

Eligibility Requirements/Tips for MSCA Doctoral Networks

Source: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, Guide for Applicants: Doctoral Networks 2026

Target Group: Doctoral Candidates

1. Status of the Candidate

Only researchers who do **not yet** hold a **doctoral degree at the time of recruitment** are eligible for recruitment. Individuals who have already successfully defended their dissertation but have not yet formally received their doctoral degree are also ineligible.

2. Enrolment in a Doctoral Program

The recruited individual **must be enrolled in a doctoral programme leading to a doctoral degree for the duration of the project**. As a rule, this must take place in at least one EU member state or a country associated with Horizon Europe. For joint doctorates, enrolment in a joint, dual, or multiple doctoral programmes is mandatory.

3. Mobility rule

The individual must **not** have **lived in the country of the hiring institution** or carried out their main activity there—such as work or study—for **more than 12 months during the 36 months immediately preceding the hire date**. Short-term stays such as vacations, mandatory service, and certain periods related to refugee status or temporary EU protection are not counted.

4. Hire Date

The date of hire is defined as the **first day of work within the framework of the project**, i.e., the date specified in the employment contract or an equivalent agreement as the start of employment.

5. Nationality

There are generally **no restrictions on** nationality. Candidates of any nationality may be eligible, provided they meet the other requirements.

6. Duration of Employment

In Standard Doctoral Networks and Industrial Doctorates, the appointment typically lasts **a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 36 months**. In Joint Doctorates, terms of up to 48 months are possible.

7. Full-Time Status and Project Commitment

Researchers are generally expected to **work full-time**. For Industrial Doctorates, researchers must also spend at least 50% of the fellowship period in the non-academic sector.

8. Recruitment by the Beneficiary

Only beneficiaries may hire researchers. Each beneficiary institution must hire, host, and supervise at least one researcher. Hiring through an employment agency is not permitted.

9. Practical Checklist Before Hiring

Item	To be checked
Ph.D. status	No doctoral degree; dissertation not yet defended
Mobility	No more than 12 months in the host country within the last 36 months
Enrolment	Ph.D. program secured or firmly planned
Contract	Obligatory EU employment contract (deviating from the TVL tariffs in the State of Baden-Württemberg) with a valid start date (i.e., within the MSCA project duration)
DN Type	Standard DN, Industrial Doctorate, or Joint Doctorate with special rules
Local requirements	Visa, labour law, language proficiency, university admission requirements

10. In practice:

- Use the standard [hiring forms](#)
- Pay grade: **Outside the TVL pay scale, in accordance with MSCA rules**
- Workload: **100%**
- Compensation is to be provided from: Other funds/third-party funding: **PSP component of the respective MSCA project**

Don't hesitate to draw on the experience **of ongoing MSCA projects** and network with others: <https://eu-office.uni-hohenheim.de/msca-projekte>

11. Please feel free to direct any questions to:

AF/EU Office: [Email](#) / Phone: -24615/ -24688

AW5 Third-Party Funding Department: [Contacts for Institutes/Organizational Units \(PDF\)](#)

APO Personnel Department: -22024