

Call 2025

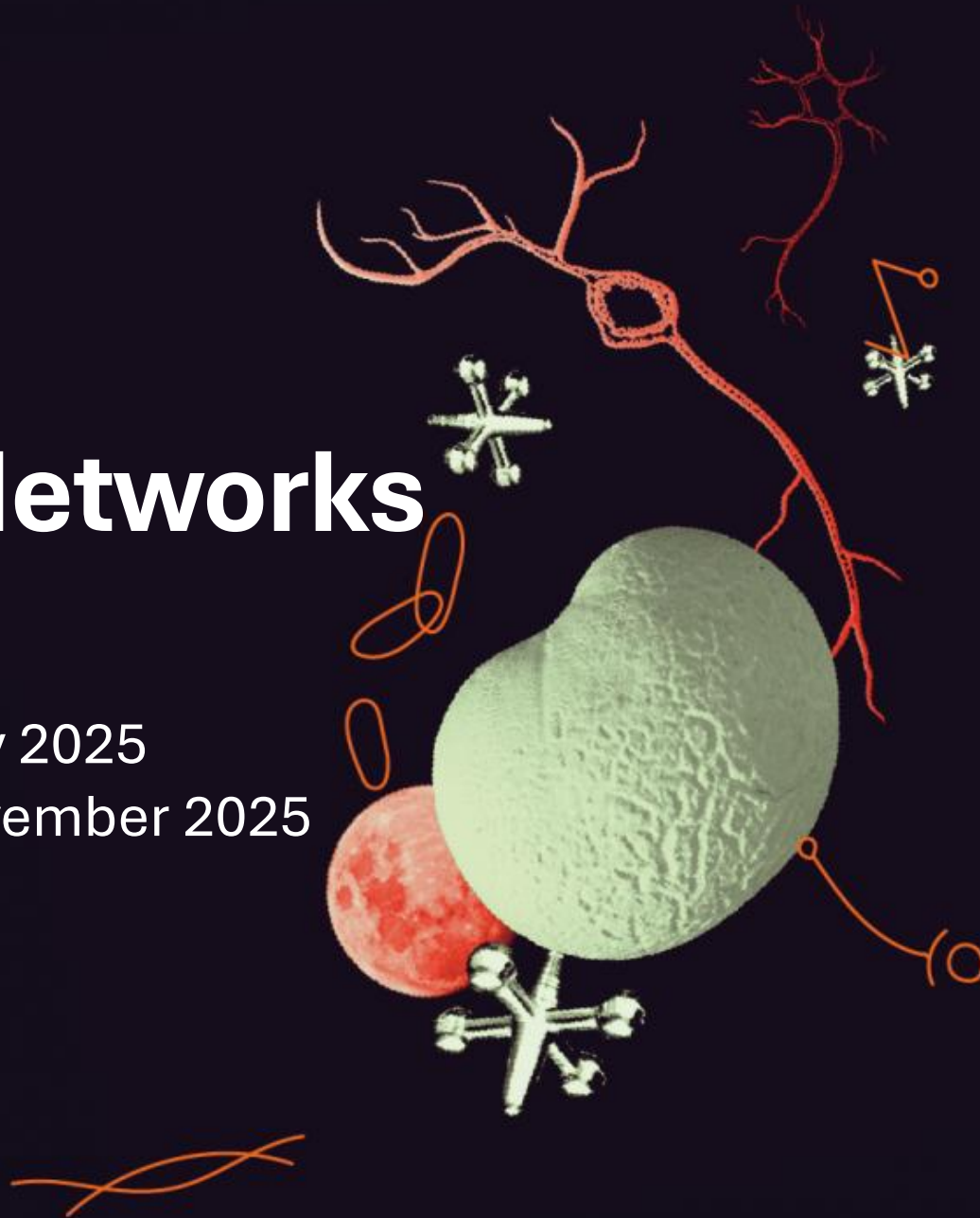
Doctoral Networks

Opening

28 May 2025

Closing

25 November 2025



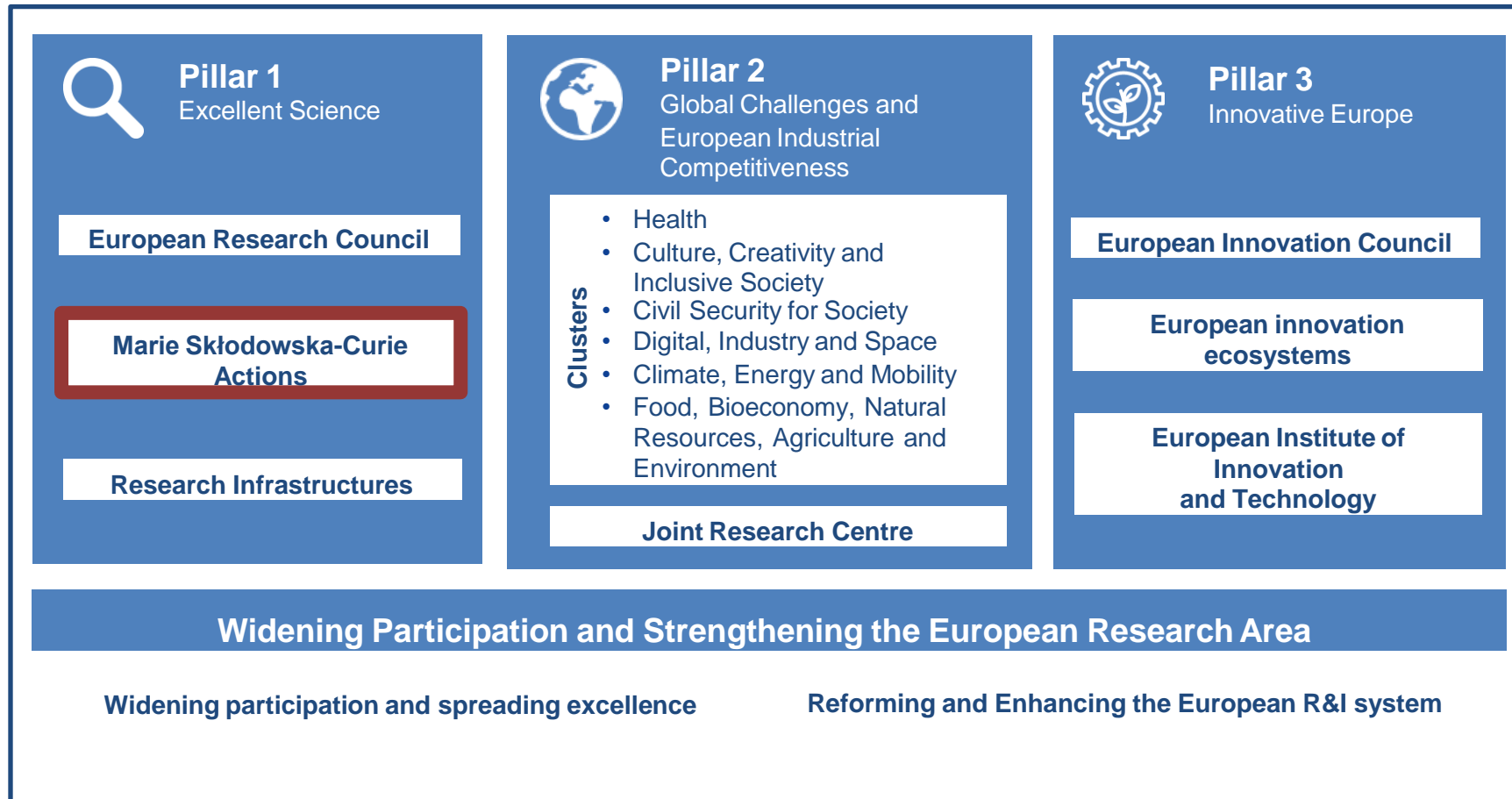
Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions in Horizon Europe

General information on Doctoral Networks

MSCA key features

- **Support the mobility, training and career development of researchers from all over the world** through excellent doctorates, postdoctoral fellowships and collaborative projects
- Stimulating **international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary** cooperation. Participation of **non- academic sector**, especially industry and SMEs
- For researchers at **every stage** of their career
- Support excellent research in all domains (**bottom-up approach**)
- Promotion of **attractive working and employment** conditions (financing rate up to 100%)
- Impacting **researcher careers, organisations, structures**

MSCA in Horizon Europe



Excellent Science (Pillar 1): reinforcing and extending the excellence of the Union’s science base

MSCA 2021-2027

1. MSCA Doctoral Networks

→ *networks training PhD candidates*

2. MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

→ *postdoctoral researchers*

3. MSCA Staff Exchanges

→ *any type of research(-related) staff*

4. MSCA COFUND

→ *co-funding for training programmes*

5. MSCA and Citizens

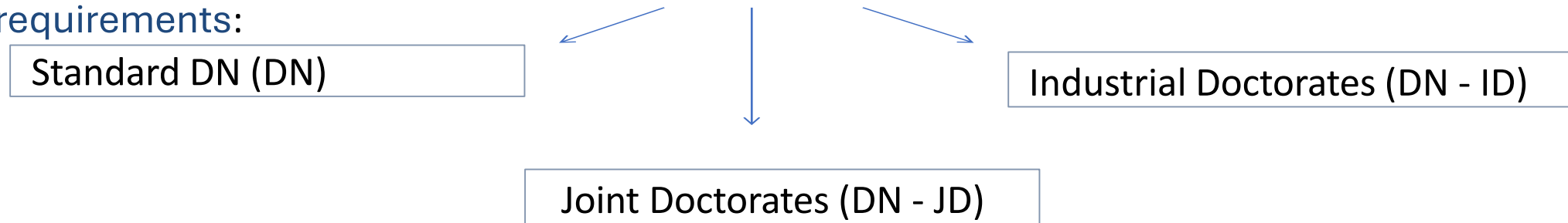
→ *public outreach events*



MSCA Doctoral Networks (1/3)

DN proposals may take one of three forms, each with different participation

requirements:



Focus on

- **career development plan**
- **supervision**
- **training: research and transferable skills**

MSCA Doctoral Networks (2/3)

- **Consortia**
 - **partnerships** of universities, research institutions and research infrastructures, businesses including SMEs, and other socio-economic actors
 - at least **three independent legal entities**, each established in a different MS or AC; minimum of 1 beneficiary from a MS (on top of this minimum, any entity from any third country can join)
- **Target group**
 - **doctoral candidates**, i.e. researcher without a doctoral degree at the date of the recruitment
- **Size**
 - **Up to 540 person-months**
- **Duration**
 - **Programme**: max. 48 months
 - **Fellowship**: between 3 and 36 months
 - **Secondments**: up to 1/3 of the fellowship duration

MSCA Doctoral Networks (3/3)

- Unit contributions

MSCA Doctoral Networks	Contributions for recruited researchers per person-month					Institutional unit contributions per person-month	
	Living allowance	Mobility allowance	Family allowance (if applicable)	Long-term leave allowance (if applicable)	Special needs allowance (if applicable)	Research, training and networking contribution	Management and indirect contribution
	EUR 4010	EUR 710	EUR 660	EUR 4720 x % covered by the beneficiary	requested unit ¹²⁵ x (1/number of months)	EUR 1600	EUR 1200

A country correction coefficient applies to the living allowance in order to ensure equal treatment and purchasing power parity for all researchers. This coefficient is the one applicable to the country of the recruiting beneficiary-

MSCA DN's objectives

The objective of Doctoral Networks is to implement **doctoral programmes** by **partnerships of organisations** from **different sectors** across Europe and beyond, to train **highly skilled** doctoral candidates, stimulate their **creativity**, enhance their **innovation** capacities and boost their **employability** in the long-term.



MSCA DN's expected impacts

- 🎯 Strengthen Europe's human capital base in R&I by training **highly-skilled doctoral candidates** (DCs)
- 🎯 Improve the attractiveness of researchers' careers notably through **better working and employment conditions** of doctoral candidates in Europe
- 🎯 Enhance talent and knowledge circulation across the R&I landscape, through **inter-sectoral, interdisciplinary** and **international mobility**
- 🎯 **Increase Europe's attractiveness** as a leading research destination
- 🎯 Enhance the **quality of R&I** contributing to Europe's sustainable competitiveness
- 🎯 Establish **sustainable collaboration** between academic and non-academic organisations
- 🎯 Foster the culture of **open science, innovation** and **entrepreneurship**

Key points





Key points to be considered during proposal preparation (1/2)

- ⚙ The project's maximum duration has to be 48 months
- ⚙ Fellowships duration 36 months and typical enrollment in a doctoral programme=> Tailor the individual project based on this information
- ⚙ The recruitment period goes from month 7 to 42: the first 6 months are planned for recruitment, the last 6 months for reporting and as a buffer in case of delayed recruitment.
- ⚙ Size of the consortium recommended between 6 and 10 beneficiaries.
- ⚙ The overall EU contribution per GA is limited to a maximum of 540 PM per network (max 15 DCs).
- ⚙ Max 40.0% of the total budget (not PMs!) can be allocated to beneficiaries from the same country



Key points to be considered during proposal preparation (2/2)

- ⚙️ Project beneficiaries must recruit and host at least 1 fellow, under a full-time employment contract.
- ⚙️ The participation and active involvement of non-academic partners, as full beneficiaries, (SMEs, industry) is highly recommended.
- ⚙️ The recruited researchers have also to be involved in secondments to other partners up to max 1/3 of the recruitment period (up to 12 months). Secondments are suggested to involve companies.
- ⚙️ DN proposals must offer a doctoral training to DCs; 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 associated as an associated partner.

Beneficiaries

- Can be **academic or non-academic** organisations
- At least from **three different EU Member States** or associated to Horizon Europe
- Recruit the DCs under an **employment contract**
- Sign the **Grant Agreement** with the EC
- Agree the Network condition by signing the **Consortium Agreement**
- **Receive Funding** from the EC, and claim costs

Associated Partner

- **Do not recruit** any researchers. They provide additional research and transferable skills training and/or secondment opportunities. They can also deliver the doctoral degree.
- Can be **academic or non-academic** organisations, located in any country.
- They are **not signatories to the Grant Agreement**. May be included in the consortium/partnership agreement (for the internal relationship between participating organisations).
- **Cannot directly claim any costs**. Instead, incurred costs for research training activities are to be covered by the unit costs paid to the beneficiaries.
- Precise **role** of each partner organisation should be clearly described in the proposal.
- No predefined number of partner organisations; number should be related to the real needs of the project.

Training activities (1/2)



- should exploit **complementarities** between participating organisations and foster sharing of knowledge and networking activities (e.g. organisation of workshops and conferences).
- should respond to well identified needs in various R&I areas, with appropriate references to **inter- and multidisciplinary fields** and follow the EU Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training
- should be primarily focused on developing **new scientific knowledge** through original research on personalised projects.
- **Inter-sectoral secondments** of researchers to other participating organisations, including in third countries, are encouraged to increase the employability of the researchers outside academia.
- should 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**.

Training activities (2/2)



Three **types** of skills:

- **Core Research Skills** (acquired via the Individual Research Project)
- **Advanced/Additional Research Skills** (delivered by the consortium)
- **Transferable Skills** (delivered by the consortium)

Three modes of **delivery**:

- **Local training**: offered at the host organisation where the DC will work. Include skills acquired via the Individual Research Programme and the structured training offered by e.g. local graduate schools.
- **Network-wide training**: offered by the consortium at specific events e.g. workshops, summer schools, training weeks.
- **Secondment** programme

Describe the **local training** followed by the **network-wide training**:

- **Local**: Describe what is offered for the DCs at their main host in terms of research training (via their Individual Research Programme), research-related training (e.g. ethics, research integrity) and transferrable skills training. It can be additive if training available at one host can be opened up to DCs from the other hosts in the consortium.
- **Network wide**: Be very specific about the details -when and where it will take place, what areas will be covered, how long will it last, who will deliver the training.
- **Open up** some events to the wider research community.

Evaluation Criteria

- Excellence weight 50%
- Impact weight 30%
- Implementation weight 20%