MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE INNOVATIVE TRAINING NETWORKS (ITN)
Horizon 2020 MSCA-ITN-2020
Deadline: 14 January 2020

Guide for Applicants

Work Programme

General Information
Innovative Training Networks (ITN) aim to train a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial, and innovative early-stage researchers (ESRs), who are able to face current and future challenges and will convert knowledge and ideas into products and services for economic and social benefit.

ITN will raise excellence and structure research and doctoral training in Europe, implemented by partnerships of universities, research institutions, research infrastructures, businesses, SMEs, and other socio-economic actors from different countries, thereby extending the traditional academic research training setting.

ITN will provide enhanced career perspectives in both academic and non-academic sectors, through international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility; proposals can be submitted in all scientific disciplines and the proposed research topic is completely bottom-up. The broad partnership approach will allow the exchange of best practice amongst participating organisations as well as providing meaningful exposure to the non-academic sector.

Key definitions for ITN
Early-Stage Researchers (ESRs): at the date of recruitment by the beneficiary, must be in the first four years (full-time equivalent research experience) of their research careers and have not been awarded a doctoral degree.

Mobility Rule: researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting beneficiary for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date. For International European Interest Organisations (IEIO), international organisations, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) or an 'entity created under Union law', recruited researchers must not have spent more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date at the same appointing organisation.

Eligibility
- All researchers recruited in an ITN must be early-stage researchers (ESRs)
- All ESRs must undertake transnational mobility
- Maximum duration of 48 months for all actions
- Participating entities can be academic and non-academic
- Maximum of 40% of the total budget may be allocated to beneficiaries within one country
- Maximum of 540 person months per network.
**Modes of partnerships**
Partnerships must take one of three forms:

**European Training Networks (ETN)**
ETN make up the largest share of the ITN budget (over €445 million) with the objective to train highly skilled ESR and stimulate entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation in Europe.

- Minimum participation of 3 beneficiaries in 3 different Member States/Associated Countries (average size 6-10 beneficiaries)
- Expectation to include beneficiaries from both academic and non-academic sectors
- Each beneficiary recruits and hosts at least one ESR
- ESR contract length: 3-36 months (project length up to 48 months)
- ESR allowed to spend maximum 30% of their total recruitment period on secondment(s) to other beneficiaries or partner organisations
- Enrolment on doctoral programme not mandatory but encouraged
- Joint supervision encouraged.

**European Industrial Doctorates (EID)**
Budget is €40 million; objective to involve the non-academic sector in doctoral training and support long-term, industry-oriented research (fundamental or applied) so that skills better match public and private sector needs.

- Minimum participation of 2 beneficiaries in two different Member States/Associated Countries, 1 academic and 1 non-academic - preferably enterprise (typical size 2-3 beneficiaries)
- ESRs must be enrolled on a doctoral programme at the academic beneficiary
- Mandatory joint selection, training, and supervision of ESR by both sectors
- ESR contract length: 36 months expected, can be split between beneficiaries encouraging flexibility (two options: either 1 employment contract + secondment or more than one employment contracts)
- ESRs must spend at least 50% of their time at beneficiaries in the non-academic sector
- Inter-sectoral mobility must be between participating organisations located in different countries
- ESR allowed to spend maximum 30% of their total recruitment period on secondment(s) in partner organisations, irrespective of the secondment organisation sector.

**European Joint Doctorates (EJD)**
Budget is €45 million; aim to promote structural change to European doctoral training landscape through international, inter-sectoral, and multi/inter-disciplinary collaboration.

- Minimum participation of 3 beneficiaries in different Member States/Associated Countries (typical size 4-8 beneficiaries)
- Creation of coherent joint doctoral programmes that deliver joint, double, or multiple doctoral degrees
- Mandatory joint selection, supervision, monitoring and assessment of ESRs through a joint governance structure
• ESRs must be enrolled on a doctoral programme and at least two-thirds of ESRs within the network must be enrolled in a joint, double, or multiple degree
• Institutional letter of commitment required from all academic beneficiaries that will award doctoral degrees
• ESR contract: 36 months expected, contract can be split between beneficiaries encouraging flexibility (two options: either 1 employment contract + secondment or more than one employment contracts)
• ESR likely to split their stay between beneficiaries to fulfil joint doctoral programme requirements, additional secondment(s) are possible
• The limitation of secondments to 30% of the total recruitment period does not apply to EJD, insofar as time spent at other participating organisations occurs in line with the proposal description.
• Degree options:
  o Joint degree with single diploma issued by at least two HEIs offering an integrated programme and recognised officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located
  o Double/multiple degrees where two or more separate national diplomas are issued by two or more HEIs and recognised officially in the countries where the degree awarding institutions are located

**Beneficiaries & Partner Organisations**

**Beneficiaries** are the legal entities which contribute directly to the implementation of the research, transfer of knowledge and training activities by recruiting, supervising, hosting, training and seconding researchers. They are signatories to the Grant Agreement and have responsibility for the implementation of the Action. **Partner Organisations** contribute to the implementation of the action, but do not sign the Grant Agreement nor employ the researchers.

**Evaluation of Proposals**

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following award criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellence</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality, innovative aspects and credibility of the research programme (including inter/multidisciplinary, inter-sectoral and, where appropriate, gender aspects)</td>
<td>Enhancing the career perspectives and employability of researchers and contribution to their skills development</td>
<td>Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources (including awarding of the doctoral degrees for EID and EJD projects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and innovative aspects of the training programme (including transferable skills, inter/multidisciplinary, inter-sectoral and, where appropriate, gender aspects)</td>
<td>Contribution to structuring doctoral / early-stage research training at the European level and to strengthening European innovation capacity, including the potential for: a) meaningful contribution of the non-academic sector to the doctoral/research training, as appropriate to the implementation mode and research field b) developing sustainable joint doctoral degree structures (for EJD projects only)</td>
<td>Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including quality management and risk management (with a mandatory joint governing structure for EID and EJD projects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the supervision (including mandatory joint supervision for EID and EJD projects)</td>
<td>Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results</td>
<td>Appropriateness of the infrastructure of the participating organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the proposed interaction between the participating organisations</td>
<td>Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences</td>
<td>Competences, experience and complementarity of the participating organisations and their commitment to the programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overall threshold of 70% will be applied to the total weighted score.

**2019 Success rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluated proposals</th>
<th>'Retained' list threshold</th>
<th>Reserve list threshold</th>
<th>Success rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHE</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECO</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENV</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIF</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAT</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHY</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EID</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EJD</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact us**

Please contact your EU Funding Manager at the earliest possible stage when considering applying for the MSCA ITN scheme. **For EJDs the Graduate School (gradschool@reading.ac.uk) must be contacted in addition to your EU Funding Manager.**
EU Unit, Research and Enterprise - Funding queries and application support
Dr Mischa Phillips m.phillips@reading.ac.uk - Theme lead: Agriculture, Food & Health; Prosperity & Resilience
Sally Caldwell s.j.caldwell@reading.ac.uk - Theme lead: Environment; Heritage & Creativity
Ioanna Theophanous i.theophanous@reading.ac.uk - General EU support