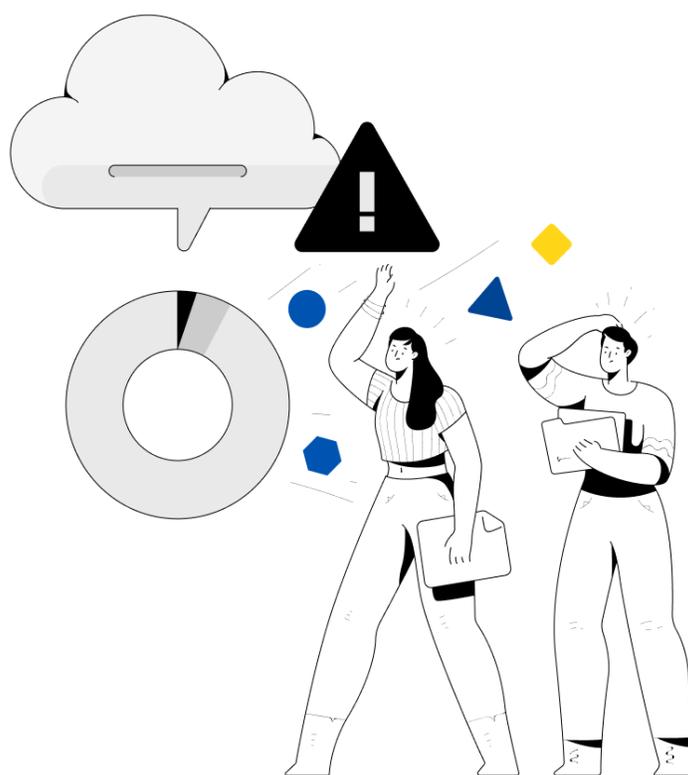


MSCA DOCTORAL NETWORKS 2022 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Update August 2022



August 2022

Document elaborat de Unitatea Horizon Europe NCP din cadrul UEFISCDI ©. August 2022.

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Funding opportunities, calls

Q1. In the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), what is the difference between associated partners and associated partners linked to a beneficiary?

As stated in the Horizon Europe MSCA Work Programme:

For MSCA DN, 'Associated partners' are entities which participate in the action, but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions. They contribute to the implementation of the action, but do not sign the grant agreement. Associated partners may not employ the researchers under the action. Associated partners must include a letter of commitment in the proposal to ensure their real and active participation in the action. The involvement of any associated partner for which no such evidence of commitment is submitted will not be taken into account during evaluation.

'Associated partners linked to a beneficiary' are organisations with an established capital or legal link with the beneficiary, which is not limited to the action nor specifically created for its implementation e.g. joint research units, foundations, university hospitals and subsidiaries. These entities implement action tasks described in Annex 1 of the grant agreement, i.e. hosting and training of researchers. The associated partners linked to a beneficiary do not have the right to claim unit contributions and may not employ the researcher under the action. In addition, they must fulfil the eligibility conditions for participation and funding applicable to the beneficiary they are linked to. The type of link and involvement of such entities must be clearly described in the proposal and will be assessed as part of the evaluation. Associated partners linked to a beneficiary must also include a letter of commitment in the proposal. A template letter is available in the proposal template.

Q2. Under Horizon Europe, are re-submissions of previous MSCA Innovative Training Networks and Doctoral Networks (DN) proposals allowed?

For the 2021 MSCA DN call, none of the proposals will be considered as resubmission. Therefore, all self-declarations will be disregarded. See also the REA website.

As of the 2022 call, proposals submitted to the previous call of MSCA Doctoral Networks under Horizon Europe and having received a score of less than 80% should not be resubmitted the following year. A specific sentence will be added at the end of the concerned Evaluation Summary Reports.

Please note that each evaluation is an independent exercise, and also depends on the level of competition amongst DN submitted proposals. Over the years proposals are assessed by different evaluators who may express different judgements and opinions.

No reference to the outcome of previous evaluations of a similar proposal should be included in the text. Experts will be strictly instructed to disregard any such references.

Q3. Under Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), what is the main difference between the Industrial Doctorates (IDs) and the Joint Doctorates (JDs) modes?

As written in the MSCA Work Programme, Doctoral Networks will implement doctoral programmes and will respond to well-identified needs in various R& I areas, exposing researchers to the academic and non-academic sectors, and offering training in research-related, as well as transferable skills and competences relevant for innovation and long-term employability.

Industrial Doctorates on the other hand will step outside academia and develop skills in industry and business by being jointly supervised by academic and non-academic organisations.

As for Joint Doctorates, they represent a highly integrated type of international, inter-sectoral and multi/interdisciplinary collaboration in doctoral training. They lead to the delivery of joint, double or multiple doctoral degrees recognised in at least two EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries.

Q4. Can beneficiaries in the HORIZON MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) use associated partners linked to them to implement the tasks of hosting and training?

In the MSCA DN, where necessary, associated partners linked to a beneficiary (and where this capital or legal link is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. Examples of such entities include joint research units (JRU), "Unités mixtes de recherche" (UMRs), linked foundations, university hospitals and subsidiaries) may implement the tasks of hosting and training of researchers as described in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement (including during secondments). The involvement of such entities must be clearly described and justified in the proposal and will be assessed as part of the evaluation. Note, however, that only beneficiaries can recruit researchers and the recruiting beneficiary remains fully responsible for the correct implementation of the action, for ensuring the eligibility of the recruited fellow, etc.

Proposal submission and evaluation

Q5. How can the concept of 'Open Science' be addressed in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposal / project?

Open Science in Horizon Europe is defined as an approach to the scientific process based on open cooperative tools, work and the diffusion of knowledge. The MSCA endorse Open Science and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) through engaging society at large, integrating the gender and ethical dimensions, promoting Open Science practices through targeted training activities, ensuring open access to research outcomes, including FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data handling, encouraging formal and informal science education and feeding back research results into teaching and education.

As indicated in the MSCA Work Programme, Doctoral Networks are expected to develop substantial training modules, including digital ones, addressing key transferable skills and competences common to all fields and fostering the culture of Open Science, innovation and entrepreneurship. In particular, Doctoral Networks should adequately prepare doctoral candidates

for increased research collaboration and information-sharing made possible by new (digital) technologies (e.g. collaborative tools, opening access to publications and to research data, FAIR data management, public engagement and citizen science, etc.)

Moreover, in MSCA Doctoral Networks and in the Horizon Europe programme overall, Open Science becomes an integral part of the proposals and is considered in the evaluation of proposals under 'Excellence' and under 'Quality and efficiency of implementation'. While some Open Science practices are recommended, others are mandatory for all beneficiaries per the grant agreement, such as open access to scientific publications or responsible management of research data in line with the FAIR principles. This does not apply to the ERC Work Programmes 2021-2023 that do explicitly include open science in the evaluation.

For detailed guidance on Open Science practices and research data management in the context of the preparation of the proposals applicants should refer to the official call documents, and in particular the Open Science section of the [Horizon Europe Programme Guide](#).

Q6. Is there a template of the letter of commitment for Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposals?

As a general rule, **all associated partners** must include a **letter of commitment** in Part B of the MSCA DN proposal to ensure their real and active participation in the proposed network. Such letters **must follow the template** available at the end of the [MSCA DN proposal template](#), and should be signed by an authorised person, scanned and included in section B.5 of the DN proposal.

Please note that associated partners linked to a beneficiary do not need to provide a letter of commitment. However, it should be clear from part B1 which associated partners are linked to a beneficiary, and which ones are not.

Applicants to DN-JD must also include in Part B of the proposal **scanned letters of pre-agreement** from the beneficiaries awarding doctoral degrees indicating their **commitment to award joint, double or multiple doctoral degrees** within the context of the proposed action. These letters should be signed by the beneficiary's **authorised legal representative**. They should also indicate agreement with the principle that the awarding of such degrees is a precondition for

funding. A **template** for these letters is provided at the end of the part B template and **must be followed by all DN-JD applicants**. Letters of pre-agreement must be included in the PDF file (Part B, document 2); these should not be attached in a separate PDF file or as an embedded file since this makes them invisible.

The expert evaluators will be instructed to disregard the contribution of any associated partner for which no such evidence of commitment is submitted. In case the letter does not follow the template or fails to give enough information on the associated partner's role and/or enough assurance on their commitment in the project (e.g. no signature, wrong proposal references, outdated letter, etc.), the experts may penalise the proposal on these aspects under the implementation evaluation criterion. The same applies for the letters of pre-agreement in DN-JD proposals. **Missing letters of pre-agreement** will lead to the exclusion of the entity, which may affect the eligibility of the DN-JD proposal.

Q7. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks - Industrial Doctorates (DN-ID), is it possible that only one Beneficiary (academic or non-academic sector) recruits all researchers throughout the whole duration of the project?

No, it isn't. All beneficiaries must recruit at least one researcher. See MSCA [Work Programme](#) and [Guide for Applicants](#).

Please note that an MSCA DN-ID must be composed of at least three independent beneficiaries each established in a different EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country and with at least one of them established in an EU Member State.

In addition, a maximum of 40% of the total EU financial contribution may be allocated to beneficiaries within one country.

Therefore, recruitments (and related budget) must be planned accordingly. The arrangements in the consortium must be made keeping in mind the obligation of hosting and training the ESRs for at least 50% of their time in the non-academic sector and the enrolment of the fellows in the doctoral programme.

Q8. In the project proposal under Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) calls, what should be included in table 3.1 a "Work Package List"?

Table 3.1 a of the MSCA DN project proposal must list all of the Work Packages covering all aspects of the project. Depending on the size of the network, the scientific content can be presented in more than one research Work Package that should reflect the research objectives. A specific Work Package should be dedicated to training and it is also good practice to add separate Work Packages on management, exploitation and dissemination of results, as well as communication activities targeted to different audiences.

The number of Work Packages must be reasonable and commensurate with their content. Only brief headings and overviews of the Work Packages should be presented in Table 3.1 a. More details in terms of actual implementation should be provided in the tables under section 3.1 a under 'Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation'.

See also [REA website](#) and [part B of the proposal template](#).

Q9. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks, do the Associated Partners linked to a beneficiary need to provide a signed Letter of Commitment?

Please note that Associated Partners linked to a beneficiary do not need to provide a Letter of Commitment.

However, it should be clear from part B1 which Associated Partners are linked to a beneficiary, and which ones are not.

Q10. In a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) action, is it possible that a third party recruits the fellows on behalf of the beneficiary?

In HE MSCA actions, the rules from the [General Model Grant Agreement](#) for third party involvement do not apply. Instead, MSCA-DN allows beneficiaries to use (1) associated partners linked to them or (2) associated partners to carry out the work under the action.

Associated partners linked to a beneficiary and associated partners do not sign the grant agreement and they do **not** recruit, only beneficiaries do. Entities with a capital or legal link (which

is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, e.g. joint research units, foundations, university hospitals and subsidiaries) may be used for hosting and training of researchers (including during secondments) — and can even implement **all** those activities under the action.

Associated partners are third parties involved in the action without a capital or legal link to a beneficiary. They may be used to provide training and host researchers, but only during secondments. And they **cannot** recruit.

The involvement of such entities must be clearly described and justified in the proposal and will be assessed as part of the evaluation. Note that beneficiaries remain solely responsible for the correct implementation of the action and for ensuring the eligibility of the recruited fellows.

Q11. Is it recommended that all associated partners and associated partners linked to beneficiaries be involved in the supervisory board of a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) project proposal?

Yes, in an MSCA DN project proposal, it is recommended that the supervisory board is composed of representatives of all beneficiaries and associated partners and may also include any other stakeholders of relevance to the training programme, including those from the non-academic sector.

The participation of external stakeholders (e.g. future employers) in the supervisory board is not compulsory. However, such an involvement of external stakeholders can be highly beneficial as they can bring added value to the supervision of the training programme.

It is also considered best practice to include a representative from among the recruited Researchers.

Q12. In a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks proposal, what is the difference between Steering Board and Supervisory Board?

In summary, the Steering Board is more a governing board and has a wider scope than the Supervisory Board. It is a superordinate body to which the network should report.

The Supervisory Board coordinates the training and supervision activities, it is usually composed by representatives of all beneficiaries and associated partners and representatives from the recruited ESRs.

Below you can find some examples related to the differences on the composition and roles of the two boards:

Supervisory Board

Composition: usually one representative per Beneficiary / Associated Partner and representatives from the recruited ESR

Role: coordination of the training and supervision activities, competent to deliberate over the implementation of the training programme, any change to this programme (at the individual or network-wide level), adequacy of the supervision, training and logistical support given to the ESR.

Steering Board

Composition: usually one representative per Beneficiary / Associated Partner with voting rights (decisions taken with a majority of the votes)

Role: main decision-making body governing the network, competent to deliberate over:

The monitoring of the project (overall network management, supervision of the recruitment process, assessment of the implementation of the research and training programme, supervising an effective exploitation, communication and dissemination of the results and actions, and other related tasks).

The project content, budget and IP rights (technical and financial reports to the EC, proposals for changes in the consortium plans, including in the budget, decisions regarding IP rights, etc.)

The consortium evolution (entry or withdrawal of a partner, conflict resolution, changes in the project coordination, etc.)

Q13. Can associated partners in the HORIZON MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call be from the same country as the Coordinator?

Yes, in the HORIZON MSCA Doctoral Networks, associated partners can be from any country, any discipline and any sector.

Q14. Under Horizon Europe, can an organisation submit a proposal to each of the three MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) modalities?

Yes, an organisation can submit a proposal to each of the three MSCA DN modalities. However, applicants must demonstrate that the scientific and training programme of each proposal is unique and original in order to avoid a potential risk of double-funding. In addition, should an organisation receive funding for more than one project under the call, they should demonstrate that they have the capacity to participate in each project to the extent indicated in the proposal. Under Horizon Europe, all DN modalities will be assessed and ranked within the same scientific panel (there is no more a dedicated budget for DN-ID and DN-JD modes). Please also note that a proposal should only be submitted to one scientific panel (multiple submission of the same proposal is not allowed).

Q15. Can universities which are not offering doctoral degree programmes (e.g. universities of applied sciences) still apply in the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call?

For MSCA Doctoral Networks such universities may participate as beneficiaries, as long as they recruit, host and supervise the recruited fellows at their premises. In such a case, the fellow may be enrolled in a PhD programme at a university or a consortium/grouping of academic/research institutions (entitled to award a doctoral degree) which must be added as an associated partner or an associated partner linked to a beneficiary.

For DN Joint Doctorates (JDs) and DN Industrial Doctorates (IDs), such universities may also participate. However for JDs they do not count as one of the academic beneficiaries required for the minimum eligibility rules as they are not entitled to award doctoral degrees. For IDs, should none of the academic beneficiaries be entitled to award a doctoral degree, a university or a consortium/grouping of academic/research institutions entitled to award a doctoral degree must be at least associated to the project as an associated partner or as an associated partner linked to a beneficiary.

Q16. Under the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call, can universities which are not offering doctoral degree programmes (e.g. universities of applied sciences) still apply?

For MSCA Doctoral Networks such universities may participate as beneficiaries, as long as they recruit, host and supervise the recruited fellows at their premises. In such a case, the fellow may be enrolled in a PhD programme at a university or a consortium/grouping of academic/research institutions (entitled to award a doctoral degree) which must be added as an associated partner or an associated partner linked to a beneficiary.

For DN Joint Doctorates (JDs) and DN Industrial Doctorates (IDs), such universities may also participate. However for JDs they do not count as one of the academic beneficiaries required for the minimum eligibility rules as they are not entitled to award doctoral degrees.

For IDs, should none of the academic beneficiaries be entitled to award a doctoral degree, a university or a consortium/grouping of academic/research institutions entitled to award a doctoral degree must be at least associated to the project as an associated partner or as an associated partner linked to a beneficiary.

Q17. What should associated partners fill in part A of a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks proposal?

In Part A, applicants will be asked for certain administrative details that will be used in the evaluation and further processing of their proposal. Part A constitutes an integral part of the proposal.

The Electronic Submission Service provides guidance on how to complete the Part A, which includes the following steps:

Step 1: Login using the coordinator's EU login account

Step 2: Selection of the funding scheme

Step 3: Creation of a draft proposal (selection of the Coordinator's PIC, insertion of the Acronym, the Abstract and selection of the scientific panel)

Step 4: Parties: creation of the consortium; Addition of the participants' PICs and contact persons. All participating organisations should be added at this stage, either as “beneficiary” or “associated partners” (including both the associated partners and the associated partners linked to a beneficiary).

Step 5: Upload of Part B1 and B2, and Editing of the forms (part A), including the following sections:

Section 1: General information about the proposal;

Section 2: Data on participating organisations (list of beneficiaries and associated partners, researchers involved, role of participating organisation in the project, Gender equality plan); Please note that associated partners do not need to fill in neither the researchers involved, nor the role of participating organisation in the project. Please also note that neither the beneficiaries, nor the associated partners, need to fill in the list of up to five publications, relevant previous projects, or significant infrastructure. This information will need to be stated in the relevant section of part B2.

Section 3: Budget (request for funding in terms of person-months);

Section 4: Ethics and Security.

Applicants must validate the form in order to check if there is no missing information or blocking issue. Applicants save and close the form.

The proposal is at the "Edit proposal" stage.

Applicants validate the proposal (step 5) for a final check before submission.

Q18. How to select keywords in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks proposal?

All eligible proposals will be evaluated under one of the eight major areas of research (known as scientific evaluation "panels"): Chemistry (CHE); Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC); Economic Sciences (ECO); Information Science and Engineering (ENG); Environment and Geo-Sciences (ENV); Life Sciences (LIF); Mathematics (MAT), and Physics (PHY). Experts will evaluate all proposals under a given panel. Each panel will establish a ranked list of proposals for funding.

In the Electronic Submission Service, the applicant chooses the panel to which the proposal will be associated at the proposal stage (using the field "Scientific Panel" in section 1 of the proposal submission forms) and this should be considered as the core discipline. Additional keywords are used to define the other disciplines that may be involved (see below).

Proposals must be submitted to only one of eight 'main evaluation panels'.

Applicants should carefully choose the panel and keywords since this will guide the REA in the selection of experts for proposal evaluation.

As a general rule the call budget will be distributed between the panels based on the proportion of eligible proposals received in each panel.

To help applicants select the most relevant panel for their proposal, a document providing a breakdown of each research area into a number of keywords is available on the REA website.

Regarding the keywords, applicants can select from three (3) to five (5) as explained below. Applicants must:

- Select the panel, i.e. the area of research (e.g. CHE) in which the proposal best fits, in section 1 of the proposal submission forms (or earlier at step 3). This should be considered as the core discipline of the proposal.
- Within the most relevant sub-area of research (e.g. C1-Inorganic Chemistry), select the first keyword that best characterises the subject of the proposal (e.g. Catalytic materials).
- The second keyword that best characterises the subject of the proposal must be selected within the area of research (e.g. CHE) that has been selected in step 3 or in section 1.
- Third keyword: it is mandatory to select at least one (1) additional keyword which can be chosen from any of the eight (8) areas of research.
- If needed you may add further two (2) additional keywords chosen freely from any of the eight (8) areas of research.

Please note that you should select the descriptors in order of importance, the first being the most important.

Q19. How to complete part A of a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks proposal?

In Part A, applicants will be asked for certain administrative details that will be used in the evaluation and further processing of their proposal. Part A constitutes an integral part of the proposal.

The Electronic Submission Service provides guidance on how to complete the Part A, which includes the following steps:

Step 1: Login using the coordinator's EU login account

Step 2: Selection of the funding scheme

Step 3: Creation of a draft proposal (selection of the Coordinator's PIC, insertion of the Acronym, the Abstract and selection of the scientific panel)

Step 4: Parties: creation of the consortium; Addition of the participants' PICs and contact persons. All participating organisations should be added at this stage, either as “beneficiary” or “associated

partners” (including both the associated partners and the associated partners linked to a beneficiary).

Step 5: Upload of Part B1 and B2, and Editing of the forms (part A), including the following sections:

Section 1: General information about the proposal;

Section 2: Data on participating organisations (list of beneficiaries and associated partners, researchers involved, role of participating organisation in the project, Gender equality plan);

Please note that associated partners do not need to fill in neither the researchers involved, nor the role of participating organisation in the project. Please also note that neither the beneficiaries, nor the associated partners, need to fill in the list of up to five publications, relevant previous projects, or significant infrastructure. This information will need to be stated in the relevant section of part B2.

Section 3: Budget (request for funding in terms of person-months);

Section 4: Ethics and Security.

Applicants must validate the form in order to check if there is no missing information or blocking issue. Applicants save and close the form.

The proposal is at the "Edit proposal" stage.

Applicants validate the proposal (step 5) for a final check before submission.

Q20. Must the beneficiaries provide full-time contracts to the researchers working on Horizon European MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) projects?

As a rule, in an MSCA DN project the researcher must be recruited under a full-time employment contract. Part-time employment must be agreed in advance with the European Research Executive Agency (REA) and may be accepted: subject to prior approval by the Agency on personal or family grounds only, and not for professional reasons.

Q21. Can associated partners and associated partners linked to a beneficiary be reimbursed for the costs of training and/or hosting of seconded researchers in Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN)?

In an MSCA DN, associated partners and associated partners linked to a beneficiary are not signatories to the grant agreements and cannot claim costs separately. Their costs are considered already covered by the unit cost paid to the beneficiaries. Beneficiaries are encouraged to share the unit costs received with them.

Normal practice during secondments is for the recruited researchers to keep their contract with the sending institution, which also pays their travel and subsistence expenses (e.g. accommodation, visa, residency card) from the institutional unit costs.

Q22. Is the EU contribution calculated in the same way for Horizon Europe MSCA Industrial Doctorates (DN-IDs) and Joint Doctorates (DN-JDs) compared to the standard Doctoral Networks (DN)?

Yes, all researcher unit costs (monthly living allowance, mobility allowance, family allowance) and institutional unit costs (research, training and networking costs, management and indirect costs) are calculated in the same way for each of the three modes of Doctoral Networks.

Q23. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks -Industrial Doctorates (DN-ID), is it possible that only one Beneficiary (academic or non-academic sector) recruits all researchers throughout the whole duration of the project?

No, it isn't. All beneficiaries must recruit at least one researcher. See MSCA Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Please note that an MSCA DN-ID must be composed of at least three independent beneficiaries each established in a different EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country and with at least one of them established in an EU Member State.

At least one independent beneficiary must come from the academic sector and at least one beneficiary from the non-academic sector.

In addition, a maximum of 40.0% of the total EU financial contribution may be allocated to beneficiaries within one country.

Therefore, recruitments (and related budget) must be planned accordingly. The arrangements in the consortium must be made keeping in mind the obligation of hosting and training the ESRs for at least 50% of their time in the non-academic sector and the enrolment of the fellows in the doctoral programme.

Q24. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks Joint Doctorates (DN-JD), do all the fellows have to be enrolled in a doctoral programme that leads to a joint/double/multiple doctoral degree?

Yes, in an MSCA DN-JD all the fellows in the action must be enrolled in a doctoral programme that results in a joint/double/multiple doctoral degree.

In order to reach the objectives of Joint Doctorates, at least three independent legal entities must be entitled to award doctoral degrees. At least two of the institutions conferring a joint, double or multiple doctoral degree must be established in an EU Member State and/or Horizon Europe Associated Country. See also MSCA Work Programme.

Q25. Under the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks - Joint Doctorates (DN-JD) mode, is there a recommended duration that each fellow must spend in each host institution?

No, the MSCA Work Programme does not specify how much time the fellows must be recruited and hosted by each institution under the Joint Doctorates (JD) mode. The recruitment and hosting arrangements for each fellow have to be described in the proposal, keeping in mind the minimum of 3 months' duration of the employment contract as an eligibility criterion.

In DN-JDs the creation of a joint governance structure with joint admission, selection, supervision, monitoring and assessment is mandatory. One of the evaluation criteria is the quality of the joint supervision of the fellow and it is therefore expected that the institutions providing the joint degree have an active role in the supervision, monitoring, and training of the fellows for a meaningful period of time.

Q26. Is it necessary that the joint doctoral degree is accepted in all countries involved in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks Joint Doctorates (DN-JD) project?

No, the joint doctoral degrees awarded under the MSCA DN Joint Doctorates (DN-JD) type of action shall be recognised by the countries awarding the joint/double/multiple degree.

Q27. Will it be checked whether the doctoral degree has actually been awarded in Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN)?

Fellows recruited under the DNs must be enrolled in the doctoral programme and are expected to complete their studies if not during the project, at least soon after.

For DN-JDs, a formal letter of commitment, following the template provided, to award joint/double/multiple doctoral degrees is required in the proposal.

Since the doctoral degree may be awarded after the DN project has finished, it may not be feasible in all cases to check during the project lifetime whether the final degree was actually awarded. However, such checks may take place after the conclusion of the project.

Q28. What is the long-term leave allowance in the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN)?

In an MSCA DN, the long-term leave allowance includes personnel costs incurred by the beneficiaries but not reimbursed by the social security or other sources, in case of researchers'

leave longer than 30 consecutive days, including maternity, paternity, and parental, sick or special leave. See also the MSCA Work Programme.

The information will be added in the Mobility declaration and the request will be assessed by the European Research Executive Agency (REA) project officer. If necessary, an amendment has to be implemented to increase the maximum grant amount and/or extend the duration.

The long-term leave allowance shall be calculated as follows:

{(long-term leave allowance (i.e. living allowance + mobility allowance))

x (% of long-term leave allowance incurred by the beneficiary (=costs incurred by the beneficiary/long-term leave allowance))

x (number of months)}

Q29. In a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Network (DN) project, what is the role of invited visiting researchers? How can their related costs be reimbursed?

In an MSCA DN, visiting researchers, who are outstanding researchers in their field, should complement the expertise in the consortium. They typically may provide specific training to the researchers, contribute to summer schools, share their experience, etc. Their involvement should be clearly described in the proposal and duly justified in the context of the training programme. The reimbursement of their costs may be covered under the institutional 'Research Training and Networking' cost category.

Q30. How are management and indirect costs distributed between the beneficiaries in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) project?

In an MSCA DN, management and indirect costs refer to a unit cost of €1,200 per person-month that is to be used towards the management of the action. Their eligibility is linked to the eligibility of the costs of the recruited researchers declared by each beneficiary.

As with Research, Training and Networking costs, these amounts may be re-distributed among the consortium. For example, the consortium may agree in the Consortium Agreement that all beneficiaries will contribute to the costs that the coordinator incurs for the management of the whole action and consequently allocate a higher percentage to the coordinator. However, the modalities of this are left to the consortium to decide, no information or request has to be submitted to the European Research Executive Agency (REA).

It is highly advisable that the proposed beneficiaries address the distribution of these costs before submitting their proposal and subsequently address this issue in the Consortium Agreement which is deemed to be concluded prior to the signature of the grant agreement.

Q31. How will the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call budget be distributed?

All the DNs, including DN-IDs and DN-JDs, proposals are ranked under eight major panels (areas of research). The budget is allocated to each of these panels in proportion to the number of eligible proposals submitted to the panel.

Q32. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), do applicants have to declare in part A the person-months funded with own resources?

In an MSCA DN, where associated partners propose to fund their own participation in the action, or beneficiaries propose to fund additional person-months (over the 360 or 540 person-months limit) from another budget source, these person-months should not be indicated in Part A of the proposal, but instead they must be clearly indicated in Part B of the proposal. A clear explanation of this set-up and of the use of own resources should therefore be provided in Part B.

Q33. Are applicants required to indicate the amount of the estimated EU contribution in the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposal?

No, in an MSCA DN, the EU contribution will be automatically calculated based on the number of person-months indicated in Part A of the proposal using the rates, allowances and coefficients given in the MSCA Work Programme. The information listed in part A should be identical as the one reported in Part B of the proposal. In case of discrepancy, values from the Part A will be deemed to prevail.

It is crucial to respect the 40.0% rule (no more than 40.0% of the total EU financial contribution may be allocated to beneficiaries in the same country or to any one International European Research Organisation or International Organisation) as well as the fact that the overall EU contribution per Grant Agreement is limited to a maximum of:

- 360 person-months per network for Doctoral Networks (DN);
- 540 person-months per network for an Doctoral Networks-Industrial Doctorates (DN-ID) and Doctoral Networks-Joint Networks (DN-JD).

Failure to respect these limits will result in the proposal being declared ineligible.

Q34. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), is it possible to arrange secondments to associated partners in the same country where the PhD is hosted?

Yes, in an MSCA DN, secondments within the same country are permitted, although international secondments are strongly encouraged. For DN-ID, inter-sectoral secondments can also be intranational.

Q35. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), is virtual mobility allowed?

In an MSCA DN, virtual mobility can complement the physical mobility, facilitate long-distance collaboration and be an effective means to faster achieving research and training objectives.

These activities should be clearly described in the proposals, should be relevant, feasible and beneficial for the researchers, and in line with the project objectives.

Virtual mobility will not be considered as a regular secondment since it does not involve physical mobility. Therefore, it will not count towards the maximum duration of one third of the researcher's total recruitment period.

See also the MSCA Work Programme.

Q36. Under Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), how is the family status taken into account during the recruitment and is it possible to modify it in the course of the project (e.g. if a researcher has a child)?

Family is defined as persons linked to the researcher by (i) marriage, or (ii) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country or region where this relationship was formalised; or (iii) dependent children who are actually being maintained by the researcher (children for which the researcher is under a legal obligation under national law to support them). See also the MSCA Work Programme.

If the recruited doctoral candidate has or acquires family obligations during the action duration, i.e. persons linked to him/her by (i) marriage, or (ii) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country or region where this relationship was formalised; or (iii) dependent children who are actually being maintained by the researcher, the family allowance must be paid to him/her as well.

Compared to H2020, there will be an increase from 50% to 75% of the estimation of fellows receiving a family allowance at the proposal stage. This will hopefully cover all cases where a family allowance needs to be paid (even those cases where the family status changed during the

course of the project). In case the family allowance allocated to the project is insufficient, additional funds will be made available by the Commission and the max EU contribution will be increased.

Q37. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), who covers the costs for secondments?

In MSCA DN, secondments of six months or less which require mobility from the place of residence must be financed using the Research, Training and Networking costs in order to prevent an unreasonable financial burden for the recruited researchers. This includes at least the travel and accommodation costs. Costs for visa-related fees should also be covered by the same cost category. Longer secondments may also be supported in the same way (even though there is no legal obligation to do so). See also the Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Q38. Under Horizon Europe MSCA DN, is it possible to get an extension for the MSCA fellowship in order to allow the doctoral researchers to conclude their doctoral studies?

No, in MSCA DN the researchers can be appointed for a maximum duration of 36 months (full time equivalent), this applies to all MSCA DN, including Industrial Doctorates (IDs) and Joint Doctorates (JDs). In those countries where the duration of PhD study is formally 4 years, additional funding from other sources may be ensured by the participant in order to support the 4th year of doctoral studies.

Q39. Is it mandatory to appoint fellows for the maximum 36-month period under the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN)?

In a MSCA DN project, the minimum/maximum duration of the funded recruitment (on the basis of full-time work/secondment) is 3-36 months. See also the Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Although it is mandatory to respect those limits, beneficiaries are allowed to extend the contract to e.g. 48 months but those additional 12 months will not be part of the DN project and will need

to be covered with the beneficiaries' own resources. Shorter appointments (with a minimum duration of 3 months) must be carefully explained and justified. They will be assessed by the expert evaluators during the evaluation procedure bearing in mind the spirit of the Work programme which is to train “a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial, innovative and resilient doctoral candidates, able to face current and future challenges and to convert knowledge and ideas into products and services for economic and social benefit” as well as engage in a doctoral research programme.

Q40. In case of multiple recruitments in Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), is the mobility rule checked at the time of each recruitment?

No. In a MSCA DN project, if the researcher has a contract with more than one beneficiary, the mobility rule will apply to the beneficiary where the researcher is recruited for the first time in the action. See also the MSCA Work Programme and the Guide for Applicants.

Q41. Are multiple recruitments foreseen in Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) projects?

In order to respect all MSCA DN rules (e.g. all beneficiaries recruit at least one fellow) and Industrial Doctorates (ID) / Joint Doctorates (JD) specific rules (e.g. min 50% in the non-academic sector for ID), multiple recruitment should be foreseen.

The location of the premises of the recruiting beneficiary will have an influence on the fellow's salary in view of the different country correction coefficients (see Table 2 of the MSCA Work Programme 2021-2022).

It may also affect the eligibility of the proposal (see for example the 40.0% rule and the mandatory recruitment rule by each beneficiary above).

Applicants are invited to consider that in IDs and JDs fellows will have to spend long periods in different countries with different country coefficients. If not duly considered at proposal stage by choosing the most appropriate recruitment option (or the most appropriate recruiting beneficiary),

this might have negative implications on the capacity of the fellows to afford the cost of living during their mandatory secondments.

Please also note that in case of multiple recruitment, a mobility declaration should be submitted by each recruiting institution.

Example for ID: Beneficiary X (academic) recruits the fellow X for 18 months and beneficiary Y (non-academic) recruits fellow X for the remaining 18 months. Example for JD: a fellow is recruited by beneficiary X but in order to obtain a double degree, the fellow needs to be present for 12 months at the location of beneficiary Y. In this case, it would be advisable, if the country coefficient of beneficiary Y is higher than the country coefficient of beneficiary X to offer the fellow a contract of 24 months with beneficiary X and a contract of 12 months with beneficiary Y.

Q42. Which type of researchers can be recruited in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Network (DN)?

All researchers recruited in an MSCA DN must be doctoral candidates (i.e. not already in possession of a doctoral degree at the date of the recruitment) and undertake transnational mobility. For all recruitments, the eligibility of the researcher will be determined at the date of their first recruitment in the action. This status will not evolve over the lifetime of the action, even if they are recruited again at another beneficiary. Please check the MSCA Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Q43. Under Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), should the proposal Section 1 (Excellence) include information about individual research projects or should those be indicated in Section 3?

In an MSCA DN proposal, the recruited Researcher involvement should be indicated in table 1.3a (Section 1). Depending on your project set-up, the involvement of the researchers in a particular Work Package may be described in table 3.1a (Section 3). However a detailed description of the

individual research projects must be provided in table 3.1d (Section 3). Please ensure consistency between tables 1.3a and 3.1d. See also proposal Part B of the proposal template.

Q44. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN), what is the definition of secondment?

In an MSCA DN, secondment means a research training period spent by a fellow at the premises of a different beneficiary, an associated partner or an associated partner linked to a beneficiary included in the list of participants. The premises of the beneficiaries / associated partners / associated partners linked to a beneficiary must be independent from each other and therefore the secondment must involve physical mobility of the fellow. During their secondment, researchers receive supervision and training at the premises of the receiving beneficiary, associated partner or associated partners linked to a beneficiary.

Secondments should be differentiated from short visits, i.e. of a few days.

The difference is not only the "time spent" criterion, but it also depends on the purpose of the fellow's visit to the host institution. During short visits, fellows do not receive training and they are not supervised.

See also MSCA Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Q45. Will the evaluation of the Horizon Europe MSCA Industrial Doctorates (ID) and Joint Doctorates (JD) differ from that of Doctoral Networks (DN) types of action?

All Industrial Doctorates (IDs) and Joint Doctorates (JDs) MSCA DN proposals will be evaluated by experts in the scientific field(s) of the proposal in the same way Doctoral Networks are. In all cases, the award criteria will be used by the experts according to the implementation mode as indicated in the Work Programme. All DN proposals (irrespective of their implementation modality) will be ranked in eight scientific panels.

The budget is allocated to each of these panels in proportion to the number of eligible proposals submitted to the panel.

Q46. In the project proposal under Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) calls, what should be included in table 1.1 "Work Package List"?

Table 1.1 of the MSCA DN project proposal must list all of the Work Packages covering all aspects of the project. Depending on the size of the network, the scientific content can be presented in more than one research Work Package that should reflect the research objectives. A specific Work Package should be dedicated to training and it is also good practice to add separate Work Packages on management, exploitation and dissemination of results, as well as communication activities targeted to different audiences.

The number of Work Packages must be reasonable and commensurate with their content. Only brief headings and overviews of the Work Packages should be presented in Table 1.1. More details in terms of actual implementation should be provided in the tables under section 3.1 a under Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation.

See also REA website and part B of the proposal template.

Q47. Why is it necessary to select appropriate descriptors in the proposal Part A during submission of the proposal for a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call?

The descriptors will help the European Research Executive Agency (REA) to identify the most qualified and suitable experts to evaluate the proposal in question.

In the Electronic Submission Service, the applicant chooses the panel to which the proposal will be associated at the proposal stage (using the field "Scientific Panel" in section 1 of the proposal submission forms) and this should be considered as the core discipline. Additional descriptors are

used to define the other disciplines that may be involved. All descriptors and guidance are available on the REA website.

Q48. How should the training programme be structured and described in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) project proposal?

The MSCA DN proposal should describe the training programme, including both network-wide and local trainings. Network-wide training should be innovative in content and methods and contain multi-disciplinary aspects. It should offer training in research-related, as well as transferable skills and competences relevant for innovation and long-term employability (e.g. entrepreneurship, commercialisation of results, Intellectual Property Rights, communication) and provide the recruited researchers with enhanced career perspectives. Particular attention should be paid to the quality of supervision and mentoring arrangements as well as career guidance. See MSCA Guidelines on supervision.

In addition, the fellows may also follow training courses offered locally at the beneficiary (e.g. since they are enrolled in the local PhD programme). Please follow the Part B of the proposal template for training and proposal structure.

Q49. Can post-doctoral researchers be recruited in Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN)?

No, only doctoral candidates, not already in possession of a doctoral degree, are eligible to participate in all MSCA DN modalities. Researchers who have successfully defended their doctoral thesis but who have not yet formally been awarded the doctoral degree will not be considered eligible. Please check the MSCA Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Q50. Must all beneficiaries recruit doctoral candidates in the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposals?

All beneficiaries in the MSCA DN including the Industrial Doctorates (DN-IDs) and Joint Doctorates (DN-JDs) must recruit at least one doctoral candidate. They are required to host at their premises and supervise recruited researchers, or use associated partners linked to them to do so. Please check the MSCA Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Q51. Can an organisation participate as beneficiary in the consortium of a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) project without recruiting a fellow?

No, it cannot. In the MSCA Doctoral Networks, Industrial Doctorates and Joint Doctorates, all beneficiaries in the consortium must recruit at least one fellow. In summary, every beneficiary must recruit, host at their premises and supervise at least one researcher.

Associated partners and associated partners linked to a beneficiary are not allowed to recruit fellows.

See also the MSCA Work Programme and Guide for Applicants.

Q52. In Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) and Industrial Doctorates (DN-IDs) proposals, should the institution delivering the doctoral degree be identified in the proposal?

Yes, the entity entitled to award a doctoral degree must be clearly identified in the MSCA DN proposal and added as a beneficiary. Should none of the academic applicants be entitled to award a doctoral degree, a university or a consortium/grouping of academic/research institutions entitled to award a doctoral degree must be associated to the project as an associated partner or as an associated partner linked to a beneficiary.

Q53. How should individual research projects be structured and described in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposal?

In an MSCA DN proposal, the individual projects should constitute a collaborative research programme with strong inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary components. The project objectives and the expected results should be thoroughly described in the context of a doctoral training programme. See also part B of the proposal template.

Q54. Should the list of deliverables distinguish between scientific and management deliverables in Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposals?

Yes, in an MSCA DN proposal, deliverables should be divided into scientific deliverables and management, training, recruitment and dissemination deliverables. They should follow the structure of the Work Packages. See also the part B in the proposal template.

Deliverables should be spread throughout the project's lifetime to allow for an adequate monitoring of the action's progress. Note that the submission of these deliverables to the European Research Executive Agency (REA) is a contractual obligation.

Q55. What is meant by “Status of Research Premises” in the table under section 4 “Participating Organisations” of part B of the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposal?

In an MSCA DN proposal, the principle is that each beneficiary must have dedicated premises – owned or rented – to host and supervise the research work of the fellows. Therefore, a newly established campus company/university spin-off that neither owns nor rents premises would not be considered to have independent research premises, nor would a "letterbox company" or a company operating from a residential address. Associated partners hosting secondments should demonstrate that they have independent dedicated premises as described above.

It must be clear from the proposal where the recruited researchers are going to be hosted and the facilities and infrastructure that are available at that location. See also the part B template.

Q56. Is there a template of the letter of commitment for Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposals?

As a general rule, all associated partners must include a letter of commitment in Part B of the MSCA DN proposal to ensure their real and active participation in the proposed network. Such letters must follow the template available at the end of the MSCA DN proposal template, and should be signed by an authorised person, scanned and included in section B.5 of the DN proposal.

Applicants to DN-JD must also include in Part B of the proposal scanned letters of pre-agreement from the beneficiaries awarding doctoral degrees indicating their commitment to award joint, double or multiple doctoral degrees within the context of the proposed action. These letters should be signed by the beneficiary's authorised legal representative. They should also indicate agreement with the principle that the awarding of such degrees is a precondition for funding. A template for these letters is provided at the end of the part B template and must be followed by all DN-JD applicants. Letters of pre-agreement must be included in the PDF file (Part B, document 2); these should not be attached in a separate PDF file or as an embedded file since this makes them invisible.

The expert evaluators will be instructed to disregard the contribution of any associated partner for which no such evidence of commitment is submitted. In case the letter does not follow the template or fails to give enough information on the associated partner's role and/or enough assurance on their commitment in the project (e.g. no signature, wrong proposal references, outdated letter, etc.), the experts may penalise the proposal on these aspects under the implementation evaluation criterion. The same applies for the letters of pre-agreement in DN-JD proposals. Missing letters of pre-agreement will lead to the exclusion of the entity, which may affect the eligibility of the DN-JD proposal.

Q57. Where should a table of contents be included in Part B of the proposal for Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN)?

In an MSCA DN proposal, a table of contents should be included in Document 1 of Part B of the proposal. It should not be longer than one page in length. Section 1 of Part B must start on page 5, and sections 1 to 3 must not exceed 30 pages in length. The expert evaluators will be strictly instructed to disregard any content above these pages' limits. For more information, consult the instructions embedded in the part B of the proposal template.

Q58. What happens in case of discrepancy between the information contained in part A and the information contained in part B of the proposal (e.g. the list of participants or the budget) in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN)?

It is crucial that the information given in Part A of a MSCA DN proposal is identical to the information given in proposal Part B.

In case of discrepancy, values from the Part A will prevail, unless obvious clerical errors are detected and confirmed.

Q59. Under Horizon Europe, is there a recommended number of associated partners in an MSCA Doctoral Training (DN) proposal?

No, there is no recommended number of associated partners in an MSCA DN proposal. The number of partners will depend on each individual research training programme and on each associated partner's added value to the programme. Each associated partner should therefore demonstrate a real and active role in the project which should be clearly described in the proposal.

All associated partners must include a letter of commitment in the proposal, signed by an authorised representative to demonstrate their real and active participation in the proposed network. The letters, which must be included in Part B of the proposal, have to be printed on headed paper and signed in order to demonstrate the credibility of the organisation's commitment to the DN. The expert evaluators will be instructed to disregard the contribution of any associated

partner for which no such evidence of commitment is submitted with the proposal. In case the letter does not follow the template or fails to give enough information on the associated partner's role and/or enough assurance on their commitment in the project (e.g. no signature, wrong proposal references, outdated letter...), the experts may penalise the proposal on these aspects under the implementation evaluation criterion.

Q60. Under Horizon Europe, how many researchers may we recruit in an MSCA Doctoral Network (DN)?

Since the overall EU contribution for MSCA Doctoral Networks is limited to a maximum of 360 person-months and the duration of a researcher's contract is minimum 3 months and maximum 36 months, the maximum number of researchers that could be recruited with a 36 months contract is 10. Shorter researchers' contracts are allowed but not recommended.

For proposals in DN-ID (Industrial Doctorates) and DN-JD (Joint Doctorates) the overall EU contribution can go to a maximum of 540 person-months of funding (e.g. 15 researchers for 36 person-months).

Please check the MSCA Work Programme and the Guide for Applicants.

Q61. Can organisations from Third Countries and International Organisations participate in the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call?

Once the minimum eligibility conditions are fulfilled and provided that the conditions laid down in the Work Programme are met, other organisations from any country may participate – under the conditions set out in the Horizon Europe Programme Guide.

Therefore, the participation of organisations from Third Countries (TCs) and International Organisations (IOs) in the Doctoral Networks (DN) call is possible.

They can participate as “beneficiaries” to the grant agreement or ‘associated partners’.

To participate as a beneficiary, TCs (i.e. a country that is not a Member State or a country associated to Horizon Europe) are divided into two groups:

1) TCs listed in the Horizon Europe Programme Guide:

Organisations from these countries are eligible to receive funding provided that the minimum eligibility requirements of the consortium have been met. Please note that International European Research Organisation (IERO) are also eligible to receive funding from Horizon Europe.

'International European Research Organisation' (IERO) means an international organisation, the majority of whose members are EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe (see Article 2(14) of the Regulation No XXX establishing Horizon Europe - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination). For the purposes of DN, IERO are considered as legal entities established in a MS or AC other than those in which the other beneficiaries in the network are established. The same applies to the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) or an 'entity created under Union law' (see Article 9(2) of the Horizon Europe Rules for Participation Regulation). Examples of IERO include CERN and EMBL.

2) TCs not listed in the Horizon Europe Programme Guide and International Organisations (IO) will be eligible for funding if at least one of the two following conditions is met:

- the participation is deemed essential for carrying out the action by the Commission or the relevant funding body on the grounds that participation by the applicant has clear benefits for the consortium, such as:
 - outstanding competence/expertise
 - access to particular research infrastructure
 - access to particular geographical environments
 - access to particular data

Such funding is provided for under a bilateral scientific and technological agreement or any other arrangement between the Union and the international organisation or, for entities established in third countries, the country in which the legal entity is established.

Applicants wishing to include organisations from TCs not listed in the Horizon Europe Programme Guide or IOs as beneficiaries in their consortium should focus on demonstrating that their participation is essential for carrying out the proposed project.

Finally, organisations from any country may participate as “associated partners” in a DN project. Associated partners contribute to the implementation of the action, but do not sign the grant agreement. Associated partners may not employ (recruit) the researchers under the action. They may be used to provide training and host researchers, but only during secondments.

Q62. Under the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call, is it permitted to propose a network comprising only research organisations and companies as beneficiaries?

MSCA Doctoral Networks may be composed of only research organisations and companies. However, almost all Doctoral Networks (DN) have universities among the beneficiaries and/or associated partners so that PhD degrees can be awarded by these institutions.

For Joint Doctorates (JDs), the above-mentioned set-up is not allowed. At least three independent legal entities must be entitled to award doctoral degrees and at least two of the institutions conferring a joint, double or multiple doctoral degree must be established in an EU Member State and/or Horizon Europe Associated Country. For more details please see the relevant Work Programme.

Q63. Is non-academic sector participation essential in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) proposal?

Yes, the participation of the non-academic sector is considered essential. As the MSCA DN call aims to improve the employability of researchers through exposure to organisations in both the academic and non-academic sectors, an essential part of any DN is the involvement of organisations from different sectors (see also the MSCA Work Programme).

For Doctoral Networks-Industrial Doctorates (DN-IDs), note that the participation of the non-academic sector as a beneficiary is an eligibility criterion (in IDs, researchers must spend at least 50% of their time in the non-academic sector. Please note that intersectoral secondments can be intra-national. The degree of involvement of organisations from the non-academic sector will be assessed by the expert evaluators according to the evaluation criteria.

Q64. Does the Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call allow for mono-site consortia?

No, mono-site consortia are not allowed for the MSCA DN call under the Horizon Europe rules. However, mono-site doctoral programmes can now be co-funded under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND action. Please refer to the relevant Work Programme.

Q65. Which is the minimum number of participants in a Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call?

An MSCA DN must be composed of at least three independent legal entities, each established in a different EU Member State (MS) or Horizon Europe Associated Country (AC) and with at least one of them established in an EU MS. Above this minimum, the participation of other legal entities, including International European Research Organisation (IERO) and entities from Third Countries (TC), is possible under the conditions provided by the Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (see the Horizon Europe Programme Guide for more details).

DN-ID must be composed of at least three independent beneficiaries each established in a different EU MS or Horizon Europe AC and with at least one of them established in an EU MS. In addition, at least one independent beneficiary must come from the academic sector and at least one beneficiary from the non-academic sector.

A DN-JD must be composed of at least three independent beneficiaries each established in a different EU MS or Horizon Europe AC and with at least one of them established in an EU MS. In order to reach the objectives of DN-JD, at least three independent beneficiaries must be entitled

to award doctoral degrees, of which at least two institutions conferring a joint, double or multiple doctoral degree must be established in a MS and/or AC.

Q66. What is meant by 'academic and non-academic sector' in the context of the HORIZON MSCA Doctoral Networks (DN) call?

The definition is specific to the MSCA Work Programme.

'Academic sector' means public or private higher education establishments awarding academic degrees, public or private non-profit research organisations and International European Research Organisations (IERO).

'Non-academic sector' means any socio-economic actor not included in the academic sector and fulfilling the requirements of the Horizon Europe Rules for Participation.