



European Commission
Research Directorate General
Human Resources and Mobility

**MARIE CURIE
EXCELLENCE GRANTS
(EXT)**

**Handbook
for**

Call: FP6-2004-Mobility- 8



MARIE CURIE ACTIONS
3rd Edition
December 2004

**This handbook explains the principles of
Marie Curie Excellence Grants (EXT)
to be funded under the EU's Sixth Framework Programme.**

Similar documents are available for the other
Marie Curie Actions namely:

Marie Curie Research Training Networks (RTN)
Marie Curie Host Fellowships for Early Stage Training (EST)
Marie Curie Host Fellowships for the Transfer of Knowledge (ToK)
Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses (SCF)
Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowships (EIF)
Marie Curie Outgoing International Fellowships (OIF)
Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowships (IIF)
Marie Curie Excellence Awards (EXA)
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Marie Curie European Reintegration Grants (ERG)
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MARIE CURIE ACTIONS

They are available on our web-site:

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Comments are welcome and may be sent by e-mail to:

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Legal notice

This guide aims to make the rules concerning Marie Curie actions transparent and easy to understand, thus it serves for information purposes only and has no legal value. It is based upon a number of legal texts, in particular the Work Programme and Rules for Participation listed in Annex V of this document. Only those texts having a legal status can be referred to for the purpose of any legal or administrative proceedings.

THE ESSENTIALS

What are they?

The Marie Curie Excellence Grants allow the creation and initial development of Excellence Teams. An Excellence Team is a research team located in a single host organisation and consisting of a leader and members, with a sufficiently good international balance.

Who can apply?

A proposal is submitted jointly by a prospective Team leader and a Host organisation (legal entity) established in a Member or Associated state. If the proposal is successful, the Host organisation will appoint the leader along with other researchers recruited as members of the Team.

Which research topics are supported?

Proposals from all areas of scientific and technological research of interest to the European Community are accepted and there are no pre-defined priority areas. Research fields within the EURATOM programme (nuclear fission or fusion) are however not eligible for funding within the Marie Curie schemes.

What is the profile of a Team leader?

The Team leader is a researcher who has early in her/his career the potential to reach a high level of excellence so as to enable her/him to attain more rapidly a position with responsibility for leading a team that executes, in priority, a leading edge and/or interdisciplinary research programme. Past mobility and international cooperation experience are important evaluation criteria.

How large is an Excellence Team?

There is no upper limit to the number of the Team members and they can have any level of experience.

How much funding can an Excellence Team receive?

The overall budget of a Team depends on the number and levels of experience of the Team members and the costs related to the Team's project.

How can the funding be used?

Part of the funding is for the benefit of the leader and the members of the Team (living, mobility and travel allowances). This is paid according to rates defined by the Commission. The remainder of the budget goes towards research costs along with overhead and management related expenses. At least 65% of the budget must be spent on the living, travel and mobility allowances of the team leader and members.

When can I apply?

A "call for proposals" was launched on 15 October 2004, with a deadline of **16 February 2005** (at 17:00 Brussels local time). An additional call is expected with a deadline in 2006.

How do I apply?

Firstly, after reading this document download an "InfoPack" that provides the material you need to prepare a proposal: http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=161. Secondly, you should consult the legal documents, in particular, the "Work Programme" upon which this handbook is based (references can be found in annex V of this document).

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Foreword

This document has been updated since the previous version was published in February 2004 to take into account the latest revision of the Human Resources and Mobility Work Programme in September 2004. The changes relate mainly to the following :

- Proposals for this call must be submitted only electronically. Details are supplied in Chapter 7.
- The evaluation is now carried out in two steps and there are major changes to the submission procedure. The changes are detailed in Chapter 7.
- The eligibility criteria for both team leaders and team members have been modified and Chapter 4 has been revised accordingly.
- The structure of the community contribution has changed (contribution to overheads reduced to 10% and new obligation to spend at least 65% of the funding for the benefit of the team leader and members). These changes are reflected in Chapter 5
- The Frequently Asked Questions at the back of the document have been modified to take into account all of the above.

1. Introduction

To help develop the European Research Area (ERA), the Commission has launched the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP6). This programme runs from 2003 to 2006 and is the financial tool with which the Commission can put research policy into practice and also provide the necessary financial support for scientific and technological development projects.

Within this programme, the Human Resources and Mobility (HRM) activity has a budget of 1.58 billion Euro and consists of a coherent set of actions that finance training and other career development opportunities for researchers. These are known as Marie Curie actions and aim at the development and transfer of research competencies, the consolidation and widening of researchers' career prospects, and the promotion of excellence in European research.

It is the purpose of this document to explain one out of the 12 different actions within the HRM activity, the **Marie Curie Excellence Grants (EXT)**. The information is essentially based upon the relevant legal texts, in particular the "Work Programme." Text that has been directly extracted from the Work Programme is shown in boxes to aid the reader.

1.1 Purpose of the Marie Curie Excellence Grants

Marie Curie Excellence Grants are one out of three actions devoted to the promotion and recognition of scientific excellence. Like the Marie Curie Chairs and Marie Curie Excellence Awards, the Marie Curie Excellence Grants were created to increase the visibility and attractiveness of European research:

"These actions focus on the promotion and recognition of excellence in European Research, thereby increasing its visibility and attractiveness. They aim at promoting European research teams, especially in new and/or emerging areas of research, and at highlighting personal achievements of European researchers, with a view to supporting their further development and international recognition, while also promoting the diffusion of their work for the benefit of the scientific community."

Work Programme, section 2.2

The specific objectives of Marie Curie Excellence Grants are the following:

"These [Grants] aim at providing support for the creation and development of European research teams which are considered to have the potential to reach a high level of excellence, more particularly for leading edge or interdisciplinary research activities."

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

The Marie Curie Excellence Grants are a mechanism to support the future development and international recognition of promising researchers who has early in her/his career the potential to reach a high level of excellence so as to enable her/him to attain more rapidly a position with responsibility for leading a team. Each Excellence Team will be formed around such a researcher who can thus attain more rapidly independence in research.

The action will also contribute to counteracting brain drain, especially by encouraging high potential researchers who are currently active in Third countries to resume their careers and bring to bear their potential for excellence in Europe.

1.2 How does it work?

To show how Excellence Teams are formed and operate, the figure on the following page shows a “life cycle” in five stages:

Stage 1: Proposal Preparation & Electronic Submission

The prospective Team leader and the Host institution at which the Team will be based jointly prepare a proposal with focus on specific research activities. The proposal must be submitted electronically via the Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS) and must be received by the Commission before the deadline given in the call for proposals. Each proposal will contain a Part A (Administrative forms) and a Part B **in two sections** (submitted as two separate PDF files). It is appropriate at this stage for the Team leader and the Host to consider the agreement they will need to conclude in case of funding.

Stage 2: Proposal Evaluation in two steps

Step 1:

After the deadline, a series of checks will be performed to ensure that technical eligibility criteria such as completeness and reception by the deadline are fulfilled. The Commission will then arrange for the first part of the proposal (i.e. Part A & Part B Section 1) to be evaluated by independent experts who will assess it against a limited number of evaluation criteria as described in the Work Programme.

Proposals failing one or more of the thresholds for the criteria established in the first step will not be retained for the second step of the evaluation. Out of the proposals passing the thresholds, only 2 ½ times as many proposals as those likely to be selected for funding will be retained for the second step.

Step 2:

The second step of the evaluation will be carried out by evaluating *the full proposal* (Part A, Part B Section 1, Part B Section 2 against *the full set of evaluation criteria* as described in the HRM Work Programme.

Stage 3: Negotiation and Selection

Taking into account the opinions of the experts and the available funding, the Commission will rank the proposals. For those proposals that are retained an invitation to enter into contract negotiations with the Commission will be issued. The purpose of this process is to collect all the necessary financial and technical information, in order to prepare a contract. In addition, the scientific and training programme will be defined in terms of contractual deliverables, and the maximum financial contribution from the Community will be finalised. Comments from the experts that arose during the evaluation will be taken into account at this stage.

Stage 4: Project Preparation

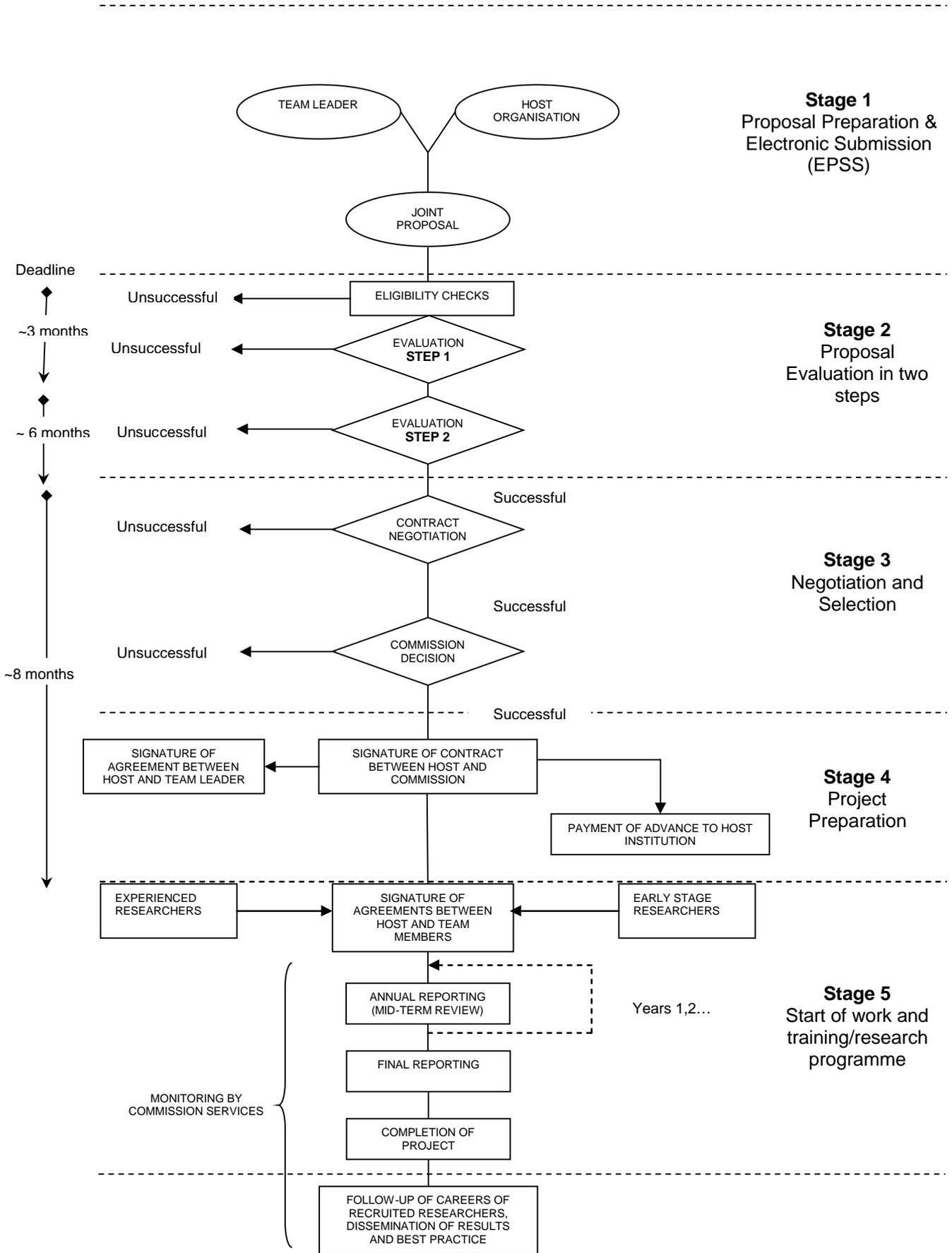
Assuming a successful outcome of the negotiations, a draft contract will be prepared by the Commission and sent to the Host organisation for signature. An initial pre-financing will be provided once both the Host organisation and the Commission have signed the contract. The contract requires the Host to conclude a written agreement with the Team leader and each and every Team member. This agreement will determine, in accordance with the contract, the conditions for implementing the research programme and the respective rights and obligations of the Team leader/members and the Host. The

agreements should be sent to the Commission when signed. An initial “kick off” meeting might take place at this stage.

Stage 5: Start of Work

Now the project can really start, normally with the recruitment of the Team members. The research work would also begin according to the technical annex of the contract. During the course of the project, the Commission will monitor the development of the activities of the Excellence Team on the basis of annual reports and a mid-term review meeting. Payments are made according to the progress made by the Team, as compared to the project deliverables set out in the contract. The final payment is released upon acceptance of the final report.

"LIFE CYCLE" OF AN EXCELLENCE TEAM



2. What is an Excellence Team expected to do?

2.1 Introduction

The Team leader will be the scientific co-ordinator of the project, and as such s/he will be in charge of the effective development of the project. To this end s/he should be granted the necessary autonomy by the Host.

The Excellence Team should aim to contribute to the level of excellence in European Research:

“...the work programme and the division of tasks among team members should present sufficient guarantees that a significant contribution to the objective of reaching a high level of excellence within Europe will be made.”

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

2.2 The Research Topic

Subject to the following specifications the Team leader and the Host will freely chose the topic(s) of the research activities, in order for the Team leader to complement and/or diversify his/her expertise:

“The research themes should be relevant to European achievements and interests, or on a subject in which European research could gain competitiveness and reach a leading position on the world stage. In this context, the research topic will be freely chosen by the researcher in collaboration with the host, with a view to complete and/or diversify his/her expertise; clear preference will be given to leading edge or multidisciplinary research activities.”

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

Like all other Marie Curie actions, Marie Curie Excellence Grants are guided by the so-called “bottom-up” principle i.e. all fields of science and technology of interest to the European Community (i.e. within the scope of the EC Treaty) are eligible for funding:

– *“Freedom is given to the proposers as to the choice of field of research for their projects. The Marie Curie actions will therefore be open to all fields of research, which contribute to the objectives of the Community as defined in Article 163 of the EC Treaty, for projects chosen freely by the applicants themselves. However, activities relating to human resources and mobility in areas covered by the EURATOM¹ treaty are not eligible under the actions in the area of Human Resources and Mobility of the Sixth Framework Programme;*

¹ Sixth Framework Programme for EURATOM 2002-2006, OJ 355 of 30 December 2002

– Great initiative is left to the proposers within the objectives of the programme and within general guide-lines (including maximum expenditure) concerning the details permitting a better realisation of the objectives.”

Work Programme, section 2.5.1

Note that fields of research within the EURATOM programme may not be eligible for funding. However, this does not exclude fundamental research in the field of nuclear physics. Fields of research with military applications may also be ineligible.

Furthermore, projects with ethical implications (e.g. human cloning, some specific aspects of human embryo research, animal welfare etc.) will be subject to ethical review and may not be eligible for funding. For more information, please consult the following web pages:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/ethics/ethics_en.html

2.3 The Concept of Panels

For practical organisational reasons, proposals will be classified under eight major areas of science (known as ‘panels’): Chemistry; Economics; Social and Human Sciences; Engineering and Information sciences; Environmental and Geo-Sciences; Life Sciences; Mathematics and Physics. Applicants are asked to indicate on the A1 Proposal Submission Form the most relevant panel to their proposal (i.e. the core discipline). Additional keywords are used to define other disciplines involved. The choice of panel and keywords will guide the Commission in the selection of experts for proposal evaluation. Note that there is no predefined budget allocation among the panels in the call for proposals. The proportionate number of eligible proposals in each panel will be used for this purpose.

“As a general rule the distribution of the indicative budget of the calls between the research disciplines will be based “a posteriori” on the proportion of eligible proposals. Deviation of this rule will be specified in the relevant call for proposals”.

Work Programme, section 2.5.1

2.4 Duration of the Project and Synergies

The typical duration of a Marie Curie Excellence Grant is defined in the Work Programme as follows:

“Community funding will normally be granted for a maximum period of four years.”

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1,

In order to achieve a greater prospect of career continuity for the researchers involved, synergies will be sought with other actions both outside and within the HRM Activity:

“Synergies will be sought with host organisations and comparable initiatives of the Member States, Associated States and research organisations at European level, in order to achieve a greater prospect of career continuity.”

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

The intention is to obtain an effect of complementarity between the Marie Curie Excellence Grants and other comparable initiatives. Such complementarity could be reached e.g. with each organisation financing a separate but adjacent period in the career of the Team leader, in a co-ordinated way.

3. Which research organisations can take part?

3.1 How are participants defined?

Participants are defined in this context as the research organisations hosting the Excellence Teams – known as the Host organisations. If selected for funding, the *Host organisation* will be signing a contract with the Commission:

“As a general rule, the participant² of the Marie Curie actions is an organisation³ active in research or research training (universities, national or international research centres or commercial enterprises, etc) implementing Marie Curie actions and signing contracts with the Commission.”

Work Programme, section 2.5.2

In the case of Marie Curie Excellence Grants, the relevant rules stipulate **one** such host organisation per project.

It should be noted in this context, that the Team leader could request a change of Host organisation if this is felt to be necessary for the further development of the project:

“The European Commission may authorise, in duly motivated and exceptional circumstances, a change of contractor on the request of the team leader if necessary to ensure further development of the project.”

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

3.2 What type of research organisations can take part?

According to the Work Programme, many different types of organisations can take part in Marie Curie Excellence Grants:

- National organisations (e.g. universities, research centres etc);
- Commercial enterprises, especially those of small and medium size (SMEs);
- Non-profit or charitable organisations (e.g. NGOs, trusts, etc.);
- International European interest organisations (e.g. CERN, ILL, EMBL, etc);
- The Joint Research Centre of the European Commission;

Definitions of some of the categories of organisations are provided in the Rules for Participation (reference provided in annex V).

² In the sense of the definition specified in the Rules of participation

³ In the case of Marie Curie Excellence Awards, it may be an individual.

3.3 Where can an Excellence Team be located?

The Excellence Team must be located at an institution established **in a Member State or an Associated State**.

"The team consisting of a designated team leader and further team members, should conduct their research project in one of the Member States or Associated States."

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

The rules of this action specifically *exclude* the participation of legal entities established in *Third countries and of International Organisations* (e.g. WHO, UNESCO, etc).

*"The **participation** and **financing** of third country legal entities and of international organisations is not possible....."*

Work Programme 2.5.2

However, a special condition allows the participation of *International European Interest Organisations* (IEIOs) independently of their location.

These organisations are defined in the Rules for Participation as follows:

"international European interest organisation" means an international organisation, the majority of whose members are European Community Member States or associated States, and whose principal objective is to promote European scientific and technological cooperation;"

Rules for Participation, Article 2 (12)

An overview of the Member States and Associated States applicable at the time of writing (December 2004) is provided in the table below:

| Member States | Associated States | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| | Candidate Countries | Other Associated States |
| Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom | Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. | Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland |

The Associated States have signed an agreement with the Community that entitles them to the same treatment in FP6 as the Member States. Thus research organisations in these countries are eligible for Community funding under FP6.

The current status of the association agreements can be found under the following:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/iscp/countries.html>

3.4 How much funding is available?

The size of the project and of the Team will depend on the nature and scope of the research activities to be undertaken. As an indication, the level of funding for each project is expected to be between 850 000 € and 2 000 000€.

4. Who can be part of an Excellence Team?

4.1 Introduction

An Excellence Team consists of a *Team leader* and a number of *Team members*. There is no upper limit on the number of Team members.

The Team Leader and Team Members will not be contractors with the Commission, but they will be *beneficiaries* of the contract between the Commission and the Host:

“Eligible researchers under these schemes are “third party” beneficiaries of the Marie Curie actions. They do not sign a contract with the Commission, but benefit from the Marie Curie actions and are therefore in this way beneficiaries of Community funds”.

Work Programme, section 2.5.3

The general definition of a **researcher** given in the Work Programme reads as follows:

“As a general rule, a researcher is defined as a person active in research, including at a training level, of at least post-graduate or equivalent level.”

Work Programme, section 2.5.3

4.2 The Profile of the researchers in an Excellence Team

The Team leader is a promising researcher, capable and ready to set up his/her own research team or to extend a recently created team, with a European dimension. S/he will be showing the potential to reach a high level of autonomy and excellence and the potential capabilities to create or develop an excellence team. His/her past career will show experience in international research cooperation as well as international mobility for research. It should be noted that the target group of this action specifically includes researchers returning from outside the Member States and the Associated States.

The Team leader should be given the necessary autonomy by the Host organisation to choose **the Team Members** most suitable for the project in order to attain the objectives of contributing to the scientific excellence and the competitiveness of European research. In the selection he/she will ensure that the conditions described below are fulfilled. The Team members need not be identified at the proposal stage but some may be. The Host institution will be required to publish vacancies in international professional publications.

4.3 Conditions for appointment of the researchers

Certain conditions determine the appointment of researchers in the Marie Curie Excellence Grants and they relate to:

- The requirement for excellence of the Team leader;
- The requirement for a transnational character of the Team as a whole;
- The requirement for institutional mobility of the Team leader and Team Members;
- The nationality of the researcher.

It is the responsibility of the Host institution to ensure that these conditions are fulfilled when appointing researchers to become members of an Excellence Team.

4.3.1 The requirement for excellence of the Team leader:

In contrast to most of the other Marie Curie Actions, the eligibility of researchers in Marie Curie Excellence Grants is **not** defined in terms of a precise number of years of experience in research. This means that **both Early-stage researchers and Experienced researchers** (as defined in the Work Programme section 2.5.3) **may participate as Team members**.

For the **Team leader**, however, there is a special requirement related to his/her level of excellence, which has to be met by the candidates. This requirement is described in the Work Programme as follows:

“The team leader shall be a researcher who in the development of her/his career, is showing the potential to reach a high level of autonomy and excellence and the potential capabilities to create or develop an excellence team.”

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

4.3.2 The requirement for a transnational character of the Team as a whole:

The Team as a whole should have a transnational character (ensured in particular through an international career profile of the Team leader, and a sufficient variety of nationalities represented in the Team):

“The transnational character of the activity and of the team as a whole should be proven by the career profile of the team leader (in terms of her/his transnational mobility in the frame of high quality international research co-operation) as well as by the envisaged balanced composition of the team (including the leader).

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

4.3.3 The requirement for institutional mobility for Team leaders and Members:

The standard requirement for transnational mobility in the Work Programme, section 2.5.3 does not apply to the Marie Curie Excellence Grants. Instead, a special requirement for *institutional mobility* applies to researchers in this action:

“Proposals will not be eligible for financial support if, at the time of the relevant deadline for submission of proposals, the prospective team leader has already been working (under any form of recruitment) for 12 months or more over the last 3 years in the same host organisation where the team is proposed to be located; nor can the team consist of a majority of members who, at the time of their appointment, have worked (under any form of recruitment) for 12 months or more over the last 3 years in the organisation hosting the team.”

Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1

Thus, in no case should the Team leader have been working at the Host institution for more than *12 months within the 3 years prior to the deadline for submission of proposals*. For Team members this condition must be fulfilled by the majority of the team members.

It should be noted however, that the selection of Team members is restricted further through the general requirement for institutional mobility of the Work Programme:

: These conditions stipulate a requirement for institutional mobility of (all) the researchers involved in order for their personnel expenses to be eligible for financing:

“Researchers will have to carry out the project at the premises of a legal entity other than the one in which they carry out their normal activities, or where they have been recruited for less than one year from the date of the reference deadline for eligibility.”

Work Programme, section 2.5.3.

In practice this means, that a **researcher cannot carry out the project at the legal entity where (s)he has been working for more than the last 12 months prior to the appointment.**

It should be stressed that this condition also applies to projects carried out in International European Interest Organisations.

EXAMPLE:

A researcher has previously worked for the Host institution for a period of 42 months but during the last 18 months before her appointment on the Team she has been working for another organisation. This researcher is eligible to become a Team member *provided that* the majority of her fellow Team members have *not* worked for the Host for more than 12 months over the past 36 months.

4.3.4 Nationality

Subject to the conditions above, the Team leader and the Team members **may be nationals of any state, including that of the host organisation.**

4.4 Gender issues

As pointed out in the general introduction to the Work Programme, the participation of women in the Marie Curie actions is particularly encouraged:

“This work programme attempts, where possible, to reinforce and increase the place and role of women in science and research, both from the perspective of equal opportunities and gender relevance of the topics covered.”

Work Programme, Introduction, 3.e)

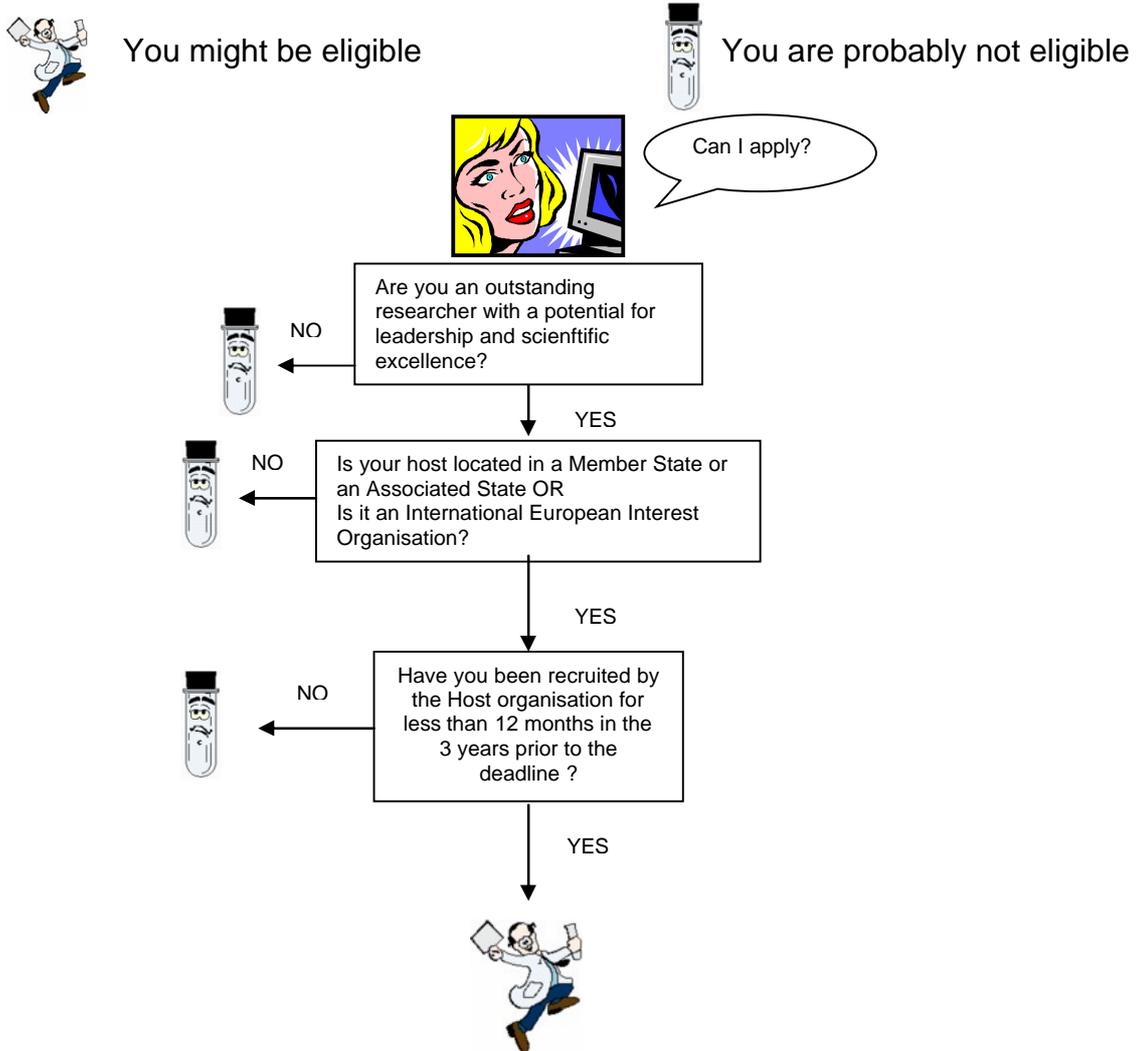
There is no quota applicable for women researchers who apply for Marie Curie Excellence Grants but a higher participation of women in research is a stated Community policy and a relevant consideration under the evaluation criterion “Added Value to the Community and Relevance to the Objectives of the Action”.

4.5 Finding your way through the conditions for appointment

To make it easier for you to determine if you qualify for a Marie Curie Excellence Grant, you may wish to refer to the flow chart on the following page. Please note that this chart is indicative only and one is always advised to check the text of the Work Programme.

INDICATIVE CONDITIONS FOR MARIE CURIE EXCELLENCE GRANTS

In the following flow chart, the conditions are described under which researchers can be appointed as Team leaders.



5. How is an Excellence Team financed?

5.1 Basic do's and don'ts

At the beginning of the contract, an initial payment will be made by the Commission services to the Host to enable the Excellence Team to begin work. The Host will be required to regularly report on the expenses that have been incurred. Some basic conditions apply regarding the charging of those expenses to the contract:

- *“they must be **actual, economic and necessary** for the implementation of the indirect action; [i.e. the project]*
- *they must be determined in accordance with **the usual accounting principles** of each participant;*
- *they must be **recorded in the accounts** of the participants or, in the case of resources of third parties...in the corresponding financial documents of those third parties;*
- *they shall be **exclusive of indirect taxes, duties and interest and may not give rise to profit.**”*

Rules for Participation, Article 14.2

5.2 Community contribution & rates

The conditions for funding the activities undertaken by an Excellence Team in order to attain the project deliverables are defined in the Work Programme, section 2.8.2 (see the table shown on the following page):

| Marie Curie Actions | Eligible expenses | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| | Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the researchers | | | | | Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the host organisations | | | |
| | - A - Monthly living allowance ⁴ | Transnational mobility | | - D - Career exploratory allowance | - E - Contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers | - F - Contribution to the research/training /transfer of knowledge programme expenses | - G - Management activities (including audit certification) | - H - Contribution to overheads ⁷ | - I - Other types of eligible expenses / specific conditions |
| | - B - ⁵ Travel Allowance | - C - ⁶ Mobility Allowance | | | | | | | |
| Marie Curie Excellence Grants | Application of the Marie Curie reference rates (cf. point 2-8) At least 65% of the Community contribution must be spent on cost categories A, B and C. | X | X | N/A | N/A | Real expenses | maximum 3 % of the Community contribution | 10 % of additional direct costs (except sub-contracting) | Possibly equipment expenses if : - necessary for the project - duly justified on basis of real costs - and with prior agreement of the Commission (partial depreciation, or total if indispensable, if justified by the use of the goods and if final destination of goods is determined) |

⁴ Allowance for fellows/month based on reference rates as mentioned in table 1 point 2.8.1.

⁵ Travel allowance / Fellow based on the direct distance (as the crow flies) between the place of origin and the host institution of the researcher, calculated on the basis of one payment for every period of 12 months or less, when the first period or the last one is less than 12 months. Only one travel allowance shall be paid per period of 12 months, independently of possible interruptions or stays with different partners.

⁶ Mobility allowance / month: fixed amount (relocation, family charges, language courses, ...): 800 € to cover supplementary expenses linked to the family situation of the researcher (marriage or equivalent status recognised by national legislation of the country of the host, and/or charge of children); 500 € for a researcher without family charges. The measuring point for the family situation is "at the time of recruitment" in case of host driven actions and "at the time of the Commission selection decision on the proposal" for individual driven actions. In the Excellence actions the family situation is determined "at the time of the Commission selection decision on the proposal" for Chair holders and Team leaders and "at the time of recruitment" for Team members. To these amounts a correction factor for the cost of living of the country of execution of the project is applied. This allocation will only be due for researchers doing a transnational mobility.

⁷ C(2003) 799 of 17.03.2003, Communication to the Commission establishing a contract type in the frame of the implementation of the Sixth Framework Programme of the European Community (2002-2006)

5.3 What types of expenses are covered?

According to the Work Programme, the eligible expenses that can be charged to the contract may be broadly divided into:

- Expenses related to the researchers (Team leader/Team members);
- Expenses related to the activities of the Host organisation.

These types of expenses are explained in more detail below.

5.3.1 Expenses related to the Team leader and Team members

- **A: Monthly Living Allowance** – this refers to the basic amount to be paid each month to the researcher according to his/her level of experience (see table in annex I (a)). This is then adjusted, applying a correction factor which reflects the cost of living in the country of the Host (see annex II & III).

The living allowance for researchers recruited under an employment contract (Type A) is a *gross* Community contribution to the salary costs. Consequently, the net salary results from deducting all compulsory social security contributions as well as direct taxes (e.g. income tax) from the gross amount. The level of taxation and social contributions varies from country to country. It is highly recommended that researchers contact the National Contact Point of the Host country (see Annex V) for more details on the nationally applicable rules.

The appointment of a Team leader and experienced Team members (i.e. with more than 4 years of research experience) should take place under an employment contract (Type A), unless the use of a Type B fixed-amount fellowship with minimum social security coverage can be *duly justified*. Researchers can only be recruited under a Type-B fellowship if this is compatible with national legislation and if social security is provided.

Host organisations may pay the researchers a top up in order to complement the Community contribution.

- **B: Travel Allowance** – this refers to an allowance to cover the costs for the researcher of travelling between his/her place of origin and the location of the Host institution. The allowance is based upon the direct distance between the two locations (see annex I (b)) and the researcher is entitled to one such allowance per each 12 months period begun.
- **C: Mobility Allowance** – this refers to a monthly payment that helps to compensate the researcher for the additional expenses that are normally incurred when working abroad (e.g. relocation, family charges, language courses, renting accommodation etc.) There are two reference amounts depending on the family situation of the researcher at the time of submission of the proposal:
 - 800€/month: Researcher with family charges (marriage or equivalent status recognised by national legislation of the host country, and/or charge of children).

500€/month: Researcher without family charges.

The measuring point for the family situation of the Team leader is “at the time of the Commission selection decision on the proposal” and for Team members the family situation is determined “at the time of recruitment.

The mobility allowance is adjusted by the same correction coefficient as the living allowance (see annex II), i.e. according to the country in which the researcher is appointed.

The travel and mobility allowances (B & C) are only paid in those cases where the researcher has undertaken a physical *transnational mobility*⁸ within less than 12 months before the relevant deadline for submission of the proposal (for the Team leader)/before their appointment under the project (for Team members).

5.3.2 Expenses related to the activities of the Host organisation

- **F: Contribution to the research expenses** – this refers to *the real expenses* associated with the research activities of the Team (e.g. consumables, providing research facilities, maintenance of the Team's website, etc.). This is based upon actual expenses incurred by the Host institution.
- **G: Management activities (including audit certification)** – this refers to *a maximum of 3% of the total Community contribution* that will be paid towards the management of the project and the expenses related to the auditing of the financial reports of the Excellence Team. It will be based upon actual expenses (e.g. towards the salary of a person assisting with the management of the project, or a contract with an external independent auditor for audit certification). In the case of public or international organisations, this certification may be provided by a competent public official.
- **H: Contribution to overheads** – this refers to *a flat rate payment of 10% of the additional direct costs (excluding costs for subcontracts)*; (i.e. items A, B, C, F & I).
- **I: Other types of eligible expenses: Equipment Expenses** – expenses related to the provision and use of equipment in the execution of the project can be charged to the contract provided that they are:
 - necessary for the project;
 - duly justified on the basis of real costs (depreciation is to be taken into account);and
 - provided that a prior approval of the Commission services has been obtained.Depreciation is normally *partial* (i.e. pro rata of the years of use on the lifetime of the equipment). Exceptionally depreciation can be *total*, if the equipment is indispensable to the project, *and* total depreciation can be justified by the use of the equipment, *and* if the final destination of the equipment after the project is determined (e.g. to be scrapped or donated free of charge).

It must be stressed that the rules require at least 65% of the total Community contribution to be spent on items A, B and C (i.e. personnel costs).

⁸ Transnational mobility means moving from the country where one legally resides and works to another country.

5.4 How is the EC contribution determined?

Applicants are not required to calculate the estimated EC contribution. The Commission will calculate the EC contribution on the basis of the information provided in Part A of the Proposal Submission Forms.

The contribution to the expenses related to the Team leader and Team members will be fixed according to the make-up of the Team, the agreed employment conditions, and the duration of the project. Since some or all members of an Excellence Team may not have been identified at the proposal stage, and the precise personal circumstances of the researcher (e.g. place of origin, family status etc.) therefore will not be known, the level of funding will be estimated by the Commission services on the basis of averages.

The contribution to the expenses related to activities of the Host organisation will be estimated on the basis of the information provided in particular in the A4 form of the proposal and will be subject to negotiation.

If the proposal is selected by the Commission for funding, the EC contribution will be estimated more accurately during the negotiations taking into account any recommendations made by the independent evaluators.

The examples below aim to help you understand the principles of the composition of the EC contribution.

In addition, to make it easier for potential applicants, Annex III contains a table of basic monthly living allowances for Team leaders and members which takes into account the country specific correction factors (of annex II) for the EU Member and Associated States. Please note, however, that the amounts indicated are gross amounts, i.e. before deduction of compulsory social security contributions and national taxes (e.g. income tax). For more details on the level of such deductions researchers are encouraged to contact the National Contact Point of the Host country (see Annex V).

EXAMPLE 1:

Let us consider as an illustration a team hosted in Oxford, UK, which consists of:

- an Estonian team leader who has returned to Europe from California, US (after a stay of more than 12 months), with more than 10 years' experience and without family charges;
- a doctoral student (early-stage researcher) from Edinburgh, UK, with a wife and child;
- a doctoral student (early-stage researcher) from Herakleion, Greece, without family charges; and
- an experienced researcher with 7 years' experience from India with a husband and child.

They have all opted for Type A *employment contracts* and work for the entire duration of a 3½ -year project.

(a) Expenses related to the researchers

For the team leader the basic yearly living allowance according to the table in annex I(a) would be 91,650€. Because he moves country to take up his function he is furthermore

entitled to a monthly mobility allowance of 500€/month (no family charges). The correction factor for the UK according to annex II, is 112.5%.

The direct distance travelled between California, US and Oxford, UK exceeds 10,000 km which gives him the right to the highest travel allowance (annex I(b)) of 2,500€. As the duration of the project is 3.5 years he should receive 4 such allowances during the lifetime of the project.

Thus to summarise,

For the Team leader:

- Basic Living Allowance: 91,650€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 500€/month (no family charges)
- Correction factor UK: 112.5%
- Travel Allowance: 2,500€ per 12 months period begun (distance: > 10,000 km)

The estimated funding for the benefit of the leader (to the nearest Euro) would be

$$(91,650 \times 3.5 + 500 \times 42) \times 1.125 + 2,500 \times 4 = 394,497 \text{€}$$

Applying the same principles, the funding for the members of the Team can be estimated as follows:

For the Team member from Edinburgh:

- Basic Living Allowance: 30,550€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 0 (does not move country)
- Correction factor UK: 112.5%
- Travel Allowance: 500€ per 12 months period begun (distance: 500-1,000 km)

The estimated funding would be

$$(30,550 \times 3.5 + 0) \times 1.125 + 500 \times 4 = 122,291 \text{€}$$

For the Team member from Herakleion:

- Basic Living Allowance: 30,550€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 500€/month (mobility but no family charges)
- Correction factor UK: 112.5%
- Travel Allowance: 1,500€ per 12 months period begun (distance: 2,500-5,000 km)

The estimated funding would be

$$(30,550 \times 3.5 + 500 \times 42) \times 1.125 + 1,500 \times 4 = 149,916 \text{€}$$

and for the Team member from India:

- Basic Living Allowance: 47,000€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 800€/month (mobility and family charges)
- Correction factor UK: 112.5%
- Travel Allowance: 2,000€ per 12 months period begun (distance: 5,000-10,000 km)

The estimated funding would be

$$(47,000 \times 3.5 + 800 \times 42) \times 1.125 + 2,000 \times 4 = 230,863\text{€}$$

The total funding for the benefit of the researchers (Team leader/members) (items A, B and C) would be

| Estimated funding for the benefit of the researchers | |
|---|-----------------|
| Team leader | 394,497€ |
| Team member 1 | 122,291€ |
| Team member 2 | 149,916€ |
| Team member 3 | 230,863€ |
| Total | 897,567€ |

(b) Expenses for the activities of the Host institution

For its project, the team needs new equipment costing 1,000,000€ with an estimated useful life of 15 years; the eligible equipment expenses (I) would be

$$1,000,000 \times 3.5 / 15 = 233,333\text{€}$$

The project costs a further 16,000€ per year to run; the cost of the research activities (F) would be

$$16,000 \times 3.5 = 56,000\text{€}$$

For the management of the project, a secretary with a full-time salary cost of 20,000€ works 15% of the time; the cost of the management activity (G) would be

$$20,000 \times 0.15 \times 3.5 = 10,500\text{€}$$

Furthermore, the expenses related to audit certificates would amount to a total of 5250€

The total additional direct costs would then be

| Activity | EC contribution |
|---|------------------------|
| Expenses for the benefit of researchers | 897,567€ |
| Equipment expenses | 233,333€ |
| Expenses related to research activities | 56,000€ |
| Management & audit | 15,750€ |
| Total additional direct costs | 1,202,650€ |

Finally, the contribution to overheads (H) would be limited to 10% of the additional direct costs (or 9.09% of the overall contribution), i.e.

$$120,265\text{€}$$

(c) Estimated total EC contribution:

The total community contribution to this project could be

| Activity | EC contribution |
|---|------------------------|
| Expenses for the benefit of researchers | 897,567€ |
| Equipment expenses | 233,333€ |
| Expenses related to research activities | 56,000€ |
| Management & audit | 15,750€ |
| Overheads | 120,265€ |
| Total EC contribution | 1,322,915€ |

Note that the contribution to expenses for the benefit of researchers is more than 65% of the total EC contribution (68% in this case).

EXAMPLE 2:

Let us consider as a further illustration a team hosted in Linz, Austria, which consists of:

- a German team leader previously based in Munich, with 7 years' experience, and with two children;
- one doctoral student (early-stage researcher) from Paris, France, without family charges;
- an experienced researcher with 5 years' experience from Warsaw, Poland, with a husband and child, and
- an experienced researcher with 11 years' experience from Salzburg, Austria, without family charges.

They have opted for Type A salaries, except for the doctoral student who has opted for a *Type B fixed-amount fellowship*, and work for the entire duration of a 3-year project.

(a) Expenses related to the researchers**For the Team leader:**

- Basic Living Allowance: 61,100€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 800€/month (with family charges)
- Correction factor Austria: 104%
- Travel Allowance: 250€ per 12 months period begun (distance: < 500 km)

The funding for the benefit of the leader (to the nearest Euro) would be

$$(61,100 \cdot 3 + 800 \cdot 36) \cdot 1.04 + 250 \cdot 3 = 221,334\text{€}$$

For the Team member from Paris:

- Basic Living Allowance: 15,275€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 500€/month (no family charges)
- Correction factor Austria: 104%

- Travel Allowance: 500€ per 12 months period begun (distance: 500-1,000 km)

The estimated funding would be

$$(15,275*3 + 500*36)* 1.04 + 500*3 = 67,878\text{€}$$

For the Team member from Warsaw:

- Basic Living Allowance: 47,000€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 800€/month (with family charges)
- Correction factor Austria: 104%
- Travel Allowance: 500€ per 12 months period begun (distance: 500-1,000 km)

The estimated funding would be

$$(47,000*3 + 800*36)*1.04+ 500*3 = 178,092\text{€}$$

For the Team member from Salzburg:

- Basic Living Allowance: 70,500€/year
- Mobility Allowance: 0 (does not move country)
- Correction factor Austria: 104%
- Travel Allowance: 250€ per 12 months period begun (distance: < 500 km)

The estimated funding would be

$$(70,500*3 + 0)* 1.04+ 250*3 = 220,710\text{€}$$

The total funding for the benefit of the Team members (items A, B and C) would be

| Estimated funding for the benefit of the researchers | |
|---|-----------------|
| Team leader | 221,334€ |
| Team member 1 | 67,878€ |
| Team member 2 | 178,092€ |
| Team member 3 | 220,710€ |
| Total | 688,014€ |

(b) Expenses for the activities of the Host institution

For its project, the team needs new equipment costing 200,000€ with an estimated useful life of 10 years; the eligible equipment expenses (I) would be

$$200,000*3/10 = 60,000\text{€}$$

The project costs a further 10,000€ per year to run; the cost of the research activities (F) would be

$$10,000*3 = 30,000\text{€}$$

For the management of the project, a programmer with a full-time salary cost of 25,000€ works 20% of the time; the cost of the management activity (G) would be

$$25,000 \times 0.20 \times 3 = 15,000\text{€}$$

Furthermore, the expenses related to audit certificates would amount to a total of 5000€.

The total additional direct costs would then be:

| Activity | EC contribution |
|---|-----------------|
| Expenses for the benefit of researchers | 688,014€ |
| Equipment expenses | 60,000€ |
| Expenses related to research activities | 30,000€ |
| Management & audit | 20,000€ |
| Total additional direct costs | 798,014€ |

Finally, the contribution to overheads (H) would be limited to 10% of the additional direct costs (or 9.09% of the overall contribution), i.e.

$$79,801\text{€}$$

(c) Estimated total EC contribution:

The total community contribution to this project could be

| Activity | EC contribution |
|---|-----------------|
| Expenses for the benefit of researchers | 688,014€ |
| Equipment expenses | 60,000€ |
| Expenses related to research activities | 30,000€ |
| Management & audit | 20,000€ |
| Overheads | 79,801€ |
| Total EC contribution | 877,815€ |

Note that the contribution to expenses for the benefit of researchers is more than 65% of the total EC contribution (78% in this case).

5.5 Key elements of the funding request

As stated above the Commission will estimate the EC contribution on the basis of the information provided in Part A of the Proposal Submission Forms. In order to guide you in the completion of the funding request (form A4) some of the key parameters in the calculation are detailed here below. Please refer also to the copy of the form A4 at the end of this section.

Full-time person months

In the form A4 of the proposal applicants are asked to indicate the number of person months requested per year and by category of full-time postgraduate research experience (0-4 years, 4-10 years, +10 years). The full-time person months are used by the Commission to estimate the living and mobility allowance.

The requested person months for the Team leader should be indicated separately in the first columns of the form. The subsequent columns (Early Stage Researchers, Experienced Researchers (4-10 years) & Experienced Researchers (>10years) should be used exclusively for requesting the person months of the team members.

For the Team members the necessary information on their level of experience is contained in the A4 form. Please note, however, that for the Team leader the applicable level of salary will be derived from his/her full-time post graduate research experience as indicated in the form A3. Therefore, to ensure the accuracy of the Commission's estimation, the proposer should make certain that the number of months indicated in the A3 form really corresponds to his/her *full-time post graduate research experience by the time of the deadline for submission of the proposal*. In practice this means that if an applicant has been engaged in other professional activities than research in certain periods since his/her graduation, this time will not count as 'full-time post graduate research experience'. In a similar vein, any periods of part-time activity in research should be translated into full-time experience (e.g. 2 months half time = 1 month full-time). The level of experience should furthermore be supported in the part B of the proposal by a current CV that gives accurate dates (month and year) for each stage of the Team leader's career.

Indicative number of researchers

The indicative number of researchers is used by the Commission to estimate the travel allowance involved in the proposal. Since the travel allowance is paid to each researcher for each period of 12 months begun the Commission needs to know how many researchers will be involved in the project during each period of 12 months starting from the project start date.

E.g.: If two researchers work full-time for 6 months each in a given year, the full-time person months of that period should be set to 12 and the indicative number of researchers to 2, each of the two researchers being entitled to a travel allowance.

Type B %

The Type B factor is important for the estimation of the living allowance. Proposers are asked to indicate for each period of 12 months the share of the requested person months that will be paid on the basis of a Type B fixed-amount fellowship with minimum social security coverage.

Examples:

- if $\frac{3}{4}$ of the researcher months in a given period will be paid on the basis of Type B fellowships and the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ on Type A employment rates, the Type B % should be set to 75;
- if all of the researcher months in a given period are paid according to Type B rates, the Type B % should be set to 100 ;
- if all researcher months in a given period are paid according to Type A employment rates, the Type B % should be set to 0.

Since Type B fellowships should only be used exceptionally for experienced researchers (4 years +) most EXT proposals will have a yearly Type B % of 0 for the Team leader and for the experienced Team members (i.e. 4-10 years & 10 years +).

An example of these features filled in correctly in an A4 form is given on the following page. The example illustrates a funding request for a project with a total duration of 4 years and a team composed as follows:

- **Teamleader** : Full-time (i.e. 12 months/year) for 4 years on Type A employment contract
- **Early Stage researcher 1** : Full-time for 3 years (starting in year 1) on Type B fellowship
- **Early Stage researcher 2** : Full-time for 3 years (starting in year 2) on Type A employment contract
- **Experienced researcher (4-10 years) 1** : Full-time for 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years (starting in the 2nd half of year 1) on Type A employment contract
- **Experienced researcher (4-10 years) 2** : Full-time for 1 year (starting in year 4) on Type A employment contract
- **Experienced researcher (>10 years) 1** : 3 months in year 2 on Type A employment contract
- **Experienced researcher (>10 years) 2** : 3 months in year 2 on Type B fellowship
- **Experienced researcher (>10 years) 3** : 3 months in year 2 on Type B fellowship
- **Experienced researcher (>10 years) 4** : 3 months in year 2 on Type A employment contract
- **Experienced researcher (>10 years) 5** : 6 months in year 4 on Type A employment contract

Proposal Submission Forms



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

6th Framework Programme on
Research, Technological
Development and Demonstration

Marie Curie Mobility Actions
Marie Curie Excellence Grants (EXT)

A4

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Proposal Number</i> | | | | | | | <i>Proposal Acronym</i> | |
|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|-------------------------|--|

| FUNDING REQUEST | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Year | Funding for the benefit of the researchers | | | | | | | | | | | Funding for the benefit of the host institution |
| | Team leader/ Chair holder | Team members (EXT only) | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Early Stage Researchers | | | Experienced Researchers (4-10 years) | | | Experienced Researchers (> 10 years) | | | | |
| | | Full-time Person Months | Type B fellowship (%) | Full-time Person Months | Indicative number of researchers | Type B fellowship (%) | Full-time Person Months | Indicative number of researchers | Type B fellowship (%) | Full-time Person Months | Indicative number of researchers | |
| 1 | 12 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 100 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 2 | 12 | 0 | 24 | 2 | 50 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 4 | 50 | |
| 3 | 12 | 0 | 24 | 2 | 50 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 4 | 12 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 24 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | |
| Total | 48 | | 72 | n.a | | 54 | n.a | | 18 | n.a | | |

| INVOLVEMENT OF THE TEAM LEADER/CHAIR HOLDER IN OTHER EC FUNDED ACTIVITIES | |
|--|--|
| Previously submitted similar proposals or signed contracts YES/NO | |
| If yes, programme name(s) and year | |
| If yes, proposal number(s) or contract number | |

6. Submission of Proposals

6.1 Call for proposals

The call for proposal ref. **FP6-2004-Mobility-8** for the **Marie Curie Excellence Grants** was published on 15th October 2004 (OJ ref. C 255). It includes the timetable of the deadlines for submission of proposals. The deadline by which proposals must arrive at the Commission offices is **16 February 2005 (at 17.00 hrs Brussels time)**. It is important to note that calls may be amended and that further calls can be published. You should always consult the latest deadline on the HRM web page. http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=161

Please note that proposals **must be received by the Commission by the specified closing date and time of the call**. No extenuating circumstances, even if outside the control of the proposer, can be taken into account should a proposal arrive after the deadline for receipt.

Please note that **only electronic submission** via the EPSS is allowed for this call.

6.2 Preparing a proposal

In the case of Marie Curie Excellence Grants, the proposals are presented by the prospective team leader in liaison with the host organisation.

In order to prepare a proposal, it is necessary to start by downloading an "InfoPack" from the following address:

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=161

Instructions on how to prepare and submit a proposal are given in the **Guide for Proposers for Marie Curie Excellence Grants**.

Each InfoPack contains the following three documents that are essential:

- The Call text as published in the Official Journal of the European Union. This will tell you the deadline for proposal submission.
- The Guide for Proposers provides a specimen of the administrative forms (known as "Part A") and instructions concerning a free-text description of the project (known as "Part B"). Detailed instructions are also provided on the electronic proposal submission process.
- The Current Work Programme of the HRM Activity. The Work Programme provides a detailed description of the Marie Curie actions, including eligibility and evaluation criteria that apply to proposals.

It is also important to consult the following documents as they elaborate on the evaluation process:

- The Guidelines on proposal evaluation and project selection procedures (the "Evaluation Manual"). This document describes the general principles and procedures that will be used for the evaluation of any FP6 proposals by independent experts.
- The HRM Activity Guidance Notes for Evaluators. These describe how the evaluation principles and procedures will apply in the HRM Activity. You may use these Guidelines to check against the specified criteria.

A complete proposal consists of the following parts:

Part A:

A series of administrative forms (forms A1, A2, A3 and A4). The information in these forms is of great importance since it will be used for eligibility checks, for the calculation of the Community contribution and for the preparation of the contract negotiation.

Part B:

This is divided **in two sections** in order to facilitate the two-step evaluation. Section B1 contains only information relevant to the evaluation criteria “Scientific Quality of the Project” and “Quality of the researcher” which will be used both in the first and the second step of the evaluation. Section B2 contains information on the remaining evaluation criteria and will be used only in the second step of evaluation.

A series of headings and explanatory notes based on the evaluation criteria are proposed for the preparation of Sections B1 & B2. The applicants are encouraged to address these issues in a clear and concise fashion. The information given there will be the basis on which the evaluators will referee the proposal. References to web pages will not be taken into account as part of the proposal during evaluation.

Applicants should make sure that **all** information relating to the two evaluation criteria evaluated in step 1 is included in Section B1 as only this will be read by the independent experts in the first step of evaluation. Section B2 will only be read for those proposals which pass to the second step of the evaluation.

The various sub-sections of Part B have a maximum length in number of pages. Information supplied for the first step of evaluation **SHOULD NOT** exceed the maximum lengths specified in the instructions. The Commission services reserve the right to disregard parts of a proposal that clearly exceed the maximum lengths specified.

Incomplete proposals will be ineligible and therefore will not be evaluated. **To be complete a proposal must include each of the relevant forms for part A as well as Sections B1 and B2.**

6.3 Accuracy of Information

No original signatures are requested at the proposal stage. It is up to the proposers to ensure that all the information given is precise and correct. This information will be used in the eligibility checks and will be the basis for the evaluation and for the contract, if the proposal is selected. The Team leader and the Host will be solely responsible for the veracity of the information given in the proposal. Note that any false declaration can result in an ineligible proposal at any stage of the process as well as in the termination of the eventual contract and in the recovery of the funds.

6.4 Methods for submission

Proposals for Marie Curie Excellence Grants (EXT) are submitted in a single stage in accordance with the instructions set out in the Call for proposals. Proposals must be received by the Commission by the closing date and time of the call.

Submission of proposals to this call should be made **electronically via the web-based Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS)**. This may be reached from the CORDIS call page:

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=161

Details concerning electronic submission are given in the Guide for Proposers. Furthermore, a detailed “EPSS Online preparation and submission guide” is available on CORDIS.

Once you have filled in and submitted the EPSS registration form, the EPSS will send you by return email a username and password that will allow you to prepare and submit your proposal. Please note that the usernames and passwords are linked to only one proposal. Thus, for each proposal you want to prepare you have to register again.

Other methods of submission (e.g. via email or fax) will not be accepted.

The proposal Part B (Sections 1 & 2) must be prepared in PDF (“portable document format”, compatible with Adobe version 3 or higher, with embedded fonts). Other file formats will not be accepted by the system.

Only two PDF files comprising each of the Sections B1 & B2 can be uploaded (Please note that Section B1 must be uploaded using the “Part B” facility of the EPSS and Section B2 must be uploaded as the single annex.) Any further files with annexes or additional information (company brochures, supporting documentation, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) will be rejected.

6.5 Multiple Submissions

Errors discovered in proposals submitted via the EPSS can be rectified by simply submitting a corrected version. So long as the call is not yet closed, the new submission will overwrite the previous one.

Once the deadline has passed, however, no further additions, corrections or re-submissions are accepted. The last version of the proposal received before the deadline is the one which will be evaluated, and any later material will be disregarded.

In the case of multiple submissions for different Marie Curie Actions, applicants are reminded that only one proposal may be in an evaluation procedure at any one time for any of the following:

- Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowships (EIF),
- Marie Curie Outgoing International Fellowships (OIF),
- Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowships (IIF),
- Marie Curie Excellence Grants (EXT),
- Marie Curie Chairs (EXC)

7. Evaluation of Proposals

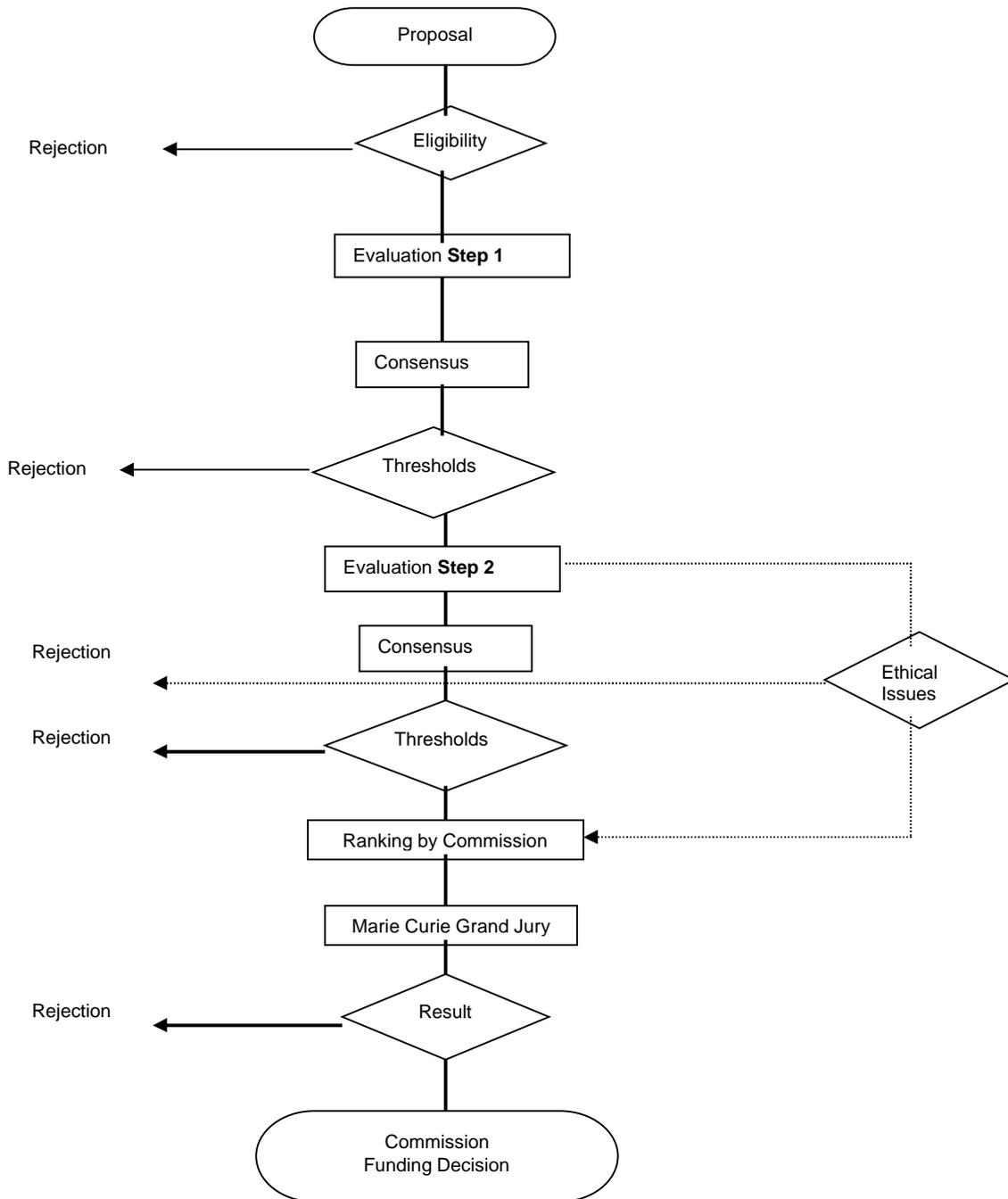
7.1 General Principles

The fundamental principles governing the evaluation of proposals are:

- **transparency:** a clear framework will be provided for researchers preparing proposals, for experts evaluating proposals, and for the Commission services themselves;
- **fair treatment:** all proposals will be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate, and of the identity of the applicants;
- **impartiality:** all eligible proposals will be treated impartially on their merits, subject to an independent peer review;
- **efficiency and speed:** the procedures must be designed to be as rapid as possible, commensurate with maintaining the quality of the evaluation and respecting the legal framework within which the specific programme is managed;
- **ethical considerations:** any proposal which contravenes fundamental ethical principles (particularly those set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union), or which does not fulfil the conditions set out in the Work Programme or in the call for proposals, may be excluded from the evaluation and selection process at any time.

7.2 Evaluation Process

In the following diagram, we show the overall evaluation process schematically:



Evaluation will be conducted by the Commission services with the assistance of independent experts according to the principles of “peer review”. Proposals will be evaluated in two steps. The experts will follow the procedures of the *Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Project Selection Procedures* (the “Evaluation Manual”), and apply the criteria given to them in the Human Resources and Mobility Work Programme.

Proposals that involve ethical issues will go through an ethical review prior to the contract negotiation. This might lead to the rejection of a proposal or may raise issues, which will be included in the negotiations.

7.3 Evaluation criteria

In order to determine the extent to which a proposal addresses the objectives of an action, independent experts are provided with a set of criteria to which marks are attributed. These criteria are listed in Annex Mob-B of the Work Programme (and reproduced below).

| HRM evaluation criterion | Specific Questions to be posed to evaluators | Threshold mark (0-5) | Weighting⁹ (%) |
|--|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Scientific Quality of Project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific quality of the research programme including, leading edge or interdisciplinary character of the research • Importance and relevance of the scientific content • Potential for promoting innovation • Research methodology | 4 | 20 (40) |
| Quality of the Host | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of receiving organisation. • Synergies offered by the hosts with the proposed activities. | - | 10 |
| Quality of the Researchers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to lead a team to reach a high level of excellence • Scientific and technological excellence of previous research • Level of international experience obtained • Experience with managing research • Ability of proposer to take on the responsibilities of the task and to successfully manage and carry out the proposed research | 4 | 20 (60) |
| Management and Feasibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for implementing and managing the activity described in the proposal • Feasibility and credibility of proposed plans • Availability of necessary resources • Quality of the dissemination plan | - | 15 |
| Added Value and relevance to objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of the proposal to one or more of the specific objectives of the action - as specified in section 2.3.3.1 of this document. • National diversity of envisaged team • Impact on prospective team leader's career • Synergies built by carrying out the proposed research at a European level • Impact on increasing the attractiveness of Europe, and on promoting European research careers, in particular the contribution to reversing brain drain. • Impact in the creation of excellent, transnational dynamic and stimulating focal points in Europe • Relevance of theme(s) in relation to European achievements and interests | - | 35 |

⁹ The figures in brackets are the weightings applied in the first-step evaluation, where only two of the criteria are assessed

The expert evaluators use these criteria in order to assign a score to the proposal. It is therefore important to ensure that the “Part B” of the proposal addresses all the relevant criteria.

Step 1 :

The first step of evaluation addresses only the criteria “Scientific Quality of the Project” and “Quality of the researcher”. These are weighted 40% and 60% respectively.

Step 2 :

In the second step of evaluation the full proposal is evaluated against the complete set of criteria.

Each proposal will be evaluated by several independent experts who will mark each criterion on a scale of 0 to 5 points. Once a consensus has been reached among the evaluators, the following procedure will be applied:

- For certain criteria, the consensus mark will be subject to a minimum threshold to ensure the excellence of the proposal in terms of the quality of the research project and of the Team leader;
- Each mark will then be weighted to reflect the relative importance of each criterion taking into account the objectives of the action;
- The overall score is subsequently determined by the sum of the weighted marks to which a threshold of 70% will then be applied.

Any proposal for which the consensus score of the expert evaluators falls below any of the above thresholds will be automatically excluded from funding.

7.4 Ranking of proposals

Once the two steps of the evaluation have been completed, the experts will draw-up a list of proposals placed in order of merit for consideration by the Commission based on the overall scores of the proposals that are above the thresholds. An Evaluation Summary Report will be prepared for each eligible proposal, a copy of which will be sent to the proposer. At this stage the Commission can modify the priority list given by the expert evaluators on the basis of the priorities of the programme. In such cases, the Commission will clearly indicate the motivations for the action taken.

On the basis of the above and taking into account the available budget, the Commission will draw-up a priority list of the proposals for immediate negotiation. In addition, a reserve list will be compiled consisting of those proposals that might also enter into negotiations if budget becomes available (e.g. following withdrawal of proposals etc.).

The remaining proposals that attain all the thresholds but for which no funding is available will be rejected for budgetary reasons.

8. Negotiations & Contracts

8.1 *The negotiation phase*

If the proposal has been successfully evaluated by the Commission on the basis of peer-review and has been retained by the Commission, proposers will be invited to enter into contract negotiations. During this phase the financial aspects of the proposal and the detailed implementation of the work programme will be agreed. The outcome of the negotiations will be the determination of the funding to be allocated to the project and the drafting of a technical annex that will form part of the contract. This technical annex will determine the objectives and main deliverables in terms of research and training.

In the case of proposals that have gone through an ethical review prior to the contract negotiation any relevant issues raised will be included in the negotiations.

Assuming that the negotiations are successfully concluded, a formal Commission Decision approving the funding will be made and the proposer informed accordingly. In the event of withdrawal of applicants or other unsuccessful negotiations among the proposers initially selected, proposers from the reserve list will be contacted to begin negotiations.

8.2 *The contract phase*

A draft contract is subsequently prepared and sent to the Host institution for signature.

8.2.1 *The contract*

The contract with the Commission will establish the rights and obligations of the Host and in particular the arrangements for the technical and financial implementation, eligibility of expenditure, as well as rules regarding intellectual property rights.

The contract is structured along the following lines⁵:

- a **core** text containing: the scope, duration, maximum Community contribution, deliverables, payment modalities;
- **Annex I “Description of Work”**;
- **Annex II “General Conditions”** covering standard legal and administrative provisions, the IPR regime and standard financial provisions among others;
- **Annex III “Specific provisions for the Marie Curie Excellence Grants”**, stipulating the obligations of the Host Organisation, the rates of Community support etc.;
- **Form C – Model Financial Statement**.

The contract shall be concluded between the Commission and Host organisation. It shall enter into force on signature by the two parties.

Once the signed contract is returned and signed by the Commission, the Host proceeds to sign **agreements** with the Team leader and Team members, which regulates their relations, and the project will begin.

The technical implementation of the project will be the responsibility of the Host.

⁵ http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/working-groups/model-contract/index_en.html

8.2.2 The Host-Researcher Agreement

The agreements between the Host and each individual researcher in the Team shall determine, in accordance with the contract, the conditions for implementing the research activities and the respective rights and obligations of the researcher and the Host. Amongst the issues that should be addressed in the agreements are¹¹:

- The activities to be undertaken by each researcher and their timetable
- The remuneration (amounts, legally justified deductions, payment arrangements)
- Social security coverage
- Intellectual Property Rights, in particular the access to pre-existing know-how, the use of knowledge, publicity and confidentiality

The preparation of the agreements should begin as soon as possible after the receipt of the invitation to enter into negotiations.

Remuneration

The remuneration of the Team leader/members should correspond *at least* to the allowances specified in the Work Programme, but the Host is free to complement these amounts:

“The host organisation receiving Community funding must pay to the selected researchers a minimum contribution according to the reference allowances specified above. Host organisation may pay a top up to the eligible researcher in order to complement this contribution.”

Work Programme, 2.8.3

Conditions of appointment

An important aspect of the Commission’s policy towards researchers is to improve their career prospects and make a career in research more attractive. The Marie Curie Actions should be a means to achieve this goal. To this end, the Host institutions will be required to follow certain conditions when appointing Team leaders/members in addition to the allowances outlined above. These conditions include the provision of all compulsory social security contributions and the provision of maternity leave.

It is important to stress that **the appointment of the Team leader and of experienced Team members should take place on the basis of a Type A employment contract**, except in duly justified cases.

It is expected that in the case of Marie Curie Excellence Grants, Type B fixed-amount fellowships should only be used in those cases where this type of appointment would not prove to be disadvantageous for the future of the researcher. At the negotiation stage the Host institution will be asked to specify whether the researchers will be employed under a Type A contract or a Type B fellowship. It is therefore important that the researchers keep in contact with the Host institution to discuss this issue and to avoid possible misunderstandings at the agreement stage.

¹¹ Please refer also to Annex III, Specific Provisions for Marie Curie Excellence Grants, article III. 3

Maternity leave

The Commission may pay a contribution in addition to the compensation received by the Team leader/member concerned from her/his insurance.

“To take into account the cases of parental leave of absence the Commission can decide, on request by the researchers and on advice/consultation of the host organisation, to prolong the duration of the fellowship and augment the sum of the Community contribution as a consequence. Calculated on a monthly basis, this additional contribution shall not exceed the difference between the compensation received from the national social insurance system and the amount of the monthly Community contribution for the benefit of the researcher concerned.”

Work Programme, Section 2.8.3

The Commission must be informed at the earliest opportunity of interruptions of the activities of a Team leader/member and in all cases prior to their commencement.

Part-time work

In principle, Team leaders/members must work full-time. Exceptionally, part-time work can be accepted for family reasons if this does not interfere with the execution of the project.

9. Implementation of the project

At its outset, the contract will contain an agreed overall implementation plan for the full duration of the project together with its associated indicative financial plan. A pre-financing (an advance payment) will be made at the start of the project.

With the agreement of the Commission, the overall implementation plan may be modified and the detailed plan will roll forward each year, as part of the reporting schedule. However, the overall objectives and principal deliverables, as set out in the contract, will not be expected to change during the lifetime of the project.

9.1 Periodic reporting and payments

The host institution will be required to submit periodic **scientific and financial reports** to the Commission. The Commission will need to review and approve all of these documents and in doing so, it may be assisted by external experts.

Once the Commission has accepted a periodic financial report, an equivalent part of the advance will be converted into an accepted payment and will be considered as a full and final settlement of the payment for the period concerned. This will be the case only if audited cost certificates are provided with the financial statement and is also subject, of course, to any ex-post audit. If no such certificate has been provided with the periodic report, the following payment will still be considered as an advance payment.

It is the intention that projects should never be operating without an approved detailed plan, or without a satisfactory advance payment.

9.2 Final reporting

At the completion of the project, a **final report** will assess the results of the project against its agreed objectives. The final report will also include, among others:

- q an analysis and evaluation of the potential economic and social impact of the achievements of the project;
- q a description of the project's activities and future plans regarding the use and dissemination of knowledge;
- q an assessment of the equal opportunity promotion actions.

The final report should be accompanied by a financial statement and a financial report for the final period.

10. Follow-up and monitoring

10.1 Tasks of the Project Officer

A project officer from among the Commission staff will be assigned to each project. The project officer may be assisted by other persons, internal and external to the Commission, with the appropriate technical expertise. The project officer maintains close contact with the contractor in order to ensure proper overall monitoring, as well as timely feed-back between the project and the Commission on developments needing particular attention. The tasks of a project officer include:

- serving as a permanent contact point for the project;
- arranging the follow-up of the project, including analysis of all project reports, both from the scientific/technical and financial/managerial points of view;
- attending all formal project reviews where this is deemed necessary.

10.2 Continuous Assessment

The Commission services will monitor the project so as to ensure proper work execution according to the terms of the contract, to protect the Community's financial interests, to reinforce public accountability and to ensure maximum synergy and coherence with other actions within the specific programme « Structuring the European Research Area ».

A variety of means will be used to carry out a systematic and continuous assessment of the implementation of the individual contracts and the success of the Marie Curie Excellence Grants activity:

- The scientific results, dissemination, training and management aspects will be assessed by the Commission's Project Officers assisted by independent experts via a mid term review meeting, annual and final reporting (including cost statements);
- The Team Leader will be asked to indicate his/her career prospects at the end of the project. A follow-up questionnaire 2 years after the end of the contract will aim to determine the longer-term impact in terms of scientific results and career development.
- The Team Members will be asked about their level of satisfaction and their career prospects at the end of project. A follow-up questionnaire 2 years after the end of the contract will aim to determine the longer-term impact in terms of scientific results and career development;

Reporting by the contractor is obligatory and provision will be made by the Commission to provide reporting data on-line (incl. questionnaires).

10.3 Audits

The model contract will specify an audit regime to enable the Commission to proceed to audits, dealing with **technical**, **financial**, **technological** (innovation impact), and **ethical** aspects:

- **Technical audits** may be launched at any point during the implementation of the project in order to verify that the project is being or has been carried out in accordance with the conditions indicated by the participant.
- **Financial audits** may be launched at any time, and may deal with any aspect of the financial implementation of the whole or a part of the project.
- **Technological audits** dealing with the use and dissemination of results may be launched at the end of all the projects, but may also be carried out earlier, if considered necessary by the Commission.
- **Ethical audits** may be launched at any time during the implementation of the project in order to verify that the project is respecting fundamental ethical principles and national regulations.

Various audits may be undertaken simultaneously. In particular, parallel technical and financial audits of a given project could be opportune. The Commission itself will conduct the audits or entitle another entity to do so.

Where to obtain further help

In the event that you have a question that has not been addressed in this document, you are invited to contact the Marie Cure Actions helpdesk using the following email address:

rtd-mariecurie-actions@cec.eu.int

We will endeavour to answer your questions as rapidly as possible.

Annex I: Definitions of the Allowances

The amounts indicated below are **gross amounts**, i.e. before deduction of compulsory social security contributions and national taxes (e.g. income tax). For more details on the level of such deductions researchers are encouraged to contact the National Contact Point of the Host country (see Annex V).

(a) Basic Living Allowance (cost of living index 100)

| Categories | Team members | |
|---|--|---|
| | Type A Employment contract ¹ (€/year) | Type B Fixed-amount fellowship ² (€/year) |
| Early stage researchers (<4 years experience) | 30 550 | 15 275 |
| Experienced researchers (4-10 years experience) | 47 000 | 23 500 |
| Experienced researchers (>10 years experience) | 70 500 | 35 250 |

| Categories | Team leaders | |
|---|--|--|
| | Type A Employment contract ¹ (€/year) | Type B Fixed-amount fellowship ² (€/year) |
| Experienced researchers (4-10 years experience) | 61 100 | 30 550 |
| Experienced researchers (>10 years experience) | 91 650 | 45 825 |

¹ These monthly allowances include all compulsory deductions under national applicable legislation.

² Fixed-amount fellowships with minimum social security coverage are not employment contracts. Researchers can only be recruited under a fixed-amount fellowship with minimum social security coverage if this is compatible with national legislation of the host organisation. The host organisation must ensure that minimum social security coverage has been provided to the researcher, not necessarily paid from the Community contribution for the fixed-amount fellowship. The minimum social security coverage required by the Commission for researchers recruited under a fixed-amount fellowship shall include some of the categories foreseen in Council Regulation (EEC) No [1408/71](#) of 14 June 1971, which are namely: benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases, invalidity benefits. As to maternity benefits it has to be noted that, even if such a category does not fall within the minimum required social security coverage requested by the Commission, the Commission can decide (according to the WP and the contractual documents), on request by the researchers and on advice/consultation of the host organisation, to augment the sum of the Community contribution as a consequence. This is the minimum standard of social security coverage required when a researcher is recruited under a fixed-amount fellowship, whether or not the country in which the project will be carried out has any regulations on this matter.

(b) Travel Allowance

| Distance ³ (km) | Fixed-amount contribution (€) |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| < 500 | 250 |
| 500 – 1 000 | 500 |
| 1 000 – 1 500 | 750 |
| 1 500 – 2 500 | 1 000 |
| 2 500 – 5 000 | 1 500 |
| 5 000 – 10 000 | 2 000 |
| >10 000 | 2 500 |

³ Direct distance (as the crow flies) based on latitude and longitude between the two locations.

(c) Mobility Allowance

- 800€ per person-month for a researcher with family obligations '(i.e. who is married or has an equivalent status as recognised by the national legislation of the country in which the host is located and/or has charge of children);
- 500€ per person-month for a researcher without family obligations;

The travel and mobility allowances (b) & (c) are only paid to researchers who have undertaken transnational mobility.

Annex II: Correction Coefficients

The table below includes only the Member States and Associated States (those which have signed an agreement of association with FP6), *at the time of writing*, for which a correction coefficient is available¹².

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|----------|-------|
| Austria | 104 | Belgium | 100 | Denmark | 129.1 | Finland | 115.9 |
| France | 104.7 | Germany | 103.8 | Greece | 87.6 | Ireland | 108.2 |
| Italy | 99.3 | Luxembourg | 100 | Netherlands | 103.9 | Portugal | 88.7 |
| Spain | 93.7 | Sweden | 110.7 | United Kingdom | 112.5 | Bulgaria | 72.1 |
| Cyprus | 95.1 | Czech Republic | 92 | Estonia | 74.3 | Hungary | 69 |
| Israel | 121.6 | Latvia | 80.7 | Lithuania | 76.6 | Malta | 103 |
| Norway | 134.2 | Poland | 88.7 | Romania | 55.1 | Slovakia | 68.8 |
| Slovenia | 76.4 | Turkey | 81.3 | | | | |

¹² For those countries where the correction coefficient is not available (not indicated in the table), the Commission will decide on a case by case basis.

Annex III: Consolidated Tables of the Basic Monthly Living Allowance

The following tables provide the monthly living allowance for researchers taking into account the country specific correction factors (from annex II). Please note that the amounts do not include additional allowances for mobility and travel and that they are **gross amounts**, i.e. before deduction of compulsory social security contributions and national taxes (e.g. income tax). For more details on the level of such deductions researchers are encouraged to contact the National Contact Point of the Host country (see Annex V).

| Country | Type A Employment contract (€/month) | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|--|---|--|
| | Team Members | | | Team Leader | |
| | Early-stage researchers (<4 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (4-10 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (>10 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (4-10 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (>10 years experience) |
| Austria | 2647,67 | 4073,33 | 6110,00 | 5295,33 | 7943,00 |
| Belgium | 2545,83 | 3916,67 | 5875,00 | 5091,67 | 7637,50 |
| Bulgaria | 1835,55 | 2823,92 | 4235,88 | 3671,09 | 5506,64 |
| Cyprus | 2421,09 | 3724,75 | 5587,13 | 4842,18 | 7263,26 |
| Czech Rep. | 2342,17 | 3603,33 | 5405,00 | 4684,33 | 7026,50 |
| Denmark | 3286,67 | 5056,42 | 7584,63 | 6573,34 | 9860,01 |
| Estonia | 1891,55 | 2910,08 | 4365,13 | 3783,11 | 5674,66 |
| Finland | 2950,62 | 4539,42 | 6809,13 | 5901,24 | 8851,86 |
| France | 2665,49 | 4100,75 | 6151,13 | 5330,98 | 7996,46 |
| Germany | 2642,58 | 4065,50 | 6098,25 | 5285,15 | 7927,73 |
| Greece | 2230,15 | 3431,00 | 5146,50 | 4460,30 | 6690,45 |
| Hungary | 1756,63 | 2702,50 | 4053,75 | 3513,25 | 5269,88 |
| Ireland | 2754,59 | 4237,83 | 6356,75 | 5509,18 | 8263,78 |
| Israel | 3095,73 | 4762,67 | 7144,00 | 6191,47 | 9287,20 |
| Italy | 2528,01 | 3889,25 | 5833,88 | 5056,03 | 7584,04 |
| Latvia | 2054,49 | 3160,75 | 4741,13 | 4108,98 | 6163,46 |
| Lithuania | 1950,11 | 3000,17 | 4500,25 | 3900,22 | 5850,33 |
| Luxembourg | 2545,83 | 3916,67 | 5875,00 | 5091,67 | 7637,50 |
| Netherlands | 2645,12 | 4069,42 | 6104,13 | 5290,24 | 7935,36 |
| Norway | 3416,51 | 5256,17 | 7884,25 | 6833,02 | 10249,53 |
| Poland | 2258,15 | 3474,08 | 5211,13 | 4516,31 | 6774,46 |
| Portugal | 2258,15 | 3474,08 | 5211,13 | 4516,31 | 6774,46 |
| Romania | 1402,75 | 2158,08 | 3237,13 | 2805,51 | 4208,26 |
| Slovakia | 1751,53 | 2694,67 | 4042,00 | 3503,07 | 5254,60 |
| Slovenia | 1945,02 | 2992,33 | 4488,50 | 3890,03 | 5835,05 |
| Spain | 2385,45 | 3669,92 | 5504,88 | 4770,89 | 7156,34 |
| Sweden | 2818,24 | 4335,75 | 6503,63 | 5636,48 | 8454,71 |
| Turkey | 2069,76 | 3184,25 | 4776,38 | 4139,53 | 6209,29 |
| United Kingdom | 2864,06 | 4406,25 | 6609,38 | 5728,13 | 8592,19 |

| Country | Type B fellowship (€/month) | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|--|---|--|
| | Team Members | | | Team Leader | |
| | Early-stage researchers (<4 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (4-10 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (>10 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (4-10 years experience) | Experienced Researchers (>10 years experience) |
| Austria | 1323,83 | 2036,67 | 3055,00 | 2647,67 | 3971,50 |
| Belgium | 1272,92 | 1958,33 | 2937,50 | 2545,83 | 3818,75 |
| Bulgaria | 917,77 | 1411,96 | 2117,94 | 1835,55 | 2753,32 |
| Cyprus | 1210,54 | 1862,38 | 2793,56 | 2421,09 | 3631,63 |
| Czech Rep. | 1171,08 | 1801,67 | 2702,50 | 2342,17 | 3513,25 |
| Denmark | 1643,34 | 2528,21 | 3792,31 | 3286,67 | 4930,01 |
| Estonia | 945,78 | 1455,04 | 2182,56 | 1891,55 | 2837,33 |
| Finland | 1475,31 | 2269,71 | 3404,56 | 2950,62 | 4425,93 |
| France | 1332,74 | 2050,38 | 3075,56 | 2665,49 | 3998,23 |
| Germany | 1321,29 | 2032,75 | 3049,13 | 2642,58 | 3963,86 |
| Greece | 1115,08 | 1715,50 | 2573,25 | 2230,15 | 3345,23 |
| Hungary | 878,31 | 1351,25 | 2026,88 | 1756,63 | 2634,94 |
| Ireland | 1377,30 | 2118,92 | 3178,38 | 2754,59 | 4131,89 |
| Israel | 1547,87 | 2381,33 | 3572,00 | 3095,73 | 4643,60 |
| Italy | 1264,01 | 1944,63 | 2916,94 | 2528,01 | 3792,02 |
| Latvia | 1027,24 | 1580,38 | 2370,56 | 2054,49 | 3081,73 |
| Lithuania | 975,05 | 1500,08 | 2250,13 | 1950,11 | 2925,16 |
| Luxembourg | 1272,92 | 1958,33 | 2937,50 | 2545,83 | 3818,75 |
| Netherlands | 1322,56 | 2034,71 | 3052,06 | 2645,12 | 3967,68 |
| Norway | 1708,25 | 2628,08 | 3942,13 | 3416,51 | 5124,76 |
| Poland | 1129,08 | 1737,04 | 2605,56 | 2258,15 | 3387,23 |
| Portugal | 1129,08 | 1737,04 | 2605,56 | 2258,15 | 3387,23 |
| Romania | 701,38 | 1079,04 | 1618,56 | 1402,75 | 2104,13 |
| Slovakia | 875,77 | 1347,33 | 2021,00 | 1751,53 | 2627,30 |
| Slovenia | 972,51 | 1496,17 | 2244,25 | 1945,02 | 2917,53 |
| Spain | 1192,72 | 1834,96 | 2752,44 | 2385,45 | 3578,17 |
| Sweden | 1409,12 | 2167,88 | 3251,81 | 2818,24 | 4227,36 |
| Turkey | 1034,88 | 1592,13 | 2388,19 | 2069,76 | 3104,64 |
| United Kingdom | 1432,03 | 2203,13 | 3304,69 | 2864,06 | 4296,09 |

Annex IV: ERACAREERS - The pan-European Researcher's Mobility Portal

One of the major obstacles to transnational mobility is the lack of adequate information on available grants and opportunities for researchers in Europe as well as on questions related to visa, access to employment, social security rights, fiscal matters and cultural aspects when researchers move to another country.

As a response to these needs, the European Commission has launched **ERACAREERS**, the **pan-European Researcher's Mobility Portal**. The URL for the portal is:

<http://europa.eu.int/eracareers>

The most relevant international, national and sectoral research organisations are being mobilised towards the interconnection at European level of their databases and information sources.

What services does the Researcher's Mobility Portal offer?

- **Available research job vacancies** published by the different actors of the Research community (universities, industries, research organisations, foundations, etc);
- **Practical information about administrative and legal issues** when moving from one country to another, as well as up-to-date information about cultural and family related aspects (conditions of entry, social security, housing, schooling, day-care, language courses, etc)
- A versatile and powerful **job vacancies data-base** where research organisations may advertise for free their job vacancies (directly visible on the homepage under the 'What's new on this site' section)
- A **CV data-base** aimed at collecting researchers' CVs
- Access to **national researcher's mobility portals** which have been developed as part of this overall huge initiative aiming at creating a more favourable environment for researchers in Europe
- Access to **ERA-MORE**, the European Network of Mobility Centres (<http://europa.eu.int/eracareers/era-more>) providing personalised assistance in all matters related to researchers' lives when they move from one country to another
- **General information** about research policies relevant to the career development of researchers in Europe as well access to a wealth of **relevant on-line career resources for researchers**, including EMBO, Science's Next Wave Europe, Nature-jobs, Ploteus and many others

Customised assistance: ERA-MORE, the European Network of Mobility Centres

The main aim of ERA-MORE, the European network of mobility centres, launched in June 2004, is to offer national and foreign researchers customised assistance in all matters relating to their professional and daily lives before, during and after their periods abroad. In fact these mobility centres want to take the pain out of moving: they will help researchers with issues related to visas, work permits, salaries and taxation, pension rights, health

care, social security, accommodation, recognition of qualifications, day care and schooling, language courses and social and cultural issues

The Network involves all EU Member States as well as Candidate Countries and Associated Countries and the location of the centres covers a wide range of organisations, such as university information centres, research bodies, public authorities, foundations or businesses.

Annex V: Bibliography

Information on Marie Curie Excellence Grants

| | |
|---|---|
| Under the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6) | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/action/excellence_en.html |
|---|---|

Legal decisions

| | |
|--|---|
| Decision on the Framework Programme | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/decision/ |
| Rules of Participation in FP6 | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/participationrules/ |
| Specific decision "Structuring the European Research Area" | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/specificprogrammes/ |

Information on Marie Curie Actions

| | |
|--|--|
| InfoPacks (including the Guide for Proposers and the HRM Work Programme) | http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=161 |
| Brochure "A rough guide to the Marie Curie Actions" | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/information/publications_en.html |
| HRM Guidance Notes for Evaluators | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/pdf/guidance_evaluators.pdf http://www.cordis.lu/calls/mariecurie-actions/ |

Supporting information

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| Brochure "The Sixth Framework Programme in Brief" | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/inbrief/ |
| The Researcher's Mobility Portal | http://europa.eu.int/eracareers/index_en.cfm |
| CORDIS FP6 service | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/ |
| National Contact Points | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/ncps/ |
| Information Days and other events | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/events/ |
| IPR helpdesk | http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org |
| CORDIS partner search facility | http://partners-service.cordis.lu/ |
| Ethical Issues and Rules | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/ethics/ethics_en.html |
| International cooperation | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html (<i>general site</i>) and www.cordis.lu/fp6/inco/ |
| Science and Society action plan | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/action-plan/action-plan_en.html and http://www.cordis.lu/rtd2002/science-society/library.htm |
| Guidelines on techniques for science communication with the public | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/science-communication/index_en.htm |
| List of Countries associated to FP6 | http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/iscp/countries.html |

Contractual information

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| Contract preparation forms | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/find-doc.htm#cpf |
| Model contracts | http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/find-doc.htm#modelcontracts |

Annex VI: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. General information

Q: *What are the Marie Curie Excellence Grants?*

A: The Marie Curie Excellence Grants allow the creation and initial development of Excellence Teams. An Excellence Team is a research team located in a single host organisation and consisting of a leader and members, with a sufficiently good international balance.

Q: *Who can apply?*

A: A prospective team leader submits a proposal jointly with a host organisation (legal entity) established in a Member or Associated State. If the proposal is successful, the host organisation will appoint the leader, along with other researchers recruited as members of the Team.

Q: *Which research topics are supported?*

A: Proposals from all areas of scientific and technological research of interest to the European Community are welcome and there are no pre-defined priority areas. Research fields within the EURATOM programme (nuclear fission or fusion) are however not eligible for funding within the Marie Curie schemes.

Q: *How does one apply?*

A: Interested researchers should first read the EXT Handbook prepared by the Commission in order to understand the rules for participating in this scheme (available on the website of the Marie Curie Actions http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/information/publications_en.html). Once they have decided to prepare a proposal, applicants should read carefully all relevant documents from the InfoPack available for each call for proposals on the CORDIS website:

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/calls_activity.cfm?ID_ACTIVITY=594

The legal documents (listed in annex II of the Handbook and in chapter VII of the Guide for Proposers) might also help applicants to understand better the evaluation process, the rules for 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: *How many contracts for Marie Curie Excellence Grants will be concluded following each deadline?*

A: The total indicative budget is €40 million for the deadline of 16 February 2005. As an indication, based on the results of the first selections for this action, the financial size of projects will vary between € 850 000 and €2 000 000.

Q: *Is it possible to access information on successful proposals from the first call?*

A: Summaries of projects selected previously are available on the Marie Curie website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/information/publications_en.html#3

2. Host organisation

Q: What are the characteristics of eligible host organisations?

A: The eligible host institutions for Marie Curie Excellence 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 enterprises, especially those of small and medium-size (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 an International European Interest Organisation established in any country?

A. Yes.

Q. Can the candidates submit their proposals together with more than one host institution?

A. No, the submission of a proposal involving more than one host institution from the outset is not envisaged. However, the rules state that, in the course of the project, the Commission may exceptionally authorise a change of contractor at the request of the team leader, if necessary to ensure further development of the project.

3. Eligible researchers

Q: What is the profile of a team leader?

A: The team leader is a researcher who in the development of his/her career, is showing a potential to reach a high level of autonomy and excellence and the potential capabilities to create or develop an excellence team. Past mobility and international co-operation experience are important evaluation criteria.

Q: Is it mandatory for the team leader to have a PhD?

A: No. In practice, however, successful applicants tend to have several years' research experience after obtaining a PhD.

Q: Should the team leader be a national of a country other than that of the host organisation?

A: Not necessarily.

Q: Can the team leader already be employed by the host organisation at the time of the proposal (possibly in a permanent position)?

A: Yes, but (s)he should not have been working at the host organisation for more than the last 12 months immediately prior to the deadline for the submission of proposals, nor may (s)he have worked at the host organisation for more than 12 months over the last three years.

Q: Should the team leader be active in a third country (i.e. outside European Member and Associated States) in order to qualify?

A: Not necessarily. Nevertheless, such researchers are particularly encouraged to apply, since one of the aims of the action is to contribute “to counteracting the brain drain” (Work Programme, section 2.3.3.1).

Q: Does the Commission carry out pre-checks, on a one-to-one basis, regarding a candidate’s general level of excellence or eligibility?

A: No, it is up to the candidate to present the information on his/her research 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>

Q: How large is an Excellence Team?

A: There is no upper limit on the number of team members and they can have any level of experience.

Q: Is it necessary for the team members to be identified at the proposal stage?

A: No, only general information on the number and levels of experience of the team members is required at the proposal stage. Once funding is agreed, the team leader and the host organisation will have to publicise the posts and recruit the team members.

Q: How should the vacancies for Excellence Teams be advertised?

A: Once the EXT contract is signed, the host organisation must ensure that job opportunities on the team are advertised on the internet, in the scientific press, and through its usual means of advertising. When available, these vacancies are published on the following CORDIS website <http://mc-opportunities.cordis.lu>. The applications should be made directly to the host institution rather than the Commission.

Q: Can any of the team members be known in advance?

A: Yes, although this is not normally expected. If some or all team members are known in advance, their choice should be justified in the proposal.

Q: Can a team member already be employed by the host organisation at the time of the proposal (possibly in a permanent position)?

A: Yes, but (s)he should not have been working at the host organisation for more than the last 12 months prior to the appointment. Furthermore, a majority of the team members may not have worked at the host organisation for more than 12 months over the last three years (measured at the time of their appointment under the project).

Q: Should the team members be nationals of a different country from that of the host organisation?

A: Not necessarily, but the proposed team (including the team leader) will be expected to have a sufficiently balanced international composition.

Q: Can an experienced researcher apply in parallel to Marie Curie Excellence Grants, Intra-European and/or Outgoing Fellowships?

A: No, each applicant-researcher may only have one proposal in an application procedure at a time for individual fellowships (EIF, OIF, IIF), Excellence Grants (EXT) and Chairs (EXC). Applicants who have submitted multiple applications to one or more of the above actions should be aware that their proposals may be deemed ineligible.

Q: Can one benefit from a Marie Curie Excellence Grant in tandem with a Marie Curie International Re-integration Grant?

A: Yes, a Marie Curie International Re-integration Grant (IRG) may be combined with a period as team leader or member under a Marie Curie Excellence Grant.

4. Project implementation

Q: Can members of the Excellence Team make research and training visits to other research organisations?

A: Yes

5. Financial and contractual aspects

Q. Does the Commission conclude the contract with the team leader?

A. No, the Commission concludes the contract with the host organisation (the participant) which, in turn, concludes special agreements with the team leader and each of the team members (the beneficiaries).

Q: How much funding can an Excellence Team receive?

A: The overall budget of a team depends on the number and experience levels of the team members, and the costs related to the project.

Q: How can the funding be used?

A: Part of the funding is for the benefit of the team leader and members (living, mobility and travel allowances). This is paid according to rates defined by the Commission and should amount to at least 65% of the EC contribution. The remainder of the budget goes towards research costs, along with overhead and management related expenses.

Q: Which expenses are eligible for funding?

A: The Community contribution will include the team leader's and members' living, mobility and travel allowances, on the basis of fixed rates. A contribution to the benefit of the team to cover the expenses related to the activities of research, training and transfer of knowledge, may be charged to the contract on a real cost basis. The host organisation can also get funding for part of the management cost and a contribution to the overheads. If necessary for the project and duly justified, the European Commission can also agree to fund equipment expenses under certain conditions.

Q: Does the monthly allowance include any compulsory employer contribution, or does the appropriate allowance have to be passed on in full to the beneficiary under the employment contract (Type A)?

A: The living allowance for researchers recruited with an employment contract is a gross amount. "These monthly allowances include all compulsory deductions under national applicable legislation" (Work Programme, section 2.8.1): i.e. any compulsory employer contribution to national insurance, etc., is included.

Q: May the host organisation choose to pay the team leader and members a higher amount than that covered by the Commission contribution?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there any support available for the team leader's and members' families?

A: Researchers with families who undertake a mobility period abroad are entitled to a higher (monthly) mobility allowance. The mobility allowance is set at €500 per month for a researcher without family charges; and at €800 per month for a researcher with a marital or equivalent status recognised by national legislation and/or charge of children; and is adjusted by the same correction co-efficient as the living allowance.

The (annual) travel allowance, on the other hand, is not increased.

Q: How is family status defined for the purpose of fixing the mobility allowance?

A: A researcher with a marital or equivalent status recognised by national legislation of the host's country and/or charge of children is entitled to the higher level of mobility allowance. For the team leader the family situation is determined "at the time of the Commission selection decision on the proposal", and for team members it is determined "at the time of recruitment".

Q: Is a researcher with family obligations who does not undertake transnational mobility entitled to an allowance on account of these obligations?

A: No.

Q: Is a researcher returning to his/her own country as a team leader or member entitled to the mobility allowance?

A: Yes.

Q: What determines whether a team leader or member is paid through an employment contract or fixed-amount fellowship?

A: The Work Programme offers the possibility for the host organisation to opt between either alternative, following an agreement with the researcher. However, it is expected that team leaders and experienced team members (i.e. with more than four years of research experience) will be recruited with employment contracts. Any recruitment on the basis of a fixed-amount fellowship must be duly justified and be compatible with national legislation. Provisions for social security must also be made.

Q: Can a Team leader or member work part time?

A: Yes, exceptionally the Commission may accept part-time work if this is duly justified for reasons connected to personal or family circumstances and if it does not interfere with the execution of the project. In case of a part-time appointment, allowances shall be adapted accordingly.

Q: Does the host organisation have to employ the team leader once the contract ends?

A: No, there is no requirement in the contract between the European Commission and the host institution to employ the team leader permanently. The Team leader and the host are free to make their own arrangements. However, synergies with other non-EU sources of funding may be explored which may lead to a prolongation of the contract.

6. Proposal preparation and submission

Q: Who applies for a grant, the prospective team leader or the host organisation?

A: The team leader must submit the proposal jointly with the host organisation.

Q: Is it necessary for the team members to be identified at the proposal stage?

A: No, only general information on the number and the experience levels of the team members is required at the proposal stage. Once funding is agreed, the team leader and the host organisation will have to publicise the posts and recruit the team members.

Q: Can any of the team members be known in advance?

A: Yes, although this is not normally expected. If some or all team members are known in advance, their choice should be justified in the proposal.

Q: Who should register in the EPSS?

It is recommended that the prospective team leader registers as the proposal coordinator and applies for the coordinator username and password. In the case of EXT, there is only one participant (the host organisation) and the prospective team leader as the applicant could fill in all A forms including A2 on behalf, and with the agreement, of the host institution.

Q: Can the 'scientist in charge' be the team leader?

A: Yes.

Q: What precise information should be given regarding the mobility experience of the prospective team leader (A3 form)?

A: [1] The total number of months spent in research activities outside the country of origin refers to months spent in the EU, Associated States plus third countries (US, Canada, Japan, etc) regardless of the funding sources. [2] The total number of months spent in research activities outside EU and Associated States refers to the months spent only in third countries (US, Canada, Japan, etc.). [3] The total number of months of Community training and mobility support received refers to the months paid by the European Union.

Q: Should the proposal give details of expected major equipment expenses that will have to be incurred in the course of the project?

A: Yes, such expenses should be properly detailed and justified in Part B of the proposal.

Q: How strict are the length limits defined for each section? Is there a suggested font size?

A: Certain sections of part B have a mandatory maximum length in numbers of pages. Evaluators will not consider extra material. The recommended font is Times New Roman 12.

Q: Does the CV have to be integrated within part B or can it be uploaded as an annex in a separate file?

A: The CV must be integrated within the Part B Section 1 (point B1.2) which is uploaded as "the Part B file" in the EPSS. Only this file will be considered in the first step of the evaluation.

Q: Do applicants need to send a formal agreement between the prospective team leader and the host organisation (with signatures and stamps) on a separate form to the European Commission prior to proposal submission?

A: No, there is no need for any additional documents or signatures at the proposal submission stage. It is up to the applicant and the host organisation to give the precise and correct information.

Q: Can the English translation of an application be sent after the deadline?

A: No, the translation of a proposal should be submitted by the deadline.

7. Evaluation

Q: Is there a preference for certain areas of research for Marie Curie Excellence Grants?

A: No, the action will cover all research fields ("bottom up" approach). However, the evaluation criteria (both "scientific quality" and "Community added value and relevance to the objectives of the scheme") place emphasis on subjects of relevance to Europe, and of a multidisciplinary, or intersectorial, or leading edge nature.

Q: In the evaluation criteria, how is the concept of "Community Added Value" defined

A: In general it is understood as the contribution made by a proposed project to Community policies. It is for the proposer to highlight specific Community policies and argue how their proposal addresses them. In the case of Excellence Grants, the relevant criterion explicitly includes synergies built by carrying out the proposed research at a European level; and the impact on increasing the attractiveness of Europe, and on promoting European research careers (Work Programme, Annex II-B). Please note that this does not exclude other contributions to Community policies.

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 Project Selection Procedures (the "Evaluation Manual"). These documents are available at the Marie Curie web-page http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/pdf/guidance_evaluators.pdf and at <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/find-doc.htm#evalproc>.

Q: What is the average duration between a call for proposal's deadline 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, till the signing of the contract.

Q: Are there any statistics available from the first EXT call for proposals with respect to the number of applications submitted and the number of successful applications?

A: For the first deadline in May 2003, the total number of proposals submitted was 210 of which 195 were eligible. Of these, 21 proposals (10,8%) were eventually funded.