Disclaimer: This is the template required for submitting a proposal to the IRIS Postdoctoral COFUND call. It must be prepared and submitted as a PDF file via the submission platform ([Apply here](https://iris-cofund.ulb.be/login)).

**All instructions in blue should be deleted from your proposal!**

**PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Proposals must respect the following minimum standards:

* *A* ***minimum font size of 11 points****, except for the* ***Gantt chart*** *and tables where the* ***minimum font size is 8 points in Times New Roman,*** *Single line spacing, A4 page size*
* ***The margins size cannot be changed*** *(top, bottom, left, right), they are set to the minimum 1.5 cm*
* *Any tables or figures must be legible in black and white if printed.*
* *Hyperlinks will not be accessed by the evaluators. Sufficient information must be provided in the proposal.*
* *Maximum 10 pages for the proposal, including references*

à *the submission document is an 11-page PDF file (cover page + 10-page proposal)*

* ***The titles, subtitles and page numbering in the footer cannot be changed***
* ***The header cannot be changed****, except to add your last name and project acronym (compulsory) – double click in the header space to access the text box.*
* *Must be written in English*

**Literature references** (minimum font size 8) should be added as footnotes and will count towards the page limit. Please include the URL whenever possible, however, links cannot be used to extend the proposal beyond the page limit. Evaluators will be instructed to ignore any hyperlinks other than those that provide access to references. It is recommended to highlight your name in the references (underlined, bold).

Applicants are free to decide on the page allocation between the sections, but the titles and subtitles of subsections cannot be changed. It is the responsibility of the applicant to verify that the submitted PDF documents are readable and are within the page limit.

Please **read the Guide for Applicants and the Evaluation Criteria** as these will assist in preparing a strong proposal. Applicants are required to read carefully and comply with the instructions. Proposals exceeding the 10-page limit or that do not comply with the instructions will be declared ineligible. The uploaded PDF document should contain one (1) cover page and the 10-page proposal.

Complete the table below (max 1 page) and delete all other instructions on this page. This page will not count towards the 10-page limit.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicant first name and last name |  |
| Project acronym |  |
| Title of the project | The title should be brief, informative, understandable to a reader with a general scientific background and suitable for public dissemination |
| Abstract | Maximum 2500 characters including spaces |
| Societal challenges | List the titles of the societal challenges addressed in this project (minimum one) |
| Keywords (MSCA level 1) | Provide the 3 to 5 level 1 keywords entered into the application system, ([link to keyword document](https://rea.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-10/MSCA%20Keywords.pdf)) |

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* Proposal page count starts on the next page \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

**Research and Training Proposal**

1. **EXCELLENCE**
   1. **Scientific quality of the research project**
      1. **State-of-the-art**

Provide an introduction, discuss the state-of-the-art, and give a brief overview of the project. Mention any novelty brought by the research proposal, its originality in relation to the state of the art, and the relevance of the project’s ambition. Outline interdisciplinary aspects. Indicate the societal challenge(s) addressed by this proposal.

* + 1. **Research questions**

Indicate the overarching and specific research questions or objectives that the planned research proposal aims to address.

Based on the state-of-the-art presented above, describe the proposed research questions, focusing on:

*What are the societal challenges to be investigated and why are they relevant to(one or more) of the Brussels Capital Region challenges? [link to* [*The Brussels Innovation Plan*](https://iris-cofund.eu/storage/files/autotranslated-fr-to-en-innoviris-plan-regional-innovation.pdf)*]*

*Are these objectives measurable and realistically achievable?*

* 1. **Methodology**

Discuss the research methods and approach, highlighting the type of research, the innovation activities and the interdisciplinary methodological approach. Specify the points of view and methods to be adopted? Make sure the methods are appropriate, complete and described in sufficient detail.

* 1. **Gender and diversity aspects**

Discuss the gender dimension and relevant diversity aspects in the research content, (see <https://rea.ec.europa.eu/gender-eu-research-and-innovation_en>). The gender dimension and other diversity aspects relevant for the research proposal should be addressed as an integral part of the proposal to ensure the highest level of scientific quality.

* 1. **Open science practices**

Discuss the open science practices anticipated throughout the project life cycle <https://rea.ec.europa.eu/open-science_en#open-science-in-horizon-europe>

* 1. **Qualifications and Training needs of the researcher: Training programme in an academic and, if relevant, non-academic environment**

Outline how a two-way transfer of knowledge will occur between the researcher and the host institution(s):

* *Explain what new knowledge the experienced researcher will gain during the fellowship at the hosting organisation(s) and how it will be acquired.*
* *Outline the previously acquired knowledge and skills that the researcher will transfer to the host organisation(s).*

Researchers should **demonstrate** how their existing professional experience, talents and the proposed research will contribute to their development as independent/mature researchers **during the fellowship**. They should also highlight how they have the potential to bring the project to a successful completion. Researchers should explain the new competences and skills that will be acquired and how these competencies and skills relate to the researcher’s existing professional experience.

Describe the project’s potential for intersectoral collaboration with non-academic partners (if relevant). Describe the training that will be offered. Typical **training activities** in postdoctoral fellowships may include:

* *Training-through-research by the means of an individual personalised project, under the guidance of the supervisor and co-supervisor, and other members of the research staff of the host organisation(s)*
* *Hands-on training activities for developing scientific skills (new techniques, instruments, methodologies, ... ) and transferable skills (entrepreneurship, proposal preparation, patent applications, management of IPR, project management, task coordination, supervising and monitoring, exploitation of research results, open science practices, ...)*
* *Inter-sectoral or interdisciplinary transfer of knowledge (e.g., through secondments), if relevant*
* *Communication, dissemination and outreach activities*

Make sure that the proposed training programme is complete, justified by the needs of the project and appropriate with regards to the existing competences of the candidate.

A **Career Development Plan (CDP) should not be included in the proposal**, but will be part of the project's implementation in line with the [European Charter for Researchers](https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/hrexcellenceaward/european-charter-researchers). A CDP is different from this “Training Programme” section as a CDP targets a longer-term vision of the researcher’s career; “Training programme” in this section should describe the training that the researcher intends to undertake during the IRIS fellowship.

1. **IMPACT**
   1. **Expected impact of the project on the researcher’s career**

Explain the expected impact of the planned research and training (i.e., the added value of the fellowship) on the future career prospects of the postdoctoral researcher **after the fellowship**. For instance, indicate to what extent the new competences acquired during the fellowship will improve the knowledge of the postdoctoral fellow/host institutes after the fellowship finishes.

Outline clearly the career goals of the researcher and how the planned research and training are likely to contribute to the achievement of these goals. Focus on how the new competences and skills can make the researcher more successful in their long-term career whether within or outside academia.

* 1. **Expected impact for society**

Explain the contribution that the planned research project is expected to have for society, specific stakeholders or on any other societal dimension. Outline clearly how the new acquired competences , including those obtained in any secondments, increase the impact of the researcher’s future activity on European Society and any benefits at the EU level, involving stakeholders and end-users.

* 1. **Expected impact on the state-of-the-art of research**

Explain the originality and innovative aspects of the planned research as well as the contribution that the project is expected to make to advancements within the research field. Describe any novel concepts, approaches or methods that will be implemented.

* 1. **Dissemination, communication and exploitation activities**

Describe how the new knowledge generated by the project will be disseminated, communicated and exploited. Be specific and realistic with the timeline, resources and your experience. Identify interdisciplinary events. Discuss the strategy for targeting different audiences, such as peers and key stakeholders (e.g., the scientific community, industry, professional organisations, policy makers, citizens, etc.). Describe potential commercialisation, if applicable, and how intellectual property rights will be dealt with, where relevant.

Demonstrate how the planned public engagement activities contribute to engaging society and creating awareness of the performed research. Demonstrate how both the research and results will be communicated to the citizens to be understood by non-specialists.

The type of outreach activities could range from an Internet presence, press articles and participating in European Researchers' Night events to presenting science, research and innovation activities to citizens, including to students from primary and secondary schools or universities to develop their interest in research careers.

* Dissemination of results include:
* *Scientific papers, other publications,*
* *Participation in international conferences,*
* *Open access*

Communication of results include:

* *Outreach activities for the general public, including students,*
* *Communication via newsletters, popular press etc*
* *Online presence, social media*

Exploitation of results include:

* *Plan for protection of results (Intellectual Property Rights),*
* *Patents,*
* *Strategy for exploitation*

For more details refer to the "[Communication, dissemination and exploitation](https://rea.ec.europa.eu/publications/communication-dissemination-exploitation-what-difference-and-why-they-all-matter_en)’ publication from the European Research Executive Agency.

1. **IMPLEMENTATION**
   1. **Work plan**

Describe the work plan (including **work packages (WP),** **deliverables** **(D)** and **milestones (M)**), the interaction between the various tasks, and the mobilised resources that will ensure the research and training objectives will be reached. There is no right or wrong number or structure of WPs, as these depend on the nature of the work

A **deliverable** is a distinct tangible output of the project (e.g. a report, a software, a prototype, a publication, etc.), meaningful in terms of the project’s overall objectives and may be a report, a document, a technical diagram, software, etc. Deliverable numbers should be ordered according to delivery dates. Use the numbering convention <WP number>.<number of deliverable within that WP>. For example, deliverable 4.2 would be the second deliverable from work package 4.

**Milestones** are control points in the project that help to chart and monitor progress. Milestones may correspond to the completion of a key deliverable, allowing the next phase of the work to begin. They may also be needed at intermediary points so that, if problems have arisen, corrective measures can be taken. A milestone may be a critical decision point in the project where, for example, the researcher must decide which of several technologies to adopt for further development.

**Secondments** **(S**) are entirely optional, and if planned can also take place in Brussels. S are research or training visits to another academic or non-academic organisation offering expertise that is not present in the home and/or co-supervisor research groups. A secondment must be meaningful, justified and helpful to achieve the objectives of the project. The maximum duration of secondment(s) must not exceed 6 months. The organisation of a secondment must be described in detail (date, place, reason, etc.). If a secondment is necessary but the organisation is not known to the applicant by the date of the deadline, describe the expertise that would be covered by the secondment and the IRIS Project Management team will assist you in finding the appropriate organisation, if your project is funded.

Explain why the number of months planned and requested for the researcher (and corresponding to the project duration) is appropriate in relation to the proposed activities. Pay attention to the coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources, and be clear about how the supervision and resources of the research group will contribute to the feasibility of the work plan.

This subsection is not only technical - it should also address organizational considerations. It should show that the researcher has a well-conceived plan to achieve the that the temporal planning and management are adequate and that resources are well distributed..

A **GANTT chart** must be included in this section listing the following:

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

The schedule should be in terms of number of months or trimesters or semesters elapsed from the start of the fellowship. The GANTT chart counts towards the 10-page limit, font-size 9 can be used.

An indicative example of a Gantt chart is provided below; candidates are welcome to adapt as needed.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Month | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | … | 29 | 30 |
| *Research* | ***Work Package 1*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | M1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Task 1* |  |  |  |  | D1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Task 2* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | D2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Work Package 2*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | M2 |  |  |  | M2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Task 3* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | D3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Task 4* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | D4 |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Task 5* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | D5 |  |  |  |  |
| *Training* | *Courses (CO)* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Secondment (S)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Conference (C)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| *Workshop (W)* |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Impact* | *Dissemination (DM)* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Communication (COM)* |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |  | 3 | 4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Exploitation (EX)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Legend (examples)** | |
| *Deliverables* | |  | | --- | | *D1: Report on [topic]; D2: Report on [topic]; D3: Prototype on [topic]; …* | |
| *Milestones* | *M1: Deliverable D2 submitted; M2: Decision on methodology; …* |
| *Courses* | *CO1: Course at [location] on [topic]; …* |
| *Secondment* | *S1: Secondment at [location] on…* |
| *Conferences* | *C1: Conference at [location] on [topic], etc.* |
| *Workshops* | *W1: Workshop at [location] on [topic], etc.* |
| *Dissemination* | *DM1: Presentation in department meeting; DM2: peer-review article; DM3: presentation at C3;…* |
| *Communication* | *COM1: Video for IRIS website; COM2: school visit; COM3: personal blog;* |
| *Exploitation* | *EX1: Meeting with TTO for exploitation strategy* |

* 1. **Risk management**

Describe the progress monitoring mechanisms put in place, to ensure that objectives are reached. Discuss the research and/or administrative risks that might endanger reaching the project’s objectives and the concrete contingency plan and mitigation actions to be put in place should risks occur objectives (including, if needed, alternative methodologies if the proposed methods prove to be unfruitful). Tables are recommended, for instance listing the WP, risk description, level of risk (high, medium, low), and the mitigation action.

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* Proposal page count ENDS \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***