

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on SUSPLACE vacancies

This FAQ contains questions within the following categories:

- Application questions
- Eligibility questions
- Organisational questions
- General questions

### Application questions

*Q*

*How do I apply?*

*A*

The recruitment system differs for each country. In general: You should apply with a motivation letter and CV. You might include a letter of recommendation and a list of their grades. Other documents such as their master thesis or other publications can be send if they are selected. An English language proof might be required, but only if you are selected.

The enrolment criteria refer to: eligibility, knowledge, experience, skills and capacities. Candidates will be further evaluated on their understanding of the SUSPLACE programme (including how Marie Curie works) and their motivation for and ideas about the proposed research project.

*Q*

*Do I have to submit a draft research proposal?*

*A*

You do not need to send a research proposal as part of your application. The short listed candidates will be asked to send their ideas for a draft proposal in the final stage of the recruitment.

*Q*

*Where can I find the application form?*

*A*

There is no standard application form for the SUSPLACE vacancies. Prospective ESRs are applying for a position at a particular university. For each university specific application procedures exist (some use an online application system which informs you what you need to upload, for others you just have to send your application letter and CV to the contact person for SUSPLACE). Please see the SUSPLACE information pack for guidance.

*Q*

*Can I apply to several ESR positions?*

*A*

You can apply for several positions but not with one application letter. For each position you will have to apply separately as the host institute differs and we have set up a different selection and appointment

committee for each vacancy. We are keen on appointing candidates that are highly motivated and committed to a particular topic, so applying for more than 3 topics will not increase your chances.

Q

*I am interested in applying for a position within a specific Work Package. How do I apply?*

A

Each Work Package has three individual research projects. You apply for a specific project within that work package. If you are interested in more than 1 position you need to apply separately for each position.

Q

What is the recruitment procedure?

A

- Non eligible applicants will be notified after first selection.
- The host will short list 3 eligible candidates for each ESR position.
- The first 2 or 3 candidates on the short-list will be interviewed in October-November. The best 2 applicants are asked to write down their research ideas in max. 3 pages (11 points scale). Not selected candidates will be informed that they are not selected.
- The final selection will be made before December 15, selected candidates will be informed and a commitment is asked of the final candidates before the start of the appointment procedure. Only then will the other one or two selected candidates be informed that they did not qualify.
- Aim to finalize the recruitment procedure before Christmas 2015 (as it will take time to finalize contracts, visa etc. before April).

### Eligibility questions

Q

*What degree do I need to be eligible?*

A

The EU guidelines are clear:

- Applicants must have their Master thesis finished (latest December)
- Not hold a PhD position
- A maximum of 4 years (nett) research experience. If you did other tasks such as teaching a nett calculation has to be made of their nett research time at the date of appointment, i.e. 1-4-2016.
- Applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country where they apply for more than twelve months in the last three years.
- The host university has to sign a declaration that an applicant is eligible. The EU will check a percentage of the projects. So we only consider those that are eligible beyond doubt.

Q

*I have a degree from a one year master's programme. Am I eligible?*

A

In principle candidates with a Master's degree (regardless if this has been a 1 or 2 year programme) are eligible for an ESR position in SUSPLACE.

Q

*Can a Ph.D. holder apply for a position within SUSPLACE?*

A

No, a Ph.D. holder cannot apply.

Q

*After obtaining a Master degree, I worked at the university as a researcher. Am I eligible?*

A

To be eligible for an ESR position in SUSPLACE you need to be in the first 4 years of your research career counting from the date of obtaining a university degree.

Q

*After obtaining my Master degree I worked for 5 years, but not in a research position. Am I eligible?*

A

In principle you are eligible when you have less than 4 years of experience in a research position after obtaining your Master degree. It is important that you can support this with written material.

Q

*I have no research experience at all. Am I eligible?*

A

Even if you have no research experience at all after having completed your Master program, you are still eligible.

Q

*Do I need to have a specific discipline, e.g. geography or sociology?*

A

No, as the SUSPLACE projects are multi-disciplinary. Each ESR will not only be supervised by a staff member of the host university but also by a staff member from one of the other partner universities. In many (if not all) cases this will always imply a combination of disciplines. This is also one of the features of the training programme: all ESRs get advanced scientific training in a variety of disciplines.

Q

*Are there any restrictions for applicants who are not EU nationals and will they be considered equally and based on the same criteria as EU nationals, regardless of nationality?*

A

We will treat all applicants equally regardless of their nationality. SUSPLACE aims at enhancing mobility of young researchers and therefore we welcome applications from all over the world.

Q

*I will not be able to produce the necessary English language proficiency certificates by October 1st. Can I submit these at a later stage?*

A

The selection committees will carry out a first selection (leading to a shortlist of candidates per vacancy) by the middle of October, which will be followed by a round of interviews (Skype or Video conferencing) before December. In this first selection round we will not take English language proficiency (by means of certificates) into account; academic credentials and relevant research experience will be the main selection criteria. Therefore, we need your certificates no later than the beginning of November 2015.

Q

*I hold an international Master degree taught completely in English. Do I still need to do a TOEFL/IELTS test?*

A

No. Candidates who have followed and completed a Masters taught in English are exempted from a TOEFL or IELTS test.

#### Organisational questions

Q

*What salary and financial support and/or costs can I expect for the programme?*

A

Generally the ESR will be appointed as junior researcher. The actual salary depends on the local arrangements of the host university.

- In addition to the salary based on the living allowance the ESR will receive a monthly mobility allowance and family allowance. The mobility allowance is a fixed amount per month. It covers the extra expenses as a result of your move to another country.
- The family allowance depends on the actual family situation. It will be paid whether the family will or will not move with the researcher. Family is defined as persons linked to the researcher by (i) marriage, or (ii) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the national or relevant regional legislation of the country where this relationship was formalised; or (iii) dependent children who are actually being maintained by the researcher.

Q

*Do I start as a PhD?*

A

No, each ERS starts as a junior researcher. After one year all ESRs will be assessed and those ESR with potential will be offered an PhD position. For this we expect them to have completed a substantial part of what eventually can become their PhD-thesis, being: an introduction with research questions, a theoretical and analytical framework and methodology section.

Q

*Can I be an ESR remotely; i.e. not living full-time in the city in which the host university is located?*

A

It is not possible to be a 'remote' ESR. The whole idea of Marie Curie Initial Training Networks such as SUSPLACE is to enhance the mobility of researchers (as researcher you learn from your host university and this requires you to be there). However, you will not stay with the host university for the entire duration of the appointment. First there are a series of network training modules, most of the courses will be organised in Wageningen and some in Cardiff. Second, each ESR is expected to do at least two secondments of 3 months at another partner institute (often a non-academic institute). Willingness to travel is an important prerequisite for an ESR.

Q

*What is the soonest possible start-date for me as ESR? Can I start earlier or later?*

A

The deadline for application is 1 October 2015. Final selection will take place before the end of December and then a final eligibility check will be carried out by the European Commission. Once approved, the appointment procedure will commence and is carried out by the hosting universities. This may take a while as perhaps visa and work permit need to be arranged and diplomas may have to be checked. We plan to appoint all 15 ESRs by the 1st of April 2016. In the meantime, selected candidates can of course already start with their project (e.g. reading literature, writing first draft of research proposals, etc...). However, you will not receive any remuneration before the official appointment starts; that is 1 April 2016. All ESRs receive their training collectively, starting in Wageningen at April 22th 2016. Therefore, it is not possible to start later than 1 April 2016.

Q

What are the selection criteria?

A

We will look at: motivation for the project and your ideas about the proposed research project, examination and M.Sc. thesis marks, internships, published papers, participation in scientific conferences, participation in national and international research projects related to the topic, motivation to participate in SUSPLACE, communication skills, understanding of the rules and procedures of Marie Curie Initial Training Networks.

Q

*When will I hear whether or not I am selected?*

A

For each vacancy we have established a selection and appointment committee and each committee will rank the applications for that specific vacancy. We plan to make shortlist of candidates per vacancy by the middle of October and have job interviews before December. We aim to finalize the recruitment procedure before Christmas 2015 (as it will take time to finalize contracts, visa etc. before April).

## General questions

Q

Where can I find additional information about my role in a Marie Curie project?

A

Please visit this website: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/careers\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/careers_en.htm)

Q

*I have a question that is not listed here, who can I turn to?*

A

For any additional questions about your application, please contact the person that is mentioned as contact person for the vacancy you are interested in. See the websites of the hosting institutes. For general questions about the SUSPLACE programme you can contact [lummina.horlings@wur.nl](mailto:lummina.horlings@wur.nl) or [dirk.roep@wur.nl](mailto:dirk.roep@wur.nl).