

FAQ - HE MSCA ‘Choose Europe for Science 2025’

What does the ‘Choose Europe for Science’ allowance cover/include?

The ‘Choose Europe for Science’ allowance constitutes EUR 6 700 per recruited researcher per month during the first phase of the project (24 or 36 months). The allowance can be used to cover any cost category.

Note that this amount is the minimum monthly gross remuneration (i.e. salaries, social security contributions, taxes and other costs or compulsory deductions under national legislation linked to remuneration) applicable for researchers recruited under the Choose Europe for Science Programmes and is inclusive of the mobility allowance. If the Beneficiary decides to use the allowance for covering part of the institutional costs (costs related to the training, research expenses, activities related to networking of researchers and transfer of knowledge, costs of managing the action and indirect costs), then it must use other sources for topping up the minimum monthly gross remuneration of EUR 6 700.

What if the national salary is lower than the ‘Choose Europe for Science’ allowance?

The Programmes funded by the MSCA Choose Europe for Science 2025 call will operate in two phases: a first phase lasting 24 or 36 months, in which the EC will provide funding equivalent to the minimum gross monthly remuneration for each recruited researchers of 6 700 EUR. A second phase, with a duration of 24 months and funded entirely by the Beneficiary, will offer remuneration rates set at a level that is nationally competitive and attractive. The applicant beneficiaries are expected to include in their proposals the details on the applicable national salary scales, as well as any other relevant information, enabling independent international evaluators to assess the competitiveness and attractiveness of the remuneration set for the second phase of their Programmes.

In case the level of the salary corresponding to postdoctoral researchers (according to the national legislation in force) is lower than the minimum monthly gross remuneration during the first phase (6 700 Euro), the beneficiary is expected to apply the same strategy as for all other MSCA grants contracted in the respective country.

What is the procedure for a long-term leave and special needs allowances?

The long-term leave allowance contributes to the personnel costs incurred by the employer in case of the researchers' leave, including maternity, paternity, parental, sick or special leave, longer than 30 consecutive days.

The special needs allowance contributes to the additional costs for the acquisition of special needs items and services for researchers with disabilities, whose long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments are certified by a competent national authority, and of such nature that their participation in the action may not be possible without them (e.g. assistance by third persons, adaptation of work environment, additional travel/transportation costs). These special needs items or services must not have been funded from another source (e.g. social security or health insurance).

Both long-term leave and special needs allowances can be requested when the need arises during the first phase of the project. During the second phase, the beneficiary should continue to follow the applicable national legislation regarding remuneration of researchers on leave and provisions for researchers with special needs.

Therefore, during the first EU-funded phase, when the beneficiary has recruited a researcher who is already on a long-term leave, or the recruited researcher has special needs according to the Work Programme definition, the beneficiary should contact the project officer who will provide the necessary guidance.

What are possible co-funding sources?

As outlined in the MSCA 2025 Work Programme, the beneficiaries are responsible for sourcing complementary funds to run their Choose Europe for Science programme. This funding does not necessarily have to come from the resources of the beneficiary institution itself but can be drawn from funding sources at regional, national and European level (e.g. ERDF, Cohesion Funds, ESF, RRF). However, Horizon Europe funding cannot be used to co-fund MSCA Choose Europe for Science programs under the 2025 call.

What happens if a researcher's contract ends before the end of the initial due date?

The MSCA Choose Europe for Science beneficiary cannot be held responsible if a fellow wants to end the employment contract before the actual due date. For example, a Choose Europe for Science fellowship that is terminated in order to commence an ERC Starting Grant following support from the host organisation will not be penalised. Please note that for all cases of early

termination of a fellowship, REA will conduct checks to confirm that the beneficiary took all measures to implement the principles set out in the [European Charter for Researchers](#) ⁽¹⁾.

What is the role of supervisors in the evaluation process?

Supervisors MUST NOT have any role in the selection/recruitment process, drafting the proposal or final decision-making process on the candidacies.

However, applicants may contact a supervisor/research manager during the application process for scientific advice, to discuss the research being proposed, obtain information about expertise/infrastructure available.

NO prior approval of the application (from either the proposed supervisor or host organisation) can be required as part of the submission process, as this constitutes pre-selection.

What should be the international dimension in the selection process?

The selection procedure for researcher candidates must be open, competitive, merit-based and with a transparent international peer-review in line with the European Charter for Researchers.

There must be substantial involvement of independent international evaluators based in other countries, with no conflict of interest, for each submitted application, and at all stages of the evaluation process. The selection of the candidates will be done by the selection committees, whose members include international independent evaluators from outside the partnership. These members must have an adequate gender balance and possess the relevant expertise and experience to assess the candidates.

A good balance between evaluators related to the beneficiary and international independent evaluators from outside the partnership (based in other countries) must be maintained in the selection committee.

⁽¹⁾ Previously this was included in the [Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#) but it has been integrated in the updated European Charter for Researchers dating to December 2023, published as [Annex II to the Council Recommendation of 18 December 2023 on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe](#).

Which researchers are eligible to be recruited through MSCA Choose Europe for Science Programmes?

Researchers must be PhD holders at the time of the vacancy notice deadline. They must not be permanently employed at the recruiting institution but can already be temporarily employed. Researchers must comply with the MSCA mobility rule which specifies that researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the beneficiary for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before the vacancy notice deadline of the selected project. Researchers can be of any nationality, there should be no limitations placed on this. Researchers can have any scientific age post-PhD. Therefore, if the applicant decides to limit the scientific age of the PhD researchers, they need to justify it in their proposal and the reasons will be assessed as part of the evaluation.

How should the scientific excellence be demonstrated?

The scientific excellence should be explained under point 1.4 in the template, excellence criterion “Quality and ambition of the research, innovation and/or academic objectives of the recruitment programme”.

In this section, the scientific excellence of the host body in which the Choose Europe for Science Programme will take place should be described, including relevant research, innovation and academic objectives as well as evidence of the current outputs, impacts and research practices.

It is then important to demonstrate how the Programme will contribute to this excellence through the quality and novelty of the work that selected researchers will carry out within the remit of their project. This should aim to address questions like: How will they contribute to the overarching objectives? What are expected results?