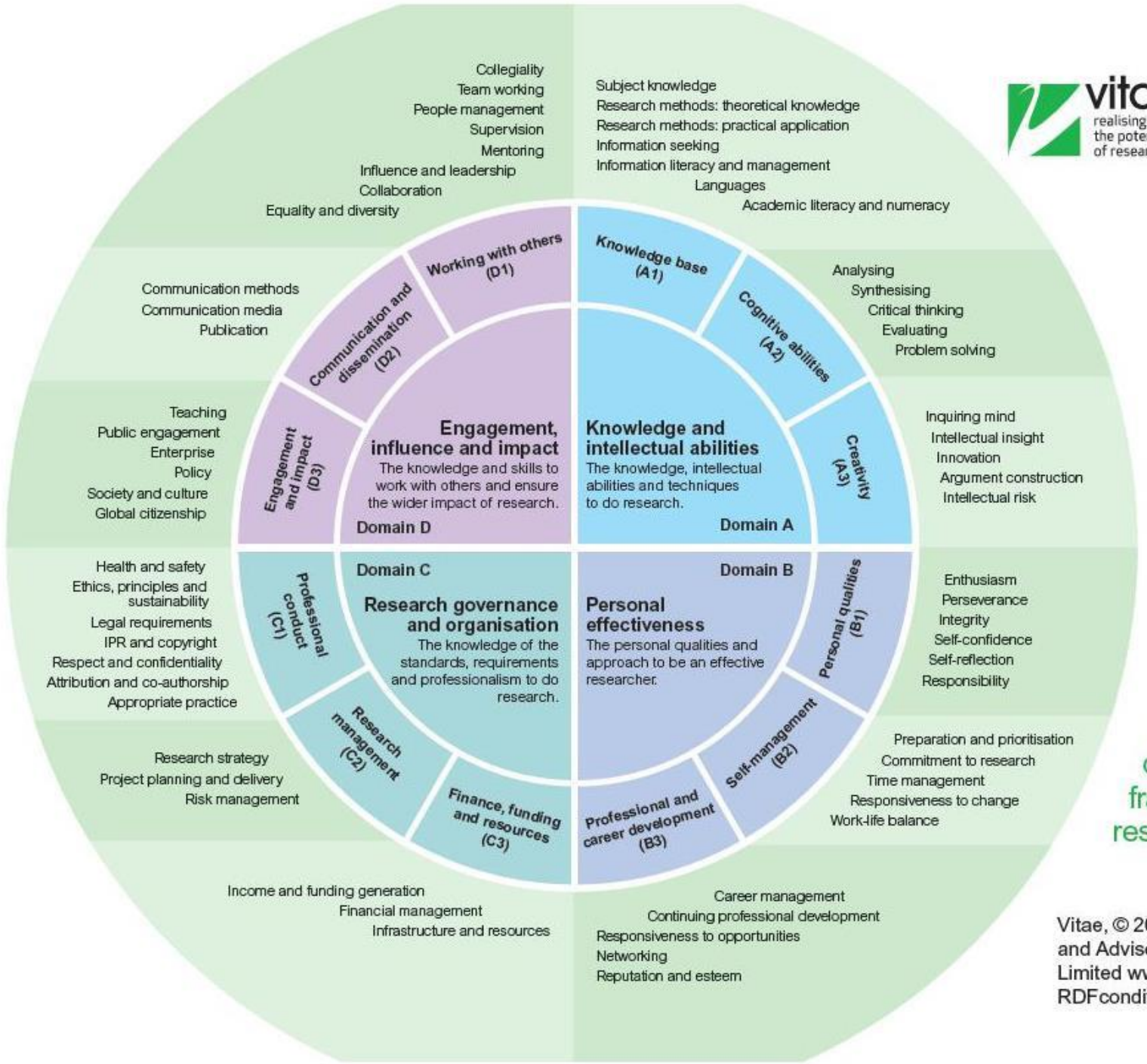
- key transferable skills
- foster innovation and entrepreneurship
- commercialisation of results,
- Intellectual Property Rights,
- communication,
- public engagement
- citizen science
- foster good scientific conduct
  - research integrity and
  - Open Science practices

Assessing your skills development needs

1. Individual Development Plan from AAAS/ScienceCareers
   https://myidp.sciencecareers.org

2. Transferable Skills Infographic from Eurodoc

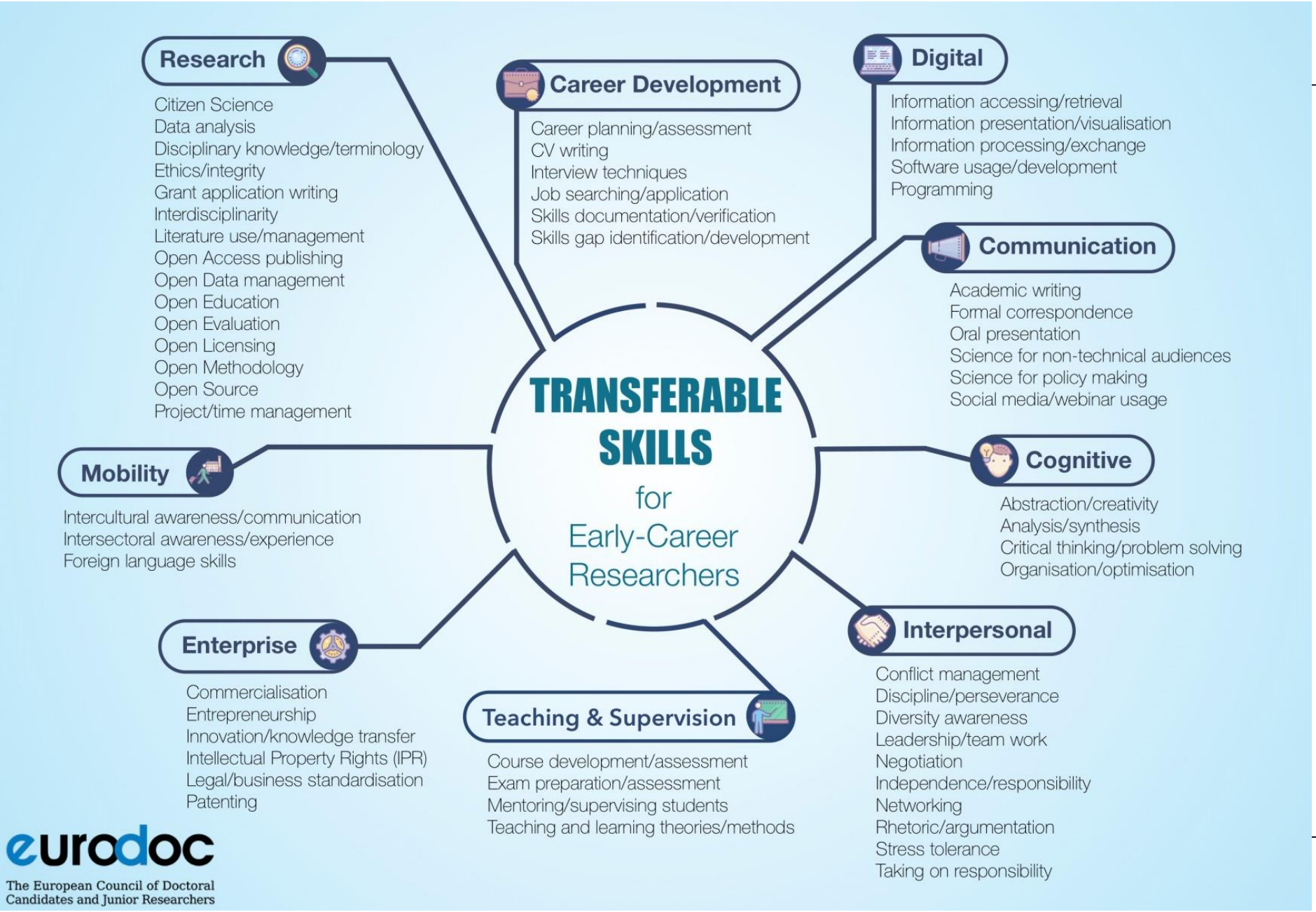
3. Vitae Researcher Development Framework



vitae realising the potential of researchers | Researcher Development Framework

SciLink

The professional development framework for researchers



eurodoc
The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers

SciLink

Research Proposal: Excellence

Transfer of knowledge

- Specify how the fellow will be integrated into the **host supervisor's group** and into the host institution.
- What new **skills and knowledge** will you gain?
- What new **skills and knowledge** will you bring to the host group?
- Specify exactly how skills and knowledge will be transferred: seminars, mentoring/supervision of students, workshops, conferences, etc.
- Show how your expertise will benefit other members of the research group and students

Research Proposal: Excellence
Why did you choose this Supervisor/Institution

Quality of the **supervision** and **hosting arrangements**

- Highlight the **expertise** of the supervisor: track record, collaborations, publications, supervisory experience, management of projects (esp. EU)
- Specify **supervision tasks**: regular meetings, help with grant management, co-drafting the Career Development Plan etc.
- The **International Office** helps with visas, finding an apartment, etc.
- **Integration** of researcher within team/institution: group meetings, social activities, seminars, induction days, training courses, postdoc group
- The nature and **quality of the research group/environment** as a whole
- Integration of researcher in different areas of expertise and disciplines
- Mention opportunities to build external networks/collaborations
- Mention that the host will respect the **European Charter for Researchers**?

Research Proposal: Excellence

Capacity of researcher to **reach/reinforce** position of **professional maturity** in research

- Based on your previous experience, show that you have the potential to grow into an **independent researcher**, who can take a **leadership** position
- Provide examples of **leadership** based on your **track record**: publications/conference participation, patents, chapters, mentoring, supervision
- Also include any non-academic experience: industry, teaching, consultancy, supervision etc.
- State clearly that you are a perfect match for the proposed research
- Include a short paragraph describing your **main research achievements**
- Highlight international experience/mobility

Research Proposal: Excellence
Sample Evaluator Comments

- The proposal clearly defines the current state-of-the-art, the research topic and objectives for the project.
- The innovative and multidisciplinary aspects are very well described.
- The two-way transfer of knowledge between the host and the researcher is clearly demonstrated.
- High quality of scientific and complementary training is provided by the host consistent with the researcher's background and expertise.
- The main supervisor is a top-level scientific manager at the host and has a very good profile for guiding the research.
- The hosting environment is ideal to guarantee the integration of the researcher and support to the project.

- The originality and innovative aspects of the project are not sufficiently demonstrated.
- The reasoning of why the interdisciplinary nature of the proposal is essential to provide excellence is unclear and insufficiently substantiated
- The gender dimension is not sufficiently integrated into the approach.
- How the training will be gained and knowledge transfer achieved is not clear, notably ways in which the researcher and applicant will interact.
- The training objectives for the researcher are not sufficiently discussed, it is not clear from the proposal what significant additional knowledge the researcher will learn at the host group.
- Integration of the researcher into the host institution is not clearly elaborated.

Structure of Research Proposal: Impact

Impact	Evaluation Criteria
Credibility of the measures to enhance the **career perspectives** and **employability** of the researcher and contribution to their **skills development**	The credibility of the measures to enhance the researcher's: • expected **career perspectives** inside and/or outside academia • expected **skills development**
Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the **dissemination** and **exploitation** plan, including **communication** activities	• planned **dissemination** and **exploitation** activities, and **the target group(s)** addressed • if relevant, the strategy for the management and protection of **intellectual property** • planning of **communication** and **public engagement** activities (their objectives, main messages, tools and channels)
The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected **scientific, societal and economic impacts**	• scale and importance of the expected **scientific, societal and economic impacts** as they are outlined in the proposal • how the results are expected to have an impact **beyond the immediate scope and duration of the proposal** • **credibility** of the quantified estimates (magnitude and importance) of the project's contribution to the **expected outcomes and impacts**.

Research Proposal: Impact

Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher

- What is your **career plan**?
- How will this fellowship **benefit your career**?
- How will you progress towards **professional maturity/independence**?
- How will you develop into a researcher with the **leadership skills** to lead research **partnerships**, whether that is in **industry** or **academia**?
  - networking that will **lead to future collaborations** or grant applications
  - **new skills** and **more interesting profile** that you will gain
- Clearly describe the **transferable skills and training** you need
  - Linked to the needs of your project
  - Linked to the needs of your future career in the medium- to long-term

Research Proposal: Impact

Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher

- How will you contribute to the **European Research Area**?
  - Returning to your Home Country afterwards spreads best practices
    - Returning to your Home Country outside the EU is also fine if that is best for you and your career
- How will experience at host or in host country benefit **your career**?
  - You can refer to **future co-operation** with partners from project
  - You can mention **other grants** that you intend to apply for afterwards
- Describe how **collaboration with partners** will **improve your skills**

Research Proposal: Impact

Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results

- **Exploitation**: activities that bring the research closer to the market
  - What support is available at host to protect **intellectual property**?
  - What support is available to exploit IP through **founding startups** or **licensing**? Is **training** available?
- **Dissemination**: sharing scientific results with other experts/professionals
  - Make a **dissemination plan** committing to publications in particular journals and conference presentations
  - Horizon Europe requires **open access** to publications and data
  - Use of **blogging/social media/website**

Research Proposal: Impact

Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences

Communication of project activities to the **general public**

- consult **public engagement** activities supported by your host institution
- to **international audience** through blogging and social media.
- Demonstrate how the planned **public engagement** activities contribute to **creating awareness** of the performed research.
- Describe how you will **tailor communication** of your research so that it will be understood by the audience.
- **Public engagement activities** can be a website, journalistic articles, taking part in European Researchers' Night or FameLab events or presenting your work to schoolkids or university students.

Research Proposal: Impact

Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences

- How will you achieve impact by engaging with **wider stakeholders**?
  - Policy Makers, Media, Industry, Voluntary Sector, Interest Groups
- How will your project build relationships with project partners from industry or the third sector? Conferences, industry events, journalistic publications, stakeholder workshops, social media, tradeshows, book chapter
- Your supervisors can help you build such networks
- How will engaging with **industry partners** benefit your career?
- Mention any experience you or your supervisor had of commercializing research or of networks you will have access to.

Research Proposal: Impact

Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences

- Communicate project activities to **target audiences**
  - particularly with the **public** in your host region
  - to **international audience** through blogging and social media
- How will you engage with **wider stakeholders**?
  - Policy Makers
  - Media
  - Industry and Third Sector Partners
- Please consult public engagement activities supported by your host institution

Research Proposal: Impact
Sample Evaluator Comments

- The positive impact on the researcher's career development is convincingly argued.
- Dissemination is properly conceived via publications, presentations and other activities of good impact.
- The commercial exploitation of the results and their protection will be carefully and appropriately managed. Patent applications are highly likely.
- The range of measures to communicate the research activities properly addresses various audiences with well-designed actions
- The existing networking structures of the beneficiary institution will be used to communicate to different target audiences.

- The career strategy is not elaborated in detail to translate the potential in a concrete path to enhance the future career prospects.
- There is no clear strategy for dissemination. The measures proposed only consider participation in a few conferences in the field.
- The IPR and exploitation issues are not sufficiently considered; this is highly inappropriate in view of the targeted commercialization of the device.
- Communication activities are generic and basic. No active measures are presented and the proposal lacks any concrete strategy for wider communication.

Structure of Research Proposal: Implementation

Implementation	Evaluation Criteria

Quality and effectiveness of the **work plan**, **assessment of risks** and **appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages**	• quality and effectiveness of the work plan
	  • including **deliverables** and **milestones**
	• **appropriateness of the effort** assigned to **work packages**
	  • including **timing** and **duration** of the different **work packages**
	• **research** and/or **administrative risks** that might **endanger achievement** of the **objectives**, and the **contingency plans** proposed should such risks occur
	• Whether a **Gantt Chart** is included (mandatory) and whether it is consistent and complete in relation to the **whole work plan**
	  • taking into account **WPs, scientific deliverables, milestones, secondments and placements** if applicable

Quality and capacity of the **host institutions** and **participating organisations**, including **hosting arrangements**	• quality of the **hosting arrangements**, including **integration in the team/institution** and **support services** available to the researcher • quality and capacity of **participating organisations**, including **infrastructure, logistics, facilities** • If applicable, the quality of the **host arrangements** and the **capacity** of the **infrastructure/facilities** of the non-academic placement host.

Implementation

Assess the proposed work plan, and the effort and resources:

- Is the work plan of good quality and effective?
- Does it include quantified information so that progress can be monitored?
- Does it follow a logic structure (for example regarding the timing of work packages)?
- Are the resources allocated to the work packages in line with their objectives and deliverables?
- Are critical risks, relating to project implementation, identified and proper risk mitigation measures proposed?

Research Proposal: Implementation

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

Describe work packages and associated resources, tasks, milestones and deliverables

Make table describing work packages, deliverables and milestones

Compile Gantt Chart to describe the timeline, including milestones and deliverables. Don’t forget your secondment if you have one.

You can also include Work Packages for

- Management
- Dissemination, Exploitation and Public Engagement,
- Training & Transfer of Knowledge

Research Proposal: Implementation Deliverables and Milestones

- A **deliverable** is a distinct, tangible or intangible outcome of your project that is produced during the project's course. Deliverables are the building blocks of your project: documents, demonstrators, pilots, prototypes, designs, websites, patents filed, press & media actions, videos, software, technical diagram, etc.
- **Milestones** are checkpoints in the project that help you chart progress throughout the course of the project. **Milestones** help identify that a number of tasks or key deliverables have been completed allowing you to move on to the next phase of your project.
- The difference between a milestone and a deliverable is that a milestone signifies project progress towards obtaining its end objectives, a stepping stone that must be reached in order to continue, whereas a deliverable is a measurable result of this process.

Research Proposal: Implementation

Allocation of resources

Allocation of Time in person months

- Distribute total amount of project months among WPs

Allocation of financial resources

- Financial Resources are €1000 x 24 over standard project lifetime
- Is this enough? If not, where will the remainder come from?

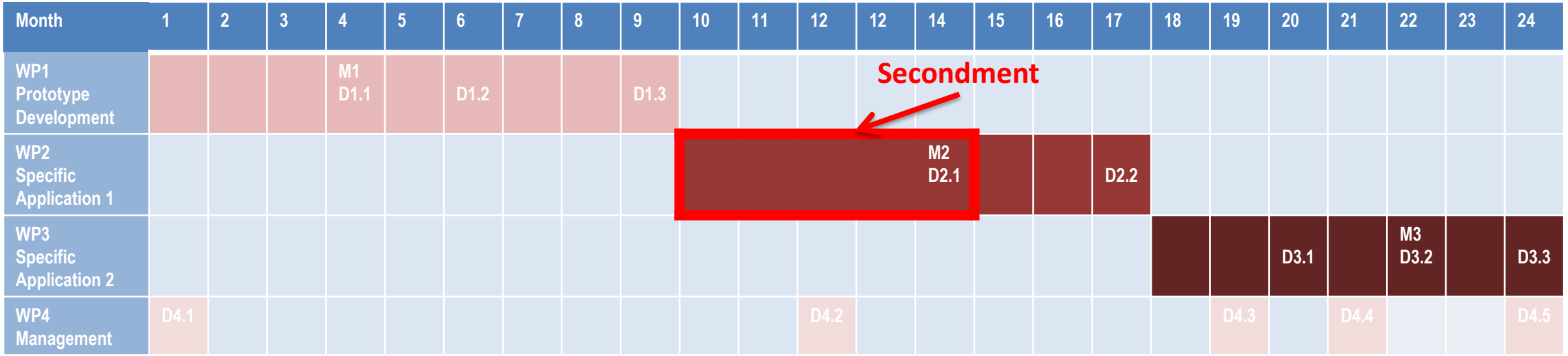
Specific	Measurable	Attainable	Relevant	Time-Bound
Make sure your goals are focused and identify a tangible outcome. Without the specifics, your goal runs the risk of being too vague to achieve. Being more specific helps you identify what you want to achieve. You should also identify what resources you are going to leverage to achieve success.	You should have some clear definition of success. This will help you to evaluate achievement and also progress. This component often answers how much or how many and highlights how you'll know you achieved your goal.	Your goal should be challenging, but still reasonable to achieve. Reflecting on this component can reveal any potential barriers that you may need to overcome to realize success. Outline the steps you're planning to take to achieve your goal.	This is about getting real with yourself and ensuring what you're trying to achieve is worthwhile to you. Determining if this is aligned to your values and if it is a priority focus for you. This helps you answer the why.	Every goal needs a target date, something that motivates you to really apply the focus and discipline necessary to achieve it. This answers when. It's important to set a realistic time frame to achieve your goal to ensure you don't get discouraged.

Research Proposal: Implementation

Work Package

WP 1	Work Package Title	Month 1 – Month 9	8 Person Months
Objectives: Clear Concise description of the Work Package			
Description of Work: Short description of the Work Package *Task 1.1*: Clear Concise description of the Task. *Task 1.2*: Clear Concise description of the Task.			
Description of Deliverables: D1.1 Development of Research Prototype D1.2 Protocol for use of Research Prototype for particular Application D1.3 Research Paper			
Milestone M1 Demonstrate Use of Research Prototype			

Research Proposal: Implementation Gantt Chart



Gantt chart must be included in the text listing the following:

- Work Packages titles (there should be at least 1 WP);
- Indication of major deliverables, if applicable;
- Indication of major milestones, if applicable;
- Secondments, if applicable:
- Planning for dissemination, exploitation and communication activities (unless included in a dedicated WP).

Research Proposal: Implementation

Appropriateness of the **management structure** and **procedures**, including **risk management**

- Highlight the organisational and management structure of the host
  - Include how host puts progress monitoring mechanisms in place that ensure objectives are reached
  - Financial Management
  - Data Management Plans
  - Intellectual Property Rights Support
- Assess research and/or administrative risks that might endanger the project and identify contingency plans.
- Highlight support services provided by the host institution (relocation support, HR services…).

Research Proposal: Implementation
Risk Analysis and Contingency Plan

Identify The Risks

Scientific, technical, administrative

Assess The Risks

Likelihood, impact

Contingency Plan

What will you do to minimise the likelihood and/or deal with the consequences

- Mitigation addresses risk before manifestation and attempts to reduce its impact before occurring.
- Contingency addresses the risk at the time the event occurs and attempts to reduce its negative effects.

Research Proposal: Implementation

Appropriateness of the **institutional environment** (infrastructure)

- How will the host reduce the administrative burden on you?
- Experience of managing EU or MSCA projects
- The beneficiary’s active contribution to the research and training activities
- The main tasks and commitments of the host institution and any partner organisations
- The host often has some standard text describing infrastructure, logistics and facilities. You may need to adapt these to highlight the implementation of your project.
- Access to host‘s external network, for example, industry partners

Research Proposal: Implementation

With a certain amount of work, writing the implementation is relatively easy to get right

If you pay little attention, it is easy to get wrong

It is worth making a coherent project plan

- if the project is accepted, it will make your life much easier later during implementation and reporting.

Research Proposal: Implementation
Sample Evaluator Comments

- The milestones are well elaborated and come at the right place in the plan.
- The work plan is very thoughtfully designed to reach the objectives aiming at a high impact results.
- Deliverables and milestones are well listed on the Gantt chart
- The allocation of tasks and resources is very appropriate for the execution of the project
- All technical tasks are clearly defined and well elaborated.
- The organization and management structures are convincing and very well designed.
- Possible risks are well identified. The mitigation measures are convincing.

- The WPs lack the necessary detail concerning when the analysis of results from the fieldwork would take place.
- Lists of milestones and deliverables are presented in generic fashion.
- The Gantt chart is very poorly designed and not sufficiently informative.
- Allocation of tasks and resources has not been properly detailed. There is no sufficient indication of specific person-months allocation to most activities proposed
- Risk management related procedures have been addressed to a very limited extent and a list of sound contingency plans is missing.
- The management structures and procedures are addressed to a very limited extent, a sound comprehensive description is lacking in the proposal

Submission Tips

- Give yourself plenty of time to write the proposal.
- Read the Call text and Guide for Applicants carefully, **details matter.**
- The proposal format is the same as the headings in the Guide for Applicants.
- Proposal isn't finished until deadline: **submit often** and **revise often**
- MSCA Postdoc Fellowship is not a standard research proposal. It has a much higher focus on your future employability and career development.
- Evaluators are often not experts in your research area
- Ask many people for feedback on the proposal:
  - Your supervisor is important
  - People with less direct experience of the research topic may pick on the same things that evaluators will not understand.
  - Talk to the EU grant support office at your host institution

Receiving Results of your Evaluation

- If the proposal is accepted, you proceed to the Grant Agreement Stage. Congratulations!
- If the proposal is rejected, this grant is not the only one. It may be there are other opportunities more suited to you and your background.
- If the proposal is rejected, you have the option to learn from the negative comments on the proposal and learn from them before you resubmit. Many people address those concerns, write a better proposal and are accepted on their second attempt.
- Some applicants are placed on the reserve list.
- Applicants to Widening Countries may receive a Widening Fellowship.
- Some countries/regions have Seal of Excellence fellowship programmes.

Curriculum Vitae

- Your CV should demonstrate your **ability** to achieve **results**.
- Highlight work and achievements that show your **potential** to achieve the **goals** outlined in the expected project results.
- Highlight **experience** and **transferable skills** where possible.
- Highlight relevant **mobility** (Summer schools, Research Experience, Research visits abroad).
- Even small **grants** and **awards** are worth listing.
- Make an attractive CV that is **easy to read**.
- 5 page limit

Thanks for your attention!

Dr Brian Cahill,
brian.cahill@tib.eu
Twitter: @b_p_cahill

CAREER MANAGEMENT

Dr Brian Cahill,

Learning and Skills Analytics Group
Technische Informationsbibliothek / Leibniz Information Centre for Science and Technology
Hannover, Germany

brian.cahill@tib.eu **Twitter: @b_p_cahill**

Declaration on Sustainable Researcher Careers

- 24th February, 2019: MCAA symposium on career paths of researchers
- 400+ researchers discussed key issues and factors influencing sustainable research careers
- Internal consultations within MCAA and Eurodoc
- Published on 27 May 2019

SCAN ME

http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3194228

WHAT CAN YOU DO LONG BEFORE LOOKING FOR A JOB?

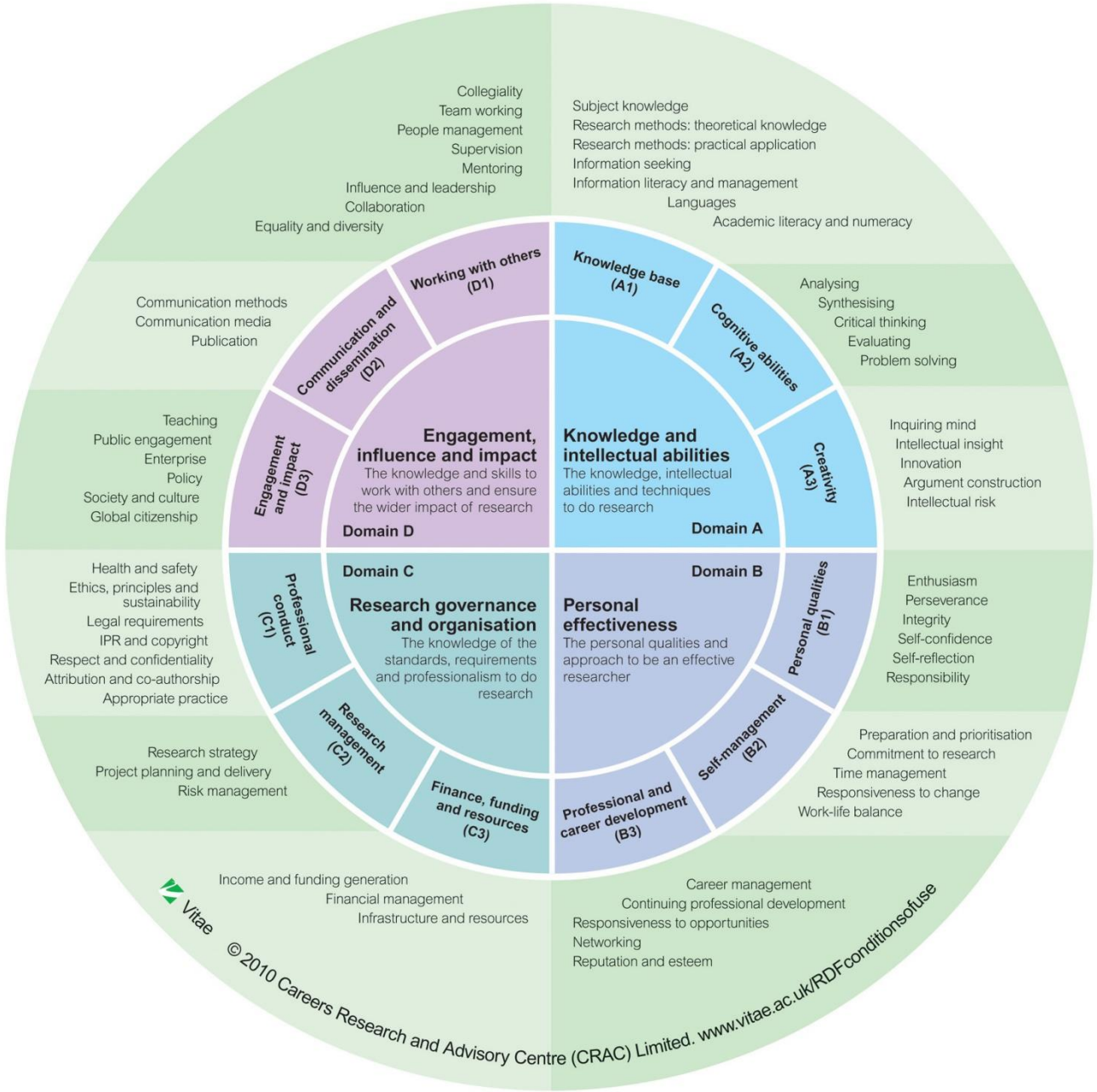
- ***Know yourself***
- ***Start investigating job opportunities early.***
- ***Actively seek out mentorship.***
- ***Develop creative problem-solving skills.***
- ***Be fully committed to each project you undertake.***
- ***Avoid overextending yourself.***
- ***Be organized.***
- ***Find balance.***

HOW DO YOU MAKE CAREER DECISIONS?

Four main steps:

- Self Awareness
- Opportunity awareness
- Decision-making
- Taking action

Career planning is not a linear process. You will be continually learning about yourself and opportunities so you may go forwards and backwards between these stages.



Have a look at these academic skills.
What are the skills that you have already acquired?
What are the skills that you want to improve?
What are the skills that would be expected in your future career?

Strengths: What are you good at and what do you enjoy?

Knowledge and intellectual abilities

- Cognitive abilities: critical analysis, synthesise complex information, problem solving
- Creativity: ask useful questions, structures arguments clearly, ability to acquire knowledge
- Knowledge base: Ability to record, manage and handle information / data, Can adapt for audiences

Personal effectiveness

- Personal qualities: motivation, perseverance, confidence, seeks feedback, takes responsibility
- Self-management: project management, research focus, time management, flexibility
- Career development: open to professional development, aware of skills, builds networks

Engagement, influence and impact

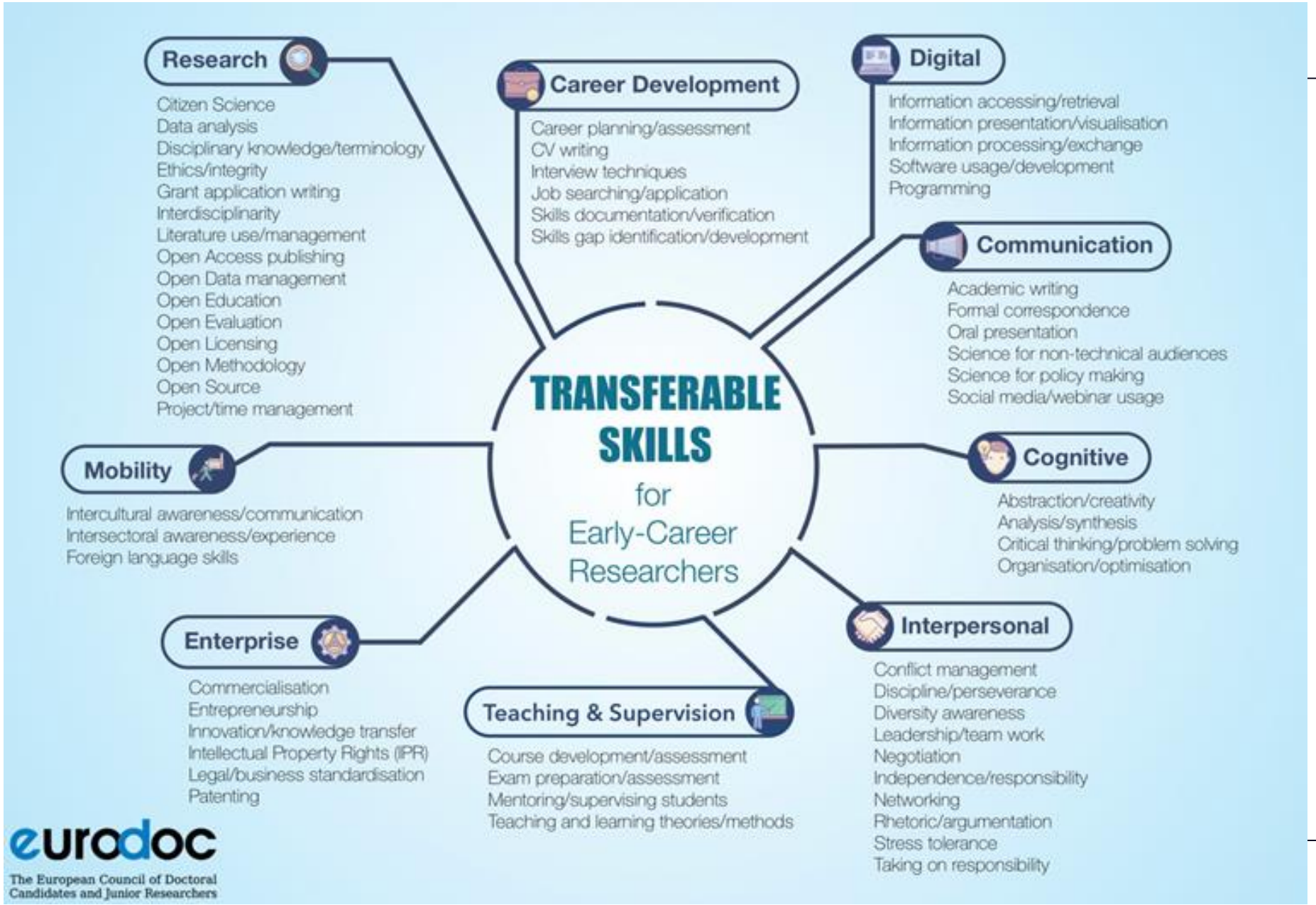
- Working with others: Give/receive feedback , contribute to team success, manages relationships
- Communication and dissemination: Constructs arguments, articulates ideas, writing skills
- Engagement and impact: teaching, public engagement, commercialization, societal impact

Strengths: What are you good at and what do you enjoy?

1. Rate yourself: It can be useful to consider what evidence you have for your choice, i.e. can you think of times when you have used the skill well? This could be at work, in education or in other areas of your life. You do not need to be using a skill on a regular basis to consider it something you do well.

2. Recognise what you do in work: Consider the work activities you engage in on a regular basis and what skills you use to carry out these activities. You will start to see there are skills you are using on a regular basis, and others you do not have an opportunity to use.

3. Consider what you enjoy: You may feel there are areas you are very skilled at but which do not energise you and you do not enjoy. Spend some time considering the list below and record those skills you enjoy using, whether in work or in any other context.


TRANSFERABLE SKILLS for Early-Career Researchers
Research
Citizen Science
Data analysis
Disciplinary knowledge/terminology
Ethics/integrity
Grant application writing
Interdisciplinarity
Literature use/management
Open Access publishing
Open Data management
Open Education
Open Evaluation
Open Licensing
Open Methodology
Open Source
Project/time management
Career Development
Career planning/assessment
CV writing
Interview techniques
Job searching/application
Skills documentation/verification
Skills gap identification/development
Digital
Information accessing/retrieval
Information presentation/visualisation
Information processing/exchange
Software usage/development
Programming
Communication
Academic writing
Formal correspondence
Oral presentation
Science for non-technical audiences
Science for policy making
Social media/webinar usage
Mobility
Intercultural awareness/communication
Intersectoral awareness/experience
Foreign language skills
Cognitive
Abstraction/creativity
Analysis/synthesis
Critical thinking/problem solving
Organisation/optimisation
Enterprise
Commercialisation
Entrepreneurship
Innovation/knowledge transfer
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
Legal/business standardisation
Patenting
Teaching & Supervision
Course development/assessment
Exam preparation/assessment
Mentoring/supervising students
Teaching and learning theories/methods
Interpersonal
Conflict management
Discipline/perseverance
Diversity awareness
Leadership/team work
Negotiation
Independence/responsibility
Networking
Rhetoric/argumentation
Stress tolerance
Taking on responsibility
eurodoc
The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers

SciLink

The importance of values

- Values are what we want and what we expect from work. They take account of your attitude and beliefs about what is important in life. Values are central to our motivation and can influence how satisfied we are in our work.
- If your values are well aligned to those within your work and environment you are likely to feel a sense of pride in what you are doing and be happy to devote time and effort to your job. If, however, your values are at odds with your work environment and those people around you, you may become de-motivated.
- People with similar skills may, because of differing values, wish to use them for varying purposes. For example, you could put good social skills to use in selling, social work, advertising or teaching but each of these career areas may satisfy different values.

What do you want from a career?

A well-known organisation
Artistic:
Being Expert:
Challenge:
Communication:
Community:
Contact with people:
Creativity:
Excitement:
Fast pace:
Friendship:

Help society:
Helping others:
Making decisions:
Money:
Peace:
Persuading people:
Place of work:
Precise work:
Pressure:

Promotion:
Recognition:
Risk:
Routine:
Security:
Status:
Supervision:
Time Freedom:
Variety:
Work alone:
Work with others:

Aspects of personality

Think about your own temperament by considering the list of adjectives below. Which ones seem characteristic of you? It may be helpful to think about how other people view you. You can also add in any other words that describe you. Choose up to 3 adjectives that describe you.

Adaptable	**Adventurous**
Assertive	Cautious
Cheerful	Competitive
Confident	Co-operative
Decisive	Energetic
Enthusiastic	Imaginative
Independent	Organised
Persistent	Reserved
Tactful	Methodical
Outgoing	Relaxed
Resilient	Meticulous
Patient	Reliable
Sensitive to others	Consistent
Warm	Introspective
Objective	Excitable
Changeable	Shy

What is a Career Development Plan and why is it important?

Aims of a CDP in an MSCA PF project

- Career development is essential in a successful proposal
- Clarify career development measures mentioned in your proposal: “Campaign in poetry, govern in prose”
- What are your career goals?
- How will this fellowship help you reach your goals?

What is a Career Development Plan and why is it important?

Why and when to develop a CDP?

- Making your career goals clear to yourself makes it easier to achieve your goals and get support from others
- Model contracts for MSCA IF in Germany **require Fellow** to have completed CDP in **first 6 weeks of the contract**
- Plan use of ***Research, training and networking*** **budget** early in the project: €1000 x 24 months = €24000

Putting together a Career Development Plan

Template:

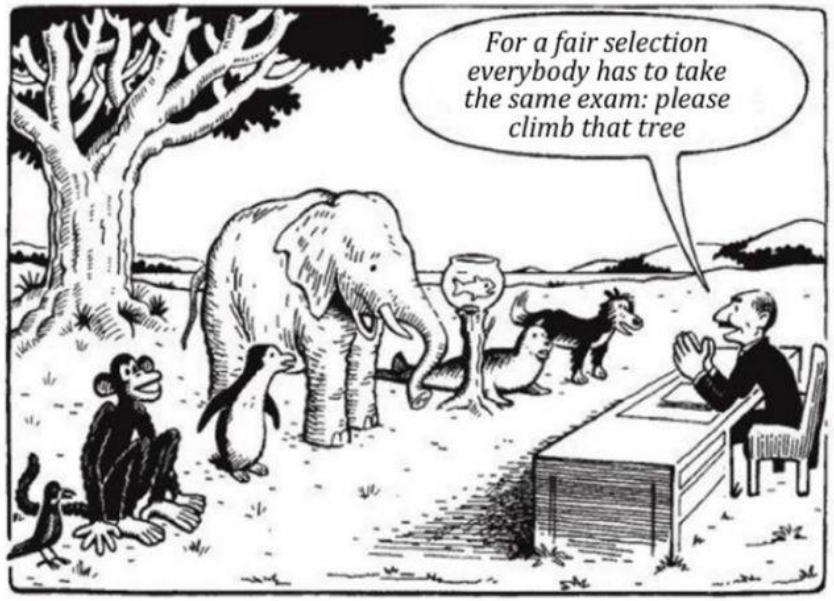
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1V-qzu6I3lHEDdx62kZs24ROLTzqERoiaQo_TT2GjaFw/edit?usp=sharing

Structure of a CDP - Personalization

A Career Development Plan is personal

Learning is personal, driven by a great number of individual goals and contexts

Image: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/finding-the-next-einstein/201404/do-we-have-trouble-taking-objective-feedback



Putting together a CDP

- Start with proposal
- Assess use of **research, training and networking budget**
- Talk to support services within institution: career development, research support office, etc.
- Talk with your supervisor and present draft of CDP

- What problems, issues may come up?

Postdoctoral researcher

You want to set up your CDP with your supervisor, and you ask for advice on how to do that. Since in your project you will work very closely together with a commercial company, you want to learn more about how Intellectual Properties (IP) developed by your PhD project are handled in terms of IP ownership, protection, and valorization. You think therefore that courses on IP management and entrepreneurship would be important to do.

Role Play

Supervisor

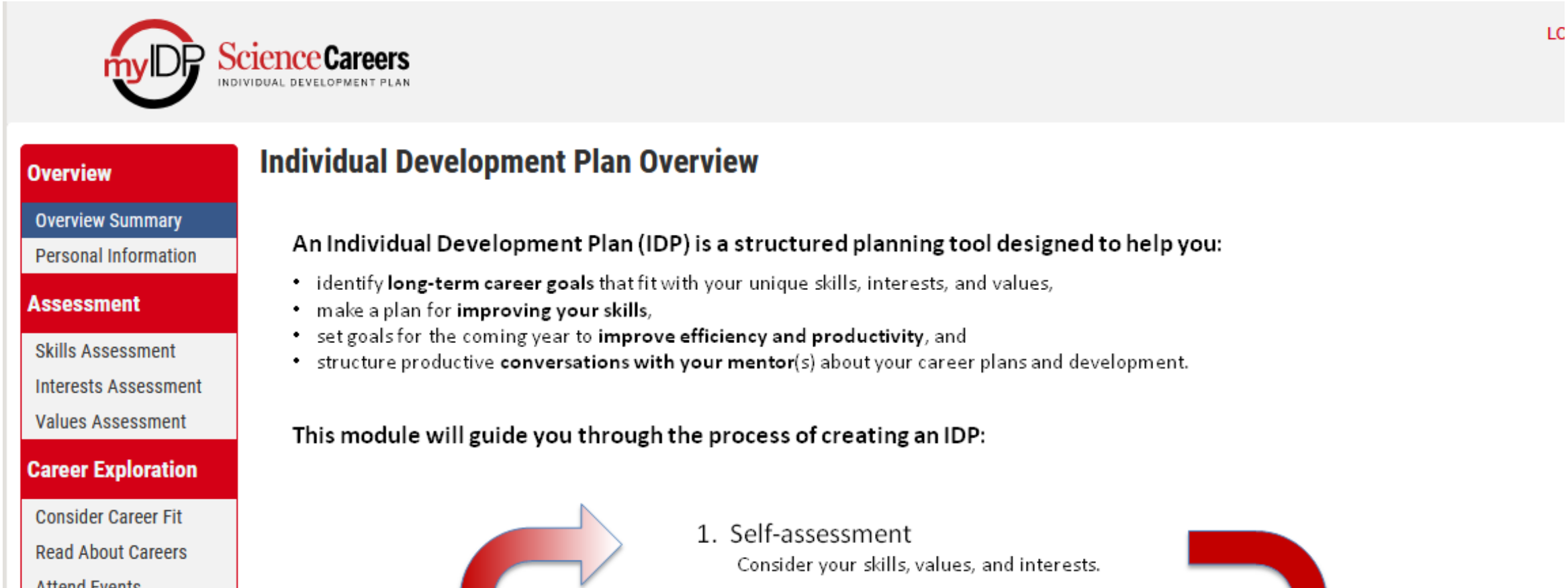
Setting up a CDP is a regular administrative issue that is dictated by the EU. You believe that it serves no direct value for your activities and for the project. You already have templates from previous research projects that you want to reuse to get over this task asap. IP issues shouldn’t be handled by the fellows, there is a dedicated IP department. Only this department should deal with IP. Fellows should focus on their project only, as 2 years are very limited.

How confident are you that employers outside academia will value YOUR skills and experience?

Careers after Academic Research

"myIDP" is a free, interactive, online tool to help you assess your skills, interests, and values:

https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/



How employers view researchers

Employers across many different industry sectors said they valued their:

- Specialist subject knowledge
- Excellent research and analytical skills
- Capacity for critical thinking
- Ability to bring fresh perspectives to problems or the organisation

How feasible are the career options you are considering?

- **Geography**
- **Working hours**
- **Salary**
- **Risk of not succeeding**
- **Re-training**
- **Status / Seniority**
- **Lifestyle**
- **A network to facilitate your next move**
- **Getting the experience that can help**
- **My next move has to be the perfect job**

What is non-negotiable for you?
Which can you be flexible about?
Could you talk this through with friends, colleagues or contacts?
Are there ones you'd compromise on in the short-term to meet a long term goal?
What can you compromise on?

Considering careers outside academia

- **Self-awareness** Understand what motivates you to stay in, or leave, HE research. Look at both positive factors, e.g. interests/passions, and negative ones, e.g. expectations of others, lack of opportunities.
- **Self-care** Find space to put yourself first, not your research. Be prepared for a lengthy transition process. Develop emotional and practical support networks.
- **Thinking ahead** Assess your prospects in HE research – be realistic. Have courage to change direction. Make a decision to research your next move before it becomes urgent – and then make career review a regular habit.
- **Focus on transferable competencies** Don’t underestimate your transferable competencies. Assess them objectively: get help from mentors, friends, family, etc. Look at any gaps and take advantage of local provision courses, careers services to address any important gaps.

Considering careers outside academia

- **Broaden experience** Get involved in work-related experiences beyond your research to explore what you might enjoy doing, and to develop and help evidence your capabilities to employers.
- **Research and assess opportunities** Be open-minded. Talk to a range of people and research different types of employment that could fit your values and competencies. Get insights into different employers. Consider whether you need to take a step down to get where you want to be in the longer term.
- **Use networks** Personal and professional networks are a huge resource for information, ideas, practical help and emotional support. Talk to former research staff who have made successful transitions.
- **Self-belief** Have confidence in what you offer employers. Be patient and persevering. Don’t rush into an unsuitable job.

Considering careers outside Academia

- **Getting and accepting job offers** Get professional and informal help to ensure you make strong applications and interview well. Know enough about the new work environment to feel confident you can be happy there.
- **Culture shock** Anticipate the need to adapt to a different type of role, typically with less autonomy, multiple activities and different pace of work. Draw on your existing competencies and attitudes to adjust successfully.
- **Identity change** Recognise that losing your academic identity could be difficult. Focus on the positives in your new role. Understand the pros and cons of keeping your links with academic research.

Considering careers in Academia

- **What type of role:**
  - research role with little or no teaching,
  - traditional lecturing job which involves both research and teaching,
  - teaching focused role
  - research support role (e.g. infrastructure management, etc.)
  - Research management role

Considering careers in Academia
What do you enjoy about working in higher education?

- teaching, either lecturing, leading tutorials, or supporting student dissertations
- public engagement activities
- managing the research process
- writing reports or publications
- knowledge exchange, through engagement with industry or other organisations
- supporting students academically or personally in a pastoral role
- influencing policy or strategy through committee work

Considering careers in Academia

There are very significant differences in the requirements of the academic system throughout Europe.

- Postdoc against long-term career
- slow pace of institutional decision making
- long-range thinking (five-year plans)
- academic freedom
- Dependence on research funding / writing proposals.
- constant rejection, including declined grant applications and manuscripts for publication, which constitute months of work

Work

Your story

Send your careers story to: naturecareerseditor@nature.com

GETTY

New CVs formats allow researchers to highlight contributions beyond their publication list.

RETHINKING THE CV

Researchers are pushing to make CVs more relevant and realistic. By Chris Woolston

In December 2021, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the largest public funder of UK scientist," she says, including mentorship, work (EDI). It modelled its new CV format on 'Résumé for Researchers', introduced in 2019 by the Royal Society in London. Similar initiatives have been unveiled by research councils in the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

In response, researchers are learning how to rework CVs to emphasize quality over quantity, and to include narratives about their broader impact. Meanwhile, hiring panels and grant evaluators need to rethink how best to assess these documents.

The core problem with standard CVs is that they tend to reduce scientists to numbers, says Rebecca Pillai Riddell, a behavioural scientist and associate vice-president of research at York University in Toronto, Canada. Evaluating researchers on the basis of sheer number of publications or using related measures, such as the impact factors of the journals in which they publish, ignores many things that go into a scientific career, Pillai Riddell says. Conventional CVs "are supposed to be quick-and-dirty summaries", she says. As someone who has seen many over the years, she knows that those summaries can contain valuable information, even if the emphasis is often misplaced. "They focus on counting, not on what's important."

The 'quantity above quality' approach is especially short-sighted and unfair in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Pillai Riddell says. Many researchers simply didn't have the time or opportunity to conduct experiments or crank out papers at their normal pace during shutdowns. And as schools closed their doors, many scientists who were also parents had to shift their priorities from work to home, especially women. "If we continue to emphasize

CV for MSCA Proposal

The CV is intrinsic to the evaluation of the whole proposal and for Section 1.4 of B1. It should be limited to maximum 5 pages and should include **the standard academic and research record.**

Any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths should be clearly explained so that this can be fairly assessed by the independent evaluators.

Include all your areas of experience (e.g., teaching, reviewing, consultancy, intersectoral experience, supervision, event organisation, public outreach etc.).

Details of Career Mobility (remember there is a mobility rule)

Patents and/or participation in industrial innovation

If you have non-institutional responsibilities, you work/ed as voluntary of some association. Whatever that may add you a value/quality: ***responsibility, organization, leadership****.*

CV for MSCA Proposal

Personal Details can allow you to show that you engage with dissemination and communication.

Include:

- WebSite
- ORCiD
- Google Scholar
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Etc.

CV for MSCA Proposal

The *experienced researchers* must provide a list of achievements reflecting their track record, and this may include, if applicable:

1. **Publications** in **peer-reviewed scientific 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 researcher (membership in the steering and/or programme committee).
7. Examples **of participation in industrial innovation**.
8. **Prizes and Awards**.
9. Funding received so far
10. Supervising, mentoring activities, if applicable.

The detail

- The key to making an impression is often in the detail that you give.
- Any claim of skills should include sufficiently detailed descriptions of what action you took.
- Detailed (yet succinct) descriptions will effectively personalise your CV and personal statement and therefore make you stand out from the crowd. They will also impress the employer by indicating that you have self-confidence and are adept at self-reflecting.

Your 'Unique Selling Points (USPs)'

- What are your Unique Selling Points (USPs)?
- What do you have that few other applicants might offer?
- This could be specialist knowledge or technical expertise built in the course of your research. Or general transferable skills that are developed by PhD researchers such as project management, decision making, problem solving, initiative and of course research skills (and many more!!).
- Don't forget to reflect on your other life experiences that may demonstrate key skills that stand out as some of your USPs.

Linking your skills to experience

- Think about the different experiences and achievements on your CV in terms of the skills you used or developed.
- For example, having an article published involved a number of skills such as writing for a specific audience, meeting deadlines, receiving feedback and working with others. A recruiter may not know what is involved in the process. You need to make it explicit to make that positive impression.

Thanks for your attention!

Dr. Brian Cahill,
brian.cahill@tib.eu
Twitter: @b_p_cahill

https://scilink.eu/

http://remo-network.eu/