MSCA
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
Developing talents, advancing research

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

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Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

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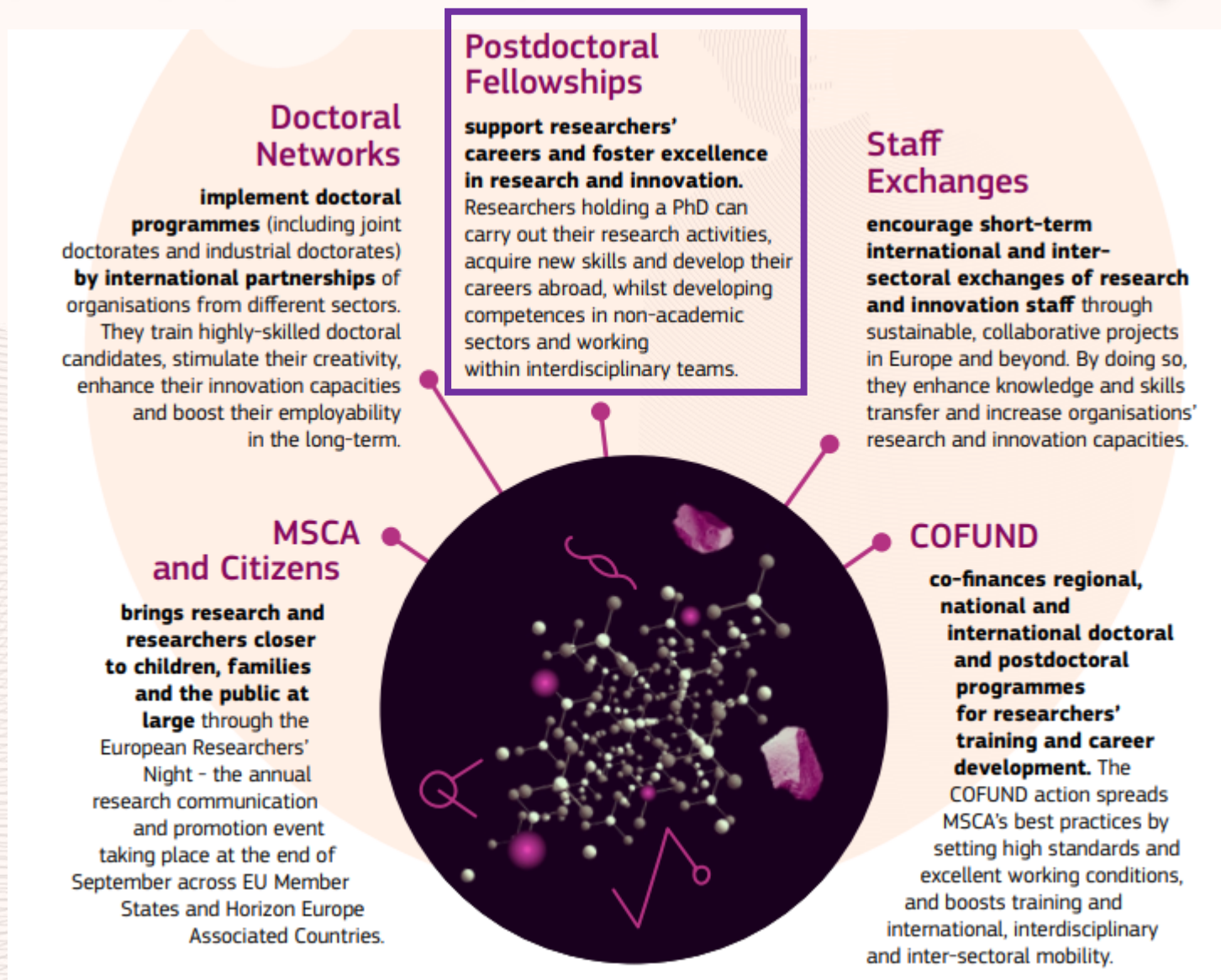
A revised version of the MSCA Work Programme 2023-2025 will be published before the Call opening date. Check the EU Funding & Tenders Portal for updated information

Overview

- Overview of the MSCA Programme and of the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF)

- Key aspects of the PF 2025 call

- Proposal preparation and submission

- Evaluation process

- Some data on previous applications from beneficiaries/ researchers from PL, LV, LT and SK

The MSCA under Horizon Europe

Doctoral Networks

implement doctoral programmes (including joint doctorates and industrial doctorates) **by international partnerships** of organisations from different sectors. They train highly-skilled doctoral candidates, stimulate their creativity, enhance their innovation capacities and boost their employability in the long-term.

Postdoctoral Fellowships

support researchers' careers and foster excellence in research and innovation. Researchers holding a PhD can carry out their research activities, acquire new skills and develop their careers abroad, whilst developing competences in non-academic sectors and working within interdisciplinary teams.

Staff Exchanges

encourage short-term international and inter-sectoral exchanges of research and innovation staff through sustainable, collaborative projects in Europe and beyond. By doing so, they enhance knowledge and skills transfer and increase organisations' research and innovation capacities.

MSCA and Citizens

brings research and researchers closer to children, families and the public at large through the European Researchers' Night – the annual research communication and promotion event taking place at the end of September across EU Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries.

COFUND

co-finances regional, national and international doctoral and postdoctoral programmes for researchers' training and career development. The COFUND action spreads MSCA's best practices by setting high standards and excellent working conditions, and boosts training and international, interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral mobility.

European Commission

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

Objective

"Enhance the creative and innovative potential of researchers holding a PhD, wishing to acquire new skills through advanced training, international, interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral mobility."

MSCA-PF 2025

Provisional Budget: EUR 404.29 million (to be confirmed)

- ✓ EUR 343.65 million – European Fellowships
- ✓ EUR 60.64 million – Global Fellowships

Call opening date: 8 May 2025

Call deadline: 10 September 2025

European Commission

Key points about MSCA-PF

Postdoctoral researchers only [ELIGIBILITY]

Max. 8 years postdoctoral research experience [ELIGIBILITY]

Researcher mobility scheme [ELIGIBILITY]

Training and career development through research

Secondments encouraged (worldwide, up to 1/3 of project duration)

Non-Academic Placements possible (up to 6m at end of project)

European Commission

A very popular programme
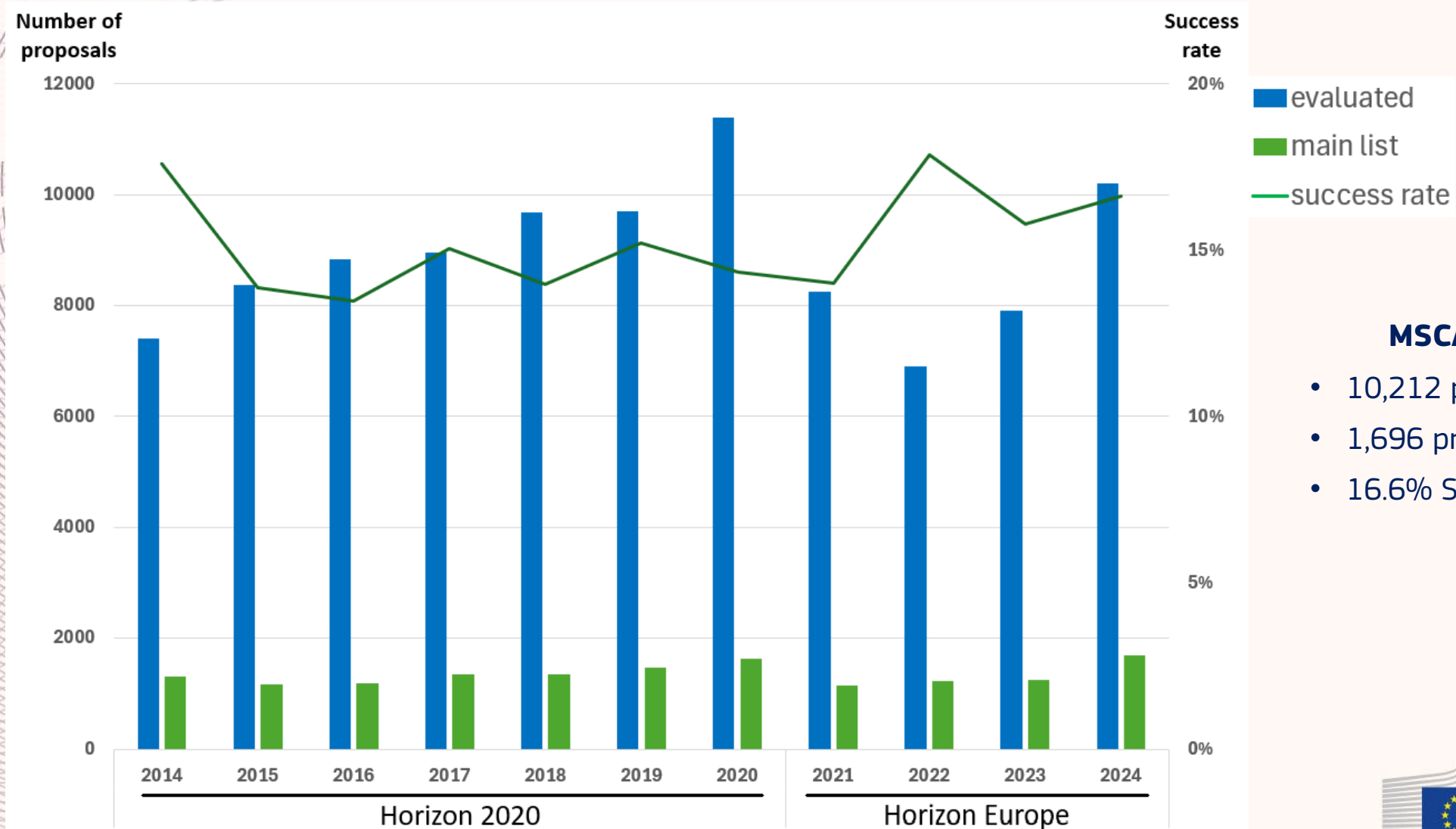
MSCA-PF 2024 call

- 10,212 proposals evaluated
- 1,696 proposals funded
- 16.6% Success rate

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

- **One beneficiary (Mono-beneficiary)**
  - ➢ Must be in EU MS or Horizon Europe-Associated Country

- **One researcher**
  - ➢ Post-Doc
  - ➢ Max. 8 years following PhD award date

- **Open to all research domains, including Euratom**

- **Two Types:**
  - ➢ European Fellowships (EF)
  - ➢ Global Fellowships (GF)

European Commission

European Fellowships – EF

Researcher (PhD): Any Nationality

Single period

Beneficiary:
Located in EU Member State or HE Associated Country

12-24 Months duration (including optional secondments)

Global Fellowships– GF

Researcher (PhD): National or long-term resident* of an EU Member State or HE Associated Country

Two periods:

- **Outgoing phase** – in a Third country, 12 – 24 months

- **Return phase:** at the beneficiary (EU Member State or HE Associated Country), 12 months

24-36 Months total duration (including optional secondments)

+ Optional non-academic placement (NAP), up to 6 months

European Commission

Eligibility Criteria

Postdoctoral Researchers only

- Must be "*in possession of a doctoral degree*" before call deadline
- If the degree is not awarded yet, must have had a successful, "*unconditional*" defence before call deadline

Max. 8 years postdoctoral research experience

- Measured from date of PhD award (time outside research not counted)

Researcher Mobility

- Must not have resided or carried out their main activity in country of the beneficiary (EF) or of the host for the outgoing phase (GF) for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before the call deadline
- For GF, must be National or long-term resident of EU Member States or HE Associated Country

Example 1

European Fellowship

• Polish national researcher awarded a PhD in 2020 in Germany.
• Still residing in Germany
• Applies for a European Fellowship together with a host institution in Poland.

ELIGIBLE?

• Awarded a PhD before the Call deadline;
• less than 8 years' experience in research since award of PhD;
• has not resided in Poland for more than 12 months in previous 3 years.

European Commission

Example 2

Global Fellowship

- Indian researcher living in Latvia for the previous 3 years (up to the call deadline)
- PhD in 2022
- Beneficiary (return phase host) in France, and outgoing phase in the USA.

ELIGIBLE?

- Awarded a PhD before the call deadline
- Less than 8 years work in research since award of PhD
- Less than 12 months in the USA in the 3 years prior the call deadline
- …but "long-term resident" in EU/AC?

European Commission

Secondments & Non-Academic Placements*

Do not confuse:

➢ Secondment

➢ Non-Academic Placement (NAP)

➢ Short visits (e.g. field work)

Secondment(s) / NAP / short visits are allowed within the same proposal

Use the correct terminology in the proposal!

Secondments (Optional)

- **Any country worldwide**

- **Any sector** (academic and non-academic)

- Can be divided into several shorter periods

- No additional budget

- **Duration:**

  - ➤**European Fellowships:** Up to 1/3 of the standard project duration
    (e.g. for a 24-month project, the max. duration of a secondment is 8 months).

  - ➤**Global Fellowships:** Up to 1/3 of the outgoing phase.

    - Secondment(s) must take place during the outgoing phase

    - A secondment of max. three months can take place at
      the beneficiary, at the start of the project

European Commission

Non-Academic Placements – NAP (Optional)

- Must be implemented in the **non-academic sector***

- Must take place **after the standard duration of the fellowship**

- **Additional budget** for the NAP, to be encoded in Part A

- Must take place in **MS or HE Associated Country**

- **Maximum 6 months duration**

European Commission

Some Examples

European Fellowship

Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
WP1																														
WP2																														
WP3																														
Secondments																														
NAP																														

Optional NAP, 6 M max, must be located in MS or AS

Global Fellowship

Outgoing phase → ← Mandatory 12-month Return phase →

Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
WP1																																				
WP2																																				
WP3																																				
….																																				
Secondments																																				

Optional NAP 6M max MS/AC

Optional, max. 3 months at the start of project at the beneficiary

Optional, anywhere in the world

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Budget – PF-2024 Unit Contributions

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

*Living Allowance corrected by a country correction coefficient (CCC)

Figures are gross amount

PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Updated Templates for the 2025 MSCA-PF call will be available in the Funding & Tenders portal – check the call page for updates!

MSCA-PF 2025 Call page

Call Deadline: 10 Sept 2025

Part A (Application Form)

- **Acronym** and **Title** for the project

- **Scientific Area** (i.e. 1 Panel out of the 8 proposed) – "best fit" for the evaluation of your proposal

- 3 to 5 "**Descriptors**" (keywords) which best characterise the content of the proposal, in descending order of relevance
  - ➢ First 3 descriptors linked to the panel you select, others unrestricted

- **Free keywords**

- **Abstract**: maximum 2,000 characters

- **Resubmission** of a proposal must be declared

Part A (Application Form)

- **Beneficiary Information**

  → Including validated Participant Information Code (PIC) and **supervisor**

- For **Global Fellowships**: **Outgoing phase host information**

  → Letter of Commitment (LoC) for the Outgoing phase host in **Part B2**

- Proposals with **NAP: NAP host information**

  → NAP budget to be added in budget table

⚠️ **Secondment hosts** must <u>not</u> be included in Part A

- **Researcher Information**, including:

  ➢ PhD award date (or date of successful defence) *

  ➢ Countries of residence during the last 5 years <u>up until</u> the call deadline

* PhD more than 8 years before the call deadline: fill in the table for extensions for the time spent outside research – see the
MSCA PF 2025 Guide for Applicants for detailed information

Part B1 (Technical Description)

Part B of the Proposal is comprised of *two documents* (**Part B1** and **Part B2**), to be uploaded as separate PDF files

Part B1:

- **Part B1 template** available on the MSCA-PF 2025 Call page is **mandatory**

- Technical description of the project

- **Limit of 10 pages** (excess pages will not be visible to evaluators)

- **Minimum font size 11 points**, with standard spacing, including texts in tables

Part B1 (Technical Description)

Criteria description, to be addressed:

1. Excellence	2. Impact	3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation
1.1 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)	2.1 Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher and contribution to his/her skills development	3.1 Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages
1.2 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)	2.2 Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities	3.2 Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements
1.3 Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	2.3 The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts	
1.4 Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills		

Part B2 (Technical Description)

- **No formal page limit**

- **CV of the Researcher** (indicative length: 5 pages)

- **Capacity of the Participating Organisations** (Sections 5.1 and 5.2)
  - ➢ Beneficiary
  - ➢ Outgoing phase host for GF (if GF)
  - ➢ NAP host (if applicable)
  - ➢ Secondment host (if applicable)
  - ➢ Organisation linked to the beneficiary (if applicable)

- **Letter of Commitment from the outgoing phase host** (for Global Fellowships only)

EVALUATION PROCESS

The MSCA-PF Evaluation

Large-Scale Evaluation

Large number of proposals

Standard Peer-Review

3 experts per proposal

Expert Balance

experience, nationality, gender, age, sector, etc.

8 Scientific Panels

CHE, ECO, ENG, ENV, LIF, MAT, PHY, SOC

Single-Stage Evaluation

Timing: from call deadline to funding decision:
5 months (+3 months to GA signature)

European Commission

Evaluation Process Overview

Proposal

ALLOCATION OF PROPOSALS TO EXPERTS

based on the scientific field of the proposal (including the *DESCRIPTORS and KEYWORDS* provided by the Applicant

Expert 1

Expert 2

Expert 3

Individual Evaluation Report

Individual Evaluation Report

Individual Evaluation Report

Consensus Discussions

Consensus Report / Evaluation Summary Report

European Commission
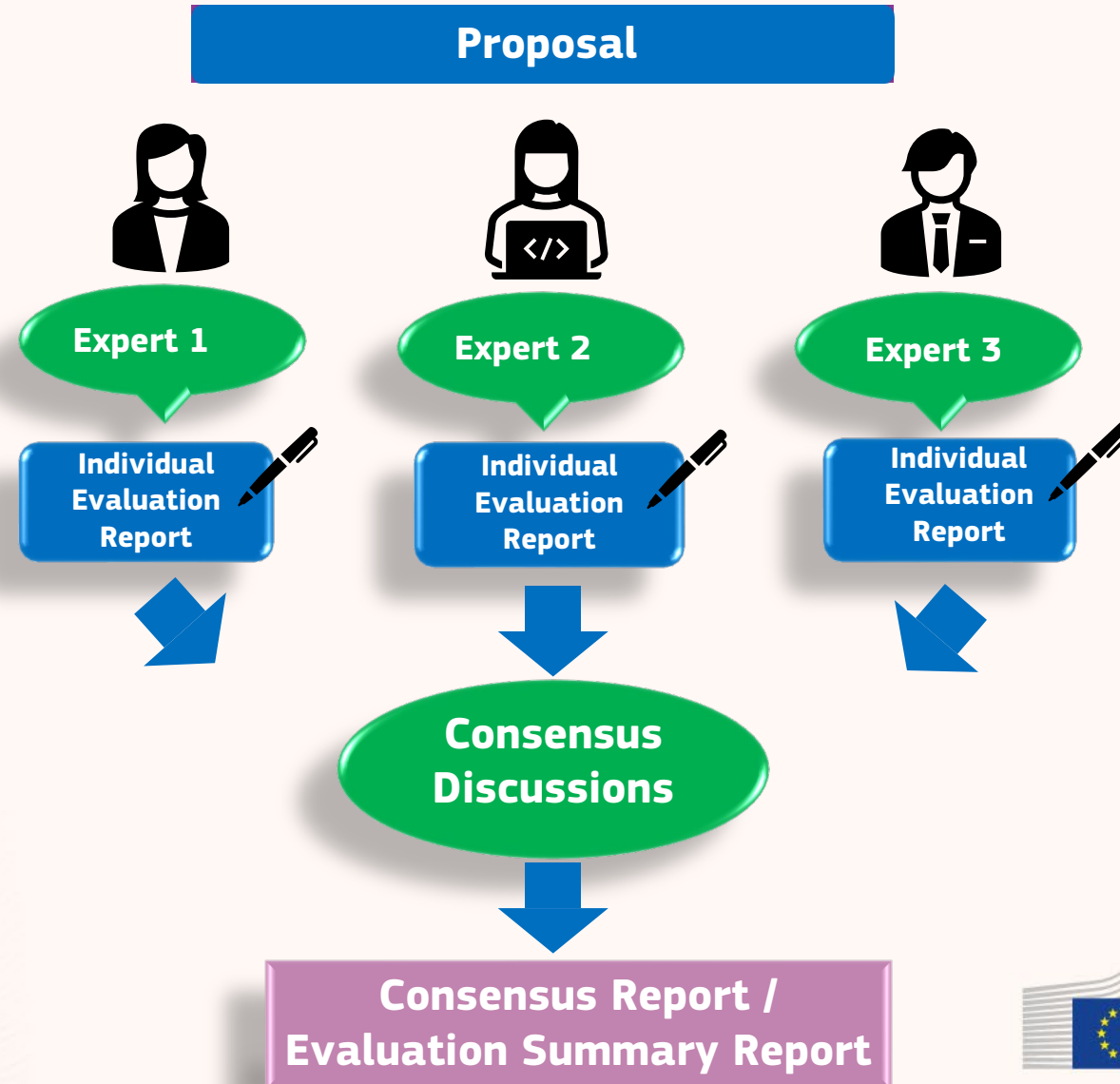
Evaluation criteria

1. Excellence	2. Impact	3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation
1.1 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)	2.1 Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher and contribution to his/her skills development	3.1 Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages
1.2 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)	2.2 Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities	3.2 Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements
1.3 Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	2.3 The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts	
1.4 Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills		
50%	**30%**	**20%**
Criteria weighting		

Proposal Ranking

- **Proposals are ranked** – and funding allocated –
  - **by Scientific Panel**, and
  - **by type of Fellowship** (*European and Global Fellowships*)

- **Seal of Excellence*:** awarded to proposals which score ≥ 85%

- **Resubmission restriction** for proposals with same researcher + same host(s) scoring <70% in the previous call evaluation

- **REA staff** ensures the evaluation process rules are respected

- **Independent observer** scrutinises the entire evaluation

ERA FELLOWSHIPS

- **Host organisations** (beneficiaries) **in Widening Countries** (these include Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia)

- Open to **researchers of any nationality**

- **Evaluation under MSCA-PF 2025 call**: <u>tick box in Part A agreeing to be considered for the ERA fellowships call</u>

- Eligible proposals considered for ERA fellowship funding if they failed to reach the main list under the MSCA-PF-EF call

- Applicants significantly increase their funding opportunities to be funded

- Indicative Budget for 2025: EUR 8 million

MSCA – EURATOM Research and Training

'To enhance nuclear expertise and excellence as well as synergies between Programmes, organisations active in nuclear research established in one of EU Member States or countries associated to the Euratom Research and Training programme 2021-2025, are eligible to participate.'*

- Applicants must comply with all conditions defined in the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships calls set in the Work Programme.

- Specific eligibility conditions that apply to MSCA postdoctoral fellowships in the research areas covered by the Euratom Research.

- Indicative budget: EUR 1 million

European Commission

Common Errors

Missing the Call deadline

Not respecting eligibility requirements (i.e. PhD date, mobility or max 8 years research experience)

Exceeding the page limits

Missing Letter of Commitment (for Global Fellowships)

Confusing Secondments and Non-Academic Placements

Requesting an ineligible Non-Academic Placement

Non-compliance to minimum font required and other formatting conditions

European Commission

Indicative timeline

Call Opening: 8 May 2025

Call Deadline: 10 Sept 2025

Evaluation Period: Oct 2025 – Jan 2026

Information Letter: Feb 2026

Project Starting Dates: Apr 2026 – Sept 2027

European Commission

SOME DATA ON HOST INSTITUTIONS AND RESEARCHERS FROM LATVIA, LITHUANIA, POLAND AND SLOVAKIA

Success rates – Latvia

Proposals with Latvian host institutions
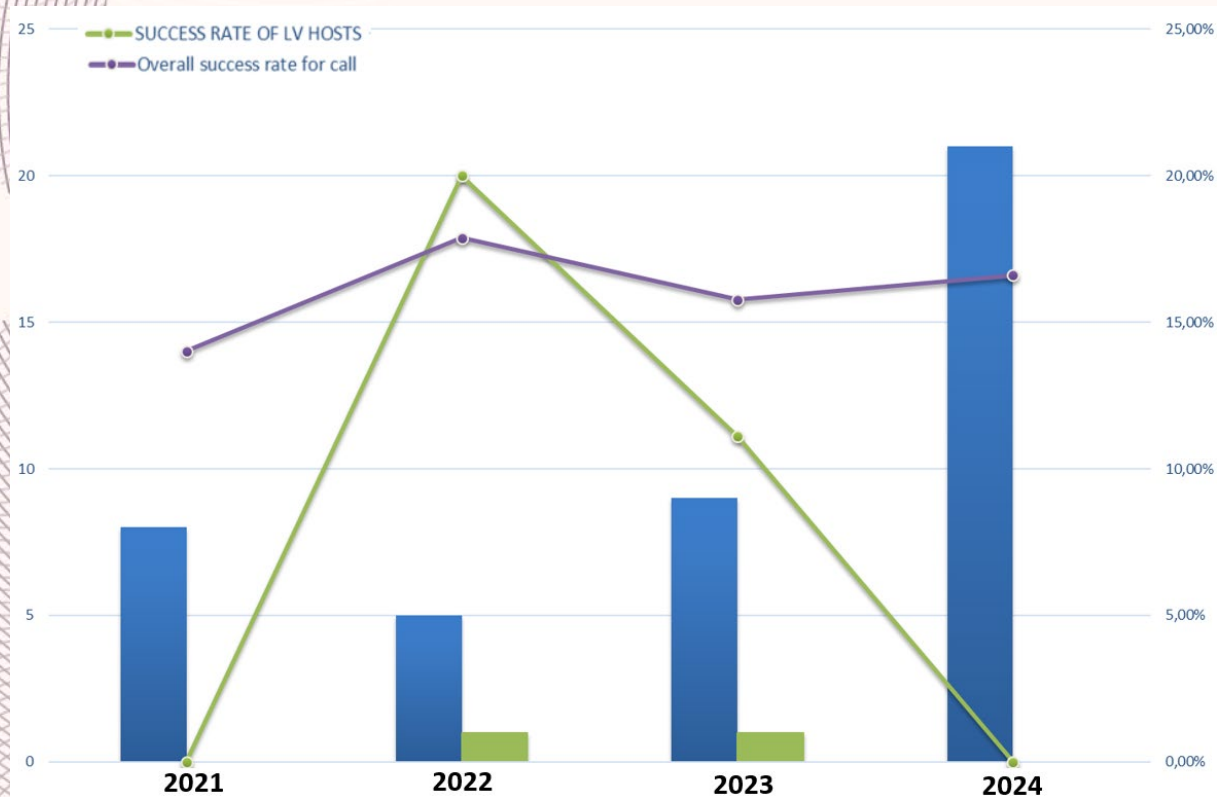
Proposals with Latvian researchers
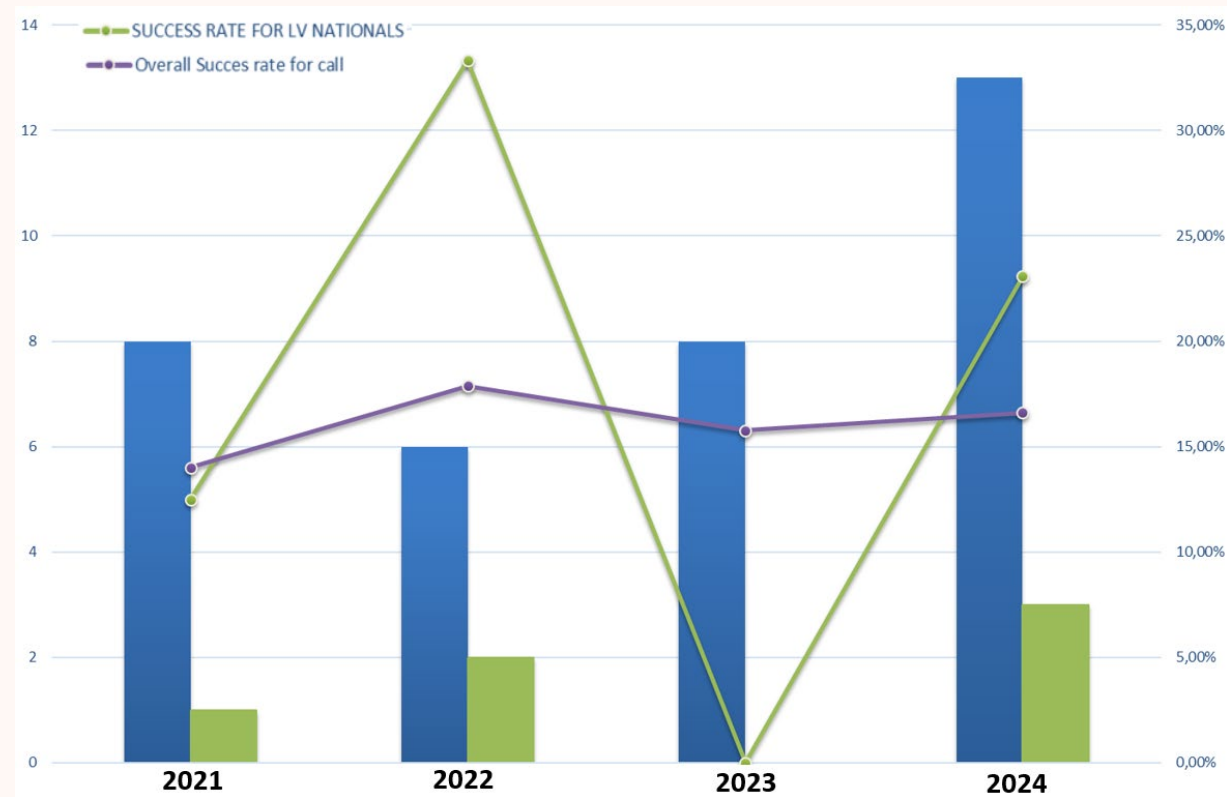
Success rates – Lithuania

Proposals with Lithuanian host institutions
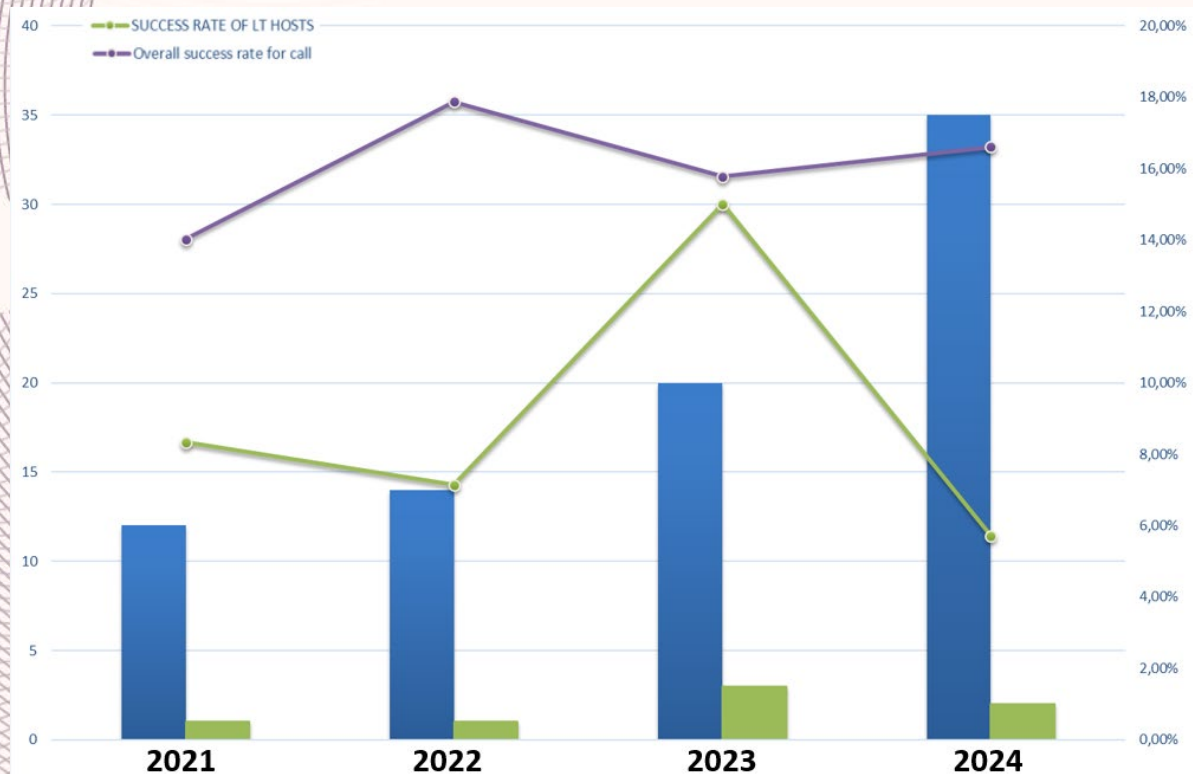
Proposals with Lithuanian researchers
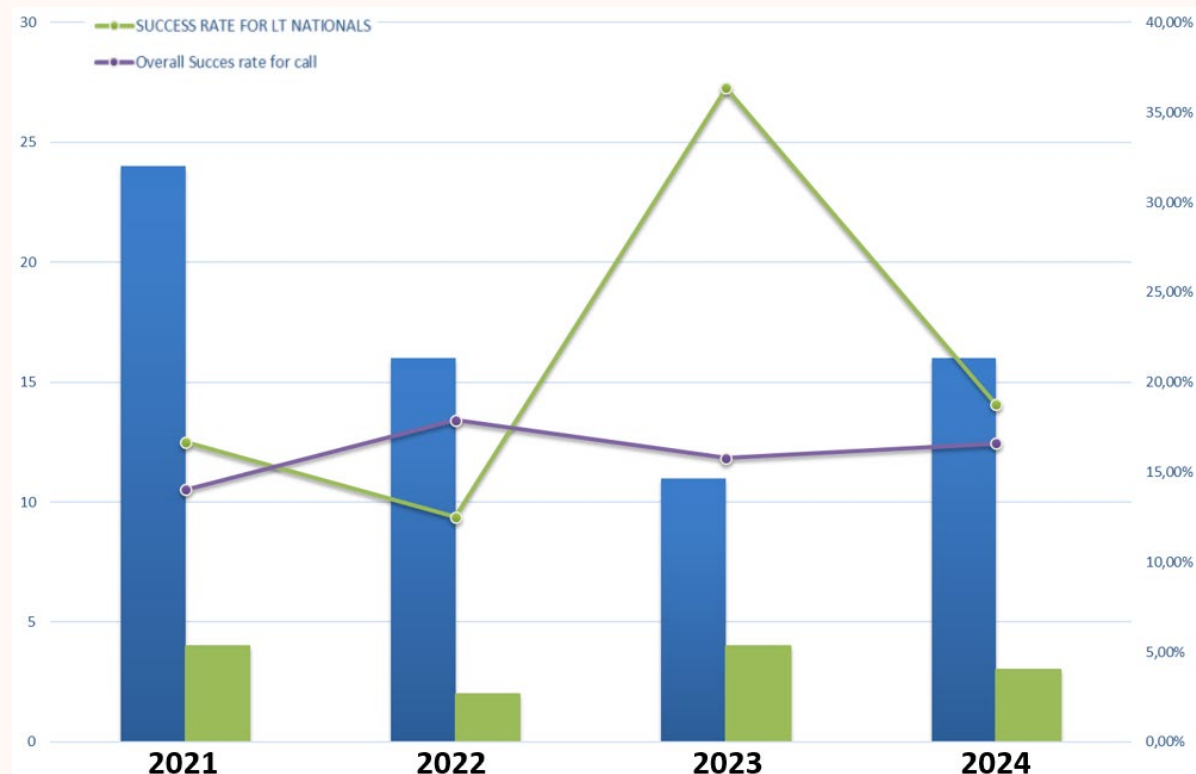
Success rates – Poland

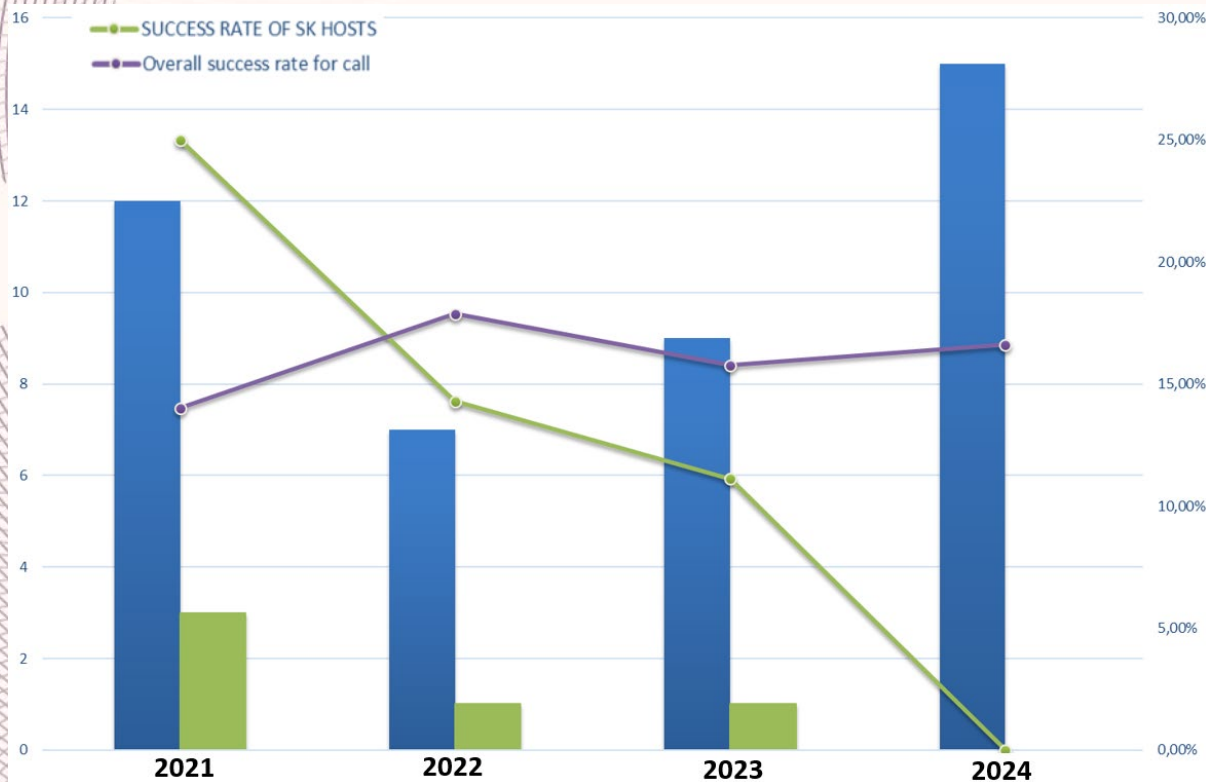Proposals with Polish host institutions
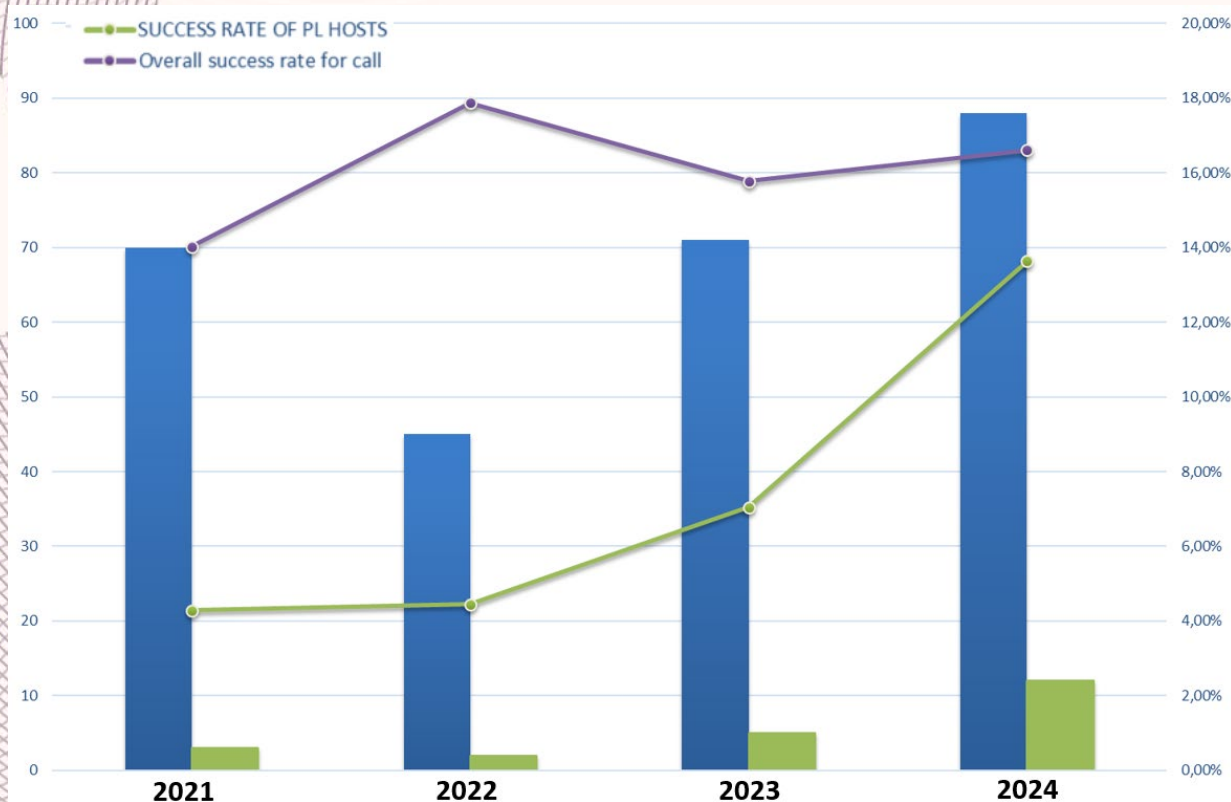
Proposals with Polish researchers
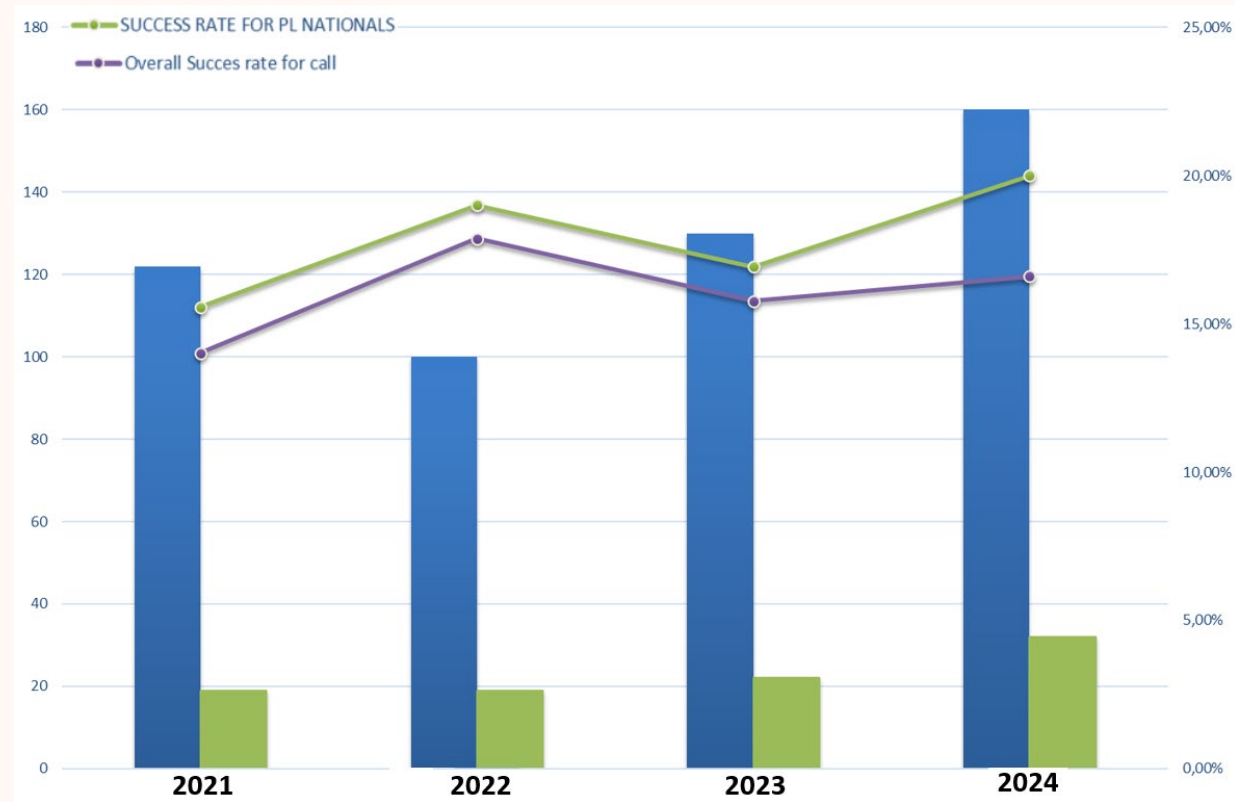
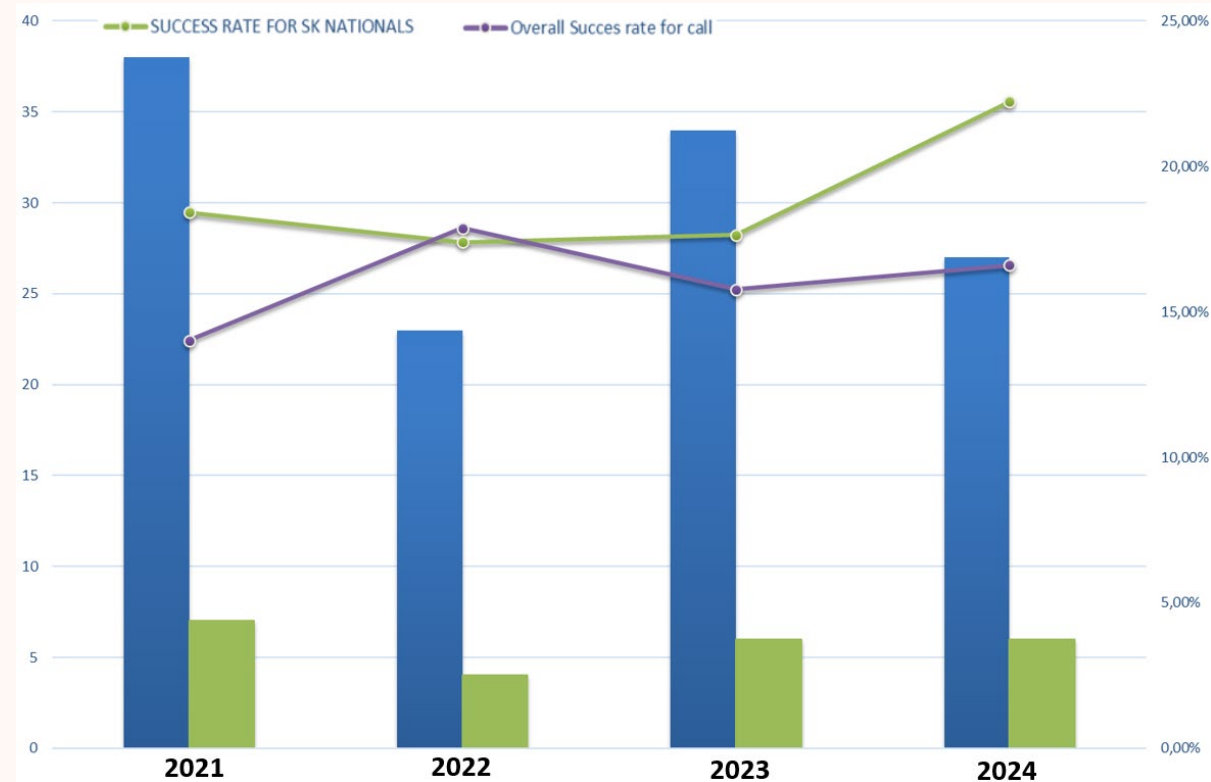# Success rates – Slovakia

Proposals with Slovakian host institutions

Proposals with Slovakian researchers

Resources and Guidance

- [MSCA PF 2025 – Call page on the EU funding & Tenders Portal](#)
- [MSCA Website](#)

- [National Contact Points](#)
- Research Enquiry Service
- Funding opportunities under MSCA – European Commission

Thank you
for your attention!