

Guide to Horizon Europe Marie Skłodowska Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships at Aarhus University

Welcome to Aarhus University

Aarhus University (AU) welcomes all researchers on Horizon Europe Marie Skłodowska Curie (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF). We will do our utmost to make sure that your stay at the university is productive and enjoyable.

The objective of this guide is to answer typical questions about administrative issues, which often arise before and during a stay financed by MSCA.

1. Grant Agreement preparation with EU	2
2. Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal – project access	2
3. Notification of Start date online in the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal	2
4. Salary and employment issues	3
4.1 Employment contract	3
4.2 Grant components from the EU	3
4.3 Calculation of the salary	4
4.4 Insurance	4
4.5 Pension schemes	4
4.6 Holiday schemes	5
4.7 Taxation	5
4.8 Parental leave	5
4.9 Residence/work permit and visa	6
4.10 Payslip (e-Boks) and bank account (NemKonto)	6
5. Timesheets	6
6. Other expenses (Research, training and networking costs/Management and indirect costs)	7
7. Reporting online in the Funding & Tender Opportunities portal	7
8. Contact information for MSCA administrative experts at AU	7
9. Links to information for international staff coming to AU	8
10. Links to general HEU documents	8

1. Grant Agreement preparation with EU

The Project Administration Team at the Research Support Office (RSO) will clarify issues, upload and submit documents to the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal regarding all types of MSCA projects. The RSO will handle all formalities regarding the EU Grant Agreement, but will not submit anything to the EU before the scientist in charge (supervisor) and the researcher (you) have both approved the content. This involves both the project description and formalities such as addresses and start dates.

RSO will sign the Grant Agreement with the EU after consulting the scientist in charge and the researcher. RSO will also sign possible future amendments to the Grant Agreement, e.g. in relation to suspension of the Grant Agreement due to parental leave.

2. Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal – project access

Link to the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

You can access the project through "My Project(s)", and you will be automatically transferred from the proposal module.

You can give other relevant persons access to the project via the "Actions" drop down menu on the project line and choosing "project consortium".

3. Notification of Start date online in the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal

There are two options regarding the start date:

1. First day of the month following the signature of the Grant Agreement
2. Fixed start date (a justification must be provided)*

*Must normally lie within 24 months from the call deadline.

If the start date is fixed in the Grant Agreement, a change of start date requires that an amendment to the Grant Agreement must be requested from the EU by the RSO.

Please bear in mind when setting a start date that a researcher can only be employed as a postdoc at AU for a four-year term. This might affect the choice of start date. If this causes problems, please contact the HR department.

4. Salary and employment issues

4.1 Employment contract

AU is required to appoint each eligible researcher under an 'employment contract'/'contract with full social security coverage' (including sickness, parental, unemployment and invalidity benefits, pension rights, benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases). The employment contract must meet the requirements of the Grant Agreement.

According to the "specific rules for carrying out the action" set out in the Annex 5, Article 18 of the Grant Agreement, the researcher must work exclusively on the action and cannot receive, for the activities carried out within the framework of the action, other income than that received from AU.

However, participation in the research action while employed at another institution is possible if the researcher takes an unpaid sabbatical leave from his/her current organisation for the duration of the MSCA PF. As long as the researcher signs an employment contract with AU, works exclusively on the action and does not receive other income than that received from AU for the activities carried out within the framework of the action.

4.2 Grant components from the EU

Your salary is comprised of living, mobility and family allowances.

Salary Marie Curie Researcher PF (EUR/month)			
Living allowance*	Mobility allowance	Family allowance	Work Programme
5080	600	0 or 660	2021-2022
5080	600	0 or 660	2023-2024

*This amount is **adjusted** by the application of a **country correction coefficient** for the cost of living according to the **country** in which the grant **beneficiary** is located (DK = 132.0% in WP 2021-2022 and WP 2023-2024). The country correction coefficient does not apply to the mobility and family allowances.

Living allowance

The living allowance rate is EUR 60,960 per year / EUR 5,080 per month under Work Programme 2021-2022 and Work Programme 2023-2024.

However, the living allowance amounts to EUR 80,467.20 per year / EUR 6,705.60 per month under Work Programme 2021-2022 and 2023-2024 when applying the country correction coefficient for Denmark, please see the table above.

Mobility allowance

You will receive a mobility allowance as part of your salary. You must cover any relocation costs in connection with moving to Aarhus and back home again.

Family allowance

The family allowance is paid to you if you have or acquire family obligations during the action duration. In this context, the EU defines a family as:

- a person linked to the researcher by marriage, or

- a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country where this relationship was formalized, or
- dependent children who are actually being maintained by the researcher.

If your family status changes during the project duration this can be revised through an amendment.

For more information about accompanying partners, see <http://ias.au.dk/living-in-denmark/>

4.3 Calculation of the salary

The total amount granted from EU to cover the costs for recruiting the researcher will be spent on salary components according to compulsory collective agreements, compulsory deductions under national law and upcoming expenses for the taking of holiday for the recruited researcher. The amount of holidays taken influences the actual cost of the employment, see more about holiday under 4.6 Holiday schemes.

If at the end of the contract period there is a surplus on the grant, the amount will be paid directly to the recruited researcher after the final reporting. This final calculation is also dependent on the average EUR exchange rate from the European Central Bank (ECB) as per the first bank day after the end of the project period.

4.4 Insurance

All researchers employed at AU are covered by Danish social security for stays of over three months in Denmark. You will also be covered by insurance from AU if you travel abroad for a shorter period of time (secondments) to conduct research at another university.

Please note that in Denmark unemployment insurance is not part of the social security coverage offered by the employer. In Denmark, unemployment insurance is voluntary, and if you wish to take out insurance against unemployment, you must apply for membership in an unemployment fund.

To receive unemployment benefits in Denmark, you must have been a member of the relevant unemployment fund for 12 months and have worked for 52 weeks over the last three years. Many unemployment insurance funds are affiliated with a trade union. However, membership in a trade union is not a prerequisite for membership in an unemployment insurance fund and vice versa.

Global Fellowships: In a global fellowship you will be employed by Aarhus University on individual terms for the outgoing phase. . In this case, you are not covered by Danish social security. Therefore, researchers are strongly advised to take out a personal insurance policy, which can be financed by the EU grant (Budget category B1). For example, health insurance for the researcher's family in the United States must be paid for by the researcher himself/herself if the researcher is employed directly in the US.

4.5 Pension schemes

Researchers recruited abroad can choose among the following three pension schemes:

- A pension scheme in which the pension is taxed at the time of retirement,
- a pension scheme in which the pension will be taxed every month as income tax during the term of employment, or

- a pension scheme in which the pension is paid out as salary and the employee receives group life insurance instead. For more information about pension paid out as salary, see <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/administration/hr/payroll/guidelinesoptionalpension/foreign-employees-pensions>

4.6 Holiday schemes

The holiday scheme in Denmark is concurrent holiday.

The Danish Holiday Act (Ferieoven) states that the employees earn their holiday during the year of accrual from 1 August – 31 July. Holiday earned in that period can be taken from 1 August – 31 December the following year. The rules on concurrent holiday mean that the holiday can be taken concurrently with the accumulation of holiday. For more information about holiday, see <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/administration/hr/holiday-1>

Special holidays are earned according to a staggered holiday scheme. The special holiday is earned in the calendar year and can be taken in the following year from 1 May – 30 April.

All holiday taken must be registered in the AU system for registration of absence from work (MitHr).

The amount of holidays taken may influence the actual cost of the employment. Therefore, you are strongly advised to take as much holiday as possible during the employment period while holiday is being accrued.

4.7 Taxation

If employed as a postdoc, you may be eligible for the special researcher taxation scheme. This scheme is a flat-rate taxation of around 32 percent in total of your taxable income. The ordinary income tax rate is normally around 37-40 percent, but it may vary depending on your place of residence, your deductions etc. For more information about taxation, see <http://ias.au.dk/taxation/>

4.8 Parental leave

Researchers employed at AU are entitled to parental leave with pay if they fulfill certain requirements. The mother is entitled to 6 weeks of paid pregnancy leave before the estimated date of delivery. The mother is entitled to paid parental leave for the 10 weeks immediately following the birth (maternity leave). The father/non-birth mother is still entitled to paid parental leave for the 2 weeks in connection with childbirth (paternity leave). Parents are entitled to paid parental leave for 23 weeks, which are divided up as follows:

- 10 weeks are earmarked for the mother
- 7 weeks are earmarked for the father/non-birth mother
- 6 weeks can be divided between the parents

As a general rule, each parent has 24 weeks of leave with parental leave benefits after the baby is born (the 24-24 model). If both parents are salaried employees, 11 of these weeks with parental leave benefits are earmarked, and these weeks cannot be transferred between the parents. (right to parental leave with parental leave benefits)

The mother is entitled to 10 weeks of leave. The father/non-birth mother is entitled to 2 weeks of leave in connection with childbirth, and both parents are also entitled to 32 weeks of parental leave (right to parental leave).

The remaining 13 weeks can be transferred from one parent to the other. For more information about parental leave, see <http://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/administration/hr/parentalleave/>

The Grant Agreement may be suspended for the period of parental leave. The MSCA grant can cover part of the salary during the parental leave if AU requests an amendment for the project to include long-term allowance. For more information about suspension of the Grant Agreement during parental leave, please contact the RSO.

4.9 Residence/work permit and visa

If you are a resident of a third country (not EU/EEA), you must apply for a Danish residence and work permit. The application must be sent a minimum of two months before you are expected to take up work. For more information about residence and work permit, see <http://ias.au.dk/permits/>.

The cost of the visa and residence permit can be covered by the MSCA grant. For information about visas, see https://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-us/coming_to_dk/visa/need_visa/who_needs_visa.htm

For more information about work permits and housing in Aarhus and other issues relevant for international employees in general, please see <http://ias.au.dk>

4.10 Payslip (e-Boks) and bank account (NemKonto)

You must open a bank account in Denmark, as your salary will be paid in DKK and transferred to the Danish bank account. The total amount may be subject to taxation (Section 4.7). See also <http://ias.au.dk/money-and-banking/#c28726>

The payslip will be available electronically from e-Boks (a digital mailbox) only. For more information about your payslip and e-Boks, see <http://www.e-boks.dk/default.aspx>, <http://ias.au.dk/registration/> and <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/administration/hr/payroll/understanding-your-payslip> On request to the Payroll Office, you can choose to have your payslip in English.

5. Timesheets

Timesheets are not mandatory in MSCA projects. They can however be used as evidence of work done by the researcher in case of an audit. They must be signed by the scientist in charge (supervisor) and the researcher (EU requirement).

Link to timesheet template (see Time registration):

<http://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/administration/researchandtalent/research-support/project-administration/mandatory-fp7-and-horizon-2020-project-administration/>

6. Other expenses (Research, training and networking costs/Management and indirect costs)

The **Research, training and networking costs** (1000 EUR/month) will cover:

- Travel expenses (for example, cost of a visa to attend a conference abroad)
- Participation in conferences, seminars, training courses (including language courses) and secondments
- Research costs (consumables, books, library records, publication costs etc.)
- A standard PC and any special/very powerful computers to be used in the research project (for example, to process large research data sets)

Importantly, all activities must contribute to your training.

Management and indirect costs (650 EUR/month) cover overheads at AU. This budget category is not available to you.

Both categories are institutional costs and are managed by the university.

7. Reporting online in the Funding & Tender Opportunities portal

For information on how to access the project in the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal (section 2), see <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

The reporting module in the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal is found via the "Actions" drop down menu on the project line and then select "Manage Project".

Scientific reports (periodic, final) will be prepared and submitted by the researcher and the scientist in Charge.

Financial reports will be prepared by the AU project controller assigned to the project. RSO will approve and submit the final version online in the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal.

8. Contact information for MSCA administrative experts at AU

Grant Agreement preparation and signature: RSO EU Financial consultants:

Jesper Juel Holst jjh@au.dk

Morten Hollænder Beeck mhbe@au.dk

Management and financial reporting of the project: RSO EU Financial consultants:

Jesper Juel Holst jjh@au.dk

Morten Hollænder Beeck mhbe@au.dk

The day to day financial tasks will be handled by the AU project controller, whose name will appear on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal via the "Actions" drop down menu when choosing "Project Consortium".

Employment contract:

AU HR - <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/administration/hr>

9. Links to information for international staff coming to AU

The International Academic Staff Services (IAS) department will help you with various practicalities in connection with your move to Aarhus. AU recommends that you visit the IAS website as soon as you are informed that the EU has awarded the Fellowship.

<https://ias.au.dk/>

The webpage contains relevant information on topics including:

- **Housing:** See under Topics in the top-left corner <https://international.au.dk/life/locations/housing/>
- **Opening a bank account/NemKonto:** <http://ias.au.dk/money-and-banking/#c28726>
- **Payslip and e-Boks:** Link to e-Boks: <http://ias.au.dk/registration/> and link to Understanding your payslip: <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/administration/hr/payroll/understanding-your-payslip>
- **Accompanying partners:** <http://ias.au.dk/living-in-denmark/>
- **University International Club (UIC):** <http://ias.au.dk/uic/>
- **News and events:** <https://internationalstaff.au.dk/news>

10. Links to general HEU documents

EU documents are available at the Research Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

Direct links to relevant HEU documents:

HEU Model Grant Agreement Marie Skłodowska-Curie mono (PF):

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/agr-contr/unit-mga_he_en.pdf