



**MSCA**

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

*Developing talents, advancing research*



## Update on MSCA Seal of Excellence support schemes

24 April 2024

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*Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture*

Marie Skłodowska-  
Curie Actions

# The MSCA Seal of Excellence



- **MSCA Seal of Excellence** awarded to proposals submitted under Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) and COFUND
- **Quality label** awarded to high-quality project proposals (equal or above to 85% evaluation score) which could not be funded due to budget constraints
- Helps researchers secure funding from other funding bodies, taking advantage of the EU evaluation process
- Helps **increase participation** and overall success rates
- Increases the **attractiveness** of hosting countries, regions and institutions, particularly widening countries (currently 10 out of the 17 countries with support schemes in place)

# The MSCA Seal of Excellence

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- **Over 11,900 MSCA Seals of Excellence** awarded under **Horizon 2020**
- **5,355** awarded under **Horizon Europe** so far
  - 1,956 under 2021 MSCA PF
  - 1,607 under 2022 MSCA PF
  - 1,737 under 2023 MSCA PF
  - 21 under 2021 COFUND
  - 34 under 2022 COFUND



# Latest news

DAILY NEWS | 12 April 2024 | Brussels

## Daily News 12 / 04 / 2024

### MSCA Seal of Excellence awarded to outstanding researchers

This recognition will allow MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships applicants to seek alternative funding for their excellent projects.

News details



1,737 Seals of Excellence  
awarded under 2023 MSCA  
Postdoctoral Fellowships  
Host organisations in 32  
countries

Country	Number of proposals		
Austria	59	Israel	8
Belgium	84	Italy	269
Bulgaria	1	Lithuania	5
Switzerland	11	Luxembourg	7
Cyprus	9	Latvia	1
Czechia	31	Malta	2
Germany	192	The Netherlands	124
Denmark	94	Norway	71
Estonia	3	Poland	6
Greece	15	Portugal	53
Spain	272	Romania	3
Finland	41	Republic of Serbia	2
France	224	Sweden	79
Croatia	4	Slovenia	12
Hungary	7	Slovakia	3
Ireland	39	Turkey	6

# MSCA Seal of Excellence funding schemes

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## **30 schemes** across **17 countries** for **Postdoctoral Fellowships**

Recovery and Resilience Facility funding	RO, IT, SI, ES, LT, SK
Cohesion funds (ERDF, ESF+)	CY (ERDF), CZ (ERDF), FR (ERDF), EE (ERDF), LT (ESF+ until 2022)
National funding	BG, PL, SE, SI, TR
Regional funding	BE-Flanders, IT-Bolzano, IT-Lombardy, DE-Hessen
Institutional funding	AT, IT (universities, research institutions, foundations)

CH scheme may resume if an association agreement to Horizon Europe is concluded

## **2 schemes** for **COFUND** in SI (national funding), CZ (ERDF)

# MSCA Seal of Excellence funding schemes

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- From five (CY, CZ, IT, SE, SI) to **17 countries**:  
AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, FR, DE, IT, LT, PL,  
RO, SK, SI, ES, SE, TR
- From 127 supported researchers in 2017 to at  
least **1,127 supported researchers this year**



# MSCA Seal of Excellence funding schemes

## Funding opportunities under Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

List of national and regional support programmes for Seal of Excellence holders under Marie-Skłodowska-Curie Actions

### PAGE CONTENTS

What you can find on this page

Available support at  
national/regional level

Additional information for other  
host countries without specific  
measures for Seal recipients

### What you can find on this page

The list below provides regularly updated information about available support at national, regional or institutional level for MSCA proposals which have been awarded a Seal of Excellence under MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships or MSCA COFUND actions.

If you are the recipient of an MSCA Seal of Excellence, you may also wish to contact the National Contact Point in your host country to enquire about funding opportunities.

[National Contact Points](#) 

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/seal-excellence/funding-opportunities-under-msca\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/seal-excellence/funding-opportunities-under-msca_en)

### Available support at national/regional level

Austria



Belgium





# The MSCA Seal of Excellence: towards FP10

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- A **very appreciated instrument** overall based on FP evaluations
- Recognises the **value of the proposal** and the significant time and effort that were invested in it; gives excellent proposals a greater chance to secure national or regional support
- **Facilitates support** from other funding bodies which can rely on the EU evaluation while adding their own funding criteria
- A best practice example in terms of **synergies with other sources of funding**: national and regional funding, but also cohesion funding



# The MSCA Seal of Excellence: towards FP10

Ongoing reflexion on how to strengthen the positive impacts of the Seal of Excellence and further harness its potential

Ring-fence funding in MS for projects that receive a Seal of Excellence

Ensure stronger alignments between HE and structural funds

Create a match-making platform to bring funders and applicants with a Seal of Excellence together

Harmonise rules and timelines of funding for national Seal of Excellence mechanisms

Lower the threshold for the COFUND Seal of Excellence (70%)

Communicate more and better about the SoE label

Improve guidelines and incentives for member states to use ESIF to fund SoR projects ensuring a coherent strategy for leveraging structural funds for R&I

Don't look for EU-money from other programs to fund R&I, give enough money to the R&I program itself

Allow the Seal of Excellence to be included as a merit for postdoctoral EURAXESS offers

Establish agreements or mechanisms that encourage national funding bodies to consider SoE projects for funding, potentially through earmarked budgets or fast-track evaluation processes

Consider the risks that synergies with member-state managed funds may lead to a change in direction that is not advantageous to basic research

Promote the SoE among private investors and industries as a marker of high-quality and innovative research

Encourage MS and regions to more widely recognise and prioritise SoE projects in their national and regional funding programs

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# Thank you!



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