

# **Attract, integrate and retain international excellence**

## **(MSCA Employment)**

A call for proposals in the area of Competence Supply for Innovation  
Power

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## Revision history

Date	Change
2021-08-03	English translation of call text
2021-08-03	Fellow with Swedish host and defended thesis abroad is also eligible
2022-06-10	Clarification evaluation criteria
2023-01-16	Additional introduction text and elaboration of evaluation criteria

## 1 The offer in brief

The call is aimed at employers who have identified a need for internationally excellent competence, and where a financial recruitment support can make a difference. Non-academic organisations, i.e. business, small and medium-sized companies, research institutes and public organizations, are eligible to apply.

Only proposals applying for support to the recruitment of a specific MSCA Fellow who has successfully defended her/his thesis<sup>4</sup> or completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Sweden are eligible under this call.

In this call for proposals, MSCA Fellows refers to researchers with a Swedish host organisation who were funded by the following programme parts of the EC research program Horizon 2020 (Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions) or Vinnova:

- Innovative Training Networks (ITN)
- Individual Fellowships (IF)
- Cofund Doctoral Programme
- Cofund Fellowship Programme
- European Fellowship Seal of Excellence (Vinnova)

The proposal requires a mutual beneficial collaboration between the employer and the MSCA Fellow. The purpose is to facilitate for international researchers in Sweden who want to establish themselves in the Swedish labour market and to demonstrate the value of MSCA funded researchers for the Swedish labour market. Vinnova offers recruitment support of a maximum SEK 500,000 for an equivalent of 6 months of full-time employment.

### **The following dates apply to the call:**

Please note that the dates are preliminary. For current information, see [www.vinnova.se](http://www.vinnova.se).

Opening date	2022-11-01
Last submission date	2023-04-12 at 14:00
Last decision date	2023-05-30
Project start at the earliest	2023-07-01
Project start at the latest	Contact Vinnova
The call is planned to have recurring closures twice a year.	

### **Contact person for the call:**

Erik Litborn, call manager  
08-473 31 98  
[erik.litborn@vinnova.se](mailto:erik.litborn@vinnova.se)

### **Administrative questions:**

Sussi Trankell  
08-473 31 58  
[sussi.trankell@vinnova.se](mailto:sussi.trankell@vinnova.se)

### **Vinnovas IT-support:**

Technical questions about Vinnova's eServices Portal  
Tel: 08-473 32 99  
[helpdesk@vinnova.se](mailto:helpdesk@vinnova.se)

Current information about the announcement and a link to Vinnova's eServices Portal is available at [www.vinnova.se](http://www.vinnova.se).

## 2 What do we want to achieve with the grant?

Please note that this call focus on the integration of the MSCA Fellow in the new organisation as well as Sweden. Consequently, it is expected that in the proposal should support, engagement and activities provided be described for the project time with Vinnova funding as well as the time after the project.

Sweden successfully attracts international researchers who move to Sweden to complete a doctorate or postdoctoral fellowship with funding from the EC Research Program Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)<sup>1</sup>.

MSCA trains researchers in strategically important areas for business, research institutes and public organizations. However, instead of being available for the Swedish labour market, statistics show that a majority of the MSCA Fellows leaves Sweden after completing their research training. Therefore, Swedish employers are missing out on fully trained, internationally renowned researchers. MSCA Fellows are currently leaving Sweden due to several reasons, such as difficulties to integrate into the Swedish labour market, lack of knowledge about Swedish business and actors, limited time in Sweden to build up their own national network and more. Moreover, employers today lack information on the pool of competence available for recruitment among MSCA fellows.

The transformation of society due to digitalization, globalization and Agenda 2030<sup>2</sup>, increases the need for new skills. MSCA Fellows should be able to satisfy this need for both specific and general competence in several cases. Through this call for proposals, Vinnova wants to lower the thresholds for recruitment of international excellence and give Swedish employers the opportunity to offer an employment to a MSCA Fellow. The project period financed by Vinnova is expected to be mutually beneficial in developing a long-term relationship between employer and MSCA Fellow including the potential of long-term integration in Sweden. Moreover, it is expected to increase employers' interest in MSCA funding, specifically within the current research program Horisont Europa<sup>3</sup>.

## 3 Who can apply?

The call is aimed at non-academic employers in Sweden (business, small and medium-sized enterprises, research institutes and public organizations) which express a need for competence that can be met, if recruitment is financially supported.

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<sup>1</sup> [MSCA Actions | Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/euro-iss/programmes/msca/)

<sup>2</sup> [Home | Sustainable Development \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/)

<sup>3</sup> [Horizon Europe | Europeiska kommissionen \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/euro-iss/programmes/horizon-europa/)

Under this call, proposals should apply for funding supporting the recruitment of a specific MSCA Fellow who has recently defended her/his thesis<sup>4</sup> or completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Sweden. The proposal requires a sound track record of collaboration between the employer and MSCA fellow during the process of writing the proposal.

MSCA Fellows are defined under this call for proposals as researchers at a Swedish host organisation funded under the following instruments by the EC research program Horizon 2020 (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions) or Vinnova:

- Innovative Training Networks (ITN)
- Individual Fellowships (IF)
- Cofund Doctoral Programme
- Cofund Fellowship Programme
- European Fellowship Seal of Excellence (Vinnova)

## 4 What do we finance?

### 4.1 Activities for funding can be applied for

Funding for salary costs during an employment period corresponding to 6 months full time.

### 4.2 Eligible costs

Funding will be provided through grants. Funding for organizations that conduct economic activities are regulated by the rules on state aid.<sup>5</sup> The rules regulate what types of costs and at what percentage may be covered by state funding.

For a project with a clear basic research character, the entire amount requested is granted. Note that this requires that the project is clearly demarcated in the beneficiary's accounting and is carried out separately from the beneficiary's economic activities.

For a project entirely carried out within an organization's non-financial activities, the entire amount applied for can be granted.

For other projects, the amount applied for can be granted as de minimis aid. Please note that this support accumulates from various grant financiers and may amount to the equivalent of a maximum of EUR 200,000 during the last three taxation years. This option requires the applicant to attach a special form<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Only a Fellow having a Swedish host (beneficiary) during the fellowship and defended the thesis is eligible.

<sup>5</sup> Read more about state aid on Vinnova webpage: <https://www.vinnova.se/en/apply-for-funding/rules-for-our-funding/state-aid-to-companies/>. Information regarding terms and conditions can also be found there as well as instructions to Vinnova's conditions on eligible costs: <https://www.vinnova.se/en/apply-for-funding/rules-for-our-funding/terms-and-conditions-for-our-funding/>

## 5 How much funding do we provide?

Maximum 500 000 SEK per project.

We expect 10-20 projects per year to be financed under this call for proposals.

## 6 Eligibility criteria

Vinnova will only assess proposals concerning the employment of researchers that meet the following formal eligibility requirements:

- Researchers must be based in Sweden and not be employed outside academia.
- Researchers who have completed a doctorate with MSCA funding at a Swedish host organisation must have received their doctoral degree to be able to start an employment outside academia.
- PhD researchers who obtained a postdoctoral fellowship under MSCA funding or Seal of Excellence funding in Sweden must have completed this Fellowship to be able to start a job outside academia.
- Funding can only be granted for positions outside academia.
- The proposal must be written in Swedish or English.

Vinnova will only assess proposals:

- from organisations in the non-academic sector.
- concerning workplaces located in Sweden.

## 7 Evaluation of proposals

### 7.1 What do we assess?

Vinnova evaluates proposals based on the following evaluation criteria, how well the proposal corresponds to our expectations on the effects of the call. Please note that parts in the proposal describing scientific questions or challenges shall be described at a popular science level.

#### **Potential**

Evaluation of how well the recruiting organisation has clearly identified the competence needs, and how the proposed project can contribute to the organisation's future development opportunities after the end of the project.

Evaluation of MSCA Fellow future development opportunities after the end of the project and how well the competence of the MSCA Fellow can strengthen the organisation.

Evaluation of the long-term potential for integration of the MSCA Fellow in Sweden as well as the relevance of the project in a Swedish perspective because of the employment.

### **Actors**

Evaluation of how well the MSCA Fellow's skills and experience correspond and match the needs of the recruiting organisation.

Evaluation of how well MSCA Fellow together with the organisation can contribute to solve the need.

Evaluation of active support given to the MSCA Fellow during the project time.

### **Feasibility**

Assessment of support given by the recruiting organisation to the MSCA Fellow in terms of concrete activities and plans.

Assessment of synergies between MSCA Fellow and the recruiting organisation, as well as the support offered by the recruiting organisation via concrete activities.

## **7.2 How do we evaluate?**

The proposals are evaluated in competition and with the help of external evaluators appointed by Vinnova.

# **8 Terms and conditions for our funding**

## **8.1 About our decision**

The decision will state how much each project part is granted in funding. The decision also states the basis for support, and governs what type of costs that are eligible.

Our decision to approve or reject a proposal is not subject to appeal.

## **8.2 Terms for granted funding**

For granted funding, our general terms and conditions for funding<sup>6</sup> apply. The terms contain rules on project agreements, conditions for payment, follow-up, reporting and utilisation of results. Scientific publication must take place under open access in accordance with Vinnova's instructions.

Additional special conditions can be determined for individual projects.

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<sup>6</sup> Valid terms and conditions can be found on our webpage together with explanations how to understand and fulfil them: <https://www.vinnova.se/en/apply-for-funding/rules-for-our-funding/terms-and-conditions-for-our-funding/>

If you do not follow our terms and conditions, you may be liable for a refund. This also applies if you have been granted funding incorrectly or with a too high amount.

## 9 How to apply

To apply for funding, you will need to fill in a web-based proposal form in Vinnova eServices Portal, which can be accessed via [www.vinnova.se](http://www.vinnova.se). You are also obliged to upload the following attachments via the Vinnova eServices Portal:

1. **Project description**, a maximum of three A4 pages with font-size 12. The project description must cover the purpose of the project linked to the call and contain a description of how the competence of MSCA Fellow will be used within the applicant organisation's activities. This also includes describing the efforts for the organisation's ongoing sustainability work.
2. **Letter from MSCA Fellow** describing how an employment in a non-academic organisation can enhance the MSCA fellow's career prospects, and the expected career development as a result.
3. **CV for the MSCA Fellow**
4. **CV for the mentor** at the recruiting organisation
5. **Support letter from the prospective employer** describing what is expected added value when recruiting a MSCA Fellow. In the letter, the prospective agreed salary needs to be specified.
6. **De minimis support form** (only in relevant cases)

The attachments must be uploaded in PDF format. The structure of the project description must be in accordance with the evaluation criteria.

Keep in mind that the evaluation panel consists of experts with expertise in many different areas. To be judged fairly, we recommend formulating the proposal in a way that it can be understood by experts from other fields. Be clear when describing the potential of the proposal in respect to the evaluation criteria.

Keep in mind that it takes time to write a proposal. You may start filling in information, save and continue at a later time. When you have finalised the proposal, mark it as done. You can at any time completely unlock the proposal and make changes, right up to the last submission date.

Prepare the proposal in good time before the call closes.

When the call is closed and the proposal is registered at Vinnova, a confirmation will be sent by email to the person who registered the user account, the project manager, and the signatory / head of department. It may take a few hours before you receive the email.



If you have not received a confirmation email within 24 hours of the call closed, please contact us.

When the application period has ended, completion of the proposal can only take place on request from us.

## **10 Who can read the proposal?**

Proposals submitted to us become public documents, but we do not disclose information on individual business or operating conditions, inventions and research results if it can be assumed that an individual suffers damage if the data is made public.