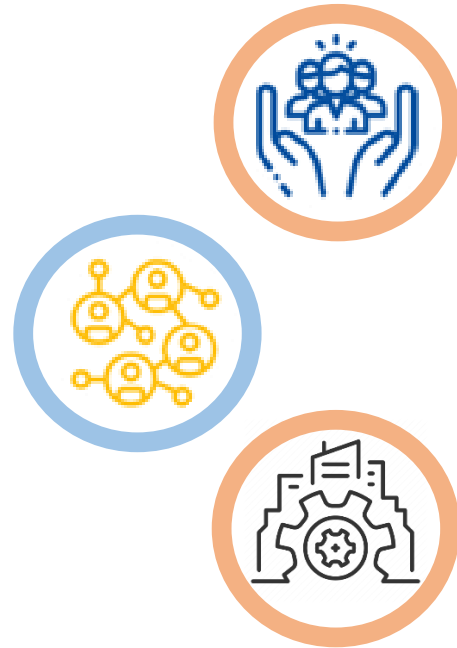# MSCA COFUND

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions

o Based on mobility (international, intersectoral, interdisciplinary);

o All scientific domains;

o Strong accent on participation of industry, SMEs and non-academia partners;

o Attract and retain talents

o Institutional visibility and networking

o Joint advanced training

o @ interfaces of the knowledge value-chain

Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions
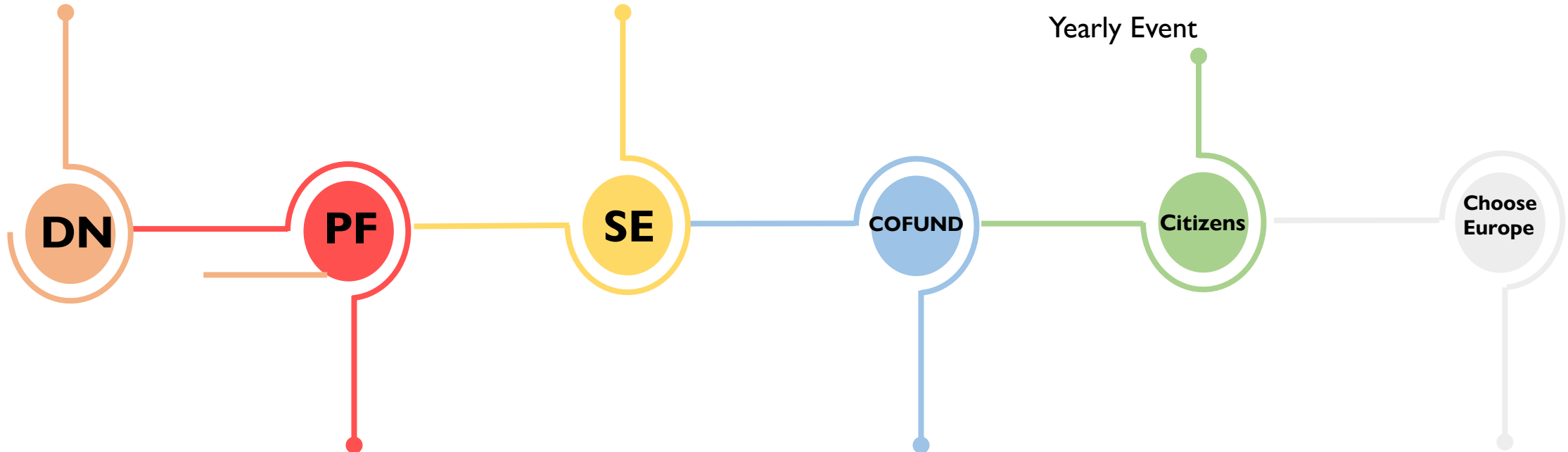
Doctoral Networks

Joint Doctorates
Industrial Doctorates
Other Doctoral Programmes

Staff Exchanges

Secondments Inter-
-sectoral | -national | -disciplinary

MSCA & Citizens

Yearly Event

DN — **PF** — **SE** — COFUND — Citizens — Choose Europe

Postdoctoral Fellowships

European Fellowships
Global Fellowships

COFUND

Co-financed Programmes:
Doctoral and Postdoctoral

Choose Europe

Co-fund long term
employment for
researchers

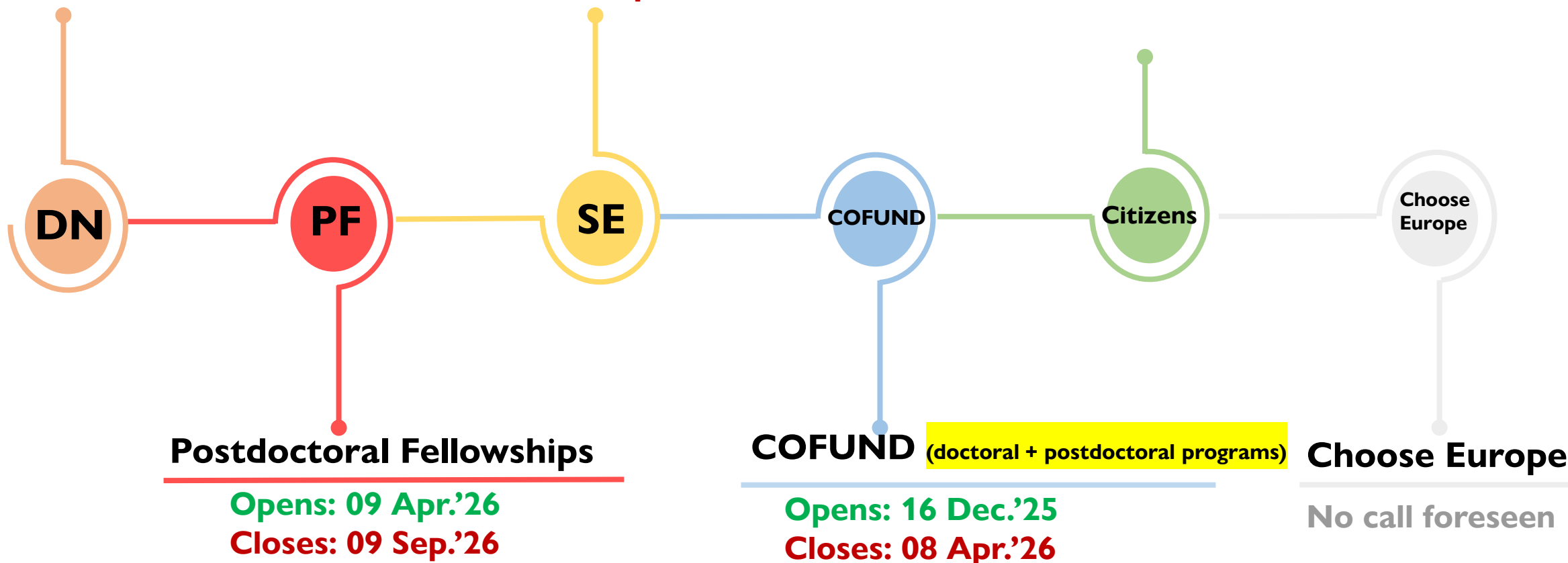# Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions – 2026 calendar

Doctoral Networks
Opens: 28 May.'26
Closes: 24 Nov.'26

Staff Exchanges
Opens: 16 Dec.'25
Closes: 16 Apr.'26

MSCA & Citizens
No call foreseen

DN — **PF** — **SE** — COFUND — Citizens — Choose Europe

Postdoctoral Fellowships
Opens: 09 Apr.'26
Closes: 09 Sep.'26

COFUND (doctoral + postdoctoral programs)
Opens: 16 Dec.'25
Closes: 08 Apr.'26

Choose Europe
No call foreseen

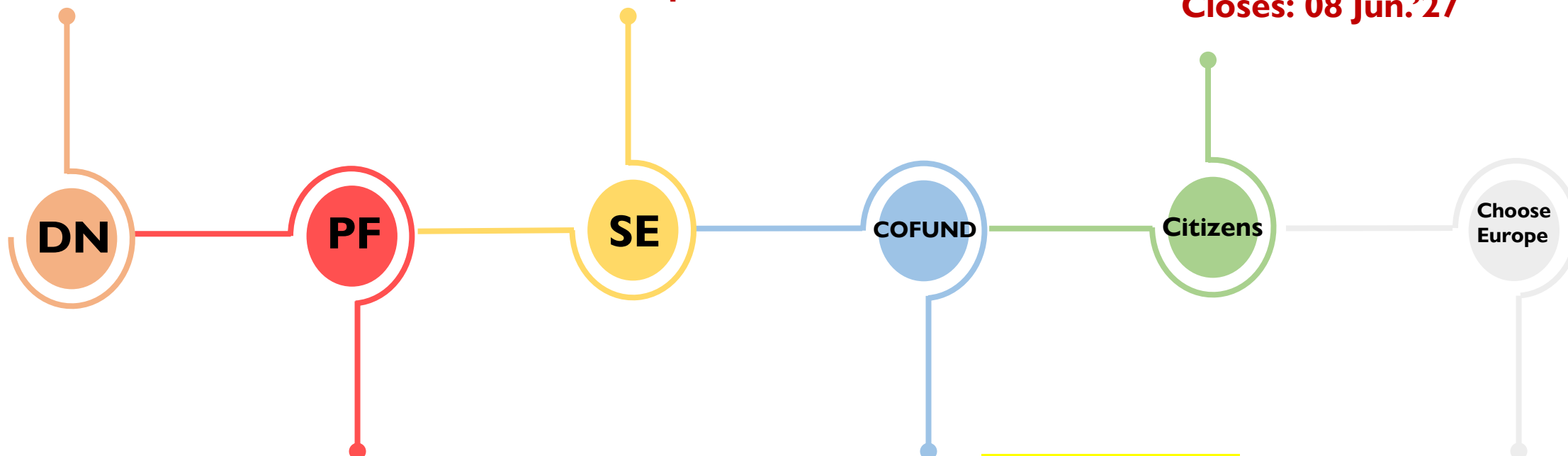# Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions – 2027 calendar

Doctoral Networks
Opens: 26 May.'27
Closes: 23 Nov.'27

Staff Exchanges
Opens: 15 Dez.'26
Closes: 15 Apr.'27

MSCA & Citizens
Opens: 09 Mar.'27
Closes: 08 Jun.'27

DN — **PF** — **SE** — COFUND — Citizens — Choose Europe

Postdoctoral Fellowships
Opens: 07 Apr.'27
Closes: 08 Sep.'27

COFUND (Doctoral Programs only)
Opens: 08 Dec.'26
Closes: 06 Apr.'27

Choose Europe
Opens: 08 Dez.'26
Closes: 06 Apr.'27

COFUND Basics

➢ <mark>Complementary funding</mark> for new or existing national, regional, and institutional schemes for <mark>doctoral</mark> and postdoctoral programmes managed by entities established in EU MS or HE AC

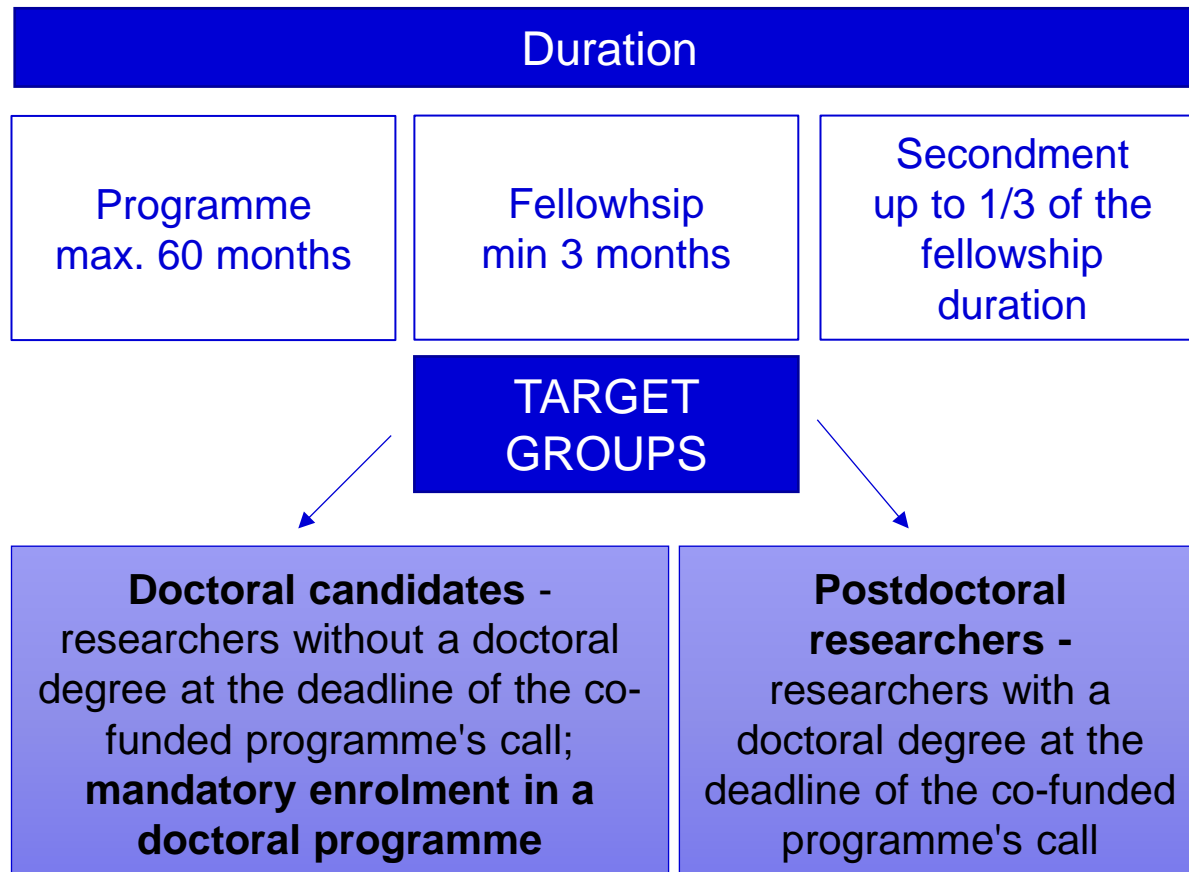| FOCUS on:	Spread best practices of the MSCA by promoting high standards in the recruitment process and excellent working conditions (European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers).
	Introduce sustainable structuring effects, by promoting excellent and sustainable research training, international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation and mobility.
	Encourage synergies with Cohesion policy funds as well as the Recovery and Resilience Facility.
	Proposed programmes are encouraged to cover all research disciplines ("bottom-up"), but can also focus on specific disciplines (based on RIS3 strategies).

Synergies with other funds

Encourage synergies with other Funds

- FP, Area of intervention: Improving and Facilitating **Synergies**;

- WP Introduction: *The MSCA promote the creation of strong links with the* ==European Regional Development Fund== *(ERDF) and* ==**European Social Fund (ESF+)**== *and the* ==Recovery and Resilience Facility== *(RRF), notably* **by creating synergies** *through its* **COFUND** *action*

- *enabling complementarities via awarding a* ==**Seal of Excellence (+ 85%)**== *certificate to proposals submitted to mono-beneficiary MSCA calls.*

MSCA COFUND

➢Proposals are submitted by the co-financing institution - private and public organisations that fund or manage doctoral programmes or fellowship programmes for researchers

➢ Application as a single legal entity (mono-beneficiaries)

Duration		
Programme max. 60 months	Fellowhsip min 3 months	Secondment up to 1/3 of the fellowship duration

TARGET GROUPS

Doctoral candidates - researchers without a doctoral degree at the deadline of the co-funded programme's call; **mandatory enrolment in a doctoral programme**

Postdoctoral researchers - researchers with a doctoral degree at the deadline of the co-funded programme's call

How COFUND works

MS /AC organisation is applying for the COFUND call
(doctoral or postdoctoral programme)

⬇

EC funds COFUND programme

⬇

MS /AC organisation (beneficiary) adviertises job/funding vacancies on EURAXESS portal
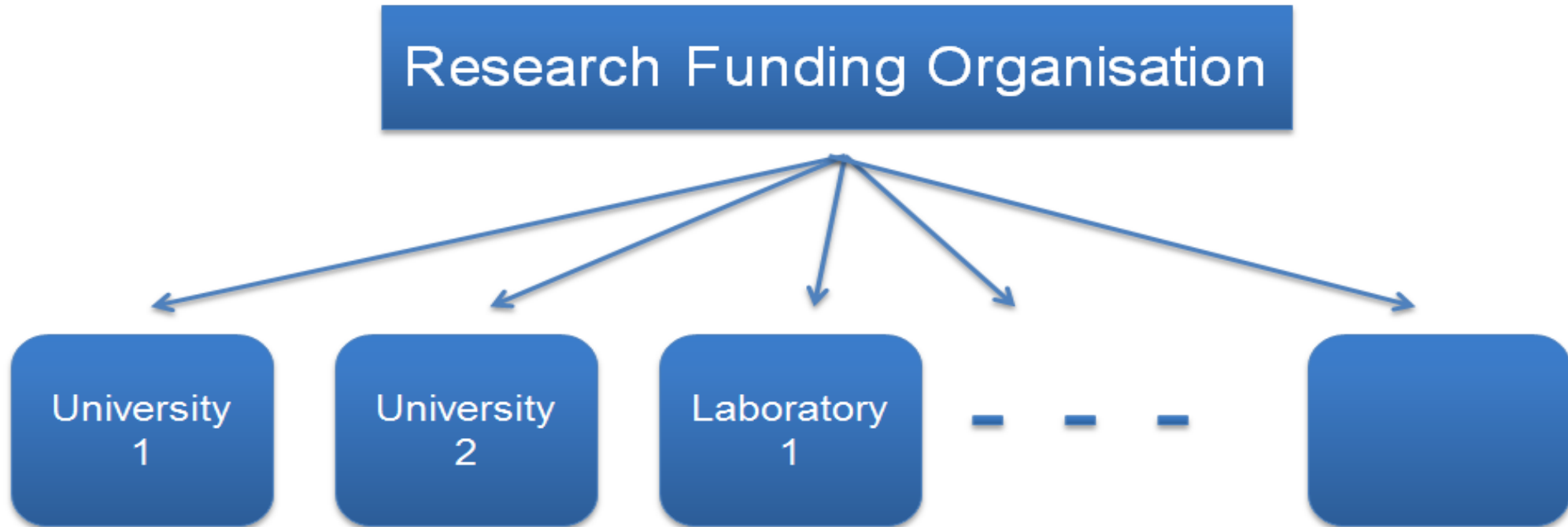
⬇

Beneficiary/Implementing partners recruit researchers

8

Beneficiary, Associated Partner, Implementing Partner

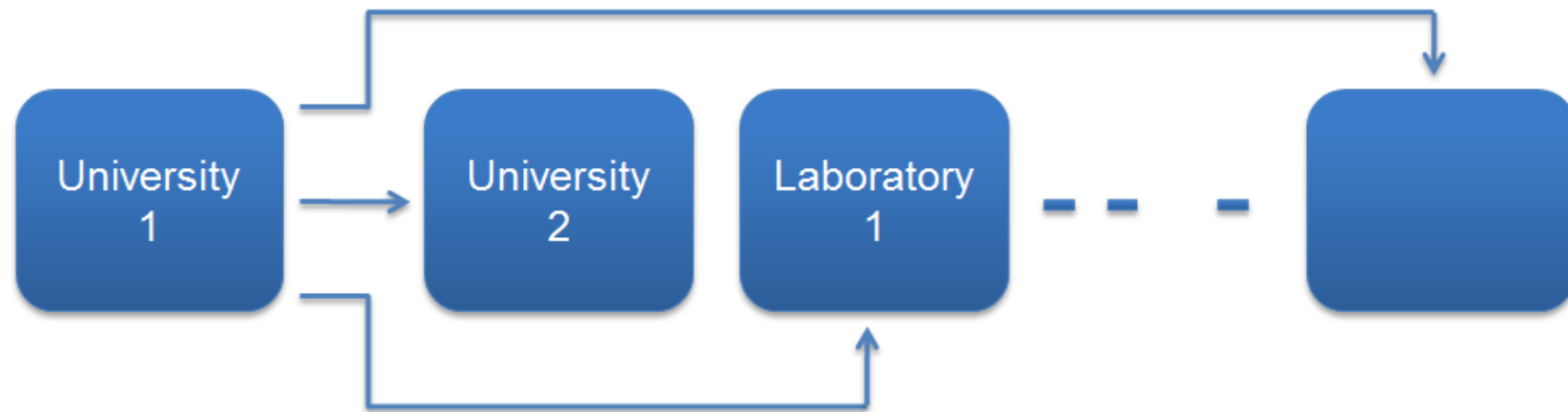| Role in the training for Doctoral and Postdoctoral	Recruitment of researchers	Training and/or Hosting of Seconded Researchers	Directly claim unit costs
Beneficiary	✓	✓	✓
Associated Partner	X	✓	X
Implementing Partner	✓	✓	X

MSCA COFUND – possible structures
1 - Hierarchical

MSCA COFUND – possible structures
2 - Horizontal

MSCA COFUND – possible structures
3 – Single point

We do everything!

MSCA COFUND

- **Co-funding**

  - ➢ Max **10 M€** per beneficiary per call

- **Duration**

  - ➢**Programme** : max. 60 months

  - ➢**Fellowship** : min 3 months

- **Recruitment**

  - ➢ Minimum of 3 researchers

European Commission

MSCA COFUND - **Doctoral programs**

Eligible researchers:

- **Any nationality**

- **Mobily rule**: must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting beneficiary or implementing partner for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before the deadline of the co-funded programme's call.

Country of the main activity: the country where the researcher is physically based when carrying out the main activity and the country of the institution for which the main activity is performed (e.g., employer)
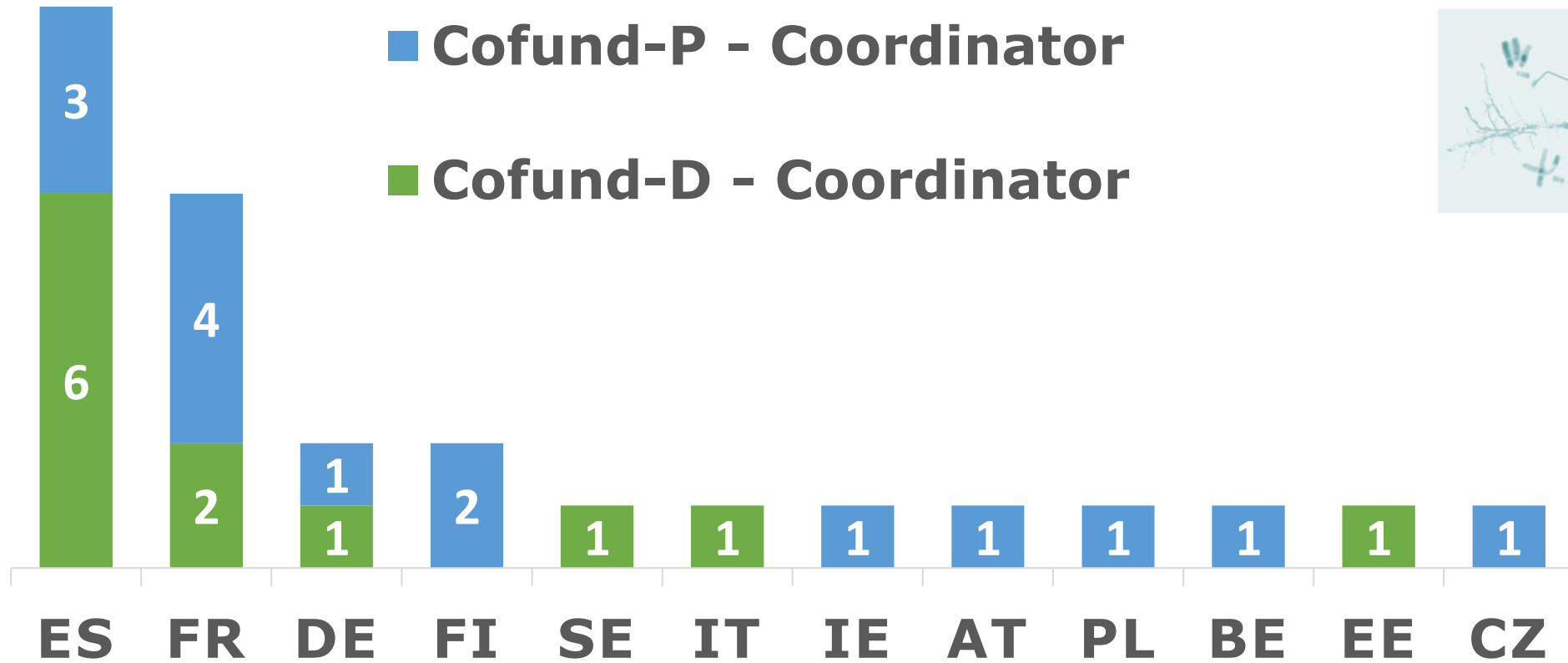
- Researchers must be **doctoral candidates**, i.e. hold a degree which qualifies them for enrolment in a doctoral programme and not be already in possession of a doctoral degree at the deadline of the co-funded programme's call

- Recruited researchers must be enrolled in a doctoral programme leading to the award of a doctoral degree in at least one EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country.

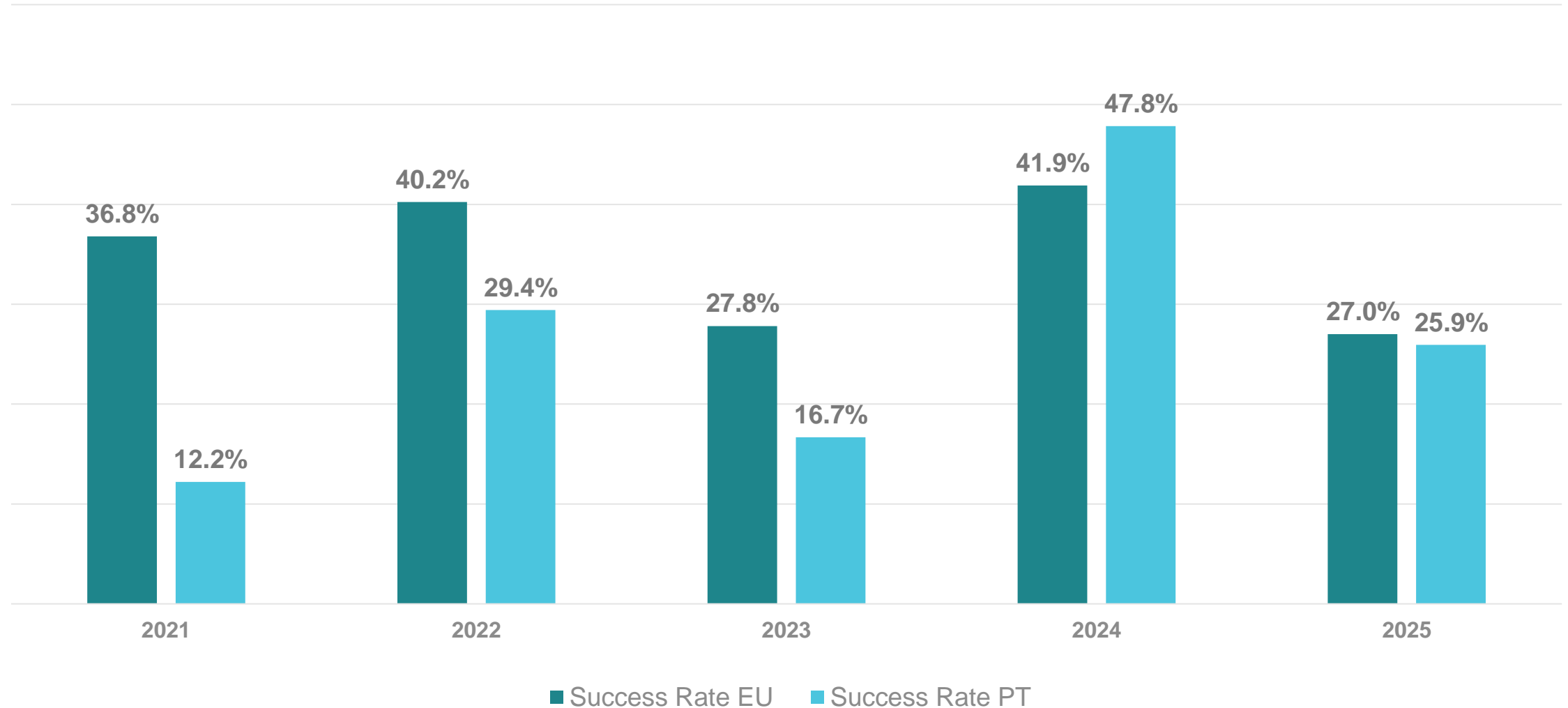# MSCA COFUND - **Postdoctoral programs**

Eligible researchers:

- **Any nationality**

- **Mobily rule**: must not have resided or carried out their main activity114 (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting beneficiary or implementing partner for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before the deadline of the co-funded programme's call.

  - Country of the main activity: the country where the researcher is physically based when carrying out the main activity and the country of the institution for which the main activity is performed (e.g., employer)

- Must be **in possession of a doctoral degree** at the deadline of the co-funded programme's call.

- Researchers who have successfully defended their doctoral thesis but who have not yet formally been awarded the doctoral degree will also be considered as postdoctoral researchers and will be considered eligible to apply. **The successful defence must be unconditional** (no further requirements/corrections that need to be addressed) and take place before the call deadline. Supporting documentation may be requested.

COFUND 2024 Proposals selected

COFUND Success Rate

2021 — Success Rate EU: 36.8%, Success Rate PT: 12.2%
2022 — Success Rate EU: 40.2%, Success Rate PT: 29.4%
2023 — Success Rate EU: 27.8%, Success Rate PT: 16.7%
2024 — Success Rate EU: 41.9%, Success Rate PT: 47.8%
2025 — Success Rate EU: 27.0%, Success Rate PT: 25.9%

■ Success Rate EU   ■ Success Rate PT

Proposal submission

MSCA COFUND

COFUND - Proposal submission

- Applications are submitted through the **Funding and tender opportunities portal**:

  - Find your call

  - Sign into the portal and register your organization (get a PIC number)

COFUND - Proposal submission

- Read **all guidance documents**:

  - **Guide for Applicants**: overview of rules, financial aspects, etc.

  - MSCA Work Programme and annexes

  - Standard application form

  - Frequently Asked Questions

  - MSCA Guidelines on Supervision:

  - MSCA Green Charter:

  - Submit specific queries to the **Research Enquiry Service** (funding, validation of participants, etc.)

European Commission

COFUND - Proposal submission

RADIANCE Handbook for the COFUND call 2025

Published on: **06/05/2025**

The COFUND handbook has been updated for the 2025 call. It is also the very first handbook made within the 'RADIANCE' project. Like the MSCA-NET handbooks in the past, you will find here recommendations for every subchapters and supporting information for the proposal preparation phase.

RADIANCE HANDBOOK COFUND 2025

https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/news/radiance-handbook-cofund-call-2025

- The 2026 version will be available soon
- There are very few differences, use this one while the 2026 one is not available

European Commission

MSCA COFUND – proposal submission

- **2 submission links**, 1 per modality (Doctoral and Postdoctoral programmes)

COFUND Proposal Structure

Part A - administrative forms

filled *on-line on the Funding & Tenders Opportunities Portal*

Part B1 - the proposal, max 34 pages (PDF uploaded)

 # Start page (1), table of contents (1), general description of the programme, information on the beneficiary (2 pages)

 # Excellence

 # Impact

 # Implementation, incl. Gantt Chart

Maximum 30 pages

Excess pages disregarded

Part B2 - no page limit, PDF uploaded

 # Ethics

 # Partner organisations (role of partner organisations, ½ pg per associated/implementing partner)

 # Letters of Commitment (compulsory for associated partners, recommended for implementing partners)

European Commission

Proposal structure – part A

PART A:

✓ General information:

- title,

- acronym,

- duration,

- panel,

- descriptors,

- keywords,

- abstract,

- declarations

✓ **Participants** and contacts

✓ **Budget**- EC contribution+other resources

✓ **Gender Equality plan**

✓ **Ethics & security** questionnaire

Administrative forms – to be filled on-line

Call:
0

Topic:

Type of Action:
0

Proposal number:

Proposal acronym:

Type of Model Grant Agreement:

Table of contents

Section	Title	Action
1	General information	
2	Participants	
3	Budget	
4	Ethics and security	

How to fill in the forms
The form must be filled in for each proposal using the templates available in the submission system. Some data fields in the form are pre-filled based on the steps in the submission wizard.

Example, not to complete

European Commission

Part B - Layout – general advice

Not evaluated but makes life easier for the evaluators

- ✓ Use charts, diagrams, tables, text boxes, figures
- ✓ Ensure any colour diagrams etc. are understandable when printed in black and white
- ✓ Use highlighting where appropriate (**bold**, <u>underline</u>, *italics*) but don't overdo it!

- ✓ Avoid jargon
- ✓ Explain any abbreviations
- ✓ Simple and clear text
- ✓ Avoid long sentences
- ✓ Get rid of repetitions (refer to other parts of the proposal if necessary)
- ✓ Don't copy text from other documents or websites
- ✓ Be consistent with language (UK/ US English)

Award criteria

MSCA COFUND

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

1.1 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

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The selection process is overall of very good quality. the transparency of recruitment process is ==convincingly demonstrated== in terms of international dissemination, high variety of channels, including networks for female researchers, support and relative documentation provided to the candidates. The key performance indicators showing effectiveness of the process are properly in place

There is a ==clear attempt== to prevent gender bias in the selection process by anonymising cvs and also to eliminate socio-economic inequalities by providing travel costs or alternative online arrangement for interviews, ==which is a strength==.

The attractiveness of the appointment and working conditions of the fellows ==is demonstrated==, in comparison with similar locally supported positions

A ==good redress== mechanism is envisaged for applicants dissatisfied with aspects of the selection process

The dissemination of the calls is ==wide and effective==, internationally announced, ==comprehensively developed== in strong liaison with Partners, and ==building on== the beneficiary's experience from a similar project previously funded

–

The proposal ==does not clearly substantiate== sufficient involvement of independent international experts in the interview panels and, in addition, the interview scoring procedure lacks clarity

The one stage evaluation process, assessed by two evaluators without interviews held and without consensus meetings presented, ==lowers its overall== transparency

The recruitment process is outsourced to a third-party organisation which can help to make the selection workflow neutral and transparent. However, ==there is not enough information== provided about the actual workflow or role of different actors within that organisation to give a clear picture of the recruitment process

There ==are not enough details== provided on the evaluation criteria with regard to the separate round of interviews of candidates with group leader prior to the interview with the evaluation committee. ==A clear justification== for the inclusion of earlier entrepreneurship or leadership experience in the evaluation criteria ==is not provided==; given the career stage, this criterion will limit recruitment of attractive candidates

The exception from the mobility rule is not in line with the COFUND-rules and ==it is not convincingly argued== how many fellows might be recruited under these conditions.

63

1.2 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

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Open access practices will ==be appropriately implemented== through data deposition on online platforms and repositories in accordance with the provisions included in the horizon europe programme.

The proposed research focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals with the three transversal areas that offer excellent themes for novel interdisciplinary research options. Interdisciplinarity is ==further strengthened== by the compulsory secondment at XX and the optional secondments at associated partners

The programme ==demonstrates a strong== triple-i dimension through the choice of an inherently interdisciplinary research theme, extensive connections to relevant leading eu research networks, and involvement of several digital startups as associated partners, part of which were established by the host organization's faculty or alumni.

The commitment of the beneficiary to operate the programme under a recognised green charter for sustainability in science ==is an asset== of the proposal

Strengthening the 3"i"'s ==is not convincingly demonstrated== as not all of these aspects are required to be included in the design of the proposed research projects

International mobility is ==insufficiently== specified and ==not supported== through specific actions. interdisciplinarity is limited to exchanges and workshops, but is not an integral part of the research itself

The inter-disciplinary aspects of the programme ==are not convincingly exposed==; simply enumerating the involved disciplines is not sufficient

Connections with the industrial partners and how the fellows will be involved in collaborations ==are not well outlined==

There is ==limited information== provided on how the societal elements of the open science practices (beyond the awareness raising process) will be addressed. This is more important when the proposal's research domains are of high importance/interest for society

64

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The training programme includes training in a set of pertinent transferable skills along with interdisciplinary research training in the corresponding knowledge areas.

The non-academic partners have a clear and meaningful involvement in the training activities, with participation in various courses by patient associations, science communication and career development experts, and founders of start-up companies.

The gender aspects are well detailed, and a good strategy is presented. All partners are strongly committed to promote gender equality and inclusiveness at all levels through dedicated training sessions, events and actions designed to specifically to support and foster the career development of under-represented groups.

The research training program is comprehensive, novel, and high-quality, including a suitable focus on open science, research dissemination, and transferable skills

The research training programme is well structured and thoroughly described with information on the timings and duration throughout the programme.

-

Training in respect to ethics in research is not clearly integrated into the training programme, which is important given the research options offered by the programme. Further, the proposal insufficiently addresses how the quality of the training courses will be measured/monitored.

The described planned role and contribution of the partners from the non-academic sector, as presented in their letters of commitments, is not properly echoed by the proposed training activities as presented in the proposal.

The transferable skills training is insufficiently illustrated, e.g. aspects on equality and diversity and entrepreneurship. further it suffers from a lack of structure, quantifiable indicators and monitoring elements.

Information for the non-academic and industrial partners on their role in training is not sufficiently detailed, notably for those outside the Host country

The expected balance between compulsory and optional training activities is not entirely clear in the proposal

66

1.4 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

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Career planning is ==supported by a well-structured and appropriately== monitored PCDP and access to a career development coach. The inclusion of an additional mentor that aligns with the next career step for the fellow and female-to-female mentoring are novel and beneficial features, providing additional independent career guidance

The quality of the supervision ==is clear==, with an identified pool of potential Supervisors at the host Partners, with ==extensive experience== in postdoctoral supervision, a ==demonstrated record== of research leadership, and extensive experience with EU projects

Regularly monitored Personal Career Development Plans are ==suitably integrated== with the supervision and at a convenient pace. Fellows have access to the Career Centre for services on competencies and management skills.

The organization and the frequency of the meetings with the supervisory team ==is appropriate.==

Career and Training Committee composition ==is well structured== and balanced for training in both academic and non-academic domains.

–

The supervision and career guidance arrangements ==are insufficiently developed and not innovative==. The programme sets a goal that at least a third of the recruited fellows should be co-supervised by mentors from outside the host organization without clarifying why broadened mentoring expertise and perspectives would not be necessary for the remaining fellows.

Quality and experience of (potential) academic supervisors are presented ==only in a generic manner==; limited information is provided regarding the quality of non-academic supervisors with whom the doctoral students will work closely for at least half the duration of their fellowship.

The overly complex structure envisaged for supervision ==raises concern for the feasibility== of effective supervision of the large number of proposed doctoral candidates.

Career guidance and career development arrangements are not sufficiently substantiated, the quality of the process itself ==is not sufficiently addressed==

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2.1 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

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+ The overall alignment with, and the concrete measures for, implementing the EU Charter and Code and Human Resources Strategy for Researchers are convincingly presented. It is worth mentioning that most of the implementing partners have been awarded the HRS4R label and the rest are in the process of obtaining it.

+ Earlier experience of participation of the consortium in EU research projects related to the human resources development in research, convincingly supports its capacity to strengthen human resources at different levels.

+ It is convincingly demonstrated that the programme will spread the good practices at the regional and national level.

+ The programme will strongly promote gender equality, organising specific training for female fellows on career opportunities and forming a network of female researchers with participation of women in science on a regional, national and international level.

+ The impacts of the programme at the various levels are duly considered and the programme will contribute to the region's competitiveness and economic growth with a focus on the challenges identified in the regional innovation strategy for smart specialisation.

+ The proposed programme is very well thought out and it will produce synergies with EU funding invested in the previous years in research infrastructures and research capacity in the region.

-

- There is insufficient detail of how the programme will contribute to the human resources practices at the consortium level and also how this will be sustained beyond the project time line.

- The programme's impact on promoting and propagating the EU principles of HR development in R&I is not well demonstrated at the international level due to insufficient integration of the associated partners via programme's events and lack of a concrete secondment plan.

- The contribution of the program at the regional level is not sufficiently presented.

- The explanation of how human resources good practices will be achieved at the international level is very brief. The foreseen collaborations with international bodies are very wide and not fully detailed.

2.2 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

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+ The first-rate, innovative research options with high societal impact, the access to state-of-the-art facilities, the engagement in intersectoral activities, the broad and complementary training in scientific and transferable skills, as well as the strong networking opportunities will further foster the fellows' career perspectives and employability in academia and the private sector.

+ Enhancement of career perspectives of ESR is highly credible, supported by collaborative opportunities, accelerated market access and reinforced recruitment of potential graduates by the industry.

+ The interdisciplinary nature of the programme and training in transferable skills will credibly make a strong impact towards contribution to the doctoral candidates skills development.

+ The proposed programme will empower the doctoral candidates with excellent scientific competences in the proposed field, and a diverse
set of career-focused transferable skills.

+ A database with the CVs of all the applicants to the programme will be set up (if they agree), to support possible employment opportunities at one of the partners. This is very innovative.

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- The proposal does not present appropriate measures for aligning the practices of the beneficiary and partner organizations with the principles set out by the EU for human resources development in research and innovation.

- The proposal does not sufficiently describe how the selected researchers can exploit the connections with the non-academic sector developed during the programme.

- The proposal does not provide clear information on how it effectively intends to support the fellows in the next step of their career.

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2.3 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

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+The programme has a sound policy in place for protection and potential exploitation of research results, in line with relevant national and EU regulations, and supported by appropriate institutional services and systematically monitored by the project manager.

+ The doctoral candidates will prepare a dissemination plan at the beginning of their employment contracts, which will evolve over the course of the programme.

+ The programme properly considers, promotes and implements Open Access, FAIR Data and Intellectual Property protection policies, in line with institutional and national regulations and Horizon Europe rules.

+Specific bilateral agreements will be drafted before any secondments in the industry; this, together with the applicants's extensive experience in IP management, will ensure an effective strategy for the management of the intellectual property.

+ The mandatory requirement in relation to the dissemination and the communication activities for the fellows is appropriate and the monitoring and technical support provided to them are well structured.

-

- The outlined dissemination and communication activities are not appropriately described and justified with dedicated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

- The strategy for dissemination and communication of project results are not presented in a convincing manner, for instance, lacking details on key elements such as clear time plan and target groups.

- The degree of involvement of the business sector in the career development of the PhD candidates is not clearly and convincingly presented.

- The communication activities are quite generic without clear details e.g. frequency or length of activities and who will contribute to them.

- A concrete strategy aimed at public engagement and reaching out the society is not elaborated and demonstrated in sufficient detail.

- The tech transfer plans are insufficiently elaborated.

72

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An ==appropriate and self-explanatory== gantt chart showing the project timeline is presented, with ==well-described== deliverables that allow easy monitoring of the project's progress.

The management structure is ==well designed==, comprising ==clearly defined==, ==credible== and non-overlapping roles and responsibilities

The management structure is appropriate and ==comprehensively described==, with ==specific== responsibilities and duties assigned to ==clearly identified== individuals and governing bodies, supported by established competent services

The proposal ==correctly identifies== and illustrates in a clear table the most important potential risks and obstacles associated with the implementation of the programme, their probability to occur, and associates them with realistic and appropriate mitigation measures.

Work packages and the work plan are ==sufficiently defined== and the effort assigned to the work packages is appropriate

The contingency and mitigation plan ==does not cover all== risks. For instance, risks related to the experience-based evaluation and update of measures towards best practices, or conflict between recruited researcher and supervisor….==are not properly considered==

Only ==very limited information== is given on the management structures, the interactions between different management bodies, decision-making procedures, and financial management provisions, which impedes an effective implementation of the programme

The risk assessment ==is not convincing== as only a small number of risks has been identified.

In several aspects of the programme the decision making mechanism is highly centralized for a single person with responsibility to other projects and duties, which ==affects the reliability== of the management framework and capacity

74

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MSCA-NET

Responsibilities of the participating organizations ==are correctly allocated==. Letters of support indicate full commitment for the programme including financial contribution

The beneficiary has ==sufficient quality and capacity== to implement the proposed programme because it has ==a proven== track record of managing an established postdoctoral fellowship schemes and previous COFUND-programmes

The beneficiary ==demonstrates high competencies== to implement the programme based, for example, on previous experience and appropriate administrative, technical and human resources. The research infrastructure and facilities that will be provided by the participating organisations are also ==very good==

The beneficiary's commitment is proven by ==a high level== of matching funds

The hosting arrangements ==are suitable== to support fellows in all phases of the process through well-organized administrative support services

The proposal ==fails to satisfactorily== introduce the expertise and experience of the key persons who will be responsible for the implementation of the programme at the beneficiary level

The necessary measures and arrangements available for the potential host institutions during the implementation period ==are not convincingly described==

The infrastructure of the implementing and associated partners in the context of tasks allocated to them in the research training program ==is insufficiently elaborated.==

The capacity of the participating organisations ==is not sufficiently explained== and all the necessary expertise for the successful implementation of the project is not clearly identified. The exact role for some of the partner organisations is not clear as they are listed, but they neither offer hosting or training

The commitment letter of associated partner organization participating in secondments states that the associated partner is ==free to decline== the hosting of a fellow if it is not feasible at the time, which can ==put in risk== the international dimension of the programme

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Evaluation

MSA COFUND

MSCA COFUND – evaluation **Overview of the process**

Receipt of proposals

Individual evaluation

Consensus group

Panel review

Finalisation

Admissibility/eligibility check

Allocation of proposals to evaluators

Experts assess proposals **individually**.

Minimum of three experts per proposal (but often more than three).

All individual experts discuss together to agree on a **common position**, including comments and scores for each proposal.

The panel of experts reach an **agreement** on the scores and comments for all proposals within a call, checking **consistency across the evaluations**.

if necessary, resolve cases where evaluators were unable to agree.

Rank the proposals with the same score

The Commission/Agency reviews the results of the experts' evaluation and puts together the **final ranking list**.

European Commission

COFUND – evaluation

The priority order for ex-aequo proposals will be established as follows:

- Score awarded for the criterion 'Excellence'

- In case of equality, scores awarded for the criterion 'Impact'

- If a distinction still cannot be made, the panel may decide to further prioritise by considering other factors, such as:

    - *environmental considerations in line with the MSCA Green Charter*

    - *gender and other diversity aspects in the research activities*

    - *participation of the non-academic sector (including involvement of SMEs)*

    - *geographical diversity*

    - *synergies with Cohesion policy funds*

    - *support to Smart Specialisation Strategies or relationship to the Horizon Europe objectives in general*

    (These factors will be documented in the panel report)

European Commission

Budget Structure

MSCA COFUND

COFUND –budget structure

Contributions for recruited researchers and institutional contributions — Per person-month		
COFUND allowance	**Long-term leave allowance** (if applicable)	**Special needs allowance** (if applicable)
Doctoral Programmes — EUR 3500	EUR 3500 x % covered by the beneficiary	Requested unit[1] x (1/number of months)
Postdoctoral Programmes — EUR 4980	EUR 4980 x % covered by the beneficiary	Requested unit[1] x (1/number of months)

Minimum remuneration applies:
EUR 3 500 for Doctoral researcher; EUR 4 980 for Postdoctoral researcher

MSCA COFUND – budget

The **COFUND allowance** contributes to:

- costs of the researchers including the **remuneration** payable to the individual doctoral or postdoctoral researchers recruited under an employment contract/equivalent direct contract with full social security coverage and complying with the applicable social security legislation, as well as the mobility costs and, if applicable, the family costs, and/or

- costs related to the **training**, **research expenses, transfer of knowledge** and **networking activities** of researchers, costs of **managing** the action and **indirect costs**.

MSCA COFUND – budget

The **long-term leave allowance** contributes to:

- the personnel costs incurred by the employer in case of the researchers' leave, including maternity, paternity, parental, sick or special leave, longer than 30 consecutive days.

The **special needs allowance** contributes to:

- the additional costs for the acquisition of special needs items and services for researchers with disabilities, whose long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments.

European Commission

MSCA COFUND –Minimum remuneration

The **monthly gross remuneration**, i.e. salaries, social security contributions, taxes and other costs or compulsory deductions under national legislation linked to in the remuneration, and the mobility costs for the benefit of the researchers must be:

For doctoral candidates: **not lower than EUR 3500**

For postdoctoral researchers: **not lower than EUR 4980**

MSCA COFUND – Total Budget

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

MSCA COFUND –budget

% beneficiary
30.84% ←
51.69%
47.45%
39.27%
43.33%
48.44%
41.12%
50.88%
47.45%
51.99%
51.16%
56.84%
50.00%
46.86%
50.00%
49.83%
51.46%
50.17%
49.62%
43.74%
63.27%
51.99%
60.03%
32.31% ←
55.29%
63.76%

% of the beneficiary

Examples from 2021 Main List

Average: 49%

Lowest: 30%

MSCA COFUND –budget

% of the beneficiary

Examples from 2025 Main List

Average: 50%

Lowest: 31%

% of the beneficiary
41%
52%
48%
50%
41%
40%
58%
50%
47%
51%
56%
41%
49%
54%
55%
57%
48%
53%
59%
56%
59%
54%
46%
31%
50%
38%
54%
43%
53%
53%
51%

Project implementation

MSCA COFUND

MSCA COFUND – project implementation

- Each beneficiary/ implementing partner must recruit each eligible doctoral/postdoctoral researcher under an **employment contract or equivalent direct contract** with full social security coverage.

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

MSCA COFUND – project implementation

- **The selection of the researchers** must follow an open, transparent, merit-based, impartial and equitable selection procedure, with vacancies internationally advertised and published, including on the EURAXESS website. Selection must be based on international peer review for the postdoctoral programmes.

- **The training programme** shall offer a wide variety of opportunities for researchers to experience secondments (including intersectoral ones), to benefit from training in research or transferable skills, as well as from innovative and interdisciplinary elements of the proposed programme.

- Doctoral/Posdoctoral researchers should devote them on a **full-time basis** to the project.

- **Part-time** is allowed for personal, family or professional reasons, with a prior agreement of the REA.

European Commission

COFUND – desafios para Portugal

- A primeira **é a dificuldade de ter acesso a fundos complementares**. Apesar de não haver uma percentagem mínima, na prática é necessário que pelo menos 30% do financiamento do programa seja com fundos complementares (o que se pode concluir através da análise das percentagens de cofinanciamento de propostas vencedoras). A Comissão Europeia incentiva as sinergias do Horizonte Europa com os Fundos de Coesão, podendo essas sinergias serem uma possível solução.

- A segunda é **a falta do** [**HR Excellence in Research Award**](#)**,** que é uma referência para e UE no que diz respeito às boas práticas de recursos humanos na investigação. Apenas [12 instituições portuguesas têm esse selo](#). Com base na análise dos relatórios de avaliação de candidaturas financiadas, podemos facilmente concluir que esse selo é um fator determinante para o sucesso no MSCA COFUND. O importante não é necessariamente ter o selo, mas ter iniciado o processo para o obter (pode durar cerca de dois anos).

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r

HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

The 'HR Strategy for Researchers' supports research institutions and funding organisations in the implementation of the Charter & Code in their policies and practices.

The implementation of the Charter & Code principles by research institutions render them more attractive to researchers looking for a new employer or for a host for their research project.

The European Commission recognises with the **'HR Excellence in Research Award'** the institutions which make progress in aligning their human resources policies to the 40 principles of the Charter & Code, based on a customized action plan/HR strategy.
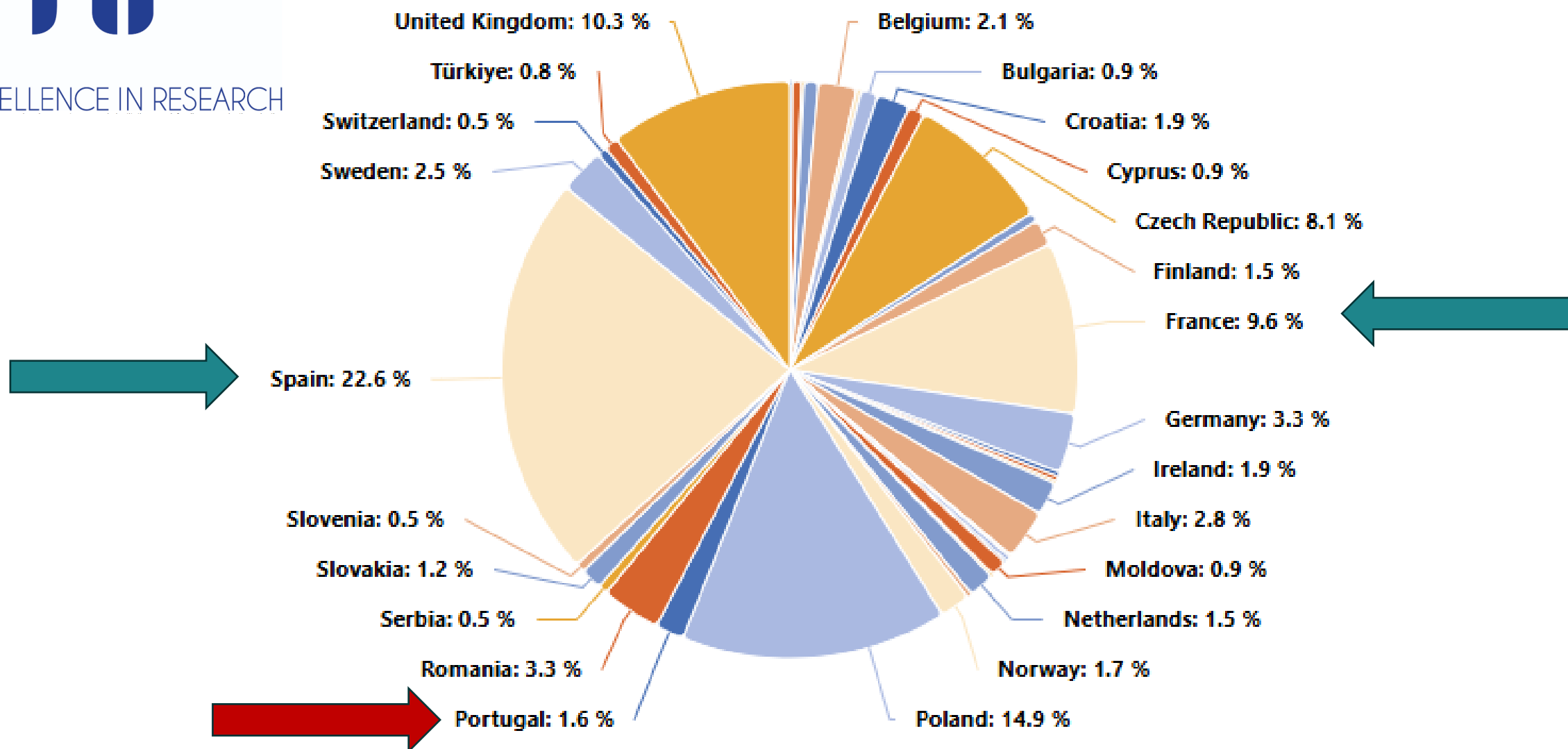
Download the **HRS4R Technical Guidelines for Institutions.pdf**

Download the **hrs4r_procedure_flow_slide.pptx**

United Kingdom: 10.3 %
Belgium: 2.1 %
Türkiye: 0.8 %
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Croatia: 1.9 %
Switzerland: 0.5 %
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Slovakia: 1.2 %
Serbia: 0.5 %
Netherlands: 1.5 %
Romania: 3.3 %
Norway: 1.7 %
Portugal: 1.6 %
Poland: 14.9 %

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r

- **INEB - Instituto Engenharia Biomedica**

- Awarded on 09/03/2021

- **IBMC**

- Awarded on 06/09/2021

- **i3S**

- Awarded on 21/10/2021

- **Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência**

- Awarded on 29/07/2020

- **IMM**

- Awarded on 19/10/2022

- **Champalimaud Foundation**

- Awarded on 05/10/2020

- **National Laboratory of Energy and Geology**

- Awarded on 28/05/2013

- **International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL)**

- Awarded on 17/07/2023

- **ASSOCIAÇÃO BIOPOLIS**

- Awarded on 27/01/2025

- **Faculdade de Medicina**

- Awarded on 15/07/2024

- **ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa**

- Awarded on 17/03/2025

- **Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal**

- Awarded on 06/05/2025

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r

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Research Infrastructures

Thank you!