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MASARYKOVA
UNIVERZITA

From Global Fellowship to being a MSCA-PF supervisor

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2010 PhD in Environmental Toxicology

MSCA-GF / PostDoc:

MSCA-GF 2016-2018 na **University of Florida**



EU MSCA Evaluator

Since 2020 evaluates MSCA, Doctoral Networks,

Teaching (fall semesters):

E0403 Research project development and funding

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Marie Skłodowska Curie's action experience

- 2016 MSCA-**GF**, My own submission “OBESOGENS” – 98.4% **granted**
- 2022 MSCA-**IF**, Ludek Sehnal submission “NAFRAM”- 98.0 % **granted**
- 2023 MSCA-**PF**, Csilla Pelyhe (incoming student) “EPIC” – 95.2% **granted**

-both EU and GF (global fellowship) experience
- ...and experience as evaluator (~30+ proposals)



Today's talk:

- 1) MSCA as applicant
- 2) MSCA as evaluator
- 3) MSCA as supervisor

1) MSCA as applicant

Why you have to try MSCA !!!

...as a early stage researcher (after PhD) you have **2 options**:

1) **Do you have an open position for me?**

- Search for open positions (competitive, selective,...)

2) **I'll come to your lab, will work for free, and I bring money to your lab**

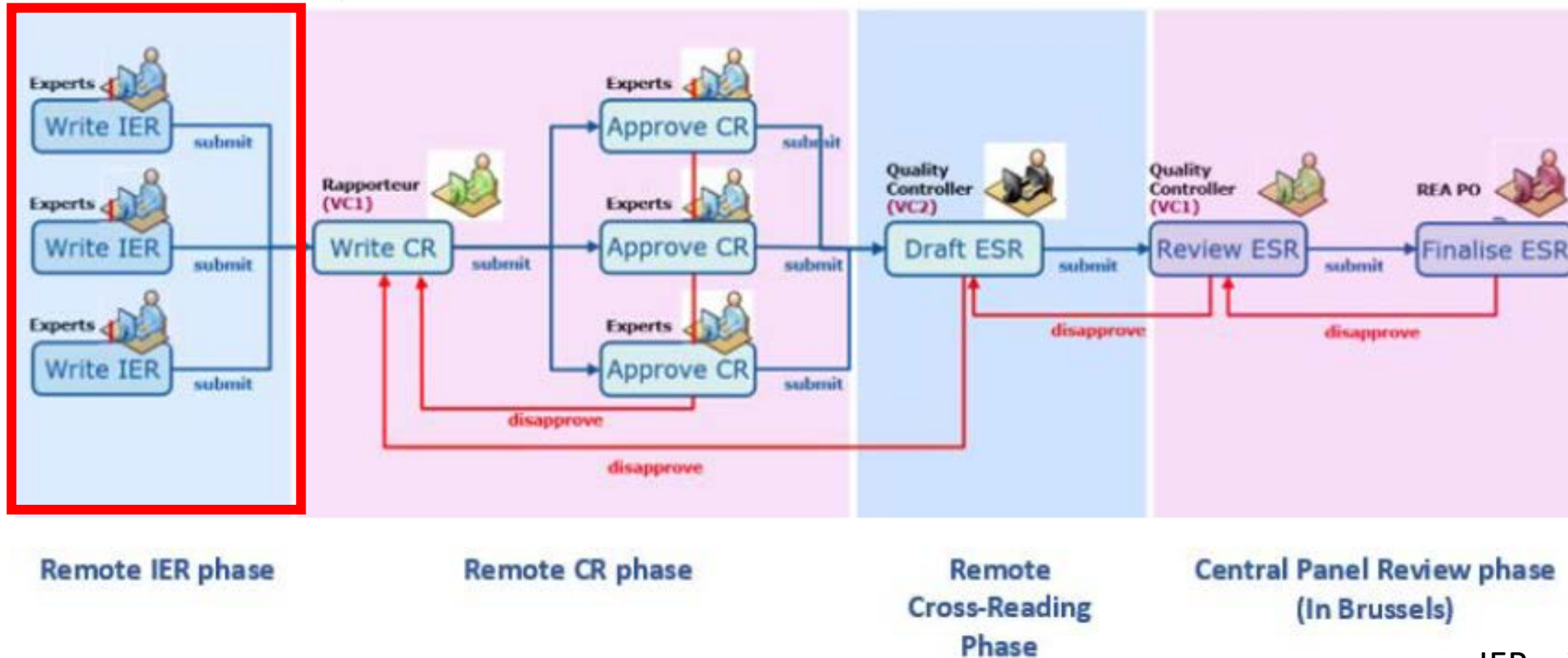
- MSCA !!!!!!! i.e. I bring my own funding

Submit MSCA!

...but it is too competitive

...well, not really

MSCA Evaluation process

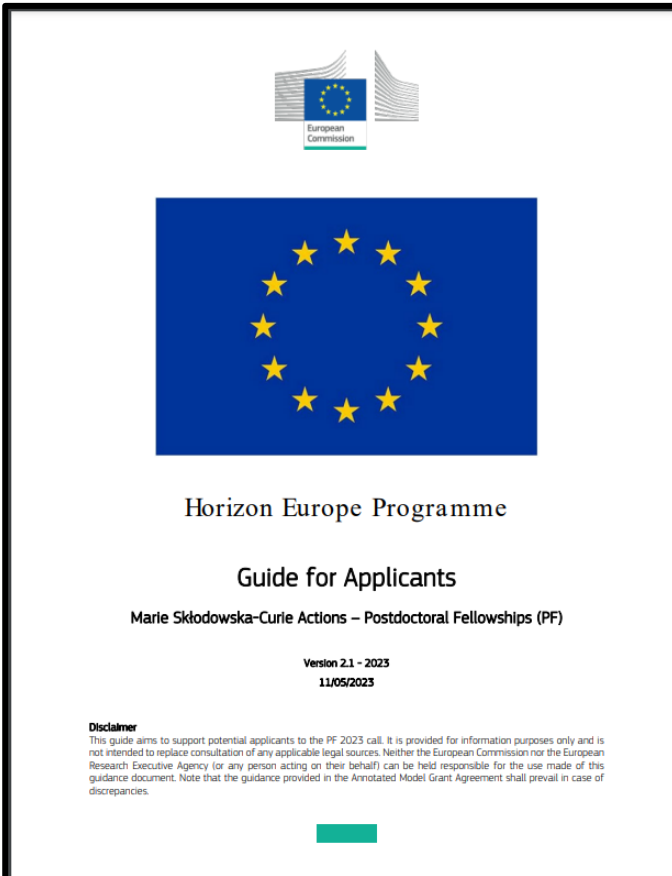


However, the success rate is ~15%, the chances are higher in reality... why?

IER – individual expert report
CR – consensus report
ESR - Evaluation Summary Report

2) MSCA as evaluator

- A relatively high number of proposals **are low-quality**
 - **= the overlook the main document i.e. The guide for applicants**



Experience as evaluator

- **ALL mandatory aspects MUST be addressed! ALL !!**
- **Not addressing some aspects – points loss – out of the game**

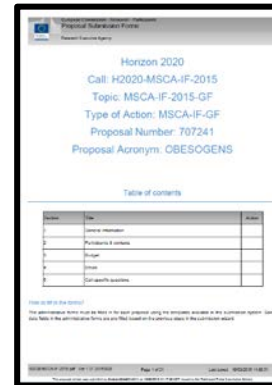
17 pages + more information
in the **project template**

How to write a grant-winning proposal? 4 most common mistakes

1) All mandatory aspects must be addressed – read Guide for applicants

2) Don't focus on scientific excellence only – all parts must be perfect

1. EXCELENCE (50% points) scientific part <- only 50% !
2. IMPACT (30% points)
3. IMPLEMENTATION (20% points)



The image shows a screenshot of a 'Proposal Submission Form' for Horizon 2020. The form includes the following information:

- Horizon 2020
- Call: H2020-MSCA-IF-2015
- Topic: MSCA-IF-2015-GF
- Type of Action: MSCA-IF-GF
- Proposal Number: 767241
- Proposal Acronym: OBESOGENS

Below this information is a 'Table of contents' section with a table that has columns for 'Section', 'Page', and 'Points'. The table is mostly empty, with some rows containing text like 'Introduction', 'Description of activities', 'Budget', 'Timeline', and 'Other specific activities'. At the bottom of the form, there is a small section titled 'How to fill in the form?' with some instructions.

- All parts must be carefully written. Even the best scientific project (e.g. novel anti-cancer drug) can bring you only 50% points.

3) Don't write scientific Gibberish – evaluators may not understand, they are not full experts in your field.

4) Wording is important (see next slides)

1. Excellence

1.3 Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host

Example

A) Prof. Novak is well recognized expert in the field of environmental toxicology (190+ IF publications, H-index 42). During last 10 years he was a PI and co-PI of 12 projects (EU, GACR, NATO sponsors) including Marie Curie scheme (Horizon 2020, 2x). His work in toxicity mechanism spurred a significant movement in toxico-omics and resulted in acceptance of new OECD method. As recognized research, he serves as editor of journal Env.Sci.Europe and he is frequently invited as invited speaker (15x in last 5 years)...Awards (MUNI, GACR)... Prof. Blaha successfully supervised 15 Postdocs, 12 PhDs, and numerous MSc., Bc. students and is currently mentoring 2 Postdocs, 8 PhD, 1 MSc.

What's wrong?

• Don't be too general
 • Why should I believe that your supervisor is an expert?

Be always specific ! In every part of the project

1.4 *Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences, and skills*

Example

(A) I am an established researcher in toxicology, with excellent laboratory skills, always trying to think out of the box. I do my best for popularization of science, always willing to increase public awareness about sciences.

L.Sechnal proposal (he agreed to use it)

(B) The applicant is considered by his former and current mentors as a very innovative and thoughtful person with creative thinking, excellent laboratory skills, flexible, with very good communication skills. The applicant is very active in the popularization of science (e.g., volunteering on ScienceToGo, RECETOX Open Days, talks at community centers across Czechia, talks at high schools) since he considers this activity as an important responsibility of each researcher to increase public awareness about current problems and possible solutions.

Wording is important! In every part of the project.



You never know until you try !

Try it !

You can write a competitive proposal ! Everybody can...

3) MSCA as the supervisor

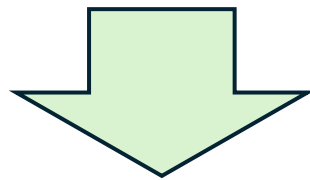
Why MSCA ?

- Post the offer on social media and pages with open position
“I’ll hire a post-doc, but it is needed to submit MSCA. The topic is xxxxx”

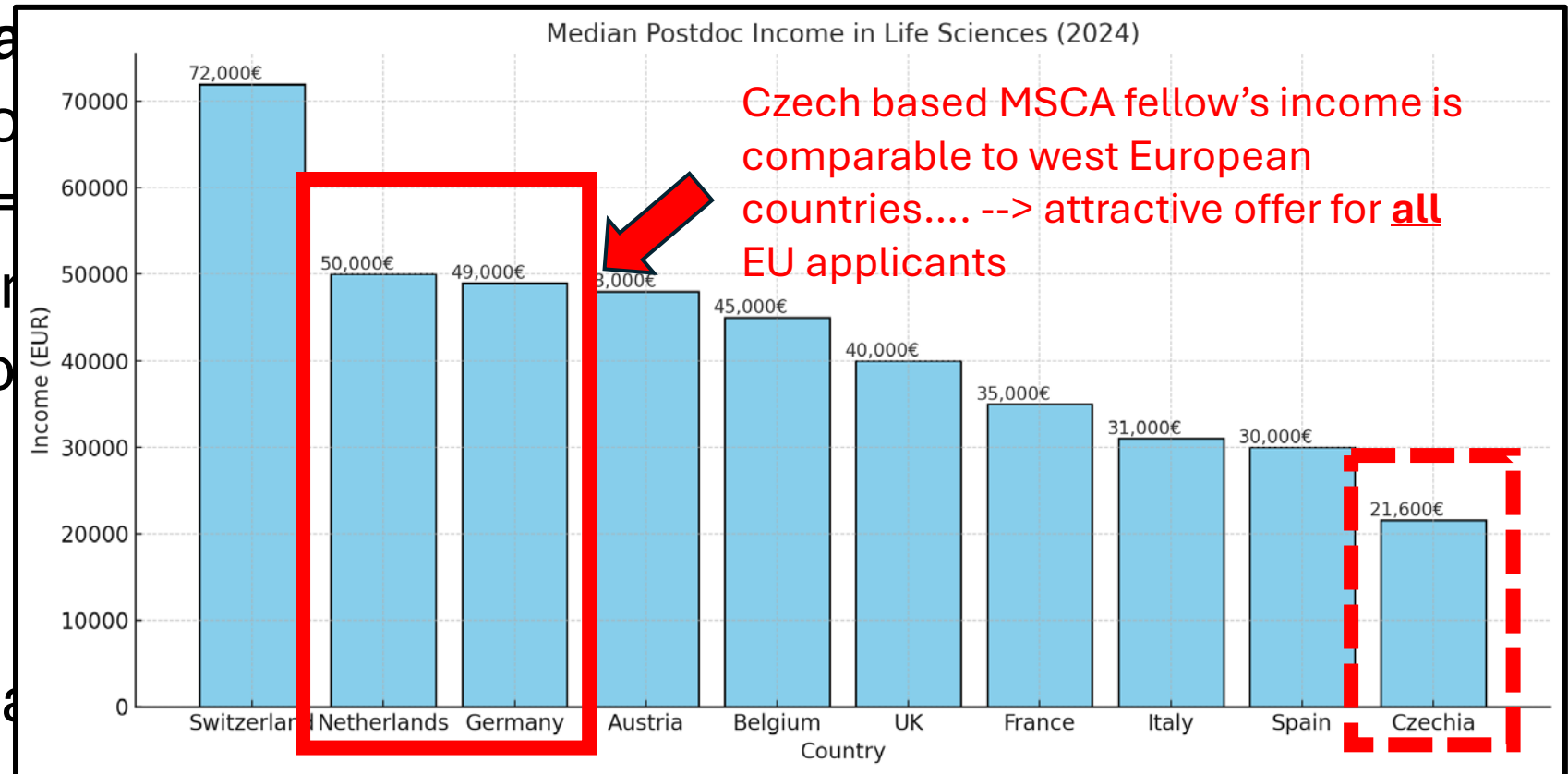
- You have a better chance

- MSCA is the best Po
- MSCA is attractive =
-> higher income for
-> 10k EUR / year for

- Prestige



- More competitive ca
- Smooth projects



Thank You
For Your Attention



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