



# **My experience with the Marie Skłodowska Curie-Actions of the European Commission**

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**My scientific career was boosted by MCSA...**

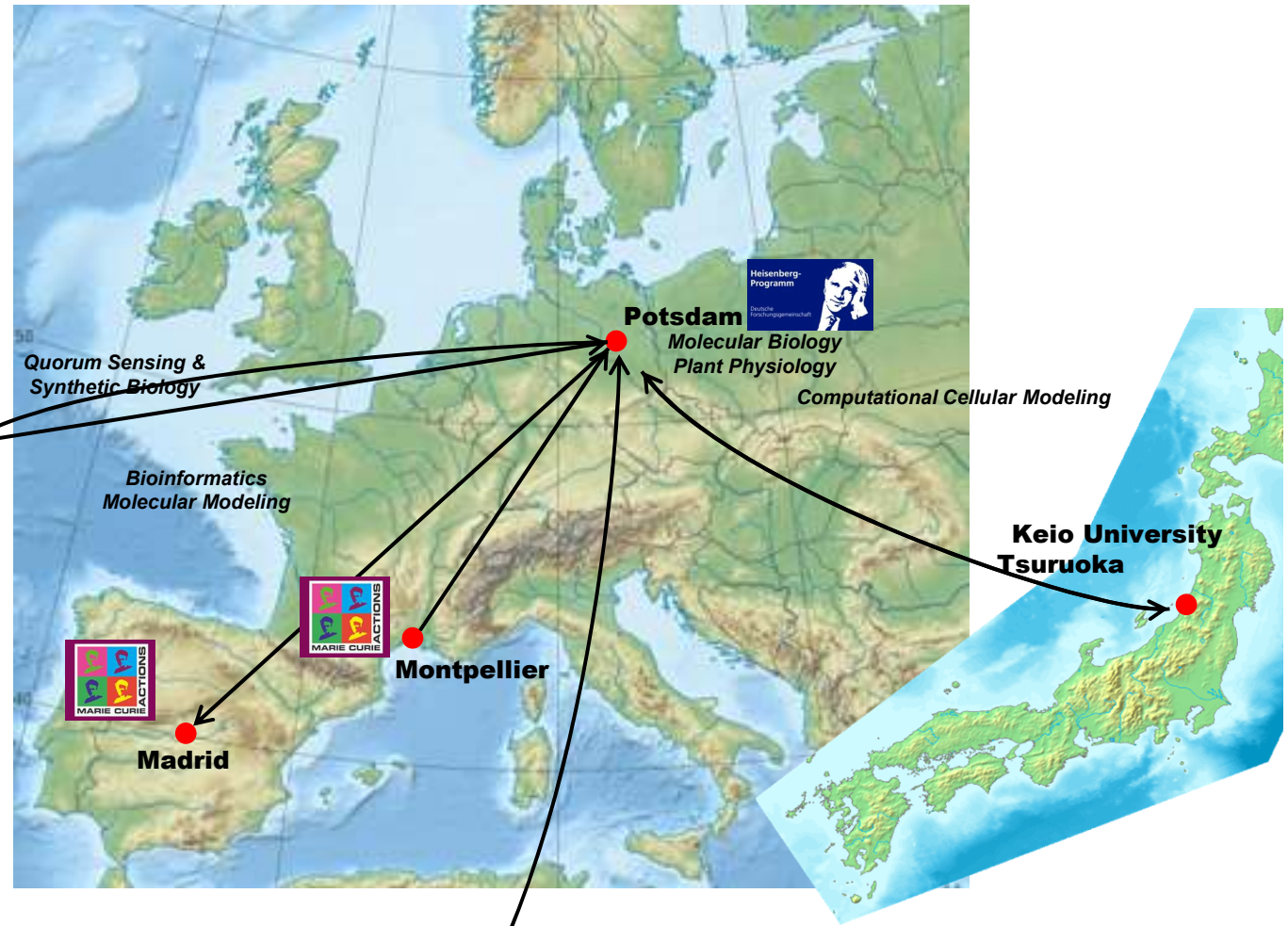


The MCS-fellowship allowed me

- to learn new techniques and
- to enlarge my scientific and personal horizon... (I learned a new language (French)!) I came as postdoc to an excellent laboratory with “my own money”

(→ high degree of independency and freedom)

# My scientific career was boosted by MCSA...



Quorum Sensing & Synthetic Biology

Bioinformatics  
Molecular Modeling

Heisenberg-Programm  
Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

**Potsdam**  
Molecular Biology  
Plant Physiology

Computational Cellular Modeling

**Montpellier**

**Keio University Tsuruoka**

Molecular Biology  
Plant Physiology

Physics

Biophysics

MCS-Career Integration Grant was essential

- To cover my stay in Spain
- My wife received a Marie-Curie-Cofound fellowship

**My scientific career was boosted by MCSA...**



*Bioinformatics  
Molecular Modeling*

*Molecular Biology  
Plant Physiology*

*Physics*

*Quorum Sensing &  
Synthetic Biology*

*Computational Cellular Modeling*

*Biophysics*



# **... a MSCA-fellowship of the European Commission is a big chance**

**For me, it opened many doors and new horizons.  
I stopped to consider myself as a German and felt European, instead.**

**Since some years I am evaluating MSCA-fellowship applications...**

**MSCA are under continuous evolution.**



## MSCA-fellowships are for scientists at **ALL (experienced) career stages**

**Each application is evaluated according to the career-stage of the applicant.**

**Important:**

- **Transnational mobility**
- **Training / Transfer of knowledge (bi-lateral!!!)**
- **From outside Europe: bringing new expertise to Europe**

**ALL scientific disciplines, subdivided into 8 Panels:**

- Chemistry (CHE)
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC)
- Economic Sciences (ECO)
- Information Science and Engineering (ENG)
- Environment and Geosciences (ENV)
- Life Sciences (LIF)
- Mathematics (MAT)
- Physics (PHY)





## MSCA-fellowships are not only for Europeans

MSCA INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS		EUROPEAN (EF)				GLOBAL
		STANDARD EF	CAR	RI	SE	GF
EXPERIENCED RESEARCHERS	Nationality	ANY	ANY	MS, AC or long-term residents	ANY	MS, AC or long-term residents
	Mobility	From ANY country to MS or AC	From ANY country to MS or AC	From TC <b>directly</b> to MS or AC ( <i>location of the host institution</i> )	From ANY country to MS or AC	From ANY country to TC then to MS/AC
		≤ 12 months in the last 3 years	≤ 36 months in the last 5 years	≤ 36 months in the last 5 years	≤ 36 months in the last 5 years	≤ 12 months in the last 3 years
	Career break in research	-	at least 12 months within 18 months prior to call deadline	-	-	-
PARTICIPANTS	Beneficiary	MS or AC	MS or AC	MS or AC	MS or AC <b>Non-academic only</b>	MS or AC
	Entity with a capital or legal link	MS or AC	MS or AC	MS or AC	MS or AC <b>Non-academic only</b>	MS or AC
	Partner Organisa- tion	MS or AC	MS or AC	MS or AC	MS or AC (both academic and non-academic)	<b>Outgoing phase (mandatory): TC</b>  <b>Secondment (optional): MS or AC</b>
DURATION (months)		12 - 24	12 - 36	12 - 24	12 - 24	<b>12 to 24 + 12</b>
SCIENTIFIC AREAS		8	8	8	8	8
NUMBER OF RANKING LISTS		8	1	1	1	8
BUDGET (total € 273 million) <b>2018</b>		€ 220 million			€ 8 million	€ 45 million



## Evaluation criteria

### 3.2.1 CRITERION 1: EXCELLENCE

EXCELLENCE is about:

- the quality and novelty of the research;
- the training activities in the project;
- the capacity of the researcher, the scientific supervisor and their interaction.

**50%**

### 3.2.2 CRITERION 2: IMPACT

IMPACT refers to the impact on the fellow's career development and the dissemination and communication activities.

**30%**

### 3.2.3 CRITERION 3: IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION is about the quality of the work plan, including the allocation of tasks and resources, and project management.

**20%**





## Evaluation scale

<b>EXCELLENT.</b> The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.	<b>5</b>	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>Excellent</b></p> <p><b>Very Good</b></p> <p><b>Good</b></p> <p><b>Fair</b></p> <p><b>Poor</b></p> </div>
<b>VERY GOOD.</b> The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.	<b>4</b> 4.9 ↕ 4.0	
<b>GOOD.</b> The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.	<b>3</b> 3.9 ↕ 3.0	
<b>FAIR.</b> The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.	<b>2</b> 2.9 ↕ 2.0	
<b>POOR.</b> The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.	<b>1</b> 1.9 ↕ 1.0	
The proposal <b>FAILS</b> to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.	<b>0</b>	

**Highly competitive: An average of 4.5/4.6 might not be sufficient for funding!**



INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS 2018 - ASSESSMENT GRID	PROPOSAL NUMBER/ACRONYM: -----	ASSESSMENT					
		Fail	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
<b>EXCELLENCE</b>	<b>1</b>						
Quality and credibility of the research/innovation project, level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects	<b>1.1</b>						
<b>Are the state-of-the-art, specific objectives and an overview of the action provided and relevant?</b>	1.1						
Is the proposed research methodology and approach credible (in view of the type of research / innovation activities proposed)?	1.1						
Is the planned research original and innovative? Will the action contribute to advance the state-of-the-art within the research field (i.e. new concepts, approaches or methods)?	1.1						
Where applicable, are there interdisciplinary aspects to consider?	1.1						
Where applicable, is the gender dimension in research content well addressed (i.e. in research activities where human beings are involved as subjects or end-users)?	1.1						
Quality and appropriateness of the training and of the two way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	<b>1.2</b>						
<b>Is the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host institution outlined and credible?</b>	1.2						
<i>For Global Fellowships only</i> , does the proposal explain how the newly acquired skills and knowledge will be transferred back to Europe?	1.2						
Are training activities described and relevant? [NOTE: do NOT penalize the proposal in case there is no Career Development Plan]	1.2						
Quality of the supervision and of the integration in the team/institution	<b>1.3</b>						
<b>Are the qualifications and experience of the supervisor well described and adequate, taking into account their level of experience on the research topic and their track record of work (e.g. main international collaborations, experience in supervising/training especially PhD, postdoctoral researchers)?</b>	1.3						
Do the hosting arrangements allow for a good integration of the researcher in the team/institution to maximize knowledge and skills generated from the fellowship? Are the nature and the quality of the research group/environment as a whole outlined? Are international networking opportunities offered?	1.3						
<i>For Global Fellowships only</i> , are the hosting arrangements at the partner organisation adequate to accommodate the researcher?	1.3						
Potential of the researcher to reach or re-enforce professional maturity/independence during the fellowship	<b>1.4</b>						
<b>Will the researcher's existing professional experience, talents and proposed research contribute to their development as an independent researcher during the fellowship?</b>	1.4						
Are the new competences and skills that will be acquired during the fellowship relevant to the researcher's profile? [NOTE: fellowships will be awarded to the most talented researchers as shown by the proposed research and their track record <i>in relation to their level of experience.</i> ]	1.4						



## Biggest mistakes

- Applicants do not provide all necessary information**  
 (The proposal needs to provide on max.10 pages substantial answers to ALL the questions in the evaluation grid)

<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Enhancing the future career prospects of the researcher after the fellowship</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Will the planned research and training activities have an impact on the future career prospects of the researcher after the fellowship? i.e. what is the added value of the fellowship?	2.1	
How can the new competences and skills (as explained in 1.4) make the researcher more successful in their long-term career?	2.1	
<b>Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
How will the new knowledge generated by the action be disseminated and exploited? Is the potential impact realistic?	2.2	
Is the strategy for targeting peers (scientific, industry and other actors, professional organisations, policy makers, etc.) and the wider community clear, consistent and appropriate?	2.2	
Where applicable, does the proposal describe potential commercialisation, and how intellectual property rights will be dealt with?	2.2	
<b>Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Will the planned public engagement activities contribute to creating awareness of the performed research? Example of outreach activities: Internet presence, press articles and participation in European Researchers' Night events.	2.3	
Will the research and results be made known to the public in such a way they can be understood by non-specialists?	2.3	



## Biggest mistakes

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<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>3</b>	
<i>Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources</i>	<b>3.1</b>	
Are the work planning and mobilised resources appropriate to ensure that the research and training objectives are achieved?	3.1	
Is the number of person-months planned and requested for the project appropriate in relation to the proposed activities?	3.1	
Is a Gantt chart included and clear? Does it cover all planned activities? Does it include at least one work package? Where applicable, does it include major deliverables, milestones and secondments? [NOTE: there is no fixed template provided]	3.1	
<i>Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures, including risk management</i>	<b>3.2</b>	
Will the organisation and management structure (including support services), as well as the progress monitoring mechanisms put in place, ensure that objectives are reached?	3.2	
Does the proposal adequately address the research and/or administrative risks that might endanger reaching the action objectives and the contingency plans to be put in place should risk occur?	3.2	
Where applicable, if entities with a capital or legal link to the beneficiary are involved, is their contribution well explained?	3.2	
<i>Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure)</i>	<b>3.3</b>	
Is the active contribution (main tasks and commitment) of the beneficiary to the research and training activities clear?	3.3	
<i>For Global Fellowships only</i> , is the active contribution (main tasks and commitment) of the partner organisation clear?	3.3	
Are the infrastructure, logistics and facilities offered suitable for the good implementation of the action?	3.3	



## Biggest mistakes

- Applicants do not provide all necessary information**  
 (The proposal needs to provide on max. 10 pages substantial answers to ALL the questions in the evaluation grid)
- Too much self-confidence**  
 (“I have Nature/Science papers, so I will certainly get it!”)
- Too few self-confidence**  
 (“I don’t have Nature/Science papers, so I do not have any chance.”)
- No or poor coordination with the host institution**  
 (European institutions, which have chances to host a MCSA-fellow, usually have an office that supports the applicants in writing the technical/administrative parts of the proposal. A MCSA-fellowship is not only a distinction for the applicant but also for the host!)
- A proposal written under time-pressure is almost a guarantee for failure.**  
 (Plan well 6-12 months in advance for an excellent proposal)

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<b>OVERALL COMMENTS</b>						
Based on the information available in the proposal, does the beneficiary possess the basic operational capacity to carry out the proposed work? The operational capacity of the beneficiary relates to whether it has, or will have in due time, the operational resources and capacity to implement the action. This is the purpose of the table in Section 5 of Part B.						Y/N
Does this proposal involve the use of hESC? If yes, please state whether the use of hESC is, or is not, in your opinion, necessary to achieve the scientific objectives of the proposal and the reasons why. Alternatively, please also state if it cannot be assessed whether the use of hESC is necessary or not because of a lack of information.						Y/N
Were there excess pages that could not be evaluated?						Y/N



**Thank You for Your Attention**

**¿ Questions ?**