

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

30
years

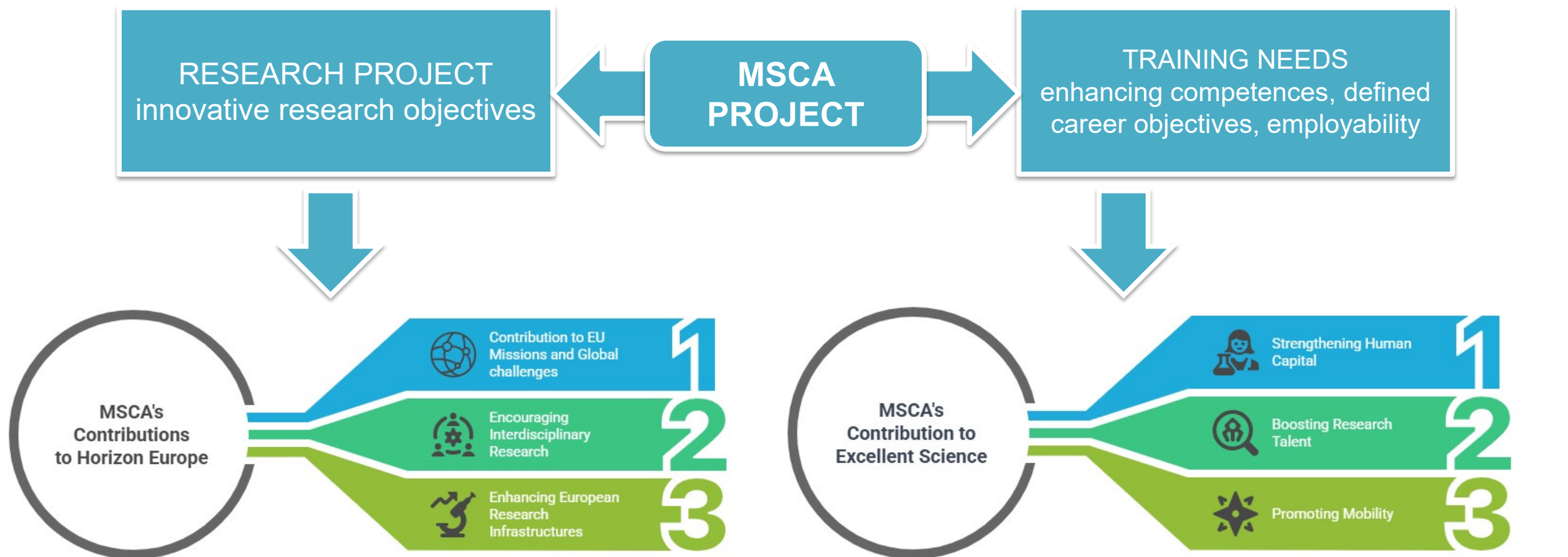
Curiosity that changes the world

PREPARING A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL
MSCA PF 2026

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Fundación madri+d

Understanding MSCA projects

Hybrid projects with dual impact



Postdoctoral Fellowship – hybrid project! SCIENTIFIC PROJECT

HAVE A CLEAR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

NOVELTY VS. STATE OF THE ART

Highlight
interdisciplina
ry and
intersectoral
elements

Consider
gender
aspects and
Open science

Scientific,
economic
and societal
impact

Research
objectives
linked to
methods

Link between
research and
training
objectives

Exploitation
dissemination
and
communicati
on

Where will
activities take
place and
why

REALISTIC AND WELL-DEFINED RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Postdoctoral Fellowship – hybrid project! PERSONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT

HAVE A CLEAR TRAINING NEEDS

TRAINING – THROUGH RESEARCH

interdisciplinary
and
intersectoral
experience

Widening
competences
of the
researcher

Personal
impact:
Long term
employability

Link between
research and
training
objectives
- Focus on
skills

Transferable
skills

Quality on
supervision
and two way
transfer of
knowledge

Where will
activities take
place and
why

REALISTIC AND WELL-DEFINED CAREER OBJECTIVES

General Tip

Write more than a mere research project, think of it in terms of:

Opportunity to gain new knowledge by working on your own research project

- find a matching place and suitable supervisor(s)

Learning new skills for your future career:

- additional scientific skills
- transferable skills

Networking

- plan to expand your network for future collaborations
- ... scientific networking + public engagement

Communication & dissemination activities

- of research results in the scientific community
- raise awareness about your research among the general public

Mobility and knowledge transfer

- two-way knowledge transfer between researcher and host
- interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral knowledge

MSCA PF 2026 Evaluation Criteria

27 QUESTIONS

EXCELLENCE	IMPACT	QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION
Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)	Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher and contribution to his/her skills development	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan , assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages
Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the quality of open science practices)	Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts , as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities	Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements
Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts	
Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience , competences and skills		
50%	30%	20%

Evaluation GRID - EXCELENCE

- 1.1. Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)
 - 1.2. Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the quality of open science practices)
 - 1.3. Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host
 - 1.4. Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills
-
- *Fail/Insufficiently addressed*
 - *Poor*
 - *Fair*
 - *Good*
 - *Very good*
 - *Excellent*
 - *Not applicable*

15 QUESTIONS

- Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives:
- Extent to which the research and innovation objectives are achievable, measurable and verifiable
- Level of ambition of the research and innovation objectives and advancement beyond the state of the art
- Soundness of the proposed methodology, including the concepts, models, and assumptions underpinning the project
- Identification of important methodological challenges and proposed measures to tackle them
- Integration of interdisciplinary expertise and methods to pursue the project's objectives
- Consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects in the proposal's research and innovation content:
- Implementation of appropriate open science practices in the proposed methodology
- Quality of the supervision
- Quality of the planned training activities for the researcher
- Overall effectiveness of the transfer of knowledge between the researcher, the host organisation, and, if applicable, the outgoing phase host
- Rationale and added value of the non-academic placement
- Rationale and added value of the secondment(s)
- Quality of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills:
- Appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience in relation to the proposed research project

EXCELLENCE – ESR

Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives:

Very good

Extent to which the research and innovation objectives are achievable, measurable and verifiable:

Very good

Level of ambition of the research and innovation objectives and advancement beyond the state of the art:

Very good

Soundness of the proposed methodology, including the concepts, models, and assumptions underpinning the project:

Good

Identification of important methodological challenges and proposed measures to tackle them:

Very good

Integration of interdisciplinary expertise and methods to pursue the project's objectives:

Excellent

Consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects in the proposal's research and innovation content:

Not applicable

Implementation of appropriate open science practices in the proposed methodology:

Excellent

Quality of the supervision:

Excellent

Quality of the planned training activities for the researcher:

Excellent

Overall effectiveness of the transfer of knowledge between the researcher, the host organisation, and, if applicable, the outgoing phase host:

Excellent

Rationale and added value of the non-academic placement:

Not applicable

Rationale and added value of the secondment(s):

Not applicable

Quality of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills:

Excellent

Appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience in relation to the proposed research project:

Excellent

Comments:

- The objectives are broad, unclear, and partly contradictory (e.g., passive adjustment vs. data-driven adaptive performance), with not fully clear, measurable, and
- achievable criteria (e.g., design optimization after construction or assessing environmental footprint via mechanical testing).
- The description of how the proposed research that integrates sensors will go beyond the state of the art is not fully convincing.
- Methodology is not entirely defined. Linking FEM models with learning algorithms, the sensor data pipeline, and AI integration in simulations is not convincingly tackled.

CRITERION 1: EXCELENCE - What the evaluators assess

1.1. R&I Objectives

- Are they ambitious and do they go beyond the state of the art?
- Has a gap been identified → hypothesis/research question?

1.2. Methodological Soundness

- Is the methodological approach sound and credible?
- Interdisciplinarity? Gender dimension (if applicable)?
- Open Science practices (FAIR data, pre-registration)?

1.3. Supervision and knowledge transfer

- Is the choice of group/supervisor justified?
- Is there a specific training plan (scientific + soft skills)?

1.4. Researcher's experience

- Is the profile suitable for the project?

NOTE: do not penalise early-career candidates for having few publications

Common mistakes that will lower your score

- Confusing objectives with **outputs** or **deliverables**.
- Failing to explicitly identify the '**knowledge gap**'.
- Missing **hypothesis** or one that is vaguely formulated.
- Descriptive methodology without justification as to why it will work.
- Failing to explain why **THIS group / THIS institution**.
- Failing to explain the "**two-way transfer**" of knowledge.
- Absence of "**soft skills**" in the training plan.
- CV not aligned with the project.
- Gender dimension ignored when it is clearly relevant.

1.1 Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)

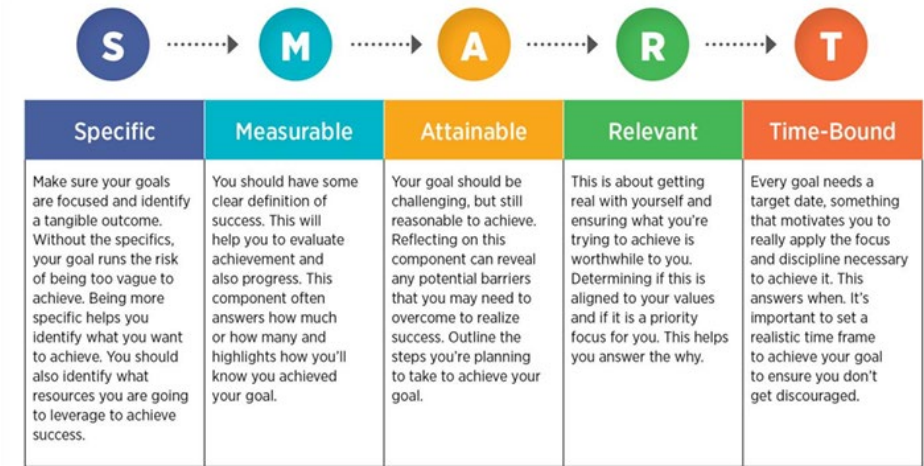
Introduction and state-of-the-art:

- Do not write an abstract; write an introduction.
- **Explain the research context** of your project and introduce your project's subject - explain the importance of the research being carried out and **how it addresses a challenge/priority at a global/European level** - end with a (bolded) statement on how the project is progressing SOA
- **Break SoA into separate short paragraphs** - each one focused and **related to a specific objective** of the project
- Outline the **current level of knowledge** and highlight how the **project will progress research beyond SOA**
- If there is **SOA work being carried out by your supervisor or by you**, then mention this here (as it demonstrates your excellence and adequacy to carry out the research).

- write in a style that is accessible to the non-experts
- use figures/charts/tables/diagrams

Objectives (i.e. research goals) and **overview of the action** (Research work packages should be mentioned):

- Describe your research goals and how they are embedded into your work plan - Specific research objectives (ROS) of the project
- Number the objectives O1, O2, O3 ect. and connect the with the research WP
- Are they **SMART** – Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely?



Originality and innovative aspects of the research programme

- How does the research project contribute to the advancement of the field?
- New analysis, concepts, methods that will be implemented; collaboration with non-academic sector...
- Use words like “novel“, “innovative“, “first-time“, “advance“, “inter-/multidisciplinary“

Do not just state that your research is important and novel – add proof, examples, numbers that help the evaluator see and decide on its importance and novelty

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

Show the match between the proposed project and the supervisor's profile!

Supervision (subsection)

- Qualifications and experience of the supervisor(s) - [Guidelines on Supervision](#)
- Track record (academic positions – short)
- Level of experience on the proposed research topic
- How many publications (number) + most important journals?
H-Index? Any major patents? Projects?
- Major international collaborations + renowned prizes/awards/grants
- How many PhD students/postdocs so far? → “success stories” - are they in leading positions now?

Be very brief with all relevant information – you can provide more information in the capacity table (B2.5 section)

Co-supervisors – can be the member of the same team of the main supervisor, or a different field if it's an interdisciplinary project

Co-supervision is encouraged, but the respective roles of both supervisors should be clearly defined and complementary.

Role of the supervisor in **Career development plan**
- Mention review of CDP every 6 months, meeting schedules, meetings, open door policy

Integration of the researcher to new research environment (international research group, collaboration opportunities, technical support)

Explain the value of the supervisor during the secondments, non-academic placement and the supervisor during the outgoing phase of the Global fellowship (if applicable)

Show that you are aware of the [Guidelines for Supervision](#)

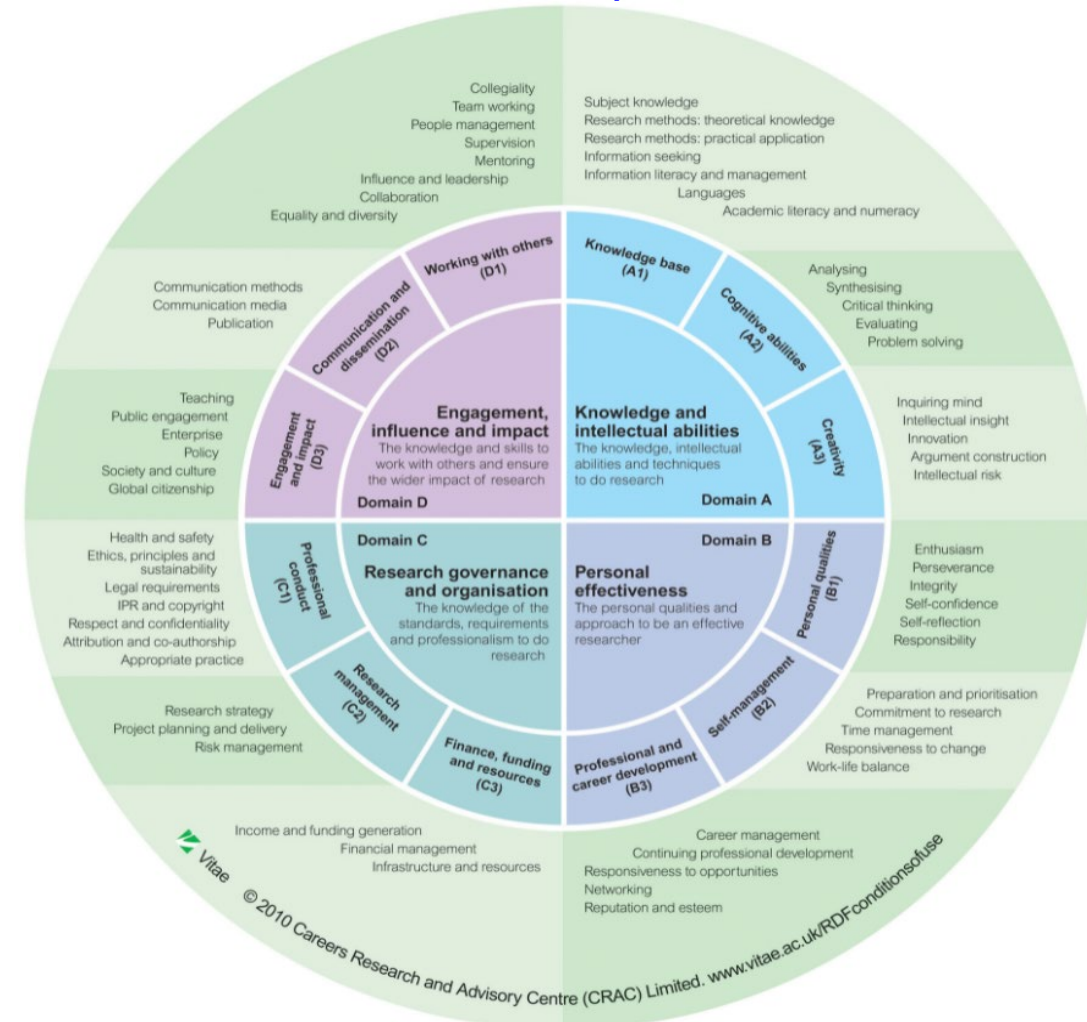
Career Development

Career development plan (researchers training and career needs)

- Have a idea of how you want your career to develop
- Identify the weakness in your current abilities – find host trainings and opportunities that will fit your needs



Vitae researcher development Framework



Training (subsection)

- How will the researcher acquire new scientific skills and transferable skills?
- Relevance and quality of the additional scientific and transferable skills training
- Developing TS through project (financial management of the project, IPR issues, project management, time management, communication and dissemination...)
- **Global Fellowship:** How will the newly acquired skills be transferred back to the European host institution?
- **Intersectoral – interdisciplinary training** during the secondment (why, when, what knowledge)

Scientific skills

- Which new techniques and methods will be acquired?
- How will they be acquired? Through research or through specific courses?
- Training on “Research integrity”, “big data/open science”, digital techniques, tools, new techniques

Transferable skills

- Teaching as well as tutoring/mentoring of students and doctoral candidates (→ leadership/communication skills)
- Project/Financial/Organisational Management (project planning, organisation of a conference)
- Development and organisation of follow-up projects (fundraising, proposal writing)
- Acquisition/Development of abilities in working in an international environment (communication, building networks)
- Business thinking (through your own project)
- Handling IPR, training in patent law, course in gender awareness

Transfer of knowledge (subsection)

- Two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and host organisation
- What **new knowledge researcher will gain** during the fellowship and how it will be acquired (staff development programmes, workshops, seminars, online courses, internal meetings,)
- Outline previously acquired knowledge and skills that the researcher will **transfer to organisation**
- Transfer of special scientific (unique) expertise to the host organisation via **teaching and mentoring undergraduates and PhD students**
- Providing **new network opportunities for the host institution**
- Global fellowships: also describe the transfer with the host of the outgoing phase – **3 way transfer of knowledge!**

Use table /graphics to describe TOK

Table example:

- Specific research skills to be transferred
- Audience of the host (students, other team members)
 - How it will be transferred
- Benefit to the host

Non-Academic Placement (subsection)

- Acquire management and leadership skills
- Highlight intersectoral – interdisciplinary training during the placement/secondment – why is it important, when will it be planned and what knowledge will be acquired
- Testing technological development during fellowship
- Connected with the **exploitation of the results!**

Remember – this is not only for the industry and entrepreneurship – could be public bodies (decision making bodies as well as NGOs)!

Examples of NAP:

A **biomedical researcher** joins a pharmaceutical company to:

- test drug candidates in pre-clinical pipelines
- learn regulatory approval processes

A **climate scientist** works in a ministry or EU agency:

- contributing to climate policy design
- translating research into policy briefs

A **health researcher** works with a non-profit:

- implementing community health programmes
- translating research into outreach materials

A **social scientist** joins a municipal authority:

- evaluating public programmes
- designing evidence-based interventions

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

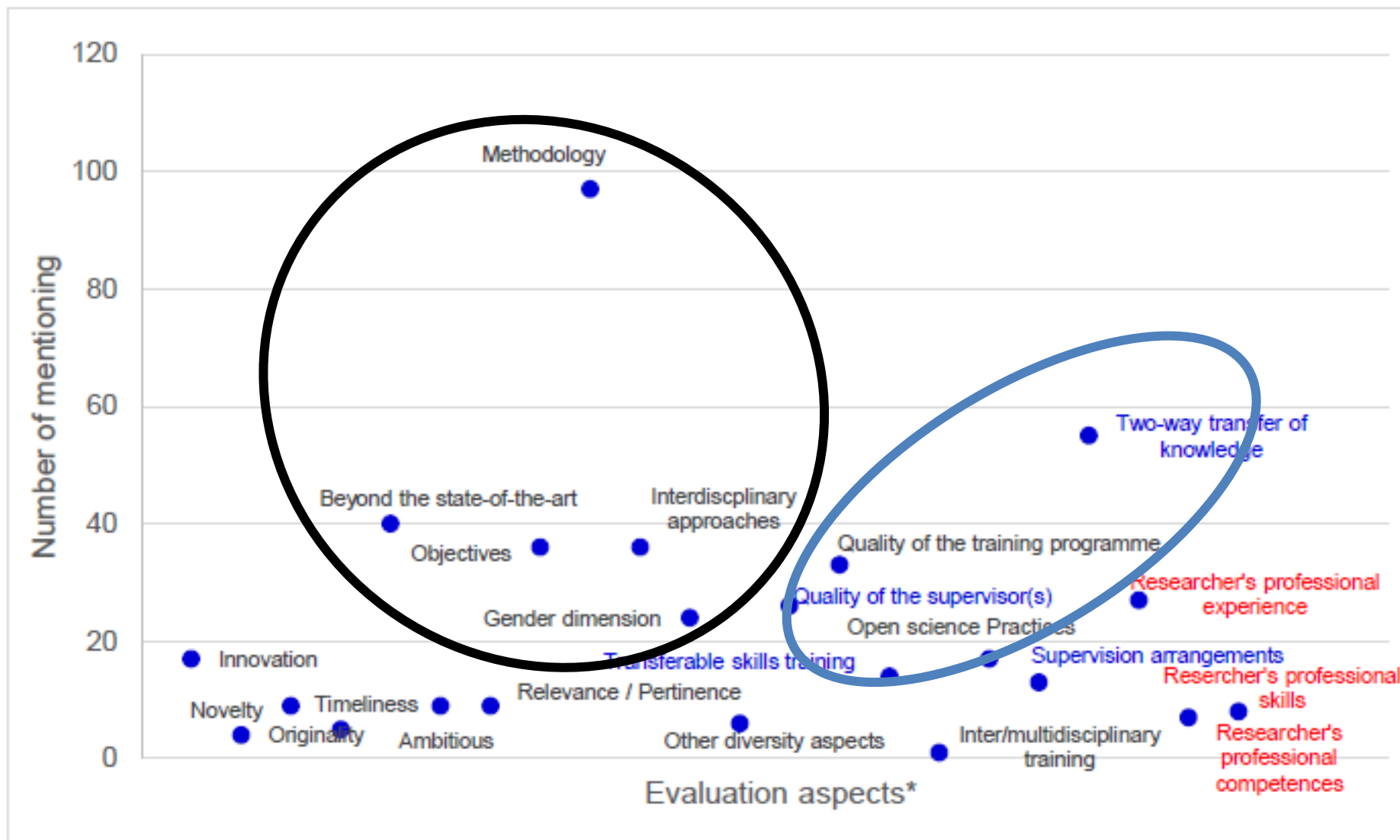
Researchers should **demonstrate** how their existing **professional experience**, talent and the **proposed research** will contribute to their development as **independent/mature researchers**

- Research experience and results
- International publications (first authorships/single authorships)
- Experience in project implementation/management
- Fellowships/awards
- Experience in supervision/teaching
- Experience in the industrial sector
- International collaborations

Explain why:

- Your scientific background is unique
- You have excellent potential
- You are perfectly able to carry out the project
 - You would greatly benefit from this project

Weaknesses - Excellence



- **Black font is related to the scientific quality**
- **Blue font is related to the supervision quality**
- **Red font is related to the researcher's professional compliance**

Weaknesses - Excellence

- The objectives are very **generally defined** and **not specifically measurable**. The extent to which the proposed research **goes beyond the state-of-the-art is not sufficiently developed** in the proposal.
- The **scientific and methodological parts are vague**, particularly regarding ice sheet modelling, heat flow processes, and the implementation of geophysical data in the models.
- **Challenges and way to overcome** them are **not convincingly described** in the proposal.
- A comprehensive training plan with methodology and goals is not adequately described and the two-way transfer of knowledge is not fully proven.
- The **supervisor's and researcher's scientific productions and impact are not fully convincing** given the **experience**.
- The **interdisciplinary dimension** appears **limited**, and the **supervisor's experience** in advanced-level training is **not clearly documented**.
- The **training plan lacks depth**, with too many proposed courses that may **dilute its effectiveness**.
- The proposal is not convincing that a **secondment at a current employer is an added value**.
- **Some terms and abbreviations are not well explained**, and the development of new 3D heat transfer software is not convincingly justified given existing commercial tools.

Evaluation GRID - IMPACT

- 2.1.Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of researchers and contribution to their skills development.
- 2.2.Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.
- 2.3.The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts.

- *Fail/Insufficiently addressed*
- *Poor*
- *Fair*
- *Good*
- *Very good*
- *Excellent*
- *Not applicable*

6 QUESTIONS

- Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher (including the contribution of their skills development)
- Suitability and quality of the planned dissemination and exploitation measures
- Suitability and quality of the planned communication and public engagement activities
- Strategy for intellectual property management and protection
- Expected scientific impact beyond the immediate scope and duration of the project
- Expected economical/ technological and/or societal impacts of the project beyond its immediate scope and duration

CRITERION 2: IMPACT - The underestimated criteria

2.1. Employability

- What specific skills will you acquire? (technical + soft skills)
- How will it prepare you for the next step in your career?
- Do not confuse this with 1.3 (training during the internship vs. future impact on your career)

2.1. Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- Where do you publish, to which audiences, and using which tools?
- Measures must be specific and proportionate. A variety of (non-conventional) measures.
- Outreach $\neq$ Open Science (they are assessed against different criteria).

2.3. Scientific, Societal and Economic Impact

- What is the scale and significance of the contribution?
- Is the described impact credible? Scale + Significance + Credibility.
- Do not overstate: inflated and unrealistic impact will be penalised

2.1 Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher and contribution to his/her skills development

Address the following aspects:

- Specific measures to enhance career perspectives and employability of the researcher inside and/or outside academia
- Expected contribution of proposed skills development to the future career of the researcher.

Explanation of how the research and training activities (incl. secondments/placement) make a positive impact on your career (after the fellowship)

- **What are the career goals** (Tenure track position, initiating a new laboratory, becoming a pioneer researcher, a new position in industry, ERC application....)
- Focus on how the **new competences and skills can make you more successful** in long-term inside/outside academia – give specific examples
- **Describe impact of the collaborations made during the fellowship** – higher impact and RI output

Expected **skill development** of the researcher.
Expected impact of the proposed **research and training activities** on the researcher's career perspectives **inside and/or outside academia**.

Link to
section
1.3.

2.2 Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities

At a minimum, address the following aspects:

- Plan for the dissemination and exploitation activities, including communication activities;
- Strategy for the management of intellectual property, foreseen protection measures.

All measures should be **proportionate to the scale of the project**, and should **contain concrete actions** to be implemented both **during and after the end of the project**.

Communication: Promote your action and results

Inform, promote and communicate
your activities and results

Reaching multiple audiences

Citizens, the media, stakeholders

How?

- Having a well-designed strategy
- Conveying clear messages
- Using the right media channels

When?

From the start of the action until the end

Why?

- Engage with stakeholders
- Attract the best experts to your team
- Generate market demand
- Raise awareness of how public money is spent
- Show the success of European collaboration

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

Dissemination: Make your results public

Open Science: knowledge and results (free of charge)
for others to use

Only to scientists?

Not only but also to others that can learn from the results:
authorities, industry, policymakers, sectors of interest, civil
society

How?

Publishing your results on:

- Scientific magazines
- Scientific and/or targeted conferences
- Databases

When?

At any time, and as soon as the action has results

Why?

- Maximise results' impact
- Allow other researchers to go a step forward
- Contribute to the advancement of the state of the art
- Make scientific results a common good

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

Exploitation: Make concrete use of results

Commercial, Societal, Political Purposes

Only by researchers?

Not only, but also:

- Industry including SMEs
- Those that can make good use of them:
authorities, industrial authorities, policymakers, sectors of
interest, civil society

How?

- Creating roadmaps, prototypes, softwares
- Sharing knowledge, skills, data

When?

Towards the end and beyond, as soon as the action has exploi-
table results

Why?

- Lead to new legislation or recommendations
- For the benefit of innovation, the economy and the society
- Help to tackle a problem and respond to an existing demand

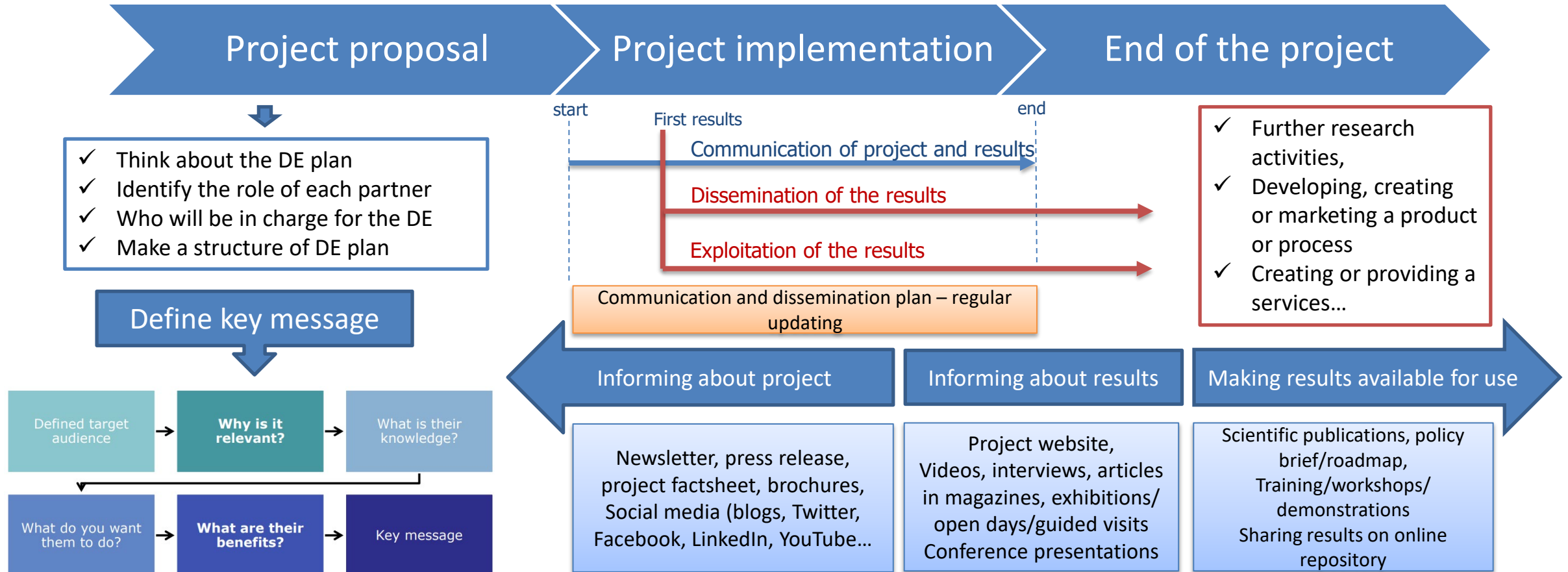
Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

- How will research results be **transferred to potential users, scientists, society?**
- Description of how the new knowledge will be **disseminated and exploited**, and what the potential impact is expected to be.
- Who are the **target audiences** and who will be interested in the results described and why?

Summarize each dissemination/ communication activity with specific & realistic details, using a table

Activity	Target audience	When	<u>Where</u>	Key Indicators (KPI)
Conference (provide the full name)	List the target audience that will participate to the conference	Estimated month of project when it will take place (M12, M14...)	If known at the time of the project proposal application	Number of <u>attendees</u> , etc.

Communication and dissemination in project lifecycle



2.3 The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts

Provide a narrative explaining how the project's results are expected to make a difference in terms of impact, **beyond the immediate scope and duration of the project** (short term, medium term and long term impact).

KEY IMPACT PATHWAYS:

Scientific impact

1. Creating high-quality new knowledge
2. Strengthening human capital in research and innovation
3. Fostering diffusion of knowledge and open source

e.g. contributing to specific scientific advances, across and within disciplines, creating new knowledge, reinforcing scientific equipment and instruments, and computing systems (i.e. research infrastructures);

Economic/ technological impact

1. Generating innovation-based growth
2. Creating more and better jobs
3. Leveraging investment in research and innovation

e.g. bringing new products, services, and business processes to the market, increasing efficiency, decreasing costs, increasing profits, contributing to standards setting, etc.

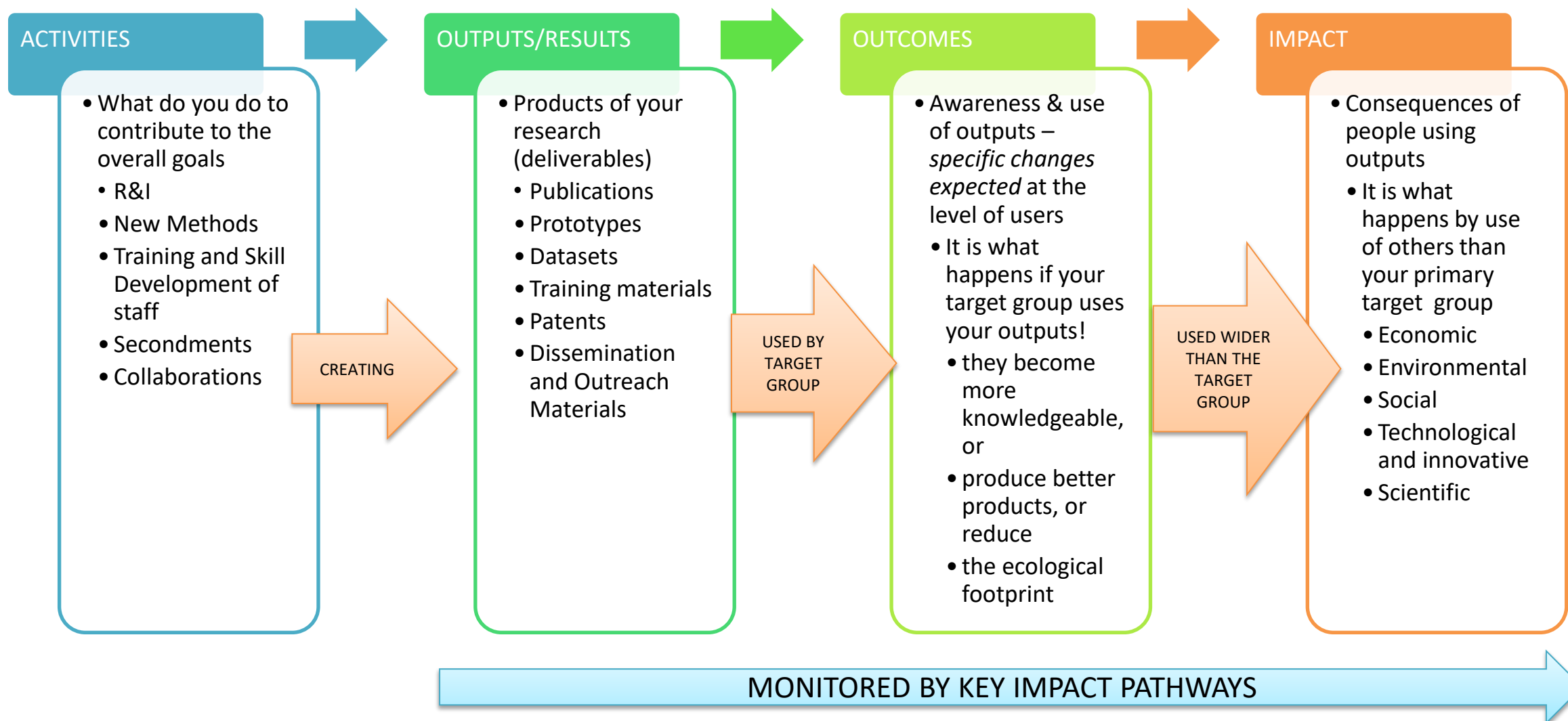
Societal impact

1. Addressing EU policy priorities and global challenges through research and innovation
2. Delivering benefits and impact through research and innovation missions
3. Strengthening the uptake of research and innovation in society

e.g. decreasing CO2 emissions, decreasing avoidable mortality, improving policies and decision-making, raising consumer awareness



Impact Logic Model – MSCA projects



KPIs in Postdoctoral Fellowships - examples

Logic Model Element	Description (PF)	Impact Area	Example KPIs
Activities	Advanced research, training, transferable skills development, secondments	Training & Skills Development	• Number of training activities • Number of new skills gained • Number of training events delivered by the fellow • Number of PM in secondments
		Knowledge Creation & Transfer	• Number of new methods/models developed • Number of collaborative outputs with the host group • Number of training events delivered by the fellow
Outputs	High-impact publications, conference contributions, new methods/models	International & Intersectoral Mobility	• Duration of secondments or placements in host organisations • Number of cross-sector collaborations initiated
		Open Science & Dissemination	• Number of open-access publications • Datasets/software shared publicly • Number of outreach events and audience reached
		Scientific Impact	• Number of high-quality publications (Q1 journals) • Citation metrics (FWCI, h-index improvements) • Number of invited talks or keynotes
Outcomes	Enhanced autonomy, stronger research profile, extended networks	Career Development of the Fellow	• Number of new collaborations established • Long-term collaboration between the fellow and the host • Career progression post-fellowship (job positions, tenure-track offers)
Impacts	Strengthened European research leadership, increased innovation capacity	Innovation & IP	• Number of invention disclosures • Patents filed • Industry collaborations initiated

- Remind the evaluator the **importance of your research in addressing a challenge/priority at a European/Global level:**
 - UN Sustainable Development Goals
 - Green Deal, MSCA Green Charter
 - Horizon Europe Missions
- Embed your project into those overarching goals – how do they contribute? At a very small scale is perfectly fine
- Demonstrate that you do not only know about the MSCA, but about the EU strategies

How your results can feed back to policy making and how it contributes to EU priorities?

Policy Briefs on
MSCA relevant topics



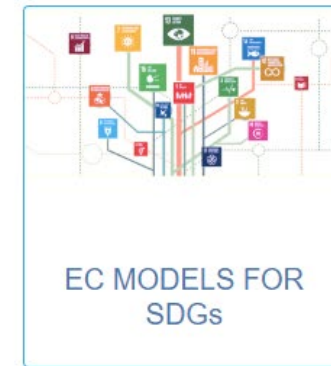
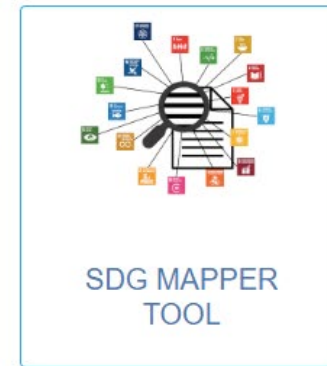
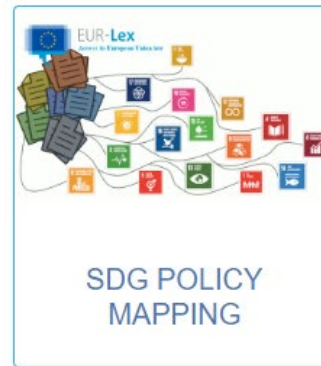
Green Deal Policy Brief
Missions



JRC KnowSDGs Platform

KnowSDGs (Knowledge base for the Sustainable Development Goals) is a web platform that **provides tools and organises knowledge** on policies, indicators, methods and data to support the evidence-based implementation of the SDGs.

Integration of SDGs in impact assesment of the project proposals



<https://knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

JRC Knowledge Centres

Their job is to inform policy-makers in a transparent, tailored and concise manner about **the status and findings of the latest scientific evidence** – one stop shop!

- [Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity](#)
- [Knowledge Centre for Bioeconomy](#)
- [Knowledge Centre on Cancer](#)
- [Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre](#)
- [Knowledge Centre on Earth Observation](#)
- [Knowledge Centre for Food Fraud and Quality](#)
- [Knowledge Centre for Global Food and Nutrition Security](#)
- [Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography](#)
- [Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies](#)



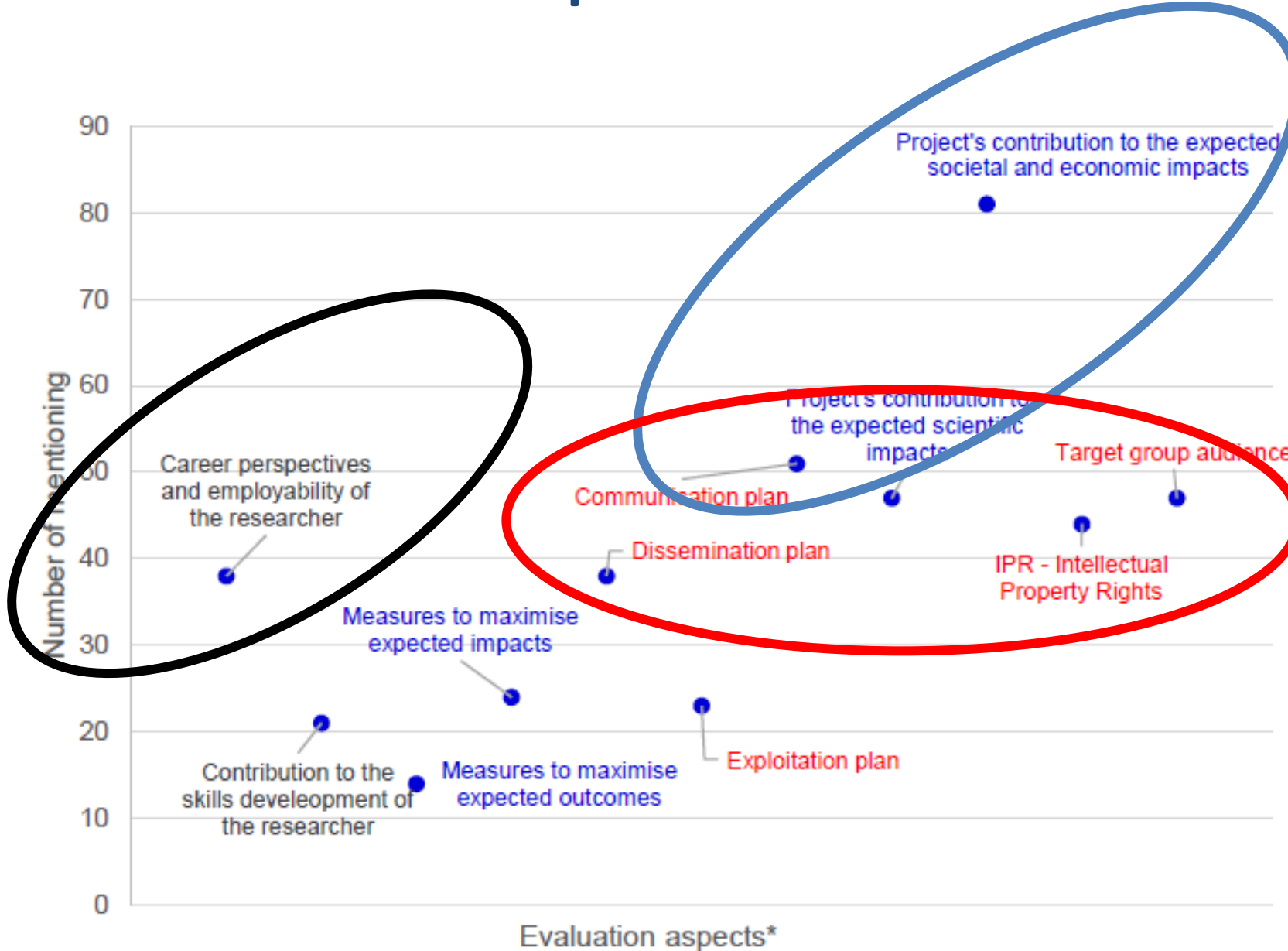
10 Tips for researchers: How to achieve impact on policy

Top tips for researchers and research organisations aiming to achieve policy impact, based on our practice at the science-policy interface.



https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/publication/10-tips-researchers-how-achieve-impact-policy_en

Weaknesses - Impact



- **Black font is related to researcher's career perspectives and employability**
- **Blue font is related to advancement of scientific fields**
- **Red font is related to dissemination/ communication activities**

Weaknesses - Impact

- **Measures to enhance career perspectives** are **not** thoroughly **discussed** and not fully **convincing**.
- The measures to enhance the researcher's **career perspectives and employability** are overly **generic**. The proposed strategy for maximizing research impact fails to clearly identify key findings and to convincingly describe their relevance, while measurable indicators of impact are insufficiently clear.
- **Communication and dissemination activities** are discussed **without goals** and a convincing plan and their effectiveness is not fully proven.
- The **dissemination and exploitation** strategy **lacks** sufficient **detail and structure**. The communication and public engagement activities are presented only in general terms.
- The proposal fails to provide a **convincing strategy to manage the IPR**. The economical and societal impacts are not adequately quantified in the proposal.
- The proposal does not sufficiently detail the **technological and economic pathways required for broader applications translated into improvements** in e.g. energy efficiency or manufacturing processes.
- The proposal does not convincingly demonstrate its **potential scientific impact beyond the project's scope and duration**.
- Claims of **societal impact are insufficiently outlined** and lack credibility, e.g. feasibility evidence, stakeholder involvement, or pilot agreements.
- The claimed extent of the anticipated societal (including regulatory) and economic benefits needs a little further justification.

Evaluation GRID - IMPLEMENTATION

6 QUESTIONS

- 3.1. Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages.
- 3.2. Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements.

- *Fail/Insufficiently addressed*
- *Poor*
- *Fair*
- *Good*
- *Very good*
- *Excellent*
- *Not applicable*

- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including deliverables and milestones
- Appropriateness of effort and timing assigned to each work package
- Completeness of the mandatory Gantt Chart and its consistency with the overall work plan
- Consideration of risks and adequacy of contingency measures
- Quality of hosting arrangements, including team integration and support services
- Quality and capacity of all participating organisations, including their infrastructure, logistics, and facilities

3.1 Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages

- Shortly **describe each work package** (research work packages should have been described in the Excellence chapter in more detail) with its corresponding **deliverables and milestones** (and the secondment/ placement, if applicable) → in running text, marked (D1.1, D1.2 ..., M1.1 ...) – you do not have to use tables
- There is no need for a detailed work plan for the **non-academic placement**, but it must be **mentioned in the Gantt chart and noted**, where relevant, in the research work packages.
- Explain why the number of **person-months planned and requested for the researcher** (and corresponding to the project duration) is appropriate to the proposed activities – don't have to repeat yourself
 - Refer to your tasks in the WPs
 - How the WP, their timing and the workload make sense
 - How much of your working time will you spend on each WP? (rough estimate)? Do you have overlapping research WPs?
 - Why is the length of the fellowship is appropriate to complete all the work?
 - Is the fixed budget sufficient for your activities? If now, where will the rest come from?

Each Work Package should contain:

- WP number
- start & end month
- if realized outside the main host, remind where (secondment or TC host)

Tasks: These are the steps/events/tasks you will carry to complete WPs (T1.1, T1.2)

Deliverables: Distinct output of the WP (report, data analysis, article, document, prototype, software etc.). There could be different versions of deliverables

Milestones: These are control points to help with progress and allow progression to the next stage of the project (completion of data analysis, development of career development plan)

There should be at most **6 work packages**

2-3 research work packages only!

These can run sequentially or concurrently and can be interconnected. Ensure they are in line with details provided in 1.1 research objectives and methodology.

WP for Management

Meetings with supervisor(s), and standard reports to EU (financial and technical reports at end of fellowship).

WP for Training and Transfer of Knowledge

Tasks/events should match the details in 1.2.

WP Dissemination/Exploitation, Communication/Public Engagement

Tasks/events should match the details in 2.2 and 2.3.

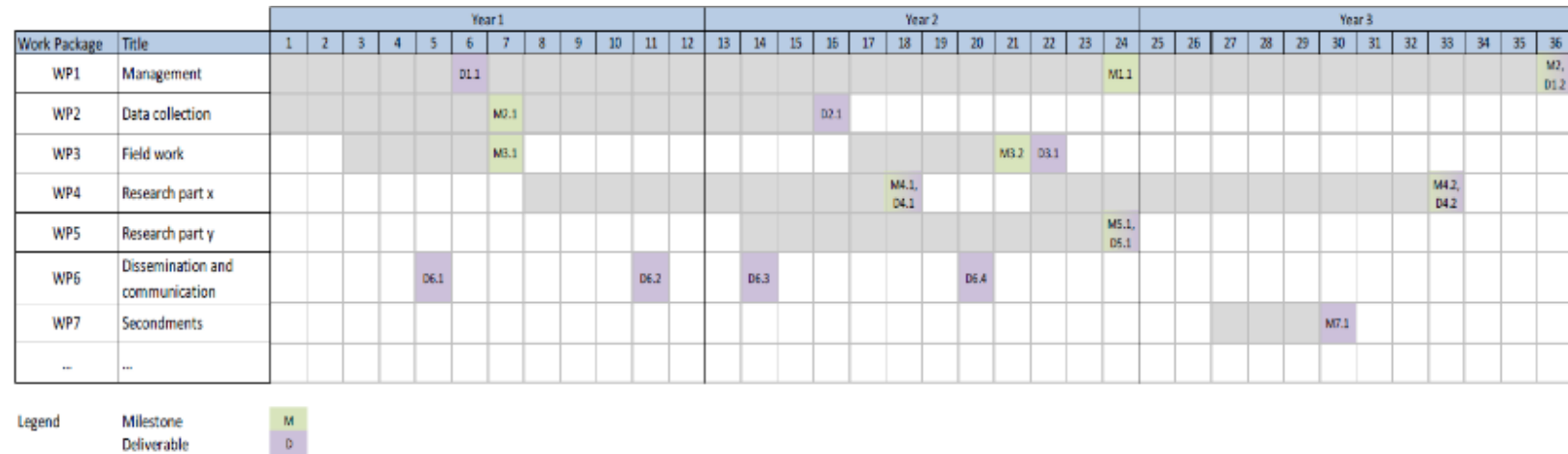
This is why it is important to have specific examples of dissemination & communication activities rather than listing general examples.

Gantt chart (not more than 1/3 or 1/2 page) must be included in the text listing the following:

- Work Packages titles (there should be at least 1 WP);
- Indication of major deliverables, if applicable;
- Indication of major milestones, if applicable;
- Secondments and non-academic placement, if applicable;
- Planning for dissemination, exploitation and communication activities (unless included in a dedicated WP).

Deliverables (mandatory):

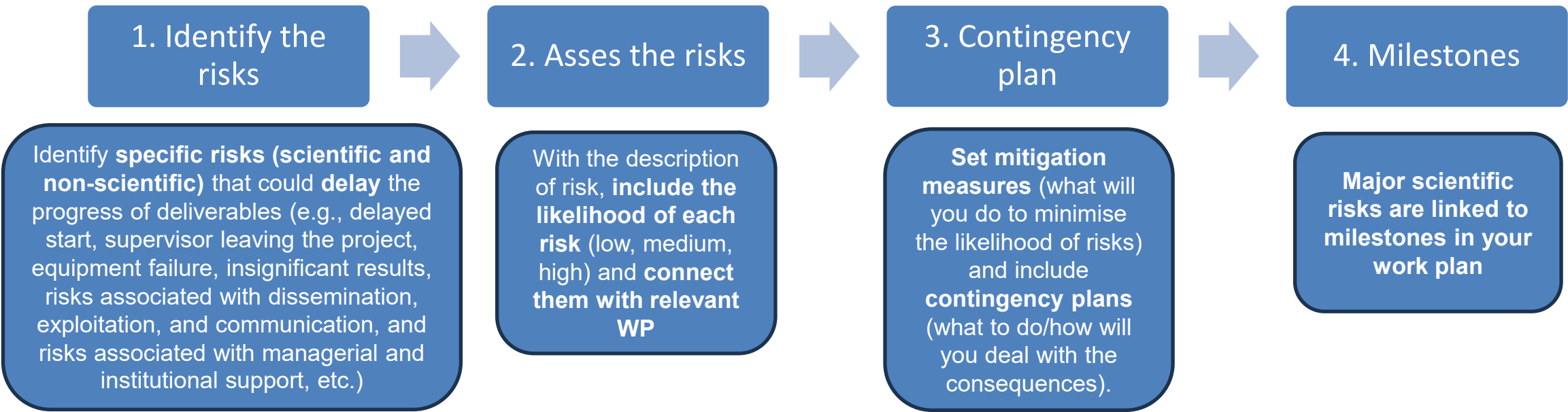
- **Mobility declaration** submitted within 20 days of the start
- **Career development plan** not later than 6 months after its start
- **Evaluation questionnaire** completed by the recruited researcher
- **Data management plan** submitted within the first 6 months of the project;
- **Plan for the dissemination and exploitation** of results submitted towards the end of the project



Assessment of risks

- Describe **mechanisms** in place to **assess and mitigate risks** (of research &/or administrative nature)
 - Explain how the research, training, career planning will be monitored and how the quality of deliverables will be assured

REMEMBER:
If no risks and corresponding alternative strategies are mentioned, it is considered a major weakness.



You can present risks in a table

Risk	Level	WP number	Contingency measures

3.2 Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements

- Describe the **research group(s)/environment as a whole** (various disciplines, opportunities to collaborate during the fellowship, number of people in the research group, technical support etc.).
- Describe you will have **access to infrastructure, logistics, and facilities** necessary for the good implementation of the action (also for participating organisations – secondment and NAP):
 - Describe the workplace offered by the institution (main equipment)
 - Describe the key facilities (laboratories, libraries, access to how many e-journals etc.) necessary for your project
 - You can refer to **B2- Section 5** where there are further details on infrastructure.

For Global Fellowship:

- Specify the **practical arrangements in place at your host organisation** in the third country to host a researcher coming from another country (visa process etc.).
- Explain the **integration into the research team/environment**.
- Incoming phase (return to European host): specify the measures planned for the **successful (re)integration of the researcher**.

Progress monitoring & management structures

Explain how the research, training, career planning will be monitored (refer back to 1.3).

How will supervisors support the project progress (explain meeting schedule).

Supervisor(s) and the researcher are the main managers – assisted by the host organisation(s) structures.

[MSCA Supervision guidelines](#) - collection of best practices

- Explain clearly **how you will be integrated into this research group(s)/environment and the wider host institution(s)** – internal meetings, introduction days, social activities, refer back to training courses that are offered etc. - be specific and show clear plans
- **Include any support from HR services** (hosting agreement, work contract, familiarisation with internal procedures) and [EURAXESS centre](#) (if applicable) assisting you with reallocation to the host country and research environment.
- If applicable, indicate if your host organisation is involved in the **HRS4R process** (HR Excellence in Research label) or has signed European Charter for Researchers

Hosting arrangements

- Further members of the research group
- Further chairs/working groups at the institution
- Interdisciplinary discourse at the institutions – collective colloquia?
- Integration into (inter-)national networks

In case of a **Global Fellowship**: explain the practical issues and the help by the Welcome Centre/International Office

Mention the Welcome Centre/International Office that will support in:

- Finding accommodation,
- Dealing with public authorities
- Insurances,
- Organisation of events for incoming fellows etc.,

Mention the Career Centre (or other departments that offer the training courses) and that the host is a family-friendly employer (childcare etc.)

Euraxess Centre at organisation/Country

CRITERION 3: IMPLEMENTATION - Details that matter

3.1. Workplan, Gantt and Risk Management

- The Gantt chart must be consistent with the text: work packages, deliverables, milestones and secondments/NAPs must all match up.
- The risk assessment must identify real risks (including geopolitical risks or risks to the researcher's safety) and propose credible contingency measures.
- The effort allocated to each work package must be logical and realistic.

3.2. Hosting Capacities

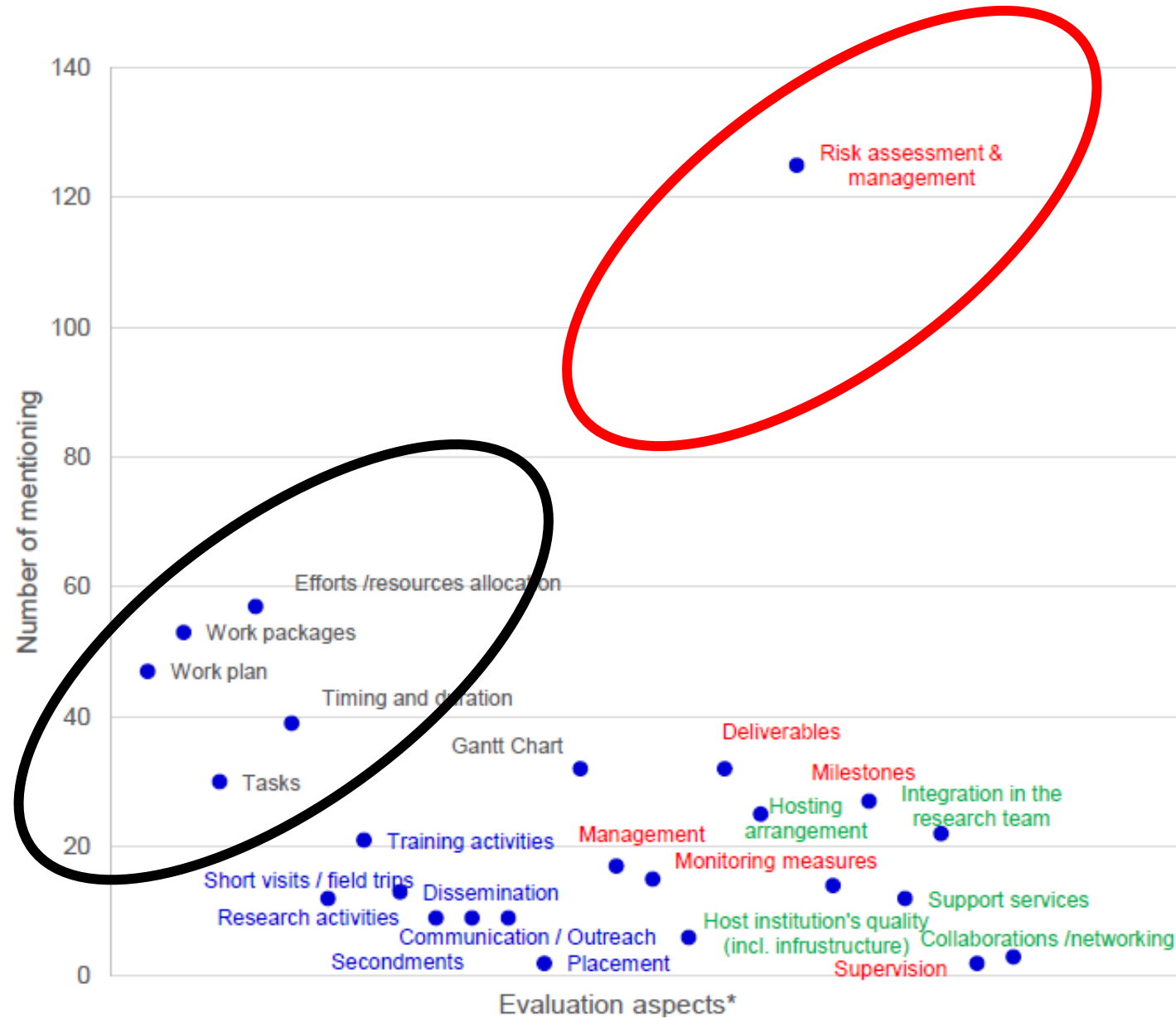
- Does the supervisor have the necessary experience and time?
- Does the institution provide the required facilities?
- Is the researcher integrated into the team (beyond the supervisor)?

Note: the capabilities of all institutions involved must be fully justified, both in secondments and in NAPs.

Evaluator's Tips

- A Gantt chart that does not match the text is a sign of poor planning.
- A generic risk assessment and contingency plan will lower your mark.
- Include information about the team, not just the supervisor.
- Justify secondments and NAPs: what value do they add?
- For Global Fellowships: the host supervisor is just as important as the home supervisor.

Weaknesses - Implementation



- **Black font** is related to the project design
- **Blue font** is related to activities types
- **Red font** is related to monitoring and mitigation plan
- **Green font** is related to host suitability

Weaknesses - Implementation

- The project does **not provide clear milestones nor deliverables** in the Gantt chart in relation to professional skills development and dissemination of results, including scientific publications.
- The work plan lacks clear milestones, detailed WP planning, and sufficient information on management, communication, and training.
- **Risk assessment is unconvincing**, with major risks already mitigated and no proper contingency plan.
- Some **deliverables** fall outside **allocated timelines**. The publication target set for the project time frame appears **overly ambitious**.
- The work plan lacks detail on the different steps to be undertaken in the work packages. Furthermore, the means for verifying that **milestones have been achieved are not clearly presented**. The timing of some work packages is not convincing (e.g. the start of communication and dissemination work), and there is some inconsistency regarding the timing of activities that involve stakeholders.
- The **Gantt chart is not complete as milestones are not clearly associated to work packages**, and the work is not adequately structured into tasks.
- The **description of host's quality and capacity** in terms of support services, relevant projects or infrastructure, **lacks an adequate level of detail**.
- Some of the proposed **risk mitigation measures are insufficiently detailed**, limiting their practical applicability. The Gantt chart also includes elements that are insufficiently justified and explained, impacting the reliability of the project timeline.

What makes the difference

What impresses them

- State of the art → gap → clear hypothesis (not to be confused with output).
- Terminology identical to that used in the evaluation criteria.
- Convincing justification of 'why this group' and 'why me', and what the benefit is for both.
- Acquisition of soft skills by the researcher.
- Credible and specific impact on the project.
- Gantt chart consistent with the text, clear definition of milestones and deliverables, with risks and contingencies clearly identified.

What frustrates them (and brings their marks down)

- 10 well-formatted pages with very little actual content.
- Methodological description lacking hypotheses or justification, or based on conventional and well-known methods.
- Host institution and supervisor described in generic terms, with no added value.
- No real knowledge transfer: only the supervisor teaches.
- Unrealistic impact: solving climate change in 2 years with €200k.
- Absence of a Gantt chart; unclear or poorly timed definition of milestones and deliverables.

RADIANCE: MSCA NCP project

Horizon Europe project whose main objective is to facilitate the **transnational cooperation between National Contact Points (NCPs)** for the MSCA in order to achieve a consistent and harmonized level of NCP support

<https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/msca>



Library Find your NCP RADIANCE



The **MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships** support individual, experienced researchers to enhance their research skills and career prospects through international mobility. The action funds fellowships of 1-3 years enabling researchers to work on excellent research projects, acquire new competences and benefit from high-quality training and supervision.

The 2026 call opened on 9 April with a deadline on 9 September 2026.

For more information or advice on the action, please contact the **NCP of your country**.

You find below all the documents related to the Postdoctoral Fellowships call made by RADIANCE.

PF DOCUMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

- **RADIANCE PF Handbook 2026 :**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2026-06/radiance_handbook_postdoctoral_fellowships_2026.pdf
- **RADIANCE Submission Guide 2025 (update expected End of June):**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2025-07/howtosubmit-pf-proposal.2025_0.pdf
- **PF Inspirational Story CONstrainCONverge:**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/widening-countries-inspirational-stories_pf_constrainconverge.pdf
- **PF Inspirational Story DiBDEV:**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/widening-countries-inspirational-stories_pf_dibdev.pdf
- **PF Inspirational Story ENSPEC6G:**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/widening-countries-inspirational-stories_pf_enspec6g.pdf
- **PF Inspirational Story PALEOSIM:**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/widening-countries-inspirational-stories_pf_paleosim.pdf
- **PF Inspirational Story SepsISensor:**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/widening-countries-inspirational-stories_pf_sepsissensor.pdf
- **PF Inspirational Story Super-HIPPO:**
https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/widening-countries-inspirational-stories_pf_super-hippo.pdf
- **PF Inspirational Video-Story Affective-PRS:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Utp2B8RtKI>

MSCA PF Handbook 2026 + other documents

<https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/ncp-networks/msca/international-mobility-experienced-researchers>

Brokerage Event – Doctoral Networks 2026



MSCA Doctoral Networks 2026

INTERNATIONAL ON-LINE BROKERAGE EVENT

15-16TH JULY 2026



<https://www.b2match.com/e/msca-2026>



msca@fecyt.es