

Inspireurope webinar; How to apply for an EU funded research fellowship
Updated 5 July 2022

Frequently Asked Questions

(Based on questions raised during the webinar and in follow-up emails)

Question 1: Is there a separate Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship scheme (MSCA-IF) especially for researchers who have experienced risk and displacement?

Answer 1: No, there is no dedicated, specific MSCA-IF scheme for those who have experienced risk and/or displacement. However, the existing MSCA scheme “particularly supports the return and (re)integration of European researchers from outside Europe and those who have previously worked here, as well as researchers displaced by conflict outside the EU and Horizon 2020 Associated Countries.” (p. 5, [MSCA-IF Guide for Applicants](#)). Specifically, the existing scheme includes provisions for researchers whose careers have been interrupted, and/or those who have spent time obtaining refugee status. In particular, the following measures might increase opportunities for at-risk and refugee researchers to apply for an MSCA-IF:

- (a) *Standard European Fellowships:* Under the standard mobility rules, in order to be eligible to apply for a standard European MSCA-IF, “the researcher cannot have resided or carried out his/her main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the beneficiary for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before the call deadline.” However, “time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status (under the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol) are not taken into account.” (p. 12 [MSCA-IF Guide for Applicants](#)) It should be noted, however, that any time spent in the country of the beneficiary after refugee status has been obtained is then counted when determining eligibility.
- (b) *Career Restart Panel, Reintegration panel, Society & Enterprise panels:* For a number of MSCA-IF schemes including Career Restart panel (CAR), Reintegration panel (RI), Society and Enterprise panel (SE), a relaxed mobility rule applies: the researcher cannot have resided or carried out the main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the host organisation for more than three years in the five years immediately before the call deadline. In addition, compulsory national service, short stays and time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status (under the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol) are not taken into account for the above.
- (c) *Evaluation:* Researchers who wish to do so are encouraged to indicate in the proposal if they are at risk or if they are a refugee researcher. In addition, there is a specific question included in the MSCA-IF proposal form on whether the applicant spent time on procedures for obtaining refugee status (according to the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol) in a Member State or Associated Country” (see page 59 of the [MSCA-IF Guide for applicants](#)) By indicating that you have experienced risk, or that you are a refugee, and providing relevant information as to the impact of these experiences on your career, it will enable the evaluators to understand in particular any research gaps in your CV. Overall, proposals are evaluated on the basis of the award criteria: Excellence, Impact and Implementation, as outlined in the MSCA IF Work Programme (p.19, [Guide for Evaluators](#))



Question 2: I am currently an at-risk scholar with a national programme (i.e. PAUSE programme in France, Philip Schwarz Initiative in Germany). Does this period in France/Germany count when considering the standard mobility rule?

Answer 2: Yes, this time does count when applying the standard mobility rule, unless in addition to being a PAUSE or PSI fellow you have also spent some or all of that time in the process for obtaining refugee status.

Question 3: Is a scholar with refugee status, granted by any EU country, eligible to apply for an EU-funded research fellowship, such as MSCA-IF, to be held outside his/her country of asylum for two or more years?

Answer 3: A person with refugee status in one EU country may apply for a mobility grant in another EU country, but moving to another EU country for two or three years may have consequences for your residency rights in the country of asylum. The relevant EU directive addressing the intra-EU mobility of researchers is: “Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing”, available [here](#). However, there are differences in how EU member states transpose the directive into national legislation. It is therefore advisable to make enquiries with the relevant immigration authorities in your country of asylum as to how your residency rights would be affected if you move to another EU country. Please find a useful FAQ [here](#) developed by the Philipp Schwartz Initiative of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation regarding the residence status of threatened researchers in Germany. Inspireurope is looking more closely at this issue and is encouraging other national programmes to develop similar FAQs. The project has also presented a webinar on mobility rights, rules and regulations within Europe for researchers at risk, including those on temporary work permits and those with refugee or protection status [here](#).

Question 4: For someone to make an application for a MSCA-IF, is English language a requirement?

Answer 4: Proposals to Horizon 2020 may be submitted in any of the official languages of the European Union. However, if you submit your proposal in a language other than English, and in order to facilitate the evaluation of the proposal by the independent experts evaluators who may not all be fluent in the language of the proposal, it is recommended that an abstract of the proposal in English is included.

Question 5: How can I apply to be considered for the pilot coaching programme in the Inspireurope project

Answer 5: The Inspireurope project includes a pilot coaching programme involving a very limited number of researcher-participants. If you would like to be considered for this programme, please email inspireurope@mu.ie for further details.

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