

## Researcher mobility in Europe : Marie Curie actions

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## Researcher Mobility in Europe: Marie Curie Actions

The name Marie Curie has become synonymous in the European research community with researcher mobility and training. These mobility initiatives were initially targeted at post-doctoral researchers wishing to relocate within European Union (EU) member states, but the 6th framework research program has extended participation to a broader cross-section of the international research community.

Researcher mobility is considered to be an important instrument in helping to improve the quality and quantity of research training. European policy makers cite enhanced dissemination, collaboration, improved use of resources, and fluidity in the labor market as mechanisms to enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of research. At the individual researcher level, it is sought to enhance career prospects and to attract more graduate students into research careers. At the organization level, the development and transfer of research expertise is sought along with improved visibility and excellence in European research. The schemes supported by the 6th framework are summarized in the schematic diagram.

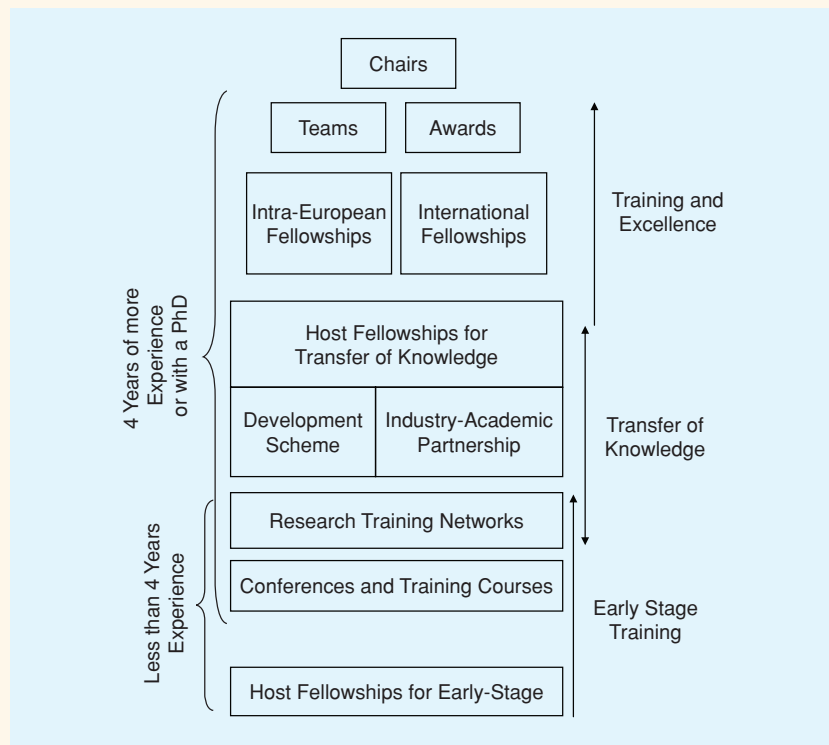
European organizations including universities, research institutes and private companies are able to apply for funding to host and support researchers. Host fellowships for early stage researchers provide for structured training, most typically through doctoral study. Research training networks comprise three or more institutions from different countries offering scientific and complementary training and transfer of knowledge within the context of a collaborative international research project. The conference and training course actions fund organizations to hold conferences and training courses for the benefit of Marie Curie researchers. For institutions to host more experienced researchers, the transfer of knowledge actions allow for the secondment of

with two main objectives. The development scheme prioritizes institutions in less favored regions of the EU and also candidate countries for EU membership, while the industry-academia strategic partnership supports long-lasting collaborations between enterprises and universities.

The researcher may apply directly for positions at host institutions which have resulted from successfully reviewed Marie Curie project proposals. Alternatively, more experienced researchers have the opportunity to prepare a joint application with the institution of their choice and submit this directly to the European Commission for assessment and peer-review. A "bottom-up" program ethos allows for study across a range of fields from science through to the social sciences. Inter-disciplinary and intersectoral research is particularly encouraged. Individual fellowships encourage researchers to attain professional independence, build international collabora-

tions and also recognise their scientific achievement. The intra-European fellowships continue to allow for mobility at the experienced researcher or post-doctoral level.

International mobility into and out of Europe is also supported. Incoming fellowships are open to applicants wishing to work at a European institution, while the outgoing counterpart provides the security of a return phase appointment for researchers undertaking a period of research outside of Europe. Reintegration programs are similarly available to ensure smoother career progression for mobile researchers wishing to return to their home country after a period abroad. At the top end of the experience scale, excellence grants provide a challenging opportunity for researchers wishing to build-up their own research team while the Chair appointments enable high-level researchers to pass on knowledge to the younger generation of



*In this schematic diagram, the schemes supported by the 6th framework are being summarized.*

## Membership Section (cont'd)

researchers. Excellence awards are also included in the program to recognize the achievements of researchers who have benefited from training and mobility schemes.

The calls for research proposals are published on annual basis towards the

end of the year and are published in the Official Journal of the European Union and on the Commissions' Web Page [http:// europa.eu.int/mariecurie-actions](http://europa.eu.int/mariecurie-actions). Opportunities arising from institution-driven actions being advertised by the host institution themselves. The immi-

nent launch of the 7th research framework is expected to further develop many of these mobility actions. If interested, do check the definitive and extensive information packs for eligibility and details as they appear on-line towards the end of the year.

Marie Curie (1867-1934), a Polish national who moved to Paris to pursue her interest in science, provides a striking role model for researcher mobility. After completing her doctoral thesis in 1903, she became the first woman professor at the Sorbonne in 1906 and the first person to be awarded the Nobel prize twice. The first time, jointly with Henri Becquerel and her husband Pierre Curie, for Physics (1903) in recognition of her research into radiation and subsequently on her own for Chemistry (1911) for the discovery of Radium and Polonium.

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