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MSCA COFUND Programmes

- COFUND Programmes are Training Programmes
 - The aim is to support and develop postdoctoral researchers who are at the start of their careers
 - The development of fellows is the highest priority, with the research viewed as a means of producing highly trained researchers
- While there are some distinct differences, the COFUND programmes broadly operate in the same ways as the MSCA IFs
- Must operate using EC policies & procedures



DevelopMed Programme

Research Topic

- Precision Oncology (Themes: Diagnostics, Drug Development, Tumour Microenvironment)*
- Specific topic & plan should be developed by fellows
- Fellowship Duration: 3-years

Training Opportunities

- Programme will feature both individual & consortium-wide training opportunities
- Secondments (3-6 months in duration) will be mandatory for all fellows
 - At any research performing organisation which meets the fellows research, training & career development needs, and is relevant to the fellow's project

Participating Universities

- Beneficiary: UCD (sole signatory to Grant Agreement; receives and distributes EU funding)
 - Lead PI: Prof. Walter Kolch, Director of SBI
- Partners: UCC, NUIG, RCSI

Programme Management

- Run out of Systems Biology Ireland (SBI)
- Contact Points: Dr. Jessica Ralston and Susan Yeates (developmed@ucd.ie)

**Can be basic or applied research which can broadly be classified into one of these 3 themes (e.g. computational modelling, nutrition, metabolism, machine learning, immunology, bioinformatics, etc).*



Recruitment Process | i) Fellow Eligibility

MCSA Mobility Rule Applies

- Fellows must not have **resided** in or carried out their main activity in Ireland for either:
 - > 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the application deadline
 - > 3 years in the 5 years immediately prior to the application deadline
- Relaxed mobility rule can be applied to researchers resuming research after a career break
- Fellows may be of any nationality

Qualifications

- Fellows must have a doctoral degree **or** at least 4 years of full-time equivalent research experience in academia or industry.



Recruitment Process | ii) Calls for Applications

General Application Information

- Calls will be internationally advertised
- Interested candidates are free to select a research topic & supervisor, but may only submit one application per call
- Applications must pass eligibility and ethics checks prior to being sent for peer review
- Open and transparent recruitment calls with merit-based selection; fellowships must be awarded on an equitable and transparent EU-wide process

Applications Must Contain:

- Project proposal (based on MSCA IF template; ~10 pages)
- Applicant's CV
- Completed Ethics Issues Table
- Description of planned secondment (3-6 months, single or multiple visits to host)



Recruitment Process | iii) Peer Review & Interviews

1) International Peer Review

- Each application reviewed by ≥ 3 international reviewers, selected from EC database (or nominees).
- Proposal scores used to generate ranked list of applicants, with top ranked applicants invited for interviews.

2) Interviews

- Interview panel typically includes other PIs from the host university, who are not associated with the applications.
- **The supervisor is not on the interview panel.**
 - The EC regard this as a conflict of interest as (s)he is involved in preparing the application.
- Interviewed applicants will be ranked, with ranked list reviewed by Steering Committee for endorsement of final funding decision.

3) Fellowship Offers

- Issued by HR at academic host of respective fellow(s).



Supervisor Commitments

Cash Commitments (NON-EU Sources)

	Per Year (€)	3 Year Total (€)
Pay-Related Costs ¹	€31,922	€95,766
Consumables Budget ²	€15,000	€45,000
Travel for Fellow (e.g. conferences)	€900	€2,700
Computing (e.g. laptop for fellow)	-	€2,160
Management & Training Costs ³	€3,300	€9,900
TOTAL	-	€155,526

¹ Includes gross salary, pension (20%) & PRSI (11.05%) costs, mobility & family allowance (family status of researcher is determined at call deadline and cannot be revised afterwards)

² Minimum consumables budget which must be made available to fellow

³ Funds to be transferred to management account in UCD on commencement of fellowship; funds summer schools, training events, project-wide activities & project management costs

Additional Commitments

- Supervision of the fellow for 3 years and supporting the fellow's career development
- Supervisors commit to contribute their expertise via presentations at training seminars, workshops and summer schools
- Appoint a 'Buddy' for your fellow (an existing PD researcher at your RPO) to guide them through their first weeks/months in post.

EU Contribution & Benefits

EU Contribution

- €2,740 per month towards living allowance of each fellow (€98,640 per fellow over 3 yrs)*
- ~€140k towards programme management
- €1,324,080 total commitment to programme

Key Benefits to Fellow/Supervisor

- Fellowships offer very competitive postdoc salaries (€51,345 with family; €45,942 without family), attracting top postdoctoral researchers to Irish labs
- Prestigious postdoc cohort in Ireland with access to bespoke training events run by the DevelopMed management team

*EU contribution is based on how many months the fellow(s) are employed

Next Steps for Interested Supervisors

1. Confirm your commitment and that you have the required budget
 - You will be asked to submit a template letter of commitment by e-mail indicating that funds are in place over the required time period, and that you commit to transferring programme management costs
 - Due before Application Call opens (Sept 2021)
2. Confirm interest of secondment host in hosting a fellow
3. Provide a bio for the DevelopMed website



**SYSTEMS
BIOLOGY
IRELAND**



**TRAINING
FUTURE LEADERS**



**12 x 3-YEAR
FELLOWSHIPS**



**3-6 MONTH
SECONDMENTS**

**PRECISION
ONCOLOGY
SUBTHEMES:**



DIAGNOSTICS



**DRUG
DEVELOPMENT**



**TUMOR MICRO-
ENVIRONMENT**

KEY DATES

CALL 1

OPENS: 1 JAN 2021
CLOSES: 31 MAR 2021
IN POST: 1 OCT 2021

CALL 2

OPENS: 1 SEPT 2021
CLOSES: 30 NOV 2021
IN POST: 1 JUNE 2022

HOST INSTITUTIONS

UCD, NUIG, UCC, RCSI



DEVELOPMED

**MSCA COFUND
Programme**

***www.ucd.ie/developmed/
Contact: developmed@ucd.ie***

DevelopMed MSCA COFUND Programme

PURPOSE

- Training programme for postdoctoral researchers at the start of their careers; fellow development is the highest priority

FELLOWSHIPS & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- DevelopMed will co-fund 12 fellowships of 3 years in duration
- Fellows can be any nationality, but must not have resided in Ireland for >12 months in the 3 years prior to the application deadline
- Individual & consortium-wide training opportunities
- 3-6 month secondments at any research organisation (academic, industry, clinical & charity sectors)

RESEARCH TOPICS

- Precision Oncology (Diagnostics, Drug Development, Tumour Microenvironment); specific topic developed by fellows

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS: UCD, NUIG, UCC, RCSI



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KEY DATES

Call 1: Application call opens January 2021; Fellowships begin October 2021

Call 2: Application call opens September 2021; Fellowships begin June 2022

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