



MSCA Week 2025 - joint event

8 - 11 April 2025

9 April 2025

Quality of supervision in MSCA



Latvian Council of Science



Research Council of Lithuania

RCL



POLISH NATIONAL AGENCY
FOR ACADEMIC EXCHANGE





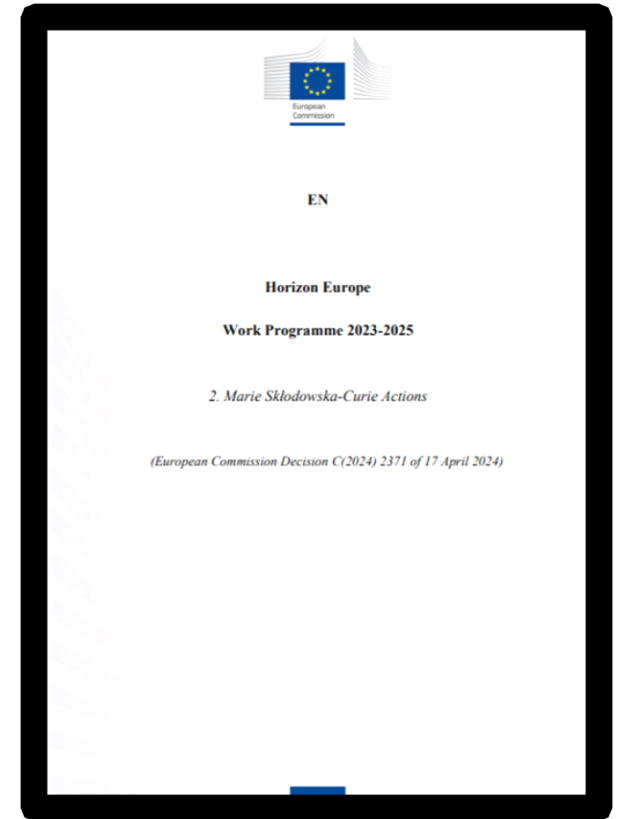
Quality supervision is a key element of the MSCA vision of excellence.

1. Work Programme – over 40 references to „supervision” 😊

*The MSCA do not only have a positive impact on individual researchers,(...) They have a **structuring impact** on higher education and other entities way beyond academia by widely spreading excellence and setting standards for high-quality researcher education and training, not only across the European Research Area (ERA), but also worldwide.*

Positive structuring effects on organisations include:

- increasing the quality of researchers’ training and **supervision** offered;
- strengthening research capacity (e.g. ability to attract funding);
- improving human resources practices and procedures, and providing fairer and more attractive working conditions for researchers, including through career guidance and development.





1. Work Programme - Main principles applying to the MSCA

Excellence

The MSCA focus on excellence in various aspects: excellence does not only apply to the individual fellows supported or the collaborations fostered and knowledge transferred, but also to the R&I methodologies applied, the research conducted as well as the **training, supervision and career guidance** provided. Long-term investment in people pays off, as indicated inter alia by the number of Nobel Prize winners who have been either former MSCA fellows or supervisors.

(...)

Supervision

The MSCA promote effective supervision, which contribute to creating a **supportive environment for the researchers to conduct their work**. In line with the principles set out in the **Charter**, MSCA beneficiaries must ensure adequately supervision or mentoring and appropriate career guidance. Supervision is one of the crucial elements of successful research. Guiding, supporting, directing, advising and mentoring are key factors for a researcher to pursue his/her career path. In this context, all MSCA-funded projects are encouraged to follow the recommendations outlined in the **Guidelines for MSCA supervision**.

(...)



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SLOVAK CENTRE OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION





1. Work Programme

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship **expected outcome**
for participating organisations:

- Increased alignment of working conditions for researchers in accordance with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers;
- Enhanced quality and sustainability of research training and **supervision**; (...)

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship **evaluation criteria** ➡

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





2. Guidelines for Applicants

clarification on

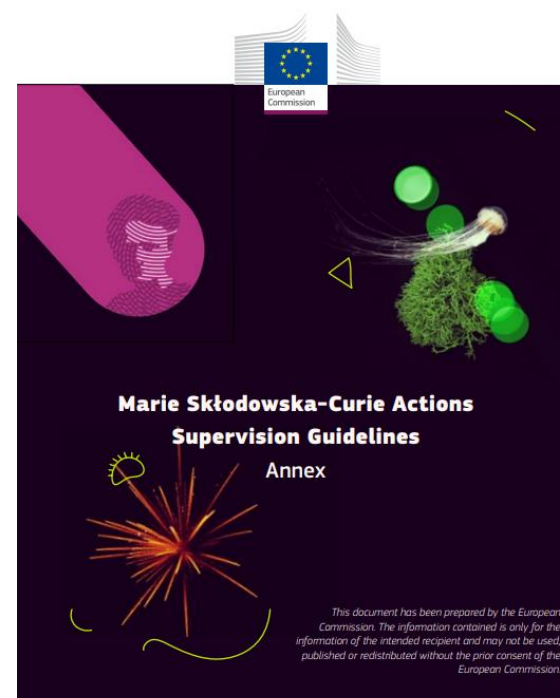
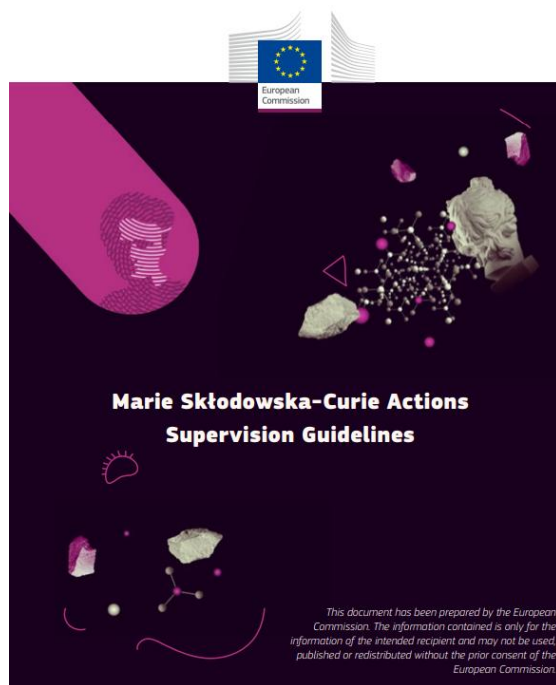
Secondments and Non-Academic Placements:

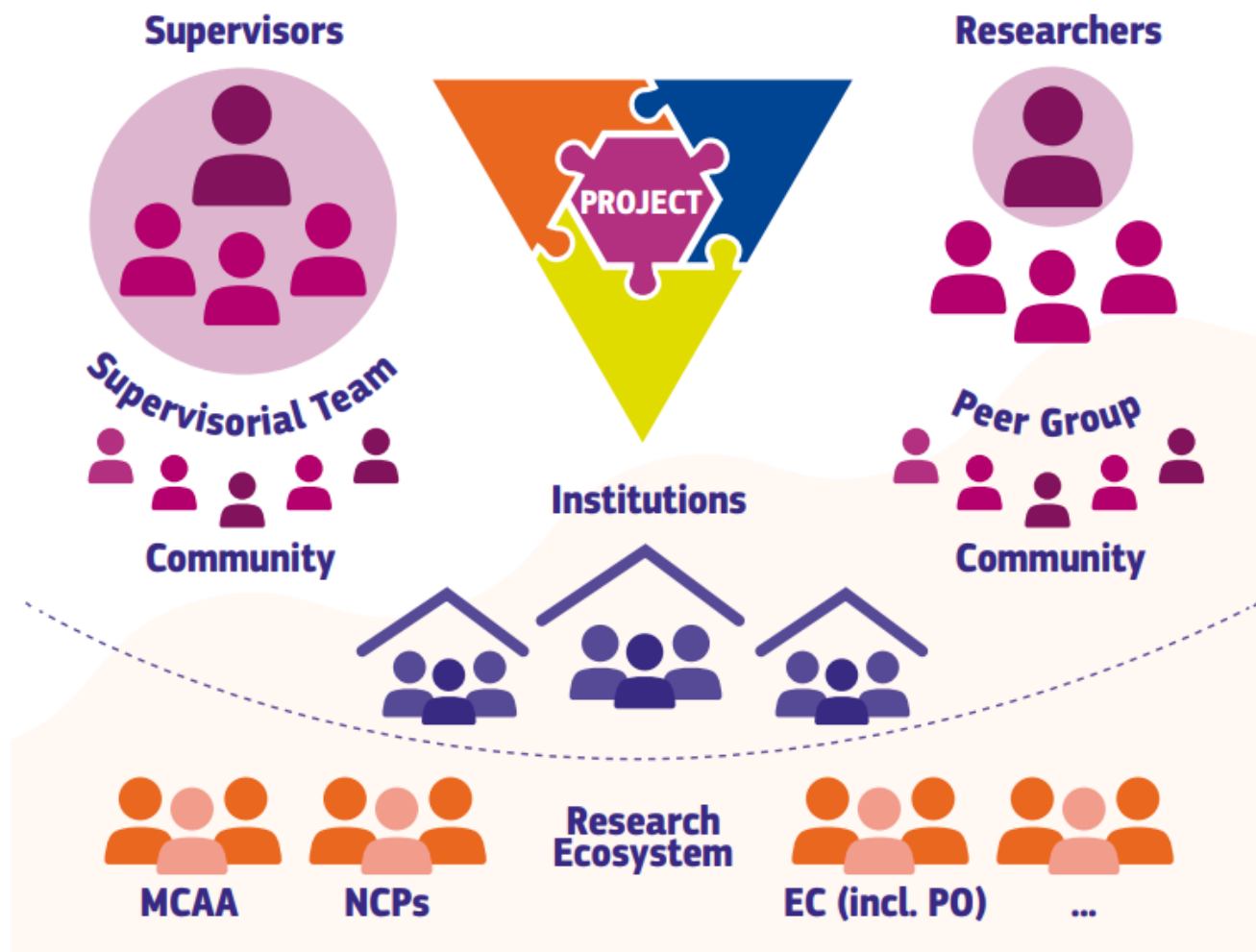
*(...)The organisations hosting secondments and/or placement **should provide supervision** of the fellow during that period. The relevance and added value of these periods will be assessed by the evaluators and may therefore impact the final score awarded to the proposal. Proposals will not be penalised for not including a secondment or non-academic placement period.*



3. Guidelines for MSCA supervision (with Annex)

- non-binding,
- funded projects are *strongly encouraged* to take them into account





Each actor

—
supervisor, researcher,
and **institution**

—
brings unique
perspectives to the
collaborative research
effort.

These guidelines aim to
facilitate this
collaboration.





These guidelines should be considered as

Art.18:
European Charter for Researchers

- complementary to the **Grant Agreement** (legal framework for the relations between the European Commission and the beneficiary),

Art.14:
European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

- complementary to **employment** or enrolment **contract** (legal framework for the relations between the hosting institution and the researcher),

- in complement to existing guidelines at the **institutional** level.


The guidelines are not exhaustive, and implementation efforts should take into account different possible situations, disciplines and **levels of experience** of researchers.

Co-supervision vs. joint supervision
(GF, secondments, NAP)

autonomy vs. control





 Slovakia
Slovak Academy of Sciences ↗ Awarded on 13-07-2020
Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice ↗ Awarded on 15-09-2021
Slovak University of Technology ↗ Awarded on 28-11-2022
Matej Bel University ↗ Awarded on 05-12-2018
University of Economics in Bratislava ↗ Awarded on 05-05-2022
Comenius University in Bratislava ↗ Awarded on 06-01-2023
Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra ↗ Awarded on 26-07-2023
Kempelen Institute of Intelligent Technologies ↗ Awarded on 07-01-2025



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

MSCA beneficiaries
are expected to ensure
adequate supervision
including appropriate
career guidance
in line with the
principles set out in the
[European Charter for
Researchers](#) (2023).





3. Guidelines for MSCA supervision (with Annex)

- Supervision frameworks
- Supervisory relationships
- Communication
- Setting expectations
- Conflict resolution/dispute settlement
- Collaborative environments
- Institutional support structures (onboarding, ...)
- Training in supervision

The University of Warsaw provides travel funding so potential MSCA Postdoctoral Fellows can meet their intended supervisors, learn from previous grantees, and work together on their proposal in a master class.

The University of Copenhagen's Graduate School of Health and Medical Science has developed guidelines for role divisions within the supervisory team.

To help navigate conflict in the supervision relationship, Trinity College Dublin developed a flowchart, highlighting the informal and formal mechanisms available at the institution.


The Humboldt University in Berlin offers free confidential conflict consultations handled by a third party outside the university to help mediate in the case of a disagreement

Imperial College London formalised the position of assistant supervisor where postdocs provide day-to-day support for doctoral candidates hosted at the university. They receive mandatory training and are eligible for supervision award schemes.





3. Guidelines for [MSCA supervision](#) (with Annex)

	Institution University of Tromsø	Country 
Type of Best Practice	<input type="radio"/> Document <input type="radio"/> Guidelines <input type="radio"/> Programme <input type="radio"/> Practice <input checked="" type="radio"/> Toolkit <input type="radio"/> Service <input type="radio"/> Training	
Theme of Best Practice	<input type="radio"/> Training in supervision <input type="radio"/> Institutional support structures <input type="radio"/> Supervision in perspective <input checked="" type="radio"/> Supervisory relationships	
Subtheme of Best Practice	Communication	
Applicable to	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Phd <input checked="" type="radio"/> Postdoc	
Description	This gender equality toolkit includes practical examples and suggestions for identifying and dealing with institutionalized poor practice.	
	Toolkit	

