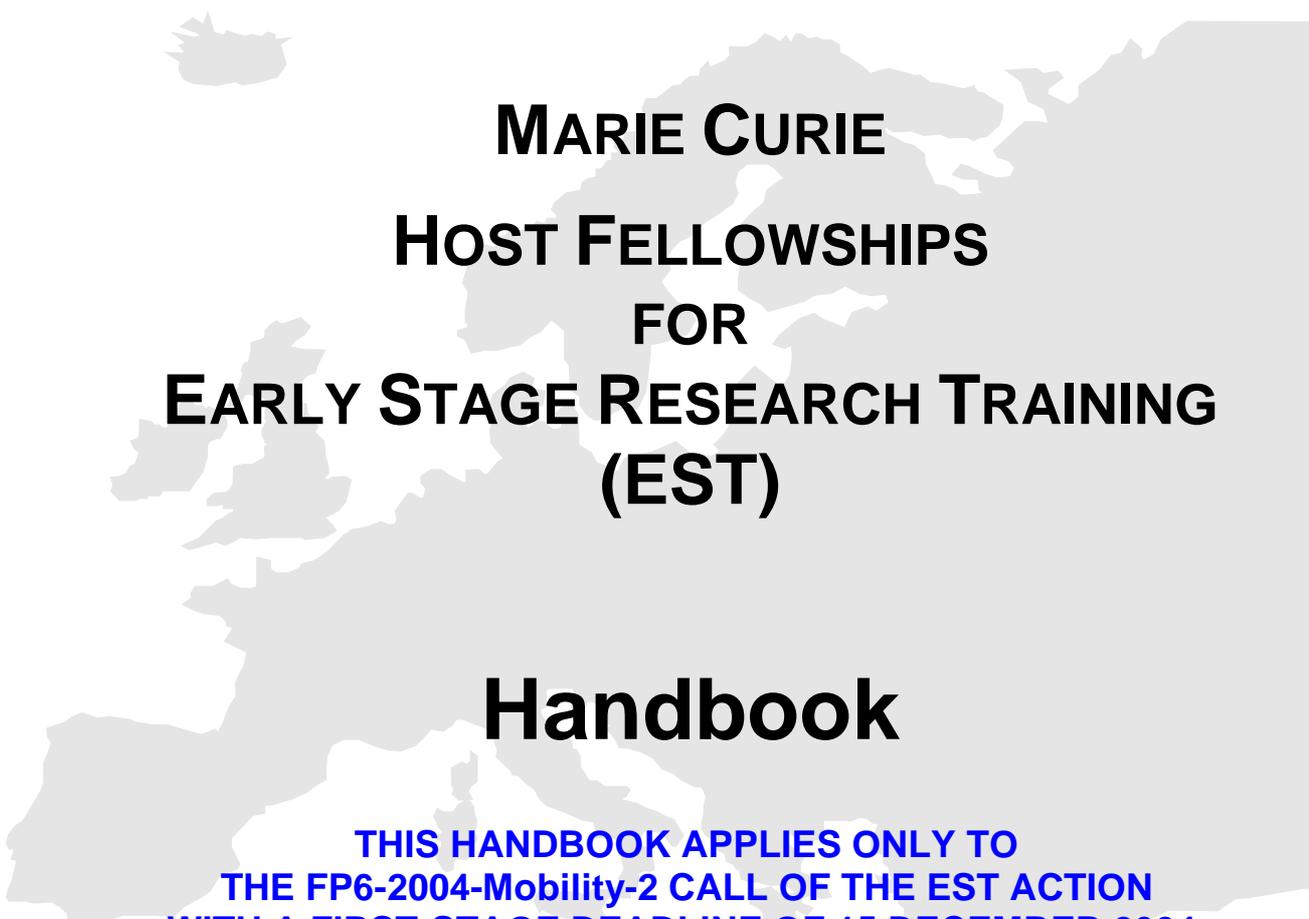




European Commission
Research Directorate General
Human Resources and Mobility



**MARIE CURIE
HOST FELLOWSHIPS
FOR
EARLY STAGE RESEARCH TRAINING
(EST)**

Handbook

**THIS HANDBOOK APPLIES ONLY TO
THE FP6-2004-Mobility-2 CALL OF THE EST ACTION
WITH A FIRST-STAGE DEADLINE OF 15 DECEMBER 2004.**



MARIE CURIE **ACTIONS**

September 2004

**This handbook explains the principles of
Marie Curie Host Fellowships for
Early Stage Research Training (EST)
to be funded under the EU's Sixth Framework Programme**

Similar documents are available for the other
Marie Curie Actions namely:

Marie Curie Research Training Networks (RTN)
Marie Curie Host Fellowships for the Transfer of Knowledge (ToK)
Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses (SCF/LCF)
Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowships (EIF)
Marie Curie Outgoing International Fellowships (OIF)
Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowships (IIF)
Marie Curie Excellence Grants (EXT)
Marie Curie Excellence Awards (EXA)
Marie Curie Chairs (EXC)
Marie Curie European Reintegration Grants (ERG)
Marie Curie International Reintegration Grants (IRG)

They are also available on the Commission's web-site:

<http://europa.eu.int/mariecurie-actions>

Comments are welcome and may be sent to:

rtd-mariecurie-actions@cec.eu.int

Legal notice

This guide aims to make the rules concerning Marie Curie actions transparent and easy to understand, thus it serves for information purposes only and has no legal value. It is based upon a number of legal texts, in particular the Work Programme and Rules for Participation listed in Annex VI of this document. Only those texts having a legal status can be referred to for the purpose of any legal or administrative proceedings.

THE ESSENTIALS

What is Early Stage Training (EST)?

Marie Curie Host Fellowships for Early Stage Research Training are aimed at offering structured scientific and /or technological training as well as providing complementary skills.

Who can apply?

A single host organisation (mono-partner application) or a consortium (multi-partner application) of any legal entities (e.g. universities, research organisations, industrial firms, SME's, international organisations, etc.) operating a coherent and integrated research training programme.

Who are the targeted researchers?

EST will focus on the training of researchers with less than 4 years of research experience. The researchers are appointed directly by the selected host for periods between 3 months and 3 years.

Which research topics are supported?

Proposals from all areas of scientific and technological research of interest to the European Community are welcome and there are no pre-defined priority areas.

What is the size of an EST?

In the case of a multi-partner application the consortium must have legal entities from *at least* three Member or Associated States of which two must be EU Member or Candidate Countries. In all cases, the size of an EST must be chosen to best achieve its objectives, particularly with regard to training, while taking into account possible limitations in terms of management and effective interaction amongst the partners.

How can the funding be used?

Funding is primarily provided for the benefit of the researchers that are appointed by the host (including their living allowances, travel expenses etc). There are also certain expenses linked to the execution of the project in the host organisation, along with a contribution towards overheads and management related expenses. For the case of multi-partner sites there will also be a contribution towards the costs of co-ordination of the research teams (via meetings, secondments etc).

When to apply?

A two-stage call for proposals was published on 11 September 2004. The deadline for the first stage "outline" proposals is 15 December 2004. Proposers selected to proceed to the second stage ("full" proposal), will be notified in March 2005 and asked to submit the full proposal at the end of April 2005 (provisional deadline 26 April).

How to apply?

Firstly, after reading this document, download an 'InfoPack' that provides the material you need to prepare a proposal. Secondly, you should consult the legal documents, in particular, the Work Programme upon which this handbook is based (references can be found in annex V of this document).

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1. Foreword

Note that this document has been updated since the second version was published in January 2004. The main differences, included in this document, are as follows:

- Due to the revision of the work programme in September 2004, there are major changes to the submission procedure and the new call is now in two stages. The changes are detailed in Chapter 7.

2. Introduction

To help develop the European Research Area (ERA), the Commission launched the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP6). This programme runs from 2002 to 2006 and is the financial tool with which the Commission will put research policy into practice and also provide the necessary financial support for scientific and technological development projects.

Within FP6, the Human Resources and Mobility (HRM) activity has a budget of 1.58 billion Euro and consists of a coherent set of actions, based on promoting the mobility of researchers. These will be aimed at the development and transfer of research competencies, the consolidation and widening of researchers' career prospects, and the promotion of excellence in European research.

It is the purpose of this document to explain one of the 11 different actions within the HRM activity: Marie Curie Host Fellowships for Early Stage Research Training (ESTs). The information is based mainly upon the relevant legal texts, in particular, the Work Programme. Text that has been directly extracted from this document is shown in boxes to aid the reader.

2.1 What are Early Stage Training Fellowships?

The specific objectives of the Early Stage Training host fellowships are:

*"The actions concerned are intended to have a strong structuring effect on the European research system, in particular by encouraging junior researchers to pursue a research career."
(Work Programme section 2.2)*

*"These Fellowships will be targeted at higher education and research institutions, training centres and enterprises, with a view to reinforcing their training capability. The scheme will be directed at researchers in the early stages of their professional career. It will focus on the acquisition of specific scientific and technological competencies in research, as well as of complementary skills."
(Work Programme section 2.3.1.2)*

This action is intended to promote the development of human resources that constitute the underlying raw material on which research capabilities are built. It also promotes the mobility of researchers between European countries and to Europe from outside. The action is targeted at the training of researchers at the early stages of their research careers. It aims to contribute to a strong structuring effect on European research systems and to particularly encourage these researchers to continue to pursue a long term

European research career. Attention will be paid to encouraging the involvement of industry and SMEs.

The scheme also addresses the possibility of training in aspects that may widen the researcher's career development (e.g. research management, languages, ethics, presentation skills etc)

Each host will be responsible for the selection and appointment of its *early-stage* researchers (as defined in section 4 of this document).

Projects may be submitted either by:

- a single host if necessary supplemented by several inter-related groups in the same country or at cross-border level*, working together on a common research or training theme

NOTE:

As an exception to the general rule, **inter-related groups** provide the possibility for groups from the same country or at cross border level not belonging to the same legal entity but involved in a joint training activity, to participate under the single-host scheme. They are expected to jointly operate a training programme as demonstrated by past records.

Full responsibility will be taken by the project co-ordinator and his/her legal entity, who must be in the position to ensure the correct execution of the project. All selected fellows will be recruited by the co-ordinator's legal entity and fellows are expected to execute a significant part of their training period at the co-ordinating organisation's premises.

*Cross-border corresponds with the definitions applied under the European Community Programme INTERREG IIIA. For further information on eligible areas please consult http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/interreg3/abc/voleta_en.htm

- by multi-partner hosts such as those involved in formal collaboration in the organisation of international doctoral studies (e.g. Euro-PhDs). Participants must be at least 3 hosts in 3 different Member States, or Associated States, of which two must be from Member States or Associated Candidate Countries. Training must be open to researchers from outside the partners. The quality of the training provided by each participating partner must be mutually recognised by all partners and, where possible, the same will be expected with the awarded degrees.

Examples for EST mono-sites:

A) Single-host

An EST comprising one research institute specialised in optics that has a well established record of training programme for postgraduate students for short and long stays and who also offers placements for a number of researchers to carry out a PhD.

B) Inter-related groups

A research institute specialised in food safety has been operating a joint training programme in microbiology for the past ten years in collaboration with the Mathematics department at the local university and a regional company specialised in microbiological modelling. The research institute submits a proposal as co-ordinator with the other two institutes as inter-related groups, offering a structured training programme on toxicology and food safety for researchers wishing to carry out PhDs as well as short term placements. The main part of the research training on toxicology and chemical food safety is

carried out at the research institute, while complementary training on advanced computational toxicology takes place at the university, and additional research on microbiological modelling is carried out at the company. The selected fellows will execute a significant part of their training period at the co-ordinating organisation.

Example for an EST multi-site:

An EST composed of Law departments from 8 universities located in Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Austria, Italy, France and Spain, offering structured training in European social studies for researchers pursuing PhDs or wishing to obtain a Masters. The training programme is the result of a long-standing collaboration among the host institutions that has resulted in a joint PhD and Masters programme where the diplomas are recognised by all 8 universities.

2.2 How does it work?

To show how an Early Stage Training site forms and operates, the whole process can be divided into 7 steps:

Step 1: Outline Proposal Preparation

In the first instance, it is expected that a host institution or a group of host institutions prepare an outline proposal that focuses upon a joint, structured research training project. In the case of the multi-sites, a staff member from one of the teams will be the *co-ordinator* for the project while the other teams will each nominate a scientist-in-charge. The outline proposal must be received by the Commission before or on the deadline given in the call for proposals.

Step 2: Outline Proposal Evaluation

Once the outline proposals have been received, a series of checks will be performed to ensure that eligibility criteria such as completeness, minimum number of teams for multi-sites, etc. are fulfilled. The Commission will then arrange for the outline proposal to be evaluated by at least three independent experts who will assess it against two predefined evaluation criteria. Each outline proposal will receive a report describing the consensus opinion reached by the independent experts.

Step 3: Full Proposal Preparation

Taking into account the opinions of the experts and the available funding, the Commission will rank the outline proposals. A number of outline proposals equal to 250% of the available budget for the call will be invited to submit full proposals. In practice this means that if the available budget would allow the eventual funding of 100 proposals, then 250 co-ordinators will be invited to expand their outline proposals and submit a full proposal.

Step 4: Full Proposal Evaluation

Once the full proposals have been received, a series of checks will again be performed to ensure that eligibility criteria such as completeness, minimum number

of teams for multi-sites, etc. are fulfilled. The Commission will arrange for the full proposal to be evaluated by at least three independent experts who will assess it against the entire range of predefined evaluation criteria. Each full proposal will receive a report describing the consensus opinion reached by the independent experts.

Step 5: Negotiation and Selection

Taking into account the opinions of the experts and the available funding, the Commission will rank the full proposals. Those full proposals that are retained will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with the Commission. The purpose of this process is to collect all the necessary financial and technical information, in order to prepare a contract. In addition, the scientific and training programme will be defined in terms of contractual deliverables and the maximum financial contribution from the Community finalised. The capacity of the host to execute the proposed training programme will be re-examined at this stage, which could result in a reduction of the number of fellows to be trained.

Comments from the experts that arose during the evaluation will also be taken into account at this stage.

Step 6: Preparation

After a successful outcome to the negotiations, a draft contract will be prepared by the Commission and sent to the co-ordinating host organisation for signature. For EST multi-partner sites a consortium agreement may be drawn-up at this stage to deal with any internal issues (e.g. use of overheads, intellectual property rights, etc.). An initial payment will be provided once the co-ordinating organisation and the Commission have signed the contract. For multi-sites, this payment may be distributed to the other teams when they, in turn, sign the contract.

Step 7: Start of Work

The project begins at the start date of the project mentioned in the contract and will have a duration of four years. Early stage researchers can be appointed not earlier than the start date of the contract.

During the course of the project, the Commission will monitor the fellowship via annual reports and review meetings. An advance payment (pre-financement) is made at the beginning of the project; subsequent annual payments are executed according to the progress made with respect to the project deliverables set out in the contract. The final payment is released upon acceptance of the final report by the Commission services.

2.3 Main Differences between FP5 and FP6

A strict comparison between the actions in FP5 and FP6 is not really possible due to the fundamental differences in terms of objectives and participation rules. Nevertheless, the following table highlights the main differences between training opportunities for early stage researchers under FP5 (Training Sites and Industry Host Fellowships) and FP6.

	FP5	FP6
Name of the programme/activity	Improving Human Potential	Human Resources and Mobility
Name of the action(s)	Marie Curie Training Sites (TS) Marie Curie Industry Host Fellowships (IHF)	Marie Curie Early Stage Fellowships (15% of the overall budget of this action to be directed towards industrial/commercial companies participation)
Age limit for researchers that can be appointed	Up to 35 years	Removed (eligibility based on experience)
Profiles of the early stage researchers appointed.	Pre-doctoral young researcher (TS: Only for PhD students)	Early-stage researcher (=4 years of research experience)
Appointment of researchers from Third Countries	Only if already resident in EU Member States for >5 years	Up to 30% of the total of person-months in addition to those resident in EU for >4 years out of the last 5.
Eligibility of researchers to work in their country of nationality	Not possible	Yes, if active outside the EU and/or Associated States for at least five years or for stays at European/International organisations.
Maximum period allowed in country of application previous to deadline	12 out of the last 24 months	12 out of the last 36 months
Allowances paid to researchers	TS: 1200€/month plus actual cost of 1 return journey IHF: (i) Living allowance (ii) mobility allowance	(i) Living allowance, (ii) monthly mobility allowance (family dependent), (iii) annual travel costs (iv) career exploration allowance
Contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers,	Not specifically featured	(i) Contribution for expenses related to training actions, (research costs, conference attendance, etc). Between 250€-500€ researcher-month
Community contribution towards the research and management costs of the host institution	Covering research costs of the fellow, management costs and overheads, conference participation, etc. No distinction among type of expense.	Contributions under 4 different subcategories: (i) to the organisation costs (ii) to co-ordination expenses for multi-sites, (iii) to management and audit costs, (iv) to overheads (see below)
Allowable expenses related with the management of the fellowship	Not specifically featured	(ii) Up to 3% of the Community Contribution
Allowable indirect costs (overheads)	Not specifically featured	(iii) 10% of direct costs (excluding subcontracting)

3 What is an Early Stage Training Fellowship expected to do?

3.1 Introduction

The main tasks of Early Stage Training Fellowships is the appointment of *early-stage* researchers and their integration into a structured training scheme that will encourage them to pursue a research career:

“Supporting the development [...] of the offer of structured training (typically within the framework of doctoral studies and including general modules of structured training and/or experimental research work) and its internationalisation, for researchers at the beginning of their careers from Member States, Associated States and third countries);”
(Work Programme section 2.3.1.2)

For EST multi-sites, a major objective of this action is to provide co-ordinated approaches to training among the organisations concerned, particularly between those involved in international doctoral studies. The quality of the training provided by each participating partner must be mutually recognised by all partners and, where possible, the same will be expected with the awarded degrees.

3.2 The Research Topic of the Project

All Marie Curie actions have a ‘bottom-up’ approach i.e. all fields of research of interest to the European Community are eligible for funding. This so-called bottom up approach is expressed in the Work Programme:

*“Freedom is given to the proposers as to the choice of field of research for their projects . The Marie Curie actions will therefore be open to all fields of research, which contribute to the objectives of the Community as defined in Article 163 of the EC Treaty, for projects chosen freely by the applicants themselves.
Great initiative is left to the proposers within the objectives of the programme and within general guidelines (including maximum expenditure) concerning the details permitting a better realisation of the objectives.”*
(Work Programme section 2.5.1)

In determining the topic of the research training project, the applicant should consider that a successful application must address the objectives of the action. These objectives targeted are defined within the work programme and are summarised in this document.

Concerning the scope of a proposed training project, the applicant should consider the feasibility of the training project, the demand from potential researchers and the need for the application to demonstrate expertise within all of the fields concerned. Experience from FP5 has shown that some hosts that have provided training within a very narrow and specialised field have found it difficult to attract suitable candidates. The application should present a coherent training project on a common theme.

Note that those research fields with direct military applications are not eligible for funding. Similarly, those fields within the scope of the EURATOM programme (nuclear fission and fusion) may be covered by other actions. However, this does not exclude, for example, fundamental research in the field of nuclear physics.

Research projects with ethical implications may be subject to ethical review and may not be eligible for funding. Examples include: research involving use of personal data whether identified by name or not; some specific aspects of human embryo research; animal welfare etc. Certain subjects are not eligible to be funded in FP6 e.g. research activity aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes; research activity intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (although research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads can be financed).

All proposers are advised to consult:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/ethics/ethics_en.html

3.3 The Concept of Panels

For practical organisational reasons, proposals will be classified for evaluation purposes under eight major areas of science (known as panels): Chemistry; Economics; Social and Human Sciences; Engineering and Information Sciences; Environmental and Geo-Sciences; Life Sciences; Mathematics; and Physics. The applicants choose the panel to which the proposal will be associated at the proposal stage (using the field 'Scientific Panel' on the A1 proposal submission form) and this should be considered as the core discipline. Additional keywords are used to define the other disciplines that are involved. The choice of panel and keywords will guide the Commission in the selection of experts for proposal evaluation. Note that there is no predefined budget allocation among the disciplines in the call for proposals.

This classification into panels is for purely operational purposes and in no instance aims to exclude multidisciplinary proposals. On the contrary, multidisciplinary is encouraged in EST Fellowship applications and is one of the issues specifically drawn to the attention of the evaluator when recognising the quality of the training proposed (see evaluation criteria in section 6 of this document).

3.4 Typical activities of Early Stage Training Fellowships

3.4.1 Training Activities

An Early Stage Training site will normally develop dedicated training programmes that focus upon exploiting the local possibilities available for the participants. For those mono-sites that have identified inter-related partners or for multi-sites, the collective multidisciplinary expertise must also be exploited. Training should be directed towards the needs of the *early-stage researchers* that are within the first 4 years of their career and typically, though not necessarily, undertaking Ph.D. studies (see section 4). Such training activities would include:

- Provision of structured training (e.g. tutoring, lecture courses, teaching) that are available locally (or from another participant in the case of a multi-site);
- Organisation of courses to provide complementary training. Topics of interest would include, for example, project management, presentation skills, language courses, ethics etc.;
- Development of training activities (e.g. workshops, summer schools) that, especially in the case of the multi-sites, may exploit the multidisciplinary aspects of the project and exposure of the participants to different schools of thought;

Likewise, a very important aim of the multi-sites will be to ensure that the participants establish the co-ordination of local training programmes between the participants to maximise added value (e.g. joint syllabus development, joint Ph.D. programmes, etc.).

"This action aims at encouraging mechanisms to substantially improve co-ordination and mutual recognition of research training between the participating organisations and beyond and, at an international level, the quality of the training, thereby enhancing the structuring effect of this action on research training at European level "

(Work Programme section 2.3.1.2)

A **Personal Career Development Plan** will be established in order to aid in the provision of the research training programme that best suits the needs of the *early-stage researchers*:

"Each researcher will establish, together with his/her personal supervisor, a Personal Career Development Plan comprising his/her training needs and scientific objectives and later on report upon the success with which these objectives were met. In this way the researchers will be encouraged to play an active role in shaping their own training programme and professional development."

(Work Programme section 2.3.1.2)

3.4.2 Co-ordinating Activities (for multi-sites only)

Community funding will be provided for such activities in the case of multi-sites with the purpose of establishing and/or strengthening the collaborations between the participants and allowing co-operation at an international level between the partners. Examples of such activities include the organisation of scientific and/or managerial meetings, video conferencing, organisation of web pages for use of the groups within the multi-site, etc.

3.4.3 Visits and Secondments (for multi-sites only)

Normal practice during visits and secondments is that the researcher continues to be appointed by the sending institute, which also pay his/her travel and subsistence expenses (e.g. accommodation). The receiving institution would be expected to pay the expenses associated with welcoming the researcher at its site. Note that secondment periods should only be used for training necessary to the project and should not be used as a means of circumventing the mobility criteria that apply. Moreover, they should not be used if the period spent at the partner represents more than 30% of the total period of recruitment for a fellow:

"In the case of a researcher being seconded to another participant for a period of more than 30 % of the total period of recruitment, he/she will have to be recruited by this other participant."

(Work Programme section 2.3.1.1)

4 Which research organisations can take part?

4.1 How are participants defined?

Participants are defined as organisations in which the members of the research teams are based (represented by the co-ordinator and scientists-in-charge). If selected for funding, the *participants* will be signing a contract with the Commission:

"As a general rule, the participant of the Marie Curie actions is an organisation active in research or research training (universities, national or international research centres or commercial enterprises, etc) implementing Marie Curie actions and signing contracts with the Commission"

Work Programme (section 2.5.2)

In Early Stage Research Training Fellowships, any organisation actively engaged in research or in providing training targeted at the needs of researchers at the early stages of their career, can participate insofar as they make a meaningful contribution (via, for example, access to special apparatus, etc.) to the joint research and training project. This may be of special interest in the case of e.g. industrial/commercial companies that are also targeted by this action.

"Participants in this action are the organisations, selected by the Commission. The selected organisations recruit and host the eligible researchers."

"As an objective, 15 % of the overall budget of this action is to be directed towards the participation of industrial/commercial companies."

Work Programme (section 2.3.1.2)

4.2 What type of research organisations can take part?

According to the Work Programme, many different types of organisations can take part in ESTs:

- National organisations (e.g. universities, research centres etc);
- Commercial enterprises, especially those of small and medium size (SMEs);
- Non-profit or charitable organisations (e.g. NGOs, trusts, etc.);
- International European interest organisations (e.g. CERN, EMBL, etc);
- The Joint Research Centre of the European Commission;

Definitions for some of the above categories of organisations are provided in the Rules for Participation (reference provided in annex V of this document).

4.3 Where can the teams be located?

In the case of mono-sites the teams have to be located in a EU Member or Associated States. For multi-sites, in principle the teams can be located anywhere in the world. However, the conditions under which they may be funded vary.

4.3.1 Teams located in EU Member or Associated States and International European Interest Organisations

Teams located in EU Member or Associated States, as well as in International European Interest Organisations are eligible for funding and take part on the same footing. The EU Member and Associated States are shown below:

Member States	Associated States	
	Candidate Countries	Other States
Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom	Bulgaria, Croatia ¹ , Romania, and Turkey.	Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

The Associated States have signed a memorandum of understanding with the Community under the terms of which they makes a financial contribution towards FP6. Once signed, organisations in these countries are eligible to receive a financial contribution from the Community at the time of contract preparation. The current status of the association agreements can be found under the following:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/iscp/countries.html>

4.3.2 Teams located in Third Countries and International Organisations

For multi-sites, in the case of research teams located in countries outside the Member and Associated States, or in International Organisations, there are special conditions:

“Participation of legal entities from third countries and of international organisations is foreseen under the conditions provided by the rules of participation and by those in the present work programme.....The financing of these entities, particularly those of developing countries and those with emerging economies or in transition, is possible if it is essential to attain the objectives of the action.”

(Work Programme section 2.5.2)

¹ As of September 2004, Croatia had not yet signed a memorandum of understanding with the Community. Please check web link for latest status.

While the participation of such organisations in multi-site ESTs is welcomed and possible, it is clear that the proposal needs to present strong arguments in order for them to be funded. It must be demonstrated that their financing is **essential** to achieve the objectives of the project. This is summarised in the table below that outlines the conditions concerning the participation and funding of organisations depending on their legal status.

		PARTICIPATION	FUNDING
ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES	Candidate countries	As Member States	As Member States
	Other (e.g. Switzerland, Israel)	Above minimum number of Member States or Associated Candidate Countries	
THIRD COUNTRIES	(e.g. Japan, South Africa, Chile etc)	Rightfully	If essential for the Project
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS	European interest (e.g. CERN, ESA, ESO, EMBL etc.)	As Member States	
	Others (e.g. WHO, FAO, ...)	Rightfully	If essential for the Project
OTHERS	Joint Research Centre of the European Commission	As Member States	As Member States

4.4 How large is an EST site and how long does the EST last?

4.4.1 Size

The basic principle regarding the size is that it has to be in accordance with the scope of the research training programme, along with the needs in this respect for the disciplines concerned and management considerations.

The following rules apply to the minimum number of legal entities required for a multi-site EST:

“Participants must be at least 3 hosts in 3 different Member States, or Associated States, of which two must be from Member States or Associated Candidate Countries.”

Examples for EST multi-sites:**A) Not eligible:**

An EST multi-site cannot consist only of teams from Associated States that are not Candidate Countries (e.g. comprising teams from Iceland, Israel and Norway only). There would need to be at least two additional teams from Member States and/or Associated Candidate Countries.

B) Eligible

An EST may be comprised solely of teams from Associated Candidate Countries (e.g. Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey).

4.4.2 Duration

Normally the duration of an EST contract would be up to 4 years (see Work Programme section 2.3.1.2). A shorter duration is permissible, although it would need to be clearly demonstrated in the proposal that the training programme could realistically be completed within this period.

The duration of the actual stays of the researchers is between 3 and 36 months. The contract provides support equivalent to a total number of months training. The hosts are responsible for promoting and advertising the vacancies and selecting the best fellows. The number of fellows and duration of each fellowship has to be compatible with the indicative planning agreed within the contract. The last fellow must have completed the fellowship before the end of the contract.

Example:

A University department could receive a contract to support early stage training in advanced image processing research. The training programme proposes providing four, 3 year long fellowships and six, 9 month long fellowships for post graduate training ($4 \times 36 + 6 \times 9 = 198$ months). The Commission places a contract with the university for 4 years to support 198 fellow months of training. Over the 4 years the university advertises the positions, selects fellows and provides training until all of the financial support has been used. Obviously, all the 3-year fellowships must start within the first year of the contract or they will not be finished within the 4-year contract period.

4.5 How much funding can an EST expect to receive?

The overall budget of an EST will largely depend upon the *early-stage researchers* that are to take part in the project, expressed in terms of *person-months* and the number of participants. During the evaluation of the proposal, the capacity of the host to provide high level training for the number of researchers requested in the application will be fully taken into account and may influence the final scoring.

There are no strict limits to the size of an EST whether mono-site or multi-site although some indications are given:

“As an indication, based on the experiences of the first call for this action in the Sixth Framework Programme, projects have a budget ranging between approximately € 300 000 and € 3 000 000.”

Work Programme (section 2.3.1.2)

The number of months training that could be supported by a contract of this value will vary depending on the geographic location of the host, the personal circumstances of the fellows and if the fellows are expected to be recruited on a fellowship or employment type contract. However depending on the circumstance and as a very approximate guide such a budget could support a total between 140 and 700 researcher months of training.

When looking at the minimum size of an EST site, applicants should consider that the specific objective of EST Fellowships is to provide structured research training and where possible to build long-term collaborations and make a contribution to overcoming fragmentation of European research. This is, in most cases, unlikely to be achieved if the project is limited to an overly small number of fellows. Applications for less than 100 researcher months in the first calls for proposals struggled to achieve high scores in the ‘Relevance to the objectives of the scheme’ and ‘Added value to the community’ criteria and, as a result were usually not successful.

As an orientation on what is considered the most appropriate size for proposals: monosites would be expected to be in the range 140 – 250 researcher months (600,000€ - 1,200,000€) and multi-partner applications in the range 140 – 500 researcher months (600,000€ - 2,000,000€), with proposals that would propose training of more than 500 researcher-months needing exceptional justification.

Example A

The genetics department in a large university with an excellent reputation for training PhD students applies for an EST mono-site. Their intention is to provide training in a very specific area of cytogenetics and offer placements for 1 three-year PhD fellowship and five short stays for stays up to six months.

The size of this EST is too limited and the proposal is unlikely to be favourably considered by the experts due to its very narrow scope in terms of subject and training offered.

Example B

A university proposes a multidisciplinary training programme within an EST mono-site, where several research groups from different faculties (physics, chemistry engineering and medicine) offer a joint, structured training programme on various aspects of nano-technology applied to biomedicine. The training offered combines the expertise in techniques such as spectroscopy, polymer synthesis, mechanical testing and biomedicine among others. As part of its programme it also offers a series of training courses on communication skills, project management and ethics. They are offering opportunities for 4 researchers to carry out PhD (three-year stays) and 10 placements for shorter stays (six-months each).

The size of this EST seems appropriate for a structured training programme in principle, as long as the applicant demonstrates that the university has the capacity to carry out the training proposed.

Example C

A small engineering company proposes a varied training programme in co-operation with a local SME and the large engineering department of a national university, both of which have been collaborators of the company in the past. The consortium is considered as an interrelated mono-site. The university will guarantee the core training in the wider engineering disciplines as well as courses in ethics and project management while the 2 SMEs provide access to state-of-the-art research instrumentation and will also propose courses in communication skills, critical path analysis and financial management. Overall, the training programme is aimed at training two 3-year PhD students and six 12-month Masters students.

Overall the consortium is proposing 144 months of training which is an appropriate size and the project will gain credit in the evaluation for its multidisciplinary nature and strength of the diverse training programme.

Example D

A multi-site application which groups four universities in four countries puts forward a joint programme of training in applied mathematics and combustion. They seek support for two 36 month PhD students at each of the group, with the four universities having signed an agreement of mutual recognition of the qualifications. The young researchers will be expected to spend a period of 3 to 9 months at a site(s) other than their appointing host in order to take advantage of the complementarity of the research discipliners in the various groups. .

Overall the consortium is proposing 288 months of training which is an appropriate size for a multi-site.

Since the allowances to be paid are defined by the Commission, the budget is roughly proportional to the number of researcher-months. It is important to note that those researcher-months that are not used at the end of the standard 4-year contract will not be considered for a Community contribution. Further information on the financial aspects of EST contracts is provided in section 5.

5 Which individual researchers can be funded by an EST?

5.1 Introduction

An essential element of Early Stage Training Fellowships is the appointment of *early-stage researchers* who will take part in the research and training programme. Indeed, this is one of the most important deliverables of the contract. These researchers are defined as follows:

"As a general rule, a researcher is defined as a person active in research, including at a training level, of at least post-graduate or equivalent level."

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

5.2 How are they appointed?

In the case of Early Stage Training Fellowships, the identity of the *early-stage researchers* is usually not known at the time of submitting the proposal. If the EST site is selected for funding by the Commission, the research organisations will be given the freedom to choose the researchers.

The host organisations will advertise the vacant posts internationally using all appropriate methods, including the CORDIS server. The applicants should describe the advertising strategy in the proposal since this will be taken into consideration at the evaluation stage. The implementation of this strategy will be a contractual obligation and the Commission will monitor its correct execution.

"The hosts must indicate in their proposals how they intend, if successfully selected, to widely advertise the fact that they participate in a Marie Curie action and receive Community funding.

The opportunities offered by the host organisations participating in the different indirect actions will be the object of publicity on an international level by host organisations using all appropriate methods (press, posters, websites, internet, information at conferences, etc) and will have to be disseminated through the Researcher's Mobility Portal, the CORDIS-site, as well as other appropriate websites. The advertisement strategy for the vacant posts will be duly appraised in the proposals by the Commission at the time of the evaluation and their effective implementation will be, like the other contractual obligations, verified by the Commission Services at the time of execution of the project.

"

(Work Programme section 2.5.4)

The selection of candidates by the host will be namely on the basis of: aptitude to carry out an individual project, potential for excellence, scientific quality, impact and the benefit of the proposed training to the individual fellow's research career and are expected to carry out the selection based on their usual procedures, but always ensuring the transparency and impartiality of the selection of candidates. The host must apply the principles of equal opportunities in particular between men and women.

"Within the framework of host-driven actions, the eligible researchers will be recruited by the host organisations (who are the best qualified to evaluate the quality and potential of the applicants) that have been selected by the Commission. This selection will be carried out on the basis of procedures normally used by them. These procedures must be open to all potential applicants, transparent and must guarantee an impartial and objective treatment of the applicants after the vacant posts have been advertised internationally. The selection procedures may be supported by individual interviews with the potential applicants, examination of letters of motivation, list of most pertinent publications submitted by the applicants (where applicable).

In this context, the criteria for selection of eligible researchers to be applied by the host organisations will comprise in particular: experience in the field of research and/or, in particular for early stage researchers (...), aptitude of the candidate to carry out his/her individual training/mobility project; potential of excellence, or recognised excellence of the candidate; the impact and benefit of the training to the career of the candidate; scientific quality and in this way its pertinence to his/her individual training/mobility project."

(Work Programme section 2.5.4)

To ensure the objectives of the action are met, a number of additional criteria must be fulfilled by the organisations when recruiting using EST funding. These criteria must be **simultaneously** fulfilled and concern:

- the nationality of the researcher;
- the location and type of the host research organisation;
- the requirement that they normally move country to take up their appointment.

Further details concerning these criteria are provided in the following sections.

5.3 Conditions of the Appointment

An important aspect of the Commission's policy towards researchers is to improve their working and living conditions while being mobile thereby opening up new perspectives for research careers within Europe. The Marie Curie Actions should act as a catalyst in this respect. The host organisations will therefore be required to meet certain conditions when appointing researchers. As described in section 5, researchers will receive country-dependent living allowances along with mobility and travel allowances that depend on their family circumstances. In addition, the provision of maternity/parental leave is envisaged.

When making appointments within an EST, the organisations can opt for an employment contract/fellowship with full social security coverage or on a fixed-amount fellowship with minimum social security, depending on the legal and/or administrative situation of the host organisation and/or the researcher. In both cases, the hosts must ensure that the *researcher* is covered under the social security scheme, which is applied to employed workers within the country of the *contractor*, or under a social security scheme providing an adequate protection. As a rule, fixed-amount fellowships should only be used in those cases where this option is contemplated by national legislation. Where there is a choice, employment contracts should be used in preference to the fixed-amount fellowships.

Fixed-amount fellowships with minimum social security coverage are not employment contracts. Researchers can only be recruited under a fixed-amount fellowship with minimum social security coverage if this is compatible with national legislation of the host organisation. The host organisation must ensure that minimum social security coverage

has been provided to the researcher, not necessarily paid from the Community contribution for the fixed-amount fellowship.

Regarding the duration of the appointment:

“The training opportunities for researchers within the coherent training and mobility scheme provided by the project may range from 3 months to 3 years.”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

In the case of multi-sites, it should enable each researcher to gain most benefit from their involvement in a multinational collaboration (e.g. to attend joint workshops or meetings). One should also be aware that the *early-stage researchers* will have contracts with the research organisations and not directly with the Commission:

“Eligible researchers under these schemes are ‘third party’ beneficiaries of the Marie Curie actions. They do not sign a contract with the Commission, but benefit from the Marie Curie actions and are therefore in this way beneficiaries of Community funds”.

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

5.4 Definition of Research Experience used for the Marie Curie Actions

Under the Marie Curie Mobility Actions, the different career pathways of researchers are taken into account by the adoption of new definitions that attach more importance to their research experience rather than their age.

Once a researcher has obtained a diploma that gives direct access to doctoral studies in the country in which the diploma was obtained (without having to acquire any further qualifications) the ‘clock’ starts ticking. In the event that a researcher has taken a break from their research career for whatever reason (e.g. working outside research, family reasons, etc.), then the clock is stopped and only starts once they resume their research career.

The actual level of experience for a researcher, is **determined at the time of selection** by the EST

“For host-driven actions, the reference deadline for eligibility is the selection of the eligible researcher by the host organisation in the framework of this action.”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

It should also be noted that any limits in terms of experience do not apply *during* the period of appointment itself. In a similar vein, the status of a researcher does not change during an appointment (e.g. if the researcher gains his/her Ph.D. during their appointment as an early-stage researcher).

5.5 Early-stage Researchers

Early-stage researchers (ESR) are appointed within ESTs as beneficiaries of the training programme. They are defined as follows and are typically those researchers who could undertake doctoral studies (but not necessarily):

“Early-stage researchers are defined as researchers in the first 4 years (full-time equivalent) of their research activity, including the period of research training.

The reference period to qualify for an early stage training activity:

- is counted from the diploma giving access to doctoral studies (the degree must entitle the holder to embark on doctoral studies, without having to acquire any further qualifications) in the country in which the diploma was obtained,*
- covers the first 4 years of experience in research or the period until a doctoral degree is obtained, whichever is shorter.*

Persons who have obtained a doctorate are ineligible for the early stage actions, independently of the time taken to acquire it.”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

Eligible researchers:

Example: A researcher has graduated in chemistry in 2004 and would like to start his Ph.D. studies in 2005. He could benefit as a researcher within an EST Fellowship while being registered for his Ph.D. studies.

Example: A researcher has already been working as a researcher in industry for two years since graduating with her first degree in engineering. She would be able to benefit from participation in an EST Fellowship (even without pursuing a Ph.D. degree).

Non-Eligible researchers:

Example: A researcher is in the process of writing up the Ph.D. after 4½ years of research and would like to apply for appointment within an EST Fellowship. While she has not yet gained her doctorate, she would **not** be considered an *early-stage researcher* due to her level of experience.

Example: A researcher has obtained a Ph.D. after 3 years of research and would like to apply for appointment within an EST Fellowship. While he has not yet achieved four years research experience, having obtained a doctorate he would **not** be considered an *early-stage researcher*.

If you find that you do not comply with any of the above criteria it may be because you are at a more advanced stage in your research career. In that case, you may still be eligible to participate in other Marie Curie actions directed at *experienced* researchers.

5.6 Transnational Mobility

To ensure the European character of Early Stage Training, the *early-stage researchers* are normally required to undertake transnational mobility (i.e. move country) when taking up their appointment:

“Researchers must be nationals of a State other than that of the host organisation. At the start of their fellowship/activity, researchers may not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc) in the country of their host organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the reference deadline for eligibility. Short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

Example: A French researcher has moved to Germany for the first time and has been carrying out research there for the last six months. She can be appointed within an EST team in Germany during the next six months.

Special conditions exist for researchers holding dual nationalities:

“In the case of a national holding more than one nationality, he/she will be able to carry out a period of mobility in the country of his /her nationality in which he/she has not resided during the previous 5 years. Short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

Example: A researcher holding both Spanish and British nationalities has just finished her undergraduate studies in Spain. She often visits the UK for holidays but has never worked or studied there. She would therefore be eligible to be appointed to a EST team located in the UK.

5.6.1 Special Conditions for Nationals of the Member States or Associated States

In the case of researchers that are nationals of Member States or Associated States, an exception to the above rule can be granted if they have been active in research in a Third Country for a at least four of the last five years:

“Researchers from Member States or Associated States can, according to the nature of the action, carry out their transnational mobility in all other Member States and all other Associated States. These researchers will be considered as being eligible to benefit from a training or mobility action, including in their country of origin, if they can provide evidence that they have legally resided and have had their principal activity (work, studies, etc) in a third country for at least four of the last five years immediately prior to the reference deadline for eligibility”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

Example: An Italian researcher has recently finished his undergraduate studies in the USA (a total of 4½ years outside the EU Member and Associated States prior to appointment in the EST). He would like to return to Europe and continue a research career. He is eligible and can even be appointed to an Italian team participating in a multi-site EST.

5.6.2 Special Conditions for Nationals of Third Countries

In the case of researchers who are nationals of Third Countries (i.e. those countries outside the EU Member and Associated States), they can be appointed as *early-stage researchers* within EST Fellowships under certain conditions.

(a) Third country Researchers based *outside* the EU and Associated States

At the time of appointment two special conditions are to be checked for the eligibility of the researcher: one concerns the location of the destination country; the other relates to the total number of person months that the fellowship will devote to Third Country researchers:

“Participation and funding of researchers from third countries is foreseen in all of the host-driven mobility schemes....they can not carry out their transnational mobility in third countries. In the case of host-driven actions, a maximum of 30 % of the number of funded researcher-months can be used for third country researchers. This percentage could be exceeded in exceptional cases under the condition that the excess is duly justified as being essential to attain the objectives of the action. For multi-partner contracts, participating organisations must have a common selection policy in order to avoid exceeding this limit.”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

Note that the 30% limit defined above applies to the person-months delivered by the EST Fellowship as a *whole* and for the *whole project duration*. It follows from this that the appointment of Third Country researchers will have to be carefully managed, especially amongst the teams of a multi-site in order to comply with this limit.

Example: A Japanese researcher currently working in Japan would like to be appointed to a EST team in the Netherlands. This is possible assuming that this is within the foreseen 30% envelope of person-months for the EST multi-site as a whole.

Example: A Ukrainian researcher has been carrying out research in Germany for the last two years having previously studied in the Ukraine. She would be eligible to be appointed to a EST team as long as it is located outside Germany and within the foreseen 30% envelope of person-months.

(b) Third country Researchers already based *within* the EU and Associated States

In the case of Third Country researchers who have been already active for at least four years within the Member or Associated States, the following conditions apply:

“For the purpose of the Marie Curie actions, non-nationals from Member States or Associated States having legally resided and having had their main activity (work, studies etc) for at least four of the last five years at the start of their fellowship in Member States/Associated States are treated as nationals of the Member/ State in which they have resided the longest....”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

Such that the researcher is treated, for the purpose of the mobility rules described above, as a national of the country in which he/she has been for the longest period (i.e. he/she is assimilated to that country).

Example: A researcher from South Africa has been working in Europe for a total of seven years having spent 5 years in Germany undertaking undergraduate studies. and subsequently two years in Italy. The researcher would be eligible for appointment within an EST Fellowship but only at teams located outside Germany (assimilated nationality) and Italy (due to the mobility requirement).

5.6.3 International European Interest Organisations

In the case of International European Interest Organisations (e.g. CERN, EMBL, ESO etc), the mobility rules described above do not apply since such an organisation cannot be associated with any one country:

“These mobility rules do not apply to the hosting of eligible researchers by international European interest organisations (...). Eligible researchers may carry out their project in any eligible international organisation, whatever its location.”

“Researchers will have to carry out the project at the premises of a legal entity other than the one in which they carry out their normal activities, or where they have been recruited for less than one year from the date of the reference deadline for eligibility [selection of the eligible researcher by the host organisation.]”

(Work Programme section 2.5.3)

Example: A German researcher is eligible to be appointed to an EST host organisation based at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg, Germany. He/she will not, however, be eligible for a mobility allowance.

Additionally, following the General Conditions of the contract a researcher cannot carry out the project at the same legal entity where he/she has been working for the last 12 months (or more) prior to the appointment:

Direct costs for personnel linked to the activities, where applicable, of a researcher will be considered as eligible if they are additional to those associated with their normal activities.

Their activities will be considered as additional if they are carried out within the framework of the project at the premises of a legal entity other than the one in which they carry out their normal activities, or if they have been recruited by this legal entity for less than one year from the date of the relevant deadline of the proposal

For researchers appointed under Marie Curie Host Fellowships for Early Stage Researchers Training, the reference for the time limit is the date of their appointment under the project.

ANNEX II HRM Monocontractor - General Conditions, II.18 - Direct costs 5.

5.6.4 Summary

The following table summarises the different possibilities for transnational mobility within ESTs in terms of the nationality of the researcher and the location of the research team.

		Nationality of Researcher to be Appointed	
		EU Member/Associated States	Third Countries
Location/ Type of EST Team	EU Member /Associated States or International (European) Organisations	Possible	Within 30% limit of person-months*
	International (European Interest) Organisations	Possible	Within 30% limit of person-months*
	Third Countries	In the case of multi-sites and <u>only if essential for project</u>	Not Possible

*30% limit does not apply if the researcher has been >4 years in EU Member or Associated States

5.7 Definition of the terms ‘Selection’ and ‘Appointment’

The Workprogramme makes it clear that for host-driven actions, the reference deadline for eligibility is the **selection** of the eligible researchers. Nevertheless, in the general conditions of the contract, the ‘**selection**’ of the researchers is linked to the ‘**appointment**’:

To be eligible, each researcher must simultaneously fulfil the (following) criteria at the time of appointment by the contractor concerned in the frame of this project.

ANNEX II HRM Monocontractor - General Conditions, III.3 - Selection of the researchers 2.

In practice of course, it is entirely possible that the selection date (following an interview process for example) could precede the date of appointment (date on which the researcher signs the contract) by days, weeks or even months in some cases. In terms of **all** eligibility criteria however, it is crucial that the young researcher fulfills the eligibility conditions on both the dates of selection and the date of appointment (if different) in order that the associated costs would be eligible under the contract.

Example: A university wishes to appoint a young researcher in the context of an EST contract. The young researcher has three years of full time research experience, no PhD and has already spent 8 months at the institution in the context of an FP5 training site. She would fulfil the eligibility criteria of transnational mobility, and research experience, as long as the university **selects** and **appoints** her within 12 months of her arrival in the host institution.

5.8 Finding your way through the eligibility criteria

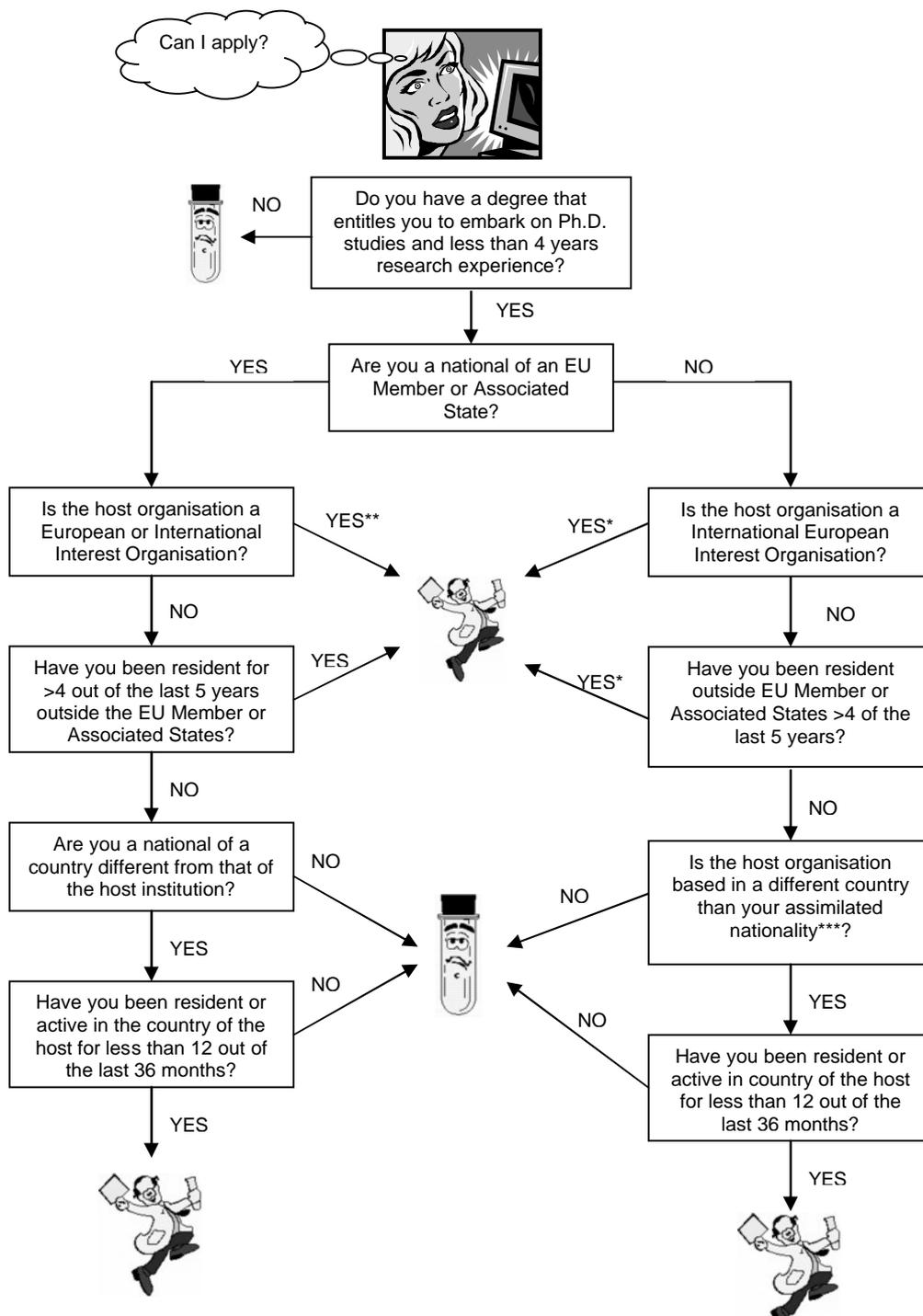
To make it easier for you to determine if an individual researcher might be eligible to be appointed within a EST, the flowchart below has been prepared. Please note that this chart is indicative only and you are always advised to check the text of the Work Programme.

INDICATIVE CONDITIONS FOR APPOINTMENT ON EST FUNDING



You might be eligible

You are probably not eligible



*Within the 30% limit for the number of person-months for Third Country researchers.

**Probably eligible as long as you have been within the institution for less than 12 months at time of appointment.

***The assimilated nationality, refers to the nationality of the EU Member or Associated State in which you have resided the longest during the last 5 years.

6 How is an EST Fellowship financed?

6.1 Introduction

The Community financial contribution for an EST Fellowship will be principally awarded upon the basis of the additional expenses associated with the appointment of the *early-stage researchers* that will benefit from the research training programme. Community financial support is also provided for contributing to the other expenses that benefit the research organisation hosting these researchers. In addition, a contribution towards the overhead and management-related expenses will be provided.

The allowances paid to *early-stage researchers* in FP6 are the Marie Curie rates and allowances defined in Work Programme, common to most of the Marie Curie Actions. Taking into account that the largest amount of the budget must be devoted to these expenses, it follows that overall available Community contribution will be largely defined by the number of researcher-months.

6.2 Basic do's and don'ts

At the beginning of the contract, an initial payment will be made by the Commission services to enable the team(s) to begin work. The team(s) will be required to regularly report on the expenses that have been incurred. Some basic conditions apply regarding the charging of those expenses up to the Community financial contribution:

- they must be **actual, economic and necessary** for the implementation of the project;
- they must be determined in accordance with **the usual accounting principles** of each research organisation;
- they must be incurred **within the duration** of the project, except when otherwise provided for in the contract;
- they must be **recorded in the accounts** of the organisation or, when provided for in the contract in the case of resources made available by third parties on the basis of a prior agreement, in the corresponding accounts of those third parties;
- they must **exclude any indirect taxes, duties, interest**, costs incurred in respect of **another Community project**, and must **not give rise to profit**.

Note that with the exception of the conditions under which the *early-stage researchers* will be appointed and the exclusion of indirect taxes, there will be no pre-defined eligible cost categories. Importance will be placed, however, upon meeting the deliverables as set out in the technical annex of the contract.

6.3 Community contribution & rates

The conditions for funding the activities undertaken by the EST Fellowship in order to attain the project deliverables are defined in the Work Programme, section 2.8.2 (see the table shown on the following page):

Eligible expenses ¹								
Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the researchers ²				Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the host organisations				
- A - Monthly living allowance ³	Transnational mobility B Travel ⁴ C Mobility ⁵ Allowances		- D - Career exploratory allowance ⁶	- E - Contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers	- F - Contribution to the research/ training /transfer of knowledge programme expenses	- G - Management activities (including audit certification)	- H - Contribution to overheads	- I - Other types of eligible expenses / specific conditions
Application of Marie Curie reference rates in Annex I, table (a)	X	X	X	Contribution managed by the hosting organisations for expenses related to the participation of eligible researchers to research and training activities (meetings, conference attendance, training actions, research costs, etc): Following a fixed amount scheme : 250 € per researcher- month for non laboratory based research training projects ; 500 € per researcher-month for laboratory based research training projects	1 – Contribution to the host organisation for the execution of the training project (publication of vacant positions, training actions, teaching material, etc): real expenses with a maximum of 250 € per researcher month <u>Only for multisites :</u> 2 - Contribution to the expenses related to the co-ordination between participants (meetings, conferences, joint training actions, detachment of staff, etc): real expenses with a maximum of 250 €per researcher-month	maximum 3 % of the total Community contribution	10 % of direct costs except for subcontractors	-

¹The following activities are considered necessary by their nature to achieve to objectives of each of the Marie Curie actions and can be the subject of Community funding within the conditions foreseen. These conditions are indicated in general terms in footnotes at the bottom of the pages. Special cases or exceptions applicable for each action are indicated directly in this table.

²The expenses A, B, C and D are for the benefit of the eligible researchers. The expenses E are expenses for the training activities carried out by the researchers.

³Allowance for fellows/month based on reference rates as mentioned in table 1 point 2.8.1.

⁴Travel allowance / fellow / period of 12 months based on the direct distance (as the crow flies) between the location of origin and the host institution of the researcher.

⁵Mobility allowance / month: fixed amount (relocation, family charges, language courses, etc): 800 € to cover supplementary expenses linked to the family situation of the researcher at the time of the recruitment (marriage or equivalent status recognised by national legislation, and/or charge of children) ; 500 € for a researcher without family charges at the time of recruitment. To these amounts a correction factor for the cost of living of the country of execution of the project is applied. This allocation will only be due for researchers doing a transnational mobility.

⁶€2000/fellow: only for fellows selected for stays of at least one year.

6.4 What types of expenses are covered?

According to the Work Programme, the eligible expenses may be broadly divided into:

- Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the researcher;
- Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the host organisations and for the benefit of the researcher.

The financial support for EST Fellowships takes the form of grants covering up to 100% of the budget, comprising the following components:

6.4.1 Expenses for the activities carried out by the researchers

- a monthly living allowance :

This refers to the basic monthly amount to be paid each month to the researcher according to the table in annex I. This is then adjusted, applying a correction factor for the cost of living according to the country in which they will be appointed, as shown in annex II.

The living allowance is a gross Community contribution to the salary costs of the fellow. Consequently, the net salary results from deducting all compulsory social security contributions as well as direct taxes (e.g. income tax) from the gross amounts.

For each eligible researcher, the host organisation can opt between recruiting him/her under an employment contract (including all compulsory deductions under national legislation in the context of the project), or a fixed-amount fellowship.

Researchers can only be recruited under a fixed-amount fellowship if this is compatible with national legislation and if social security is provided. The social security scheme should provide an adequate protection in terms of level and scope and cover the *researcher* in every place of implementation of the *research training activities*. In the case of the multi-sites, where researchers may be seconded for short stays in other partner institutions, the social security provision should also cover the researchers during these periods.

Example of appointment under fixed-amount fellowship:

A host institution, offering early stage training for short periods of 9 months, is located in a country where, according to the national legislation, social security coverage for researchers on short stays includes medical care and maternity-leave but not unemployment or pension benefits. The host institution could reach an agreement with the researcher to appoint him/her under the appropriate legal status with a fixed-amount fellowship.

Host organisations may pay a top up to the eligible researcher in order to complement this contribution.

- a travel allowance:

This refers to an allowance upon taking up employment and yearly thereafter. As shown in annex II, it is based upon the direct distance between the location of origin and the host institution of the researcher. Location of origin: means the place where the researcher was residing or carrying out his/her main activity at the time of the selection by the EST host unless (s)he has resided or carried out his/her main activity for less than 12 months in this location immediately prior to this date. In the latter case, the location of origin is the capital city of the country of his/her nationality. In case of a researcher holding more than one nationality, the location of origin is the capital city of the country where the researcher was residing for the longest period during the last 5 years prior to the relevant deadline for submission of the proposal.

Each fellow is entitled to at least one travel allowance. Fellows with a fellowship between 13-24 months are entitled to 2 travel allowances, whereas those on longer fellowships (25-36 months) will receive 3 travel allowances.

- a mobility allowance:

This is a monthly payment of a fixed amount to cover expenses related to the mobility (relocation, family charges, language courses, etc.). A correction factor for the cost of living of the country of execution of the project is applied (see Annex II). There are two reference amounts depending on the family situation of the researcher at the time of recruitment:

- 800€/month: Researcher with family charges (marriage or equivalent status recognised by national legislation, and/or charge of children.).
- 500€/month: Researcher without family charges.

This allowance is only paid in those cases where there is transnational mobility of the researcher, consequently, a fellow who is carrying out the project in an international organisation located in his/her country of nationality, would not receive a mobility allowance.

- a career exploratory allowance:

One single payment of 2000€/fellow, only for stays of at least one year. This allowance is intended to enable each researcher to help develop their career by e.g. attending job interviews, additional courses, job fairs, etc

- a contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers:

This contribution is managed by the hosting organisation for expenses related to the participation of the researchers in research and training activities (contribution to research related costs, meetings, conference attendance, training actions, etc). It consists of a fixed amount:

- 500€ per researcher-month: for laboratory based research projects
- 250€ per researcher-month: for non-laboratory based research projects

Whether a project is considered laboratory based or not will be determined on the basis of the information contained in the proposal.

NOTE that social security contributions and taxation vary from country to country. In order to obtain an estimation of the actual net allowances for the researchers, it is recommended to consult the host institution and/or the relevant National Contact Point (see Annex V).

6.4.2 Expenses for the activities of the host organisation for the benefit of the researcher

- Contribution to the research/ training programme expenses – this refers to the actual expenses incurred by the host institutions to and is subdivided into the following types of activities:
 - **(1):** to support the organisation and implementation of the training project (publication of positions, teaching material, training activities, etc). Real expenses with a maximum of 250€ per researcher-month.
 - **(2) For multi-sites only:** to support the activities of co-ordination among the participants (joint training actions, meetings, workshops, conferences, expenses due to staff detachment, etc). Real expenses with a maximum of 250€ per researcher-month.
- management costs (including audit certification):

This refers to a maximum of 3% of the Community contribution that will be paid towards the management of the project. This will also cover the cost of audit certification. It will be based upon actual expenses (e.g. towards the salary of a person dedicated to assist with the management of the project, or a contract with an external independent auditor for audit certification). In the case of public or international organisations, this certification may be provided by a competent public official;
- contribution to overheads:

This refers to a flat rate payment of 10% of the direct costs (excluding costs for subcontracts).

The maximum amount of the grant will be fixed in the contract after the negotiation.

6.5 How is the EC contribution determined?

On the basis of the information requested in Part A of the Proposal Submission Forms and, in particular, the distribution of the researcher-months of *early-stage researchers*, the Commission will estimate the maximum Community contribution. If the proposal is selected by the Commission for funding, the Community contribution will be determined more accurately during the negotiations taking into account the anticipated conditions of appointment (e.g. fellowship or employment contract) and recommendations, if any, from the expert evaluators.

It is an intrinsic feature of host-driven actions that the expenses related with the appointment of *early-stage researchers* cannot be accurately calculated in advance. This is because the allowances to be paid depend upon the personal circumstances of the

researcher (e.g. place of origin, family status etc). The level of funding has to be determined with the Commission services on the basis of an average level.

The example below aims to help understand the way the contributions are calculated.

Example:

Application summary

A UK based host organisation proposes to provide early stage training to support three 3 year long PhD programmes (total 108 months) and five 9 month long periods of post graduate training for PhD students recruited from elsewhere (total 45 months). This application proposes to provide a total of 153 months of training.

The fellows on the 9 month stays are expected to be recruited as students, the allowance is not expected to be taxed nor subject to employers' deductions, consequently they will be paid on the basis of a fixed-amount fellowship since their health and social security can be covered by their home organisation during their 9 month stay..

The host intends to recruit the researchers undertaking a 3 year Ph.D. under an employment contract and therefore will be liable to the normal social security contributions, tax, etc. Consequently they will be employed on the basis of the 'employment' rate.

The project is going to be laboratory based.

(a) Expenses for the benefit of the Early-stage Researchers

In order to estimate the budget, it is important to start with an estimate of the expenses associated with the appointment of *early-stage* researchers. The number of person-months to be provided will determine the maximum total Community contribution and the contribution that would be available for other activities such as the research, training and co-ordination.

Referring to the table shown in annex I, the monthly living allowance is calculated according to the level of experience of the researcher and whether the gross amount will be subject to compulsory social security deductions (normally an employment contract) or not (normally a 'fixed-amount fellowship'). In the latter case, the host research organisation must nevertheless ensure that social security cover is provided for the researcher.

When looking at the overall calculations for the above mentioned example:

- Living allowances:

- 108 months (= 9 years), to support the appointment of 3 researchers for a period of 3 years each under employment contracts (30 550€/year):

$$30\,550\ \text{€} \times 9\ \text{years} = 274\,950\ \text{€}$$

- 45 months (3.75 years) to support the appointment of 5 researchers for a period of 9 months each under fixed-amount fellowship (15 275 €/year)

$$15\,275\ \text{€} \times 3.75\ \text{years} = 57\,281\ \text{€}$$

Total Living allowances: 332 231€

- Mobility allowances:

This calculation will always be an estimate since the fellows are unknown at the time of application or of the negotiation. It will depend on the population of researchers at whom the early stage training is targeted. In some scientific areas, where it is common to take up research after a long period devoted to other professional aspects, fellows might be more senior and with more family obligations than in other areas where it is traditional to take up research immediately after graduation. It is therefore difficult to anticipate the family status of early stage researchers who will be recruited by the host. In this example, a good working assumption could be that 15% of the fellows would have family obligations and therefore could be entitled to the higher mobility allowance. Hence:

From the total 153 months of the EST:

Without family obligations (153 X 85% = 130.05 months)

$$500€ \times 130.05 \text{ months} = 65\,025€$$

With family obligations (153 X 15% = 22.95 months)

$$800€ \times 22.95 \text{ months} = 18\,360€$$

Total mobility allowance: 83 385€

correction factor for UK = 112.5%

Total Living allowance + Total Mobility allowance = 415 616€ x 112.5% = 467 568€

- Career exploratory allowance: for fellowships of at least 1 year: $2000€ \times 3 = 6\,000€$
- Travel allowance

As with the mobility allowance this calculation will always be an estimate since the locations of origin of the fellows are unknown at the time of application or of the negotiation. Therefore, the average travel allowance has been estimated at around 750 € / year.

The total number of travel allowances to be paid would be a function of:

- the number of fellows taking up appointment (in this example: 8 fellows)

and

- the yearly payment of the travel allowances for the fellows with longer stays (the 3 fellows with 3 years stays, who would be receiving two additional travel allowance payments each).

Hence in the present example: a total of 14 travel allowances payments would be made.

estimated Total Travel allowance: 14 x 750€ = 10 500€

- Contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers:

Research costs (lab based): $500 \text{ €} \times 153 \text{ fellow-months} = 76\,500 \text{ €}$

**Estimated Total Community Contribution for the activities carried out by the researcher:
560 568 €**

(b) Expenses for the benefit of the Host Institutions

- Contribution to the research/ training programme expenses –

The maximum amount would be 250€ per researcher-month: $250 \text{ €} \times 153 = 38\,250 \text{ €}$

- Management costs & Contribution to overheads

The total Community Contribution is the basis for the calculation of the management costs, whereas to calculate the overheads the total direct costs need to be known.

- 4 Direct costs = Expenses for the activities carried out by the researcher + contribution to the research/ training programme expenses
- 4 Overheads = 10% direct costs
- 4 Total Community Contribution = direct costs + overheads + management costs
- 4 Management costs = 3% Total Community Contribution

The initial step is to calculate the overheads:

The direct costs are: $560\,568 \text{ €} + 38\,250 \text{ €} = 598\,818 \text{ €}$

Since the overheads are maximum 10% of the direct costs:

Overheads = 59 882€

Total Community Contribution = direct costs + overheads + management costs

In this example:

Total Comm. Contr. = $598\,818 \text{ €} + 59\,882 \text{ €} + 3\% \text{ Total Comm. Contr.}$

Hence: Comm. Contr. $658\,700 / 1 - 0.03 = 682\,000 \text{ €}$

Total Maximum Community Contribution = 679 072€

The management costs are maximum 3% of the total Community contribution, hence:

Management costs = 20 372 €

Please note that, with the exception of the overheads, all the expenses related to the activities of the host institutions are paid on the basis of the actual expenses incurred. The above calculations therefore only serve to allow proposers to estimate the scale of activities that could be undertaken assuming, of course, that the host can appoint researchers and provide the necessary amount of training and in terms of person-months.

In summary, for this fictitious EST fellowship:

Activity	Maximum EC Contribution (Euros)
Expenses for early-stage researchers	560 568
Contribution to the research/training programme expenses	38 250
Overhead expenses (10%)	59 882
Management and audit certificate related expenses (3%)	20 372
TOTAL	679 072

A table of basic monthly salaries for researchers including the country coefficients is provided in annex III for the EU Member and Associated States. One must still take into account the mobility and travel allowances when calculating the total expenses. In future, a 'budget estimator' tool will be made available on the Marie Curie web-pages.

EST-multi-partner applications

The example above referred to a mono-partner training site. In the case of an EST multi-partner application there are some other factors that need to be taken into account:

- Living and mobility allowances: the correction factors vary from country to country (see Annex II). This will obviously have direct implications on the contributions towards the living allowances in each of the participants. For example 12 months fellowship in UK would be equivalent to 17 184 € whereas in France it would be equivalent to 15 993 €. The same correction factors would apply to the mobility allowance.
- Contribution to the research/ training programme expenses: EST multi-sites are entitled to a contribution of maximum 250€ per researcher-month (real expenses) to support the activities of co-ordination among the participants

7 How to submit a Proposal and Beyond

7.1 Call for proposals

The call for proposal ref. **FP6-2004-Mobility-2** for **Marie Curie Host Fellowships for Early Stage Research Training** was published on 11 September 2004 (Official Journal reference C 227). The deadline for submission of **outline** proposals is **15 December 2004** at 17.00 (Brussels local time).

Please note that proposals **must be received by the Commission by the specified closing date and time of the call**. No extenuating circumstances, even if outside the control of the proposer, can be taken into account should a proposal arrive after the deadline for receipt.

7.2 Preparing a proposal

In order to prepare a proposal, please download the InfoPack:

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=155

Each InfoPack contains the following three documents that are essential:

- **The Call text** as published in the Official Journal of the European Communities. This includes the list of Actions that are open for proposals, and what are the submission addresses and deadlines for proposal submission.
- **The Guide for Proposers** contains a series of administrative forms (known as Part A) and a free-text description of the project (known as Part B). Detailed instructions are also provided on the proposal submission process.
- **The Current Work Programme of the HRM Activity**. The Work Programme provides a detailed description of the Marie Curie actions, including eligibility and evaluation criteria that applies to proposals.

It is also important to consult the following documents as they elaborate on the evaluation process:

- **The Guidelines on proposal evaluation and project selection procedures (the 'Evaluation Manual')**. This document describes the general principles and procedures that will be used for the evaluation of any FP6 proposals by independent experts.
- **The HRM Activity Guidance Notes for Evaluators**. This describes how the evaluation principles and procedures will apply in the HRM Activity. You may use these Guidelines to check against the specified criteria.

You may also wish to consult the following to gain a complete picture:

- **The brochure 'A Rough Guide to the Marie Curie Actions'**. This brochure provides an overview of all the Marie Curie actions.

- **The brochure ‘The 6th Framework Programme in Brief’.** This brochure gives a user-friendly overview of the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6).
- **The model contract and its annexes.** This specifies the contractual terms and conditions to which the participants will be expected to agree if your proposal is selected for funding.

7.2.1 The Proposal Forms

Both the **outline** (1st stage – deadline 15 December 2004) and the **full** proposal (2nd stage - proposers successful after the 1st stage will be invited to submit full proposals in April 2005) consist of a Part A (common to both stages) and a Part B which differs according to whether the proposal is OUTLINE or FULL.

Part A: A series of administrative forms, which in the case of Early Stage Training Fellowships are reduced to forms **A1**, **A2**, and **A4**. The information in these forms is of great importance since it will be used for the preparation of the contract negotiation phase, for the calculation the Community contribution and for eligibility issues such as the consortium composition in the case of EST multi-sites.

Part B **OUTLINE** Proposal: An 8 page outline proposal addressing two evaluation criteria: B1 - Scientific Quality Of The Research Training Area (weight of 30% of the overall score for Stage 1); and B2 - Quality Of Training Activities (weight of 70% of the overall score for Stage 1).

Part B **FULL** Proposal: The free-text description of the research project. A series of headings and explanatory notes based on the evaluations criteria are proposed for the preparation of part B. The applicant is encouraged to address these issues in a clear, concise fashion. The information given there will be the basis on which the evaluators will referee the proposal, so make sure that it is precise and complete. Proposers are recommended to specify the names of the persons who will be responsible for the training (see sample table overleaf) and provide short CVs and/or a list of recent publications (e.g. 5 most important publications in the last 2 years). This information is intended to allow the expert evaluators to judge accurately the training capacity and experience of the hosts.

Certain sections of Part B have a recommended length in terms of the number of pages. These recommendations are not mandatory, but be aware that the experts evaluators can look with disfavour on proposals which are excessively lengthy, repetitive or padded out with unnecessary or irrelevant material. References to web pages will not be taken into account as part of the proposal during evaluation.

Incomplete proposals will be ineligible and therefore will not be evaluated. To be complete a proposal must include each of the relevant forms for part A as well as the part B.

Table 1: Staff involved in the Early Stage Training Action

Family name	First name	Position (e.g. Prof, technician, etc.)	Full-time equivalent % of time involved during the contract	Type of involvement
Kieslowki	Krzysztof	Prof.	10%	Formal Supervisor
Bier	Susanne	Prof.	10%	Formal Supervisor
Kael	Pauline	Prof.	10%	Supervision of Ph.D. students/lecturing
Moretti	Nanni	Dr	25%	Supervision/lecturing in communication
Jørgensen	Bodil	Dr	10%	Co-ordination of training activities
Kaminski	Janusz	Dr	25%	Day-to-day practical research guidance
Jensen	Anders Thomas	Technician	30%	Day-to-day technical guidance

Table 2: List of ongoing or planning contracts/ for training of researchers involving the same staff members/group

Funding body (e.g. EC, national, etc)	Contract Number (if EC-funded)	Number of staff members involved in the training	Number of researchers trained by the action	Average duration of the training (months)
EC	ERB.....	4	10	36 (Ph.D. Students)
National Research Council	-	10	50	30 x 12 months (MSc) 20 x Ph.D. students

7.2.2 Accuracy of Information

No original signatures are requested at the proposal stage. It is up to the proposers to ensure that all the information given is precise and correct. This information will be used in the eligibility checks and will be the basis for the evaluation and for the contract, if the proposal is selected. The applicants will be solely responsible for the accuracy of the information given in the proposal.

7.3 Methods for submission

Proposals for this call are invited to be submitted only as an electronic proposal via the web-based Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS), which is reached **via the CORDIS call page** to prepare and submit your proposal online.

Details concerning electronic submission are given in the Guide for Proposers. Note that other methods of submission (e.g. via email or fax) will not be accepted.

It has the advantage of allowing the proposer to submit a proposal right up to the deadline, facilitating preparation particularly where more than one partner is involved.

When using the electronic submission system there is a requirement to request a login and password, which is then sent to proposers by post (this may take several days).

Preregistration is mandatory prior to the first stage of submission. This is particularly important since neither part A nor part B of the first stage submission requests details (such as the name, department/faculty, institution, and country) of the partners involved in a proposal. These details are essential to the Commission to avoid potential conflicts of interest in the choice of evaluation experts. Full details of the preregistration process are given on the CORDIS website.

7.3.1 Multiple Submissions

In the case of successive submissions of a proposal, the Commission will examine the last version received before the closure date and time specified in the call concerned.

In case of multiple proposal submission in all other cases, including proposed participation in more than one proposal submitted in the same evaluation round of one action or in other actions open at the same time, the participants will have to demonstrate clearly the capacity to participate in those proposals simultaneously (in terms of research staff, infrastructure and management).

7.4 Evaluation of proposals

7.4.1 General Principles

The fundamental principles governing the evaluation of proposals are:

- **transparency:** a clear framework will be provided for researchers preparing proposals, for experts evaluating proposals, and for the Commission services themselves;
- **fair treatment:** all proposals will be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate, and of the identity of the applicants;
- **impartiality:** all eligible proposals will be treated impartially on their merits, subject to an independent peer review;
- **efficiency and speed:** the procedures must be designed to be as rapid as possible, commensurate with maintaining the quality of the evaluation and respecting the legal framework within which the specific programme is managed;
- **ethical considerations:** any proposal which contravenes fundamental ethical principles (particularly those set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union), or which does not fulfil the conditions set out in the work programme or in the call for proposals, may be excluded from the evaluation and selection process at any time.

Evaluation will be conducted by the Commission services with the assistance of independent experts according to the principles of peer review, following the procedures of the Evaluation Manual, and applying the criteria given to them in the Human Resources and Mobility Work Programme.

Proposals that involve ethical issues will go through an ethical review prior to the contract negotiation. This may raise issues, which will be included in the negotiations.

7.4.2 Evaluation criteria

In order to determine the extent to which a proposal addresses the objectives of an action, independent experts are provided with a set of criteria to which marks are attributed. The criteria are listed in Annex Mob-B of the Work Programme and reproduced below.

Outline Proposal

In the first stage of evaluation the outline proposal addresses only the criteria B1 (Scientific Quality of Project or Research Training Area) and B2 (Quality of the Training Activities). These are weighted 30% and 70% respectively.

Full Proposal

In the second stage of evaluation it is important to ensure that the Part B of the Proposal Submission Forms addresses all blocks of criteria.

In the following table, the main evaluation criteria are shown. Each proposal will be evaluated by several independent experts who will mark each criterion on a scale of 0 to 5 points. Once a consensus has been reached among the evaluators, the following procedure will be applied:

- For certain criteria, the consensus mark will be subject to a minimum threshold to ensure the excellence of the proposal in terms of the scientific quality of the proposed project, the quality of the training and management and feasibility;
- Each mark will then be weighted to reflect the relative importance of each criterion taking into account the objectives of the action;

- The overall score is subsequently determined by the sum of the weighted marks to which a threshold of 70% will then be applied.

Any proposal for which the consensus score of the expert evaluators falls below any of the above thresholds will be automatically excluded from funding.

HRM evaluation criterion	Specific questions to be posed to evaluators	Threshold mark (0-5)	Weighting (%)
Scientific Quality of Project or Research Training Area	Scientific/technological quality of the training area. Timeliness and relevance of the research training area. Research methodology including any interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary aspects of the proposal. Originality and innovative nature of the training area.	3	10 <i>(30% in stage 1: outline proposal)</i>
Quality of the Training Activities	Quality of the training programme including complementary training offered. Match and appropriateness of the proposed training for the targeted researchers. Benefit to the researchers of the training in the relevant field. Benefit to the researchers and host from new collaborations. Mutual recognition of the training acquired by multipartner hosts (where appropriate).	4	15 <i>(70% in stage 1: outline proposal)</i>
Quality/Capacity of the Host or Partnership	Quality of the group/supervisors, and capacity of the hosts to provide mentoring/tutoring, specifically in early stage research training. Quality of infrastructure/facilities. Relevance of partnership composition for proposal objectives (where relevant). Potential to reinforce the training capacities of the host. Quality of international collaborations.	-	25
Management and Feasibility	Practical arrangements for the implementation and management of the training, and where relevant between partners. Recruitment strategy, including timetable, equal opportunity policy, etc. Appropriate size of requested of training project with regard to the training capacity of the host.	3	15
Added value and relevance to objectives	Structuring effects at the European level and if relevant extent to which other European policy objectives are met.. Contribution to international recognition of research training and diploma recognition. Match to the demand for researchers in the particular field, and contribution to gender balance. Extent to which other objectives of European policies and actions are met (e.g. structuring the European Research Area; attractiveness of science; European competitiveness; intersectorial exchanges; promoting women in science; cohesion and regional policy).	-	35

7.4.3 Ranking of proposals

Stage 1: Outline Proposal

As outlined in section 2.2 *How does it work*, the outline proposals will be ranked according to the overall scores of the proposals that are above the criteria thresholds. An Evaluation Summary Report will be prepared for each proposal, a copy of which will be sent to the proposer. The Commission will then invite the submission of a number of full proposals equivalent to 250% of the available budget.

Stage 2: Full Proposal

Based on the overall scores of the proposals that are above the thresholds, the experts will draw-up a list of proposals placed in order of merit for consideration by the Commission. An Evaluation Summary Report will be prepared for each proposal, a copy of which will be sent to the proposer.

On the basis of the above and taking into account the available budget, the Commission will draw-up a priority list of those proposals for immediate negotiation. In addition, a reserve list will be compiled consisting of those proposals that might also enter into negotiations if budget becomes available (e.g. following withdrawal of proposals etc.).

The remaining proposals that attain all the thresholds but for which no funding is available will be rejected for budgetary reasons.

7.5 Contract negotiations

If the proposal has been successful in this evaluation procedure and has been retained by the Commission, proposers will be invited to enter into contract negotiations. During this phase, all the necessary financial and technical information will be collected in order to prepare the contract and to define the implementation of the scientific and training programme in terms of contractual deliverables. The maximum financial contribution from the Community will also be determined. Comments from the experts that arose during the evaluation may also be taken into account at this stage.

In the case of EST multi-sites, the participants may wish to complete a consortium agreement to address internal issues, such as intellectual property rights, distribution of overheads etc. However, this agreement is optional.

Assuming that the negotiations are successfully concluded, a formal Commission Decision approving the funding will be made and the proposer informed accordingly. A contract is subsequently prepared and sent to the co-ordinator for signature. The contract enters into force following subsequent signature by the Commission. An initial payment can then be made to the co-ordinator, which in the case of the EST multi-sites is then distributed to the other teams once they have, in turn, signed the contract.

In case of an EST mono-partner with inter-related groups, the Commission signs a contract only with the co-ordinator of these groups who will be fully responsible for the execution of the project across all the inter-related groups, including those that do not belong to the same legal entity as the co-ordinator.

A contract is subsequently prepared and sent to the host institution for signature. Once the signed contract is returned and signed by the Commission, the host proceeds to advertise the vacant posts and subsequently select the candidates. The selected researcher then signs an **agreement** with the host.

7.6. Key aspects of the host-researcher agreement.

The agreement between the host and the researcher shall determine, in accordance with the contract, the conditions for implementing the research training activities and the respective rights and obligations of the researcher and the contractor. It must indicate the amounts that s/he is entitled to receive, the conditions of implementation of the project, the law applicable to the agreement, the social security coverage among other issues (see section 5.4.1). More details will be given in the 'Specific Provisions' of the contracts, accessible via the Marie Curie Actions homepage. Researchers are strongly encouraged to carefully read these provisions and check that their agreements comply with the rules.

Annexed to the agreement there shall be a Personal Career Development Plan that should have been previously established by the fellow and his/her supervisor. This Plan comprises the fellow's training needs and scientific objectives as well as a description of all activities foreseen as part of the fellowship specific training/career development at the host. This Career Development Plan will be part of the follow up at the different reporting stages.

7.6.1. Maternity/parental leave

The Commission must be informed at the earliest opportunity of interruptions of fellows' stays and in all cases prior to their commencement.

Maternity leave

In cases of maternity, contracts will be suspended on request. In all cases, the relevant national regulations applying for maternity leave should be followed. Usually the financial part is covered by social security ('*mutuelle*', medical insurance, etc.) of the relevant country.

Parental leave

Contract suspension following requests for parental leave is normally possible if this is a legal right in the host country. If parental leave is not a legal right in the host country (but, for example, an option for the host on a voluntary basis), contracts can be suspended if the project co-ordinator confirms that the suspension does not have a negative impact on the execution of the project. Suspensions should not however exceed 6 months, except if this is a legal right in the host country.

7.6.2 Split Stays

These can be taken into consideration if they are justified for personal reasons or if they are beneficial for the training project. In no case they may interfere with the development of the project. The possibility must be clearly addressed in the proposal and integrated in the work plan.

7.6.3 Part-time work

In principle, fellows must work full-time on their training project. Exceptionally, part-time work and the corresponding extension of the project duration can be accepted for family reasons if this does not interfere with the execution of the project. Under no circumstances can an increase of the Community Contribution be contemplated.

7.7 Where to obtain further help

In the event that you have a question that has not been addressed in this document, you are invited to contact the Marie Curie Actions helpdesk using the following email address:

rtd-mariecurie-actions@cec.eu.int

We will endeavour to answer your questions as rapidly as possible.

Annex I: Definitions of the Allowances

(a) Basic Living Allowance

For each eligible researcher, the host organisation can opt between recruiting him/her under an employment contract or a fixed-amount fellowship.

Categories	A: Researchers recruited under an employment contract/ fellowship with full social security coverage (€/year) ¹	B: Researchers receiving a fixed-amount fellowship with minimum social security coverage (€/year) ²
Early stage researchers (<4 years experience)	30 550	15 275

¹ These monthly allowances include all compulsory deductions under national applicable legislation.

² Researchers can only be appointed under a fixed-amount fellowship if this is compatible with national legislation and if social security is provided.

(b) Travel Allowance

Travel Rate	Distance ¹ (km)	Fixed-amount contribution (€)
TR_1	< 500	250
TR_2	500 – 1.000	500
TR_3	1.000 – 1.500	750
TR_4	1.500 – 2.500	1 000
TR_5	2.500 – 5.000	1 500
TR_6	5.000 – 10.000	2 000
TR_7	>10.000	2 500

¹ Direct distance (as the crow flies) based on latitude and longitude between the two locations.

(c) Mobility Allowance

- 800€ per person-month for a researcher with family obligations (i.e. married or has an equivalent status as recognised by the national legislation of the country in which the host is located and/or has charge of children).
- 500€ per person-month for a researcher with no family obligations
- No mobility allowance is paid to researchers that have not undertaken physical transnational mobility (e.g. for those researchers working in an International Organisation in their country of origin).

Annex II: Correction Coefficients ^{1 2}

Austria	104	Belgium	100	Denmark	129,1	Finland	115,9	France	104,7
Germany	103,8	Greece	87,6	Ireland	108,2	Italy	99,3	Luxembourg	100
Netherlands	103,9	Portugal	88,7	Spain	93,7	Sweden	110,7	United Kingdom	112,5
Albania	97,3	Angola	115,9	Argentina	129,4	Australia	93,9	Bangladesh	77,9
Barbados	142,5	Belize	103,2	Benin	88,4	Bolivia	74,3	Bosnia and Herzegovina	87,5
Botswana	55,4	Brazil	82,4	Bulgaria	72,1	Burkina Faso	78,5	Cameroon	96,1
Canada	84,5	Cape Verde	75,6	Central African Republic	109,8	Chad	112,5	Chile	86,2
China	107,3	Colombia	82,9	Congo	103,7	Costa Rica	104,7	Côte d'Ivoire	106,1
Croatia	97,3	Cyprus	95,1	Czech Republic	92	Democratic Rep. of the Congo	144,9	Djibouti	141,8
Dominican Republic	92,4	Egypt	73,4	Equatorial Guinea	95,8	Eritrea	46,3	Estonia	74,3
Ethiopia	80,2	Fiji	71,1	FYROM	77,5	Gabon	116,1	Georgia	111,2
Ghana	89,5	Guatemala	93,8	Guinea	87,1	Guinea-Bissau	132,2	Guyana	70,7
Haiti	98,4	Hong Kong	121,9	Hungary	69	India	61,2	Indonesia	88,5
Israel	121,6	Jamaica	126,4	Japan	161,3	Jordan	99,2	Kazakhstan	117,9
Kenya	98,5	Latvia	80,7	Lebanon	110,9	Lesotho	44,1	Lithuania	76,6
Madagascar	96,1	Malawi	105	Mali	86,6	Malta	103	Mauritania	72,8
Mauritius	84,5	Mexico	102,4	Morocco	89,6	Mozambique	81,7	Namibia	48,4
Netherlands Antilles	121	New Caledonia	122,2	Nicaragua	99,4	Niger	87,7	Nigeria	102,7
Norway	134,2	Pakistan	59,3	Papua New Guinea	68,3	Peru	112,4	Philippines	68,7
Poland	88,7	Romania	55,1	Russia	133,6	São Tomé and Príncipe	74,4	Senegal	81,5
Slovakia	68,8	Slovenia	76,4	Solomon Islands	97,2	South Africa	41,9	South Korea	108,3
Sri Lanka	77,8	Sudan	48	Suriname	81,5	Swaziland	42,3	Switzerland	124,8
Syria	108,4	Tanzania	80,9	Thailand	70,9	The Comoros	103,3	The Gambia	60,5
Togo	96,3	Tonga	72,7	Trinidad and Tobago	90,7	Tunisia	83,6	Turkey	81,3
Uganda	99,2	Ukraine	123,9	United States	132,5	Uruguay	109,3	Vanuatu	121,9
Venezuela	115,6	Vietnam	68,9	West Bank and Gaza Strip	112,9	Serbia and Montenegro	63,6	Zambia	66
Zimbabwe	88,5								

¹ These rates are based on the correction coefficients used for EC civil servants working in these countries.

² For those countries where the correction coefficient is not available (not indicated in the table), the Commission will decide on a case by case basis.

Annex III: Consolidated Tables of the Basic Monthly Living Allowance

Please note that the following table provides the basic monthly allowance for researchers but does not include additional allowances for mobility and travel allowances. These allowances represent the Community Contribution to salary costs and are as such gross amounts. Consequently, the net salary results from deducting all compulsory social security contributions as well as direct taxes (e.g. income tax) from the gross amounts.

	A: 'Employment contract' (€/month)	B: 'Fixed-amount Fellowship' (€/month)
Country	Early-stage researchers (<4 years experience)	Early stage researchers (< 4 years experience)
Austria	2648	1324
Belgium	2546	1273
Bulgaria	1836	918
Cyprus	2421	1211
Czech Republic	2342	1171
Denmark	3287	1644
Estonia	1892	946
Finland	2951	1476
France	2665	1333
Germany	2643	1322
Greece	2230	1115
Hungary	1757	879
Ireland	2755	1378
Israel	3096	1548
Italy	2528	1264
Latvia	2054	1027
Lithuania	1950	975
Luxembourg	2546	1273
Netherlands	2645	1323
Norway	3417	1709
Poland	2258	1129
Portugal	2258	1129
Romania	1403	702
Slovakia	1752	876
Slovenia	1945	973
Spain	2385	1193
Sweden	2818	1409
Turkey	2070	1035
United Kingdom	2864	1432

Note that social security contributions and taxation vary from country to country. In order to obtain an estimation of the actual net allowances for the researchers, it is recommended to consult the host institution and/or the relevant National Contact Point (see Annex V).

Annex IV: The pan-European Researcher's Mobility Portal

(<http://europa.eu.int/eracareers>)

On line since July 2003, the Portal aims to create a more favourable environment for career development opportunities for researchers in the European Research Area by providing the necessary structured information. The Portal provides access through links to a selection of international, European, national, regional and sectoral web resources covering general information about research fellowships and grants, research job opportunities published by different actors of the Research community (universities, industries, research organisations, foundations etc...), practical information about administrative and legal issues when moving from one country to another, as well as up to-date information about cultural and family-related aspects (housing, schooling, day-care, language courses, etc..).

The Portal also provides general information about research policies relevant to the career development of researchers in Europe. Furthermore, it offers research organisations the opportunity to put research job vacancies, and offers researchers the possibility to put their CVs on the Researcher's Mobility Databases, (the service is free of charge). Researchers will also have free access through the Portal to a Europe wide customised assistance service offered by the **European Network of Mobility Centres** to be launched in mid 2004. These Centres will assist researchers in all matters related to their professional and daily lives, including practical information on housing, schooling, day-care or language courses.

Annex V: Bibliography

Information on Early Stage Research Training Fellowships

Under the fifth Framework Programme (FP5)	http://www.cordis.lu/improving/fellowships/home.htm
Under the sixth Framework Programme (FP6)	http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/action/training_en.html

Legal decisions

Decision on the Framework Programme	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/decision/
Rules of Participation in FP6	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/participationrules/
Specific decision 'Structuring the European Research Area'	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/specificprogrammes/

Information on Marie Curie Actions

InfoPacks (including the Guide for Proposers and the HRM Work Programme)	http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=155
Brochure 'A rough guide to the Marie Curie Actions'	http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/information/publications_en.html
HRM Guidelines for Evaluators	http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/pdf/guidance_evaluators.pdf http://www.cordis.lu/calls/mariecurie-actions/

Supporting information

Brochure 'The Sixth Framework Programme in Brief'	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/inbrief/
CORDIS FP6 service	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/
National Contact Points	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/ncps/
Information Days and other events	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/events/
IPR helpdesk	http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org
CORDIS partner search facility	http://partners-service.cordis.lu/
Ethical Issues and Rules	http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/ethics/ethics_en.html
International co-operation	http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html (general site) and www.cordis.lu/fp6/inco/
Science and Society action plan	http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/action-plan/action-plan_en.html and http://www.cordis.lu/rtd2002/science-society/library.htm
List of Countries associated to FP6	http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/iscp/countries.html

Contractual information

Consortium agreement checklist	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/consortiumchecklist/
Contract preparation forms	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/contractpreparation/
Model contracts	http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/contracts/