

# Marie Curie International Reintegration Grants (IRG)

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Warning:** *The answers to Frequently Asked Questions do not supersede the rules and conditions laid out, in particular, in Council and Parliament Decisions relevant to the Sixth Framework Programme, the Specific Programme, the Human Resources and Mobility Work Programme, Calls for proposals, or the Guidelines on the evaluation and selection of proposals. These documents are available at: <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/find-doc.htm>*

### 1. General information

#### **Q: What are Marie Curie International Reintegration Grants (IRG)?**

A: This action aims at attracting European researchers who are carrying out research in third countries to return to a host organisation located in the EU or in Associated States. The project can, amongst other things, address research activities, training, teaching, transfer of knowledge, commercial exploitation, diffusion, or development of co-operation with the scientific and/or industrial sector of the third country from which the researcher is returning.

#### **Q: Who can apply?**

A: Experienced researchers from the EU or Associated States who have carried out research outside Europe for at least five years and who wish to return to Europe can apply. They should not have spent more than one year in any Member State or Associated State during the previous three years.

#### **Q: Who is responsible to the European Commission for the reintegration programme?**

A: The host organisation will have to sign the IRG contract with the European Commission whereby it commits itself to engage the researcher for at least three years in order to carry out a research project.

#### **Q: Who pays what?**

A: The Marie Curie grant is a lump sum to be used as a contribution to the scientific costs relating to the researcher's project at the reintegration host. The salary of the fellow must be paid by the host institution.

#### **Q: How does it work?**

A: The researcher applies to the Commission jointly with the host institution. The proposal should be based on a well-defined research project. If it is selected, the Commission signs a contract with the host which will commit it to ensuring an effective and lasting reintegration of the researcher for a period of at least three years.

#### **Q: Which research topics are supported?**

A: Proposals from all areas of scientific and technological research of interest to the European Community are welcome; there are no priority areas. However, fields of research within the scope of the EURATOM programme or fields of research with military applications may not be eligible for funding. This does not exclude fundamental research in the field of nuclear physics.

**Q: When to apply**

A: An open call for proposals was published on 15 October 2004 with closure dates of 19 January 2005, 19 April 2005, 19 July 2005, 19 October 2005, 19 January 2006, 19 April 2006 and 19 July 2006, at 17.00 (Brussels local time). Proposals can be submitted at any time and will be evaluated in batches following each of these closing dates.

**Q: How to apply?**

A: Interested researchers should first read the documents from the InfoPack available for each call for proposals on the CORDIS website:

[http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call\\_details.cfm?CALL\\_ID=165](http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=165). The relevant legal documents (listed in chapter VII of the Guide for Proposers) will also help applicants to understand better the evaluation process, rules of participation, contractual and financial issues, etc. The application is made through the on-line Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS):

<http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/subprop.cfm>

## 2. Host organisations

**Q: In which country should the Marie Curie researcher look for a return host organisation in the framework of the IRG?**

A: Host organisations should be located in an EU Member State or an Associated State.

**Q: What are the characteristics of eligible host organisations?**

A: The eligible host institutions for Marie Curie International Reintegration Grants are organisations active in research or researcher training located in EU Member States or Associated States. The following types of research organisation can take part:

- National organisations (e.g. universities, research centres, etc.)
- Commercial concerns, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- Non-profit or charitable organisations (e.g. NGOs, trusts, etc.)
- International European interest organisations (e.g. CERN, EMBL, etc.)
- The European Commission's Joint Research Centre

**Q: Can the host organisation be a big industrial company or an SME?**

A: The host institution can be an industrial company including an SME provided they have all the necessary infrastructure, human resources, etc. needed to run a three-year research project. The quality of the host institution is also one of the evaluation criteria and should be described in the project proposal.

**Q: What are the contractual commitments of the host organisation in the researcher's reintegration country towards the European Commission?**

A: The European Commission signs a contract with the (re)integration host in a Member State or Associated State, which commits it to ensuring an effective and lasting reintegration (attested by adequate legal means) of the researcher (for at least three years). Evidence that researchers will be integrated on a longer-term basis in the (re)integration host will be taken into account in a positive way during evaluation.

### 3. Eligible researchers

**Q: Who can apply?**

A: Experienced researchers from the EU or Associated States can apply who have carried out research outside Europe for at least five years, with or without having benefited from EU financial support, and who wish to return to Europe. They should not have spent more than one year in any Member State or Associated State during the previous three years, with the exception of short stays, holidays, parental leave, sick leave or home leave, etc.).

**Q: What level of experience is required of eligible researchers?**

A: To be eligible, researchers must have at least four years of full-time research experience since gaining a university degree/diploma giving them access to doctoral studies or a PhD.

**Q: Are European researchers who, at a relevant closing date, have carried out research in a third country for less than five years also eligible for the IRG?**

A: No, the mobility rule is strictly respected! However, they are eligible to apply to the Marie Curie Intra-European fellowships (EIF). Those who can provide evidence that they have legally resided and have had their principal activity (work, studies, etc.) in a third country for at least four of the last five years (immediately prior to the deadline for submission of proposals) will also be allowed to apply for an Intra-European fellowship (EIF) in their country of origin.

**Q: Is a researcher who already has a new position in a host organisation from a Member State or Associated State after five years in a third country also eligible to apply for an IRG?**

A: Yes, if he or she has spent less than one year in the Member State or Associated State at the relevant closing date, as foreseen in the call for proposals.

**Q: Does the Commission carry out pre-checks, on a one-to-one basis, regarding a candidate's eligibility?**

A: No, it is up to the candidate to present the information on his/her research and mobility/training experience in a way that the external evaluators will be satisfied that he/she complies with the minimum requirements. For more specific advice, applicants are invited to contact their National Contact Point at <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/ncp.htm>

### 4. Project implementation

**Q: What is the average duration between a proposal's submission closure date and the signing of the contract between the European Commission and the host institution?**

A: It usually takes six months from the deadline for proposal submissions until the signing of the contract.

**Q: Is it a problem if a reintegration project starts before the Commission's decision about the IRG proposal?**

A: The project should normally start after the contract between the host organisation and the Commission has been signed. The start date of the project could however be a fixed date before the contract signature.

**Q: What is the minimum number of months for an IRG project?**

A: The duration of the project to be funded by the Commission is 24 months. However, the project could be longer than that and in any case there should be a commitment by the researcher and the host organisation that reintegration will last for at least 3 years.

**5. Financial and contractual aspects**

**Q: What does the funding cover?**

A: It consists of a maximum grant of €80 000 for a period of two years. This sum is to be used as a contribution to the scientific costs relating to the researcher's project at the reintegration host and CANNOT be used for the researcher's salary.

**Q: Is it possible to pay the salary of the returning researcher through an externally funded research project (by the European Commission or other international or national public organisation)?**

A: Yes, there is no restriction on the source of the funding. The host institution has to provide evidence that there is a contractual commitment with the researcher for a minimum of two years.

**Q: Are there any specific requirements regarding the three-year work contract with the return host organisation, such as a minimum monthly salary, number of hours' work per week, etc.?**

A: The contract between the researcher and the host organisation should be in conformity with local legislation.

**6. Proposal preparation and submission**

**Q: How to apply**

A: Interested researchers should first read the documents from the InfoPack available for each call for proposals on the CORDIS website:

[http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call\\_details.cfm?CALL\\_ID=165](http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=165). The relevant legal documents (listed in chapter VII of the Guide for Proposers) will also help applicants to understand better the evaluation process, rules of participation, contractual and financial issues, etc. The application is made through the on-line Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS):

<http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/subprop.cfm>

**Q: Who should register as the proposal coordinator in the EPSS?**

A: It is strongly recommended that the potential research fellow (the individual researcher) registers as the proposal coordinator for the purposes of the EPSS system, and applies for the coordinator user name and password. By doing so, the fellow will receive a username and a password which enables them to write all sections of the proposal. They will also receive a 'partner' password which can be passed on to the host organisation so that the host can enter their own details on page A2.

If the host organisation applies for the coordinator user name and password, the fellow will neither be able to enter his or her own details nor complete part B unless the host shares the coordinator password with the fellow. (The partner password is not sufficient as it allows access to the A2 form only.)

When using the EPSS system, on the web page called 'Part A' the pages of the proposal are represented by three links labelled A1, A2 and A3. Users will note that the name of the co-

ordinator appears next to the A2 form. This simply indicates that that form belongs to the proposal being created for that coordinator. Details of the host organisation must be entered into the A2 form.

**Q: When filling in the registration form for the EPSS, how do applicants choose the theme that corresponds to the Marie Curie IRG?**

A: The ‘themes’ are available on the relevant call information page. For example, for IRG go to the call page for IRG and select ‘Areas and instruments addressed within this call’ and the activity code Mobility-4.2 will appear. The same applies to other Marie Curie actions. Selecting the theme is not critical for the registration and will not influence the proposal submission in any way.

**Q: Should the yearly budgetary breakdown related to the implementation of the project and the planned research activities cover the full duration of the project or only the first two years supported by the IRG?**

A: It is recommended that this information be provided for the full duration of the project since it would further emphasise the serious preparations being made for the reintegration programme.

**Q: Should the proposal include a draft work contract, including a salary for at least two years, for the applicant individual researcher in the host organisation in the return country?**

A: No, it is not compulsory to attach such a document at the submission stage but it should be specified in Part B of the proposal that the host is ready to provide contracting arrangements with the researcher for a minimum of three years, if the proposal is successful. Evidence of the host institution’s commitment to the researcher will be verified by the European Commission during the negotiation phase.

**Q: Can a researcher apply for an Intra-European fellowship (EIF) to complement the IRG for the same project?**

A: There is no restriction in applying for an EIF to complement an IRG grant and vice versa as long as there is no duplication of funding.

## 7. Evaluation

**Q: Approximately how long does the evaluation process take?**

A: The total duration is between four and six months, including evaluation and contract preparation.

**Q: How are proposals evaluated? Who are the evaluators? How many evaluators assess each proposal? How are evaluators selected? Does everybody have access to the guidelines for evaluators?**

A: The Guidance Notes for Evaluators address these issues in detail. The general principles are set out in the Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Selection Procedures (the ‘Evaluation Manual’). These documents are available from the call page [http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call\\_details.cfm?CALL\\_ID=165](http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=165)

**Q: What happens after the publication of the preliminary evaluation results?**

A: The European Commission takes a formal decision about the final evaluation results and informs each proposer personally about the status of his/her proposal. Successful proposers are then invited to enter into negotiations.

**Q: Are any statistics available from the first IRG call for proposals with respect to the number of applications submitted and the number that were successful?**

A: For the first closing dates in 2003 and 2004, the number of proposals submitted for each call ranged between 30 and 80, approximately 95% of which were eligible. At the end of each evaluation, the success rate of every batch of proposals has been over 85%.