

Euraxess: Grants in Practice 2018

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Quick introduction about myself:



Lessons I have learned writing a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Individual Fellowship proposal.

- Organizational
- Writing
- General

First things first: Organizational duties

- Get in contact with the host institution (e.g. grant administration) **early**. They are able to provide a lot of help - you are not alone. Remember **summer holidays** (conferences...) might hamper ready progress.
- Set up your **EU account** right from the beginning. A lot of things will become far more understandable and the grant administrators can get started to upload information to your profile.
- **Gather MSCA IF applications from peers**. The more examples you can analyze (also unsuccessful applications are helpful) the better.
- Be in touch with your future host, and get their **approval** for the proposed project and final proposal (**fix dates** of when you will send them drafts and make sure the host is aware of the deadlines).
- Ask people to **proof read** and comment on your proposal (including comprehensibility, English language and how convincing it is).

Don't underestimate the time and start early

The actual writing

The science part

... and the rest

The fun part: Science

Before starting:

- Host must agree to your idea
- Writing the scientific part should be rather straight forward, since it is your idea and you already convinced future host.

Here are a few tips:

- Choose a project that is **realistically doable in only 2 years**. Thus, build on previous progress and avoid too many uncertainties.
- The structure/story should be very **linear and simplistic** – not branching out.
- Provide a very **concise literature summary** to show that you are aware of the progress in the research field.
- Formulate a **clear question** and elaborate on why it is important to find an answer to this question
- Summarize the **research methodology** of the project. Highlight what is special or new about your approach.
- Summarize the **key advances** you will achieve in a final statement highlighting the innovative aspects.

Time 2 weeks

The not-so-fun parts – aka “homework”

These parts (including 1.2-1.4) are not so much about science but rather mentioning the relevant points in the right sections. Use the H2020 MSCA IF guide (from EU website).

- Collect relevant **information about future host** (e.g. number of publications, supervision of postdocs, funding, skills)
- Vocabulary list with handy **buzz words**: cutting edge, interdisciplinary, synergistic, eminent ...
- You need to sell your future host, yourself, and how you and your career will benefit from an MSCA IF. Therefore **don't be shy!**
- Collect ideas on how you will disseminate your results in your community and general public. Some are generic (e.g. Presentation at conferences, papers) for others (especially for general public) you can be more creative and/or contact **public engagement responsible** from university or institute.
- Leave enough space for preparing a complete and **foresightful contingency plan**.
- In your CV highlight **attributes that are important for the proposed project**. Your CV will be evaluated with regard to project.

Time 2 weeks

General Aspects

- Plan in advance the **number of pages** you would like to dedicate to each section. A good guide line is the weight of each section for the final score.
- Good **formatting**.
- Include colorful **figures/schemes** if applicable. Helps understanding and breaks up the text
- **Highlight** important aspects (e.g. bold, underline, italique but don't overdo).
- Be **simple**: Simple sentences, simple story, simple explanations.
- Be to the point as much as possible
- Find a good **title** and acronym

Thank you!