



Choose EUROPE

for SCIENCE

**A snapshot of initiatives in the European
Union to support researchers worldwide**



CHOOSE EUROPE FOR SCIENCE

The European Union (EU) offers strong support for research and innovation. With **EUR93.5 billion** available through **Horizon Europe**, the EU runs the world's largest funding programme for research and innovation. On **5 May 2025**, the European Commission announced a **EUR500 million package** for 2025–2027 to attract and retain researchers based outside the EU.

Europe has long been a **centre of scientific discovery**—from Galileo and Marie Curie to the Large Hadron Collider. Today, that legacy continues with **modern infrastructure, international collaboration, and a stable, well-supported research environment**.

Researchers in Europe benefit from **affordable healthcare and education, reliable social security, and stable working conditions**, not only for themselves but also for their families.

Europe also protects the **freedom of scientific research**. It is guaranteed by national laws and the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**, and the European Commission is now working to enshrine this freedom in EU legislation **(NEW)**.

Across the EU, a wide range of **programmes at the European, national, regional and institutional levels support researchers**, from relocation and integration to career development and long-term opportunities.

For researchers looking for a supportive research environment, scientific freedom, and a high quality of life, Europe is a compelling choice.

This document provides a snapshot of European Union initiatives aimed at supporting researchers worldwide. It is intended for illustrational purposes only and does not represent an exhaustive list of all available programmes or actions.



FUNDING INITIATIVES ACROSS THE EU

The EU and its Member States offer a variety of **funding opportunities** open to **researchers outside Europe**.

From **prestigious grants** and **international fellowships** to **tenure-track opportunities** and **programmes tailored for returning scholars** or those **working under threat**, the EU and its **27 Member States** are actively opening their doors to the world's brightest minds.

The following sections present the **key funding initiatives** making it possible for researchers based outside the EU to **connect, collaborate, and thrive** within **Europe's dynamic research ecosystem**.



EU level funding initiatives

Researchers based outside the EU have many opportunities to engage with European funding schemes. The EU's research and innovation programmes are designed to be inclusive, promoting global collaboration and excellence.

European Research Council (ERC) Grants

The ERC offers prestigious grants to support **frontier research across all fields**. Researchers of **any nationality** can apply, provided they conduct their research in an **EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country**. The overall ERC budget from 2021 to 2027 is more than **EUR16 billion**.

- **Starting grant:** For early-career researchers with 2–7 years of experience post-PhD, offering up to **EUR 1,5 million over 5 years**.

- **Consolidator grant:** For researchers with 7–12 years of experience post-PhD, providing up to **EUR 2 million over 5 years**.
- **Advanced grant:** For established researchers with a significant track record, offering up to **EUR 2,5 million over 5 years**.
- **Synergy grants:** For 2–4 principal investigators tackling ambitious research questions together. Up to **EUR 10 million over 6 years** (plus EUR 4 million extra for additional needs).

ERC Advanced Grant additional support (NEW)

Specifically for the **Advanced grant**, researchers moving from non-EU countries can apply for an additional **EUR 2 million** to cover eligible start-up costs, including personnel expenses, equipment, and access to large facilities.

Moreover, under the soon to be launched **ERC Super Grant** initiative, the grant duration will be extended to **seven years**.

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)

The MSCA is open to researchers of any nationality and at any career stage. They support mobility, training, and career development across borders and sectors. Notably, the **European Postdoctoral Fellowships** allow researchers from around the world to undertake projects in **EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries** for up to **24 months**.

Additionally, the **MSCA Staff Exchanges programme** facilitates international and inter-sectoral collaboration through short-term exchanges of research and innovation staff. These exchanges are open to researchers and staff from any country, promoting knowledge transfer and networking.

MSCA Choose Europe for Science Pilot (NEW)

Launching in 2025, the “**Choose Europe for Science**” initiative aims to attract and retain top research talent globally. With a budget of EUR 22,5 million, this pilot under the MSCA seeks to address brain drain and enhance research

career prospects in Europe. It offers **extended postdoctoral fellowships** and encourages institutions to provide **longer-term employment opportunities**.

ERA Chairs (NEW)

The **EUR230 million ERA Chairs call**, to be **adopted at the end of 2025**, aims to attract **top researchers and research managers** to **universities or research centres** in **widening countries**, as defined by Horizon Europe. It supports the creation of around 120 research teams, built around **ERA Chairs** and fully integrated into the **host institutions**, with the goal of significantly improving **research performance** in a chosen **scientific field**.

Other EU funding opportunities

In addition, the EU offers a wide array of **additional funding opportunities** accessible through the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#). The portal features tools to help users identify suitable funding opportunities and understand the requirements for participation.



National level funding initiatives

Mobility is fundamental to **scientific exchange**. Across the **European Union**, **national and regional funding schemes** are unlocking **billions of euros in funding opportunities** to attract **leading research talent from beyond EU borders**.

The EU and its member states offer **fellowships**, **visiting researcher programs**, and **recruitment programmes** (including **tenure-track positions**, **professorships**, and **junior research group leadership roles**) that allow **international researchers** to work in **EU-based institutions**, build **collaborative networks**, and gain valuable **international experience**, often serving as a **stepping stone** to longer-term opportunities within the **EU research system**.

A snapshot of funding initiatives:





	Ad Astra Fellows		ATRAE - INCORPORATE TALENT		ATTRACT Programme
Ireland	Recruitment campaign for early-career academics in strategic areas, offering 50 positions. Link	Spain	A program for established researchers to develop their careers, fund a project and hire principal investigator for 3–4 years. Link	Luxembourg	Supports promising junior researchers to set up research teams in national priority areas. Link
	BEWARE2		Choose France for Science		Else Kröner Excellence Grants
Belgium	Places researchers in joint appointments between Walloon companies and academic institutions. Link	France	Dedicated platform for applications to host international researchers Link	Germany	Provides up to EUR10M annually to medical researchers. Link
	Emmy Noether Programme		Ernst Mach Grants		Explorer Program
Germany	Funds early-career researchers to lead junior groups and qualify for professorships in Germany. Link	Austria	For postgraduates and postdocs from non-European countries wishing to conduct research in Austria. Link	Bulgaria	Provides scholarships for young researchers in computer science and AI at INSAIT, Sofia University. Link
	EXPRO Programme		FCT Mobility		FCT-Tenure
Czechia	Offers long-term funding to experienced researchers for ambitious research agendas. Link	Portugal	Supports incoming and outgoing international mobility for PhD researchers across all fields. Link	Portugal	Supports permanent hiring of researchers to reinforce academic competitiveness in Portugal. Link
	FWF ESPRIT		FWF Principal Investigator		Grant researchers outside Europe
Austria	Gives early-career researchers a chance to lead their own project. Link	Austria	Provides principal investigators and their teams with resources to pursue key research over several years. Link	Sweden	Enables Swedish institutions to recruit leading researchers from outside Europe. Link
	Heisenberg Programme		Helmholtz Investigator Group		HUN-REN Welcome Home
Germany	Supports researchers qualified for professorships with up to 5 years of funding. Link	Germany	Five-year funding for international postdocs to lead research groups with potential tenure. Link	Hungary	Supports top researchers (Hungarian or foreign) to set up research groups in Hungary. Link

	ICREA		Incoming Summer Research Internships		INTER-ACTION Programme
Spain	An initiative that hires top international researchers to conduct long-term research in universities and research. Link	Lithuania	Summer internships for students with EUR2,000 scholarships to engage in research in Lithuania. Link	Czechia	Bilateral research funding with selected third countries. Link
	IP, UIP and DOK		Italian Fund for Science		JUNIOR STAR
Croatia	These programmes fund research projects, independent careers, and doctoral training at Croatian institutions. Link	Italy	Supports research projects conducted by researchers in line with the ERC model. Link	Czechia	Supports early-career researchers to establish independent teams and high-impact projects. Link
	Lendület (Momentum)		Max Planck Postdoc Program		Mercator Fellowship
Hungary	Funds young researchers to build research teams and reduce brain drain. Link	Germany	Career development support for international postdocs in the Max Planck Institutes. Link	Germany	Allows long-term international collaborations through funded research stays in Germany. Link
	Mobilitas 3.0		My First Research Team		NWO
Estonia	Supports recruitment of foreign researchers and returning Estonians for at least 24 months in R&D institutions. Link	Lithuania	Funds young researchers to lead teams; includes diaspora and foreign researchers. Link	Netherlands	Offers funding across disciplines, with some calls open to international researchers. Link
	Odysseus Programme		P4SCIENCE Program		Pathway Programme
Belgium	Attracts foreign and diaspora researchers, offering funding and tenure-track or permanent positions in Flanders. Link	Belgium	Targets international and returning researchers for positions at Federal Scientific Institutions in Belgium. Link	Ireland	Supports postdocs transitioning to research leaders across disciplines in Ireland. Link
	PEARL Programme		PICOM Program		PLUMTRI
Luxembourg	Attracts established researchers in strategic areas to Luxembourg research institutions. Link	Bulgaria	Postdoc program in mathematical sciences to boost national capacity, hosted at IMI-BAS. Link	Malta	A platform offering information, among other things, on funding opportunities in Malta. Link

	Postdoctoral Fellowships		Postdoctoral Fellowships		Research - Innovate 2021-2027
Czechia	International mobility fellowship for postdoctoral researchers to enhance their research profiles. Link	Lithuania	24-month projects for early-career researchers across disciplines in Lithuanian R&D institutions. Link	Greece	Programme designed to support SMEs and research organisations in developing R&D projects. Link
	RIF		Research Grant Hungary		Research Professorship Programme
Cyprus	Offers various funding programs, some of which are open to international researchers. Link	Hungary	Funds researchers to establish new scientific schools in Hungary. Link	Ireland	Assists institutions to recruit world-leading researchers for professorial-level or similar leadership positions. Link
	Scholarships PhD Students		Fellowships for Researchers		Science Hub Denmark
Slovakia	Funds excellent international PhD students (R1) at Slovak institutions. Link	Slovakia	Supports top foreign and Slovak researchers with competitive conditions at Slovak institutions. Link	Denmark	An initiative for top international researchers in natural sciences, engineering, and life sciences. Link
	Ulam NAWA		ULYSSE		University Excellence Initiative
Poland	Supports international researchers' visits to Poland for research and teaching. Link	Belgium	Supports Belgian and international researchers with a strong track record to work at WBF universities for up to 3. Link	Lithuania	Enhances R&D by attracting foreign researchers to Lithuanian universities. Link
	UPinLT – Internship		Walter Benjamin Programme		Welcome to Poland NAWA
Lithuania	Supports international graduates in integrating into the Lithuanian labour market via paid internships. Link	Germany	Postdoctoral funding for researchers, including refugees, to conduct independent projects at institutions in. Link	Poland	Funds services and infrastructure for better international researcher integration in Poland. Link
	Zawacka NAWA – Incoming	<p>This document offers a snapshot of national and regional initiatives supporting researchers. For the most up-to-date and comprehensive list, visit EURAXESS at euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs.</p> 			
Poland	Supports students and researchers coming to Poland under international agreements. Link				

Additional national support for ERC and MSCA applicants

In some cases, when **high-quality proposals** submitted to ERC and MSCA do not receive funding due to budget constraints, **EU member states** step in with **dedicated support**. These national initiatives help ensure that **excellent research ideas** are not lost, allowing promising researchers to pursue their projects and contribute to Europe's broader research and innovation goals.

	Support for ERC Resubmission		Incoming Postdoctoral Grant		Seal of Excellence Support
Estonia	Provides EUR117,000/year to ERC applicants for resubmission support, under given conditions. Link	Estonia	Funds MSCA-evaluated (≥85 points) postdocs not funded, to undertake research in Estonia. Link	Sweden	Provides funding for postdoctoral researchers holding MSCA Seal of Excellence via Swedish Strategy Group. Link
			PF2MT		
		Malta	Covers travel and accommodation for PhD holders applying with a Maltese host for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship. Link		

Scientific diaspora programmes

Several EU member states run initiatives that have an additional focus on supporting their **scientific diaspora**, helping to **reintegrate** talent and strengthen national research capacity.

	Aleš Debeljak Mobility Scheme		Polish Returns		Rita Levi Montalcini
Slovenia	National program aimed at returning Slovenian researchers abroad; adaptable for third-country attraction. Link	Poland	Enables Polish researchers abroad to return and establish research groups in Poland. Link	Italy	Encourages return of young researchers (Italian or foreign) by offering tenure-track positions at universities. Link
			Brainmap		
		Romania	An initiative connecting the Romanian diaspora with research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Link		

Specific funding initiatives for researchers at risk

The EU and its Member States offer **dedicated support for researchers facing persecution, conflict, or displacement**. These initiatives provide safe environments, funding, and institutional backing. An important EU-level initiative is EURAXESS, that lists hundreds of jobs available.

	SAFE PROJECT		SAFE PLACE FOR SCIENCE		PSL Fellows and Postdocs
EU	60 fully-funded fellowships (up to 24 months) for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. Link	France	Initiative to host 15 researchers in climate, health, SHS, and environment research with EUR15M budget. Link	France	Funds researchers to continue projects in France on AI, health, climate, SSH, and major research programs. Link
	PAUSE		Ukrainian researchers call		Recruiting Researchers Call
France	Protects and welcomes scientists and artists who can no longer pursue their activities in their home countries. Link	Slovakia	Two programs offering research fellowships and postdoc positions for those unable to work in their countries. Link	Finland	Funds Finnish universities to recruit researchers from countries with limited academic freedom. Link

In addition, the [EURAXESS Science4Refugees](#) initiative supports researchers at risk by helping them continue their careers in Europe through the **listing of hundreds of refugee-friendly jobs**, a **research buddy system**, and personalised career development support. Starting in 2026, EURAXESS will **further strengthen its support for researchers** at risk by assisting hiring institutions with **risk assessments** and launching dedicated initiatives, including a **new fellowship scheme for researchers at risk**. (NEW)



NON-FUNDING INITIATIVES ACROSS THE EU

If you're a **researcher from outside the EU** thinking about **conducting research in Europe**, you'll be glad to know that both the **European Union** and individual **Member States** are actively working to make your **move smoother**.

[EURAXESS](#) is an initiative that helps researchers from outside Europe explore and pursue research careers within European countries.

[EURAXESS Jobs & Opportunities](#) provides access to **thousands of research vacancies, funding programmes, and fellowship opportunities** across Europe, all freely available and regularly updated. This includes also hundreds of opportunities specifically for **researchers at risk**.

[EURAXESS National Platforms](#) offer **country-specific information** on research environments, visa and residence procedures, funding options, and living conditions, tailored to the needs of international researchers.

[EURAXESS Service Centers](#): a network of over **650 Service Centres**, EURAXESS offers **personalised assistance to researchers** and their **families**, helping them with relocation, administrative requirements, and integration into their new host country.



Coming to Europe

If you are a researcher from outside the EU considering a move to Europe, it's important to know that both the European Union and its Member States are working to make the process clearer and easier. Immigration policy in the EU is a shared competence, meaning that **both the European Union and its Member States** have the authority to legislate and adopt legally binding acts in this area.

At the EU level, the **Students and Researchers Directive** supports researchers entering the EU for academic work by providing fast-track residence applications within 90 days, the right to teach, equal treatment with EU citizens, and the ability to bring family members who also enjoy mobility rights. Researchers can stay up to nine months after their project ends to find a job or start a business, and can move between EU countries for short- or long-term research stays.

The **EU Blue Card**, is aimed at highly skilled professionals, including researchers with a higher education qualification or at least five years of experience. It requires a job offer of at least six

months and a salary above a national threshold. Blue Card holders benefit from equal rights, can bring their families with work access, may move to another EU country after 12 months, and can apply for long-term residence after five years.

Through the **Visa Strategy** to be adopted at the end of 2025, the Commission will look at how legal migration procedures can be further facilitated to make relocation easier. **(NEW)**

EU Immigration Portal


The [EU Immigration Portal](#) is an online resource that provides up-to-date, practical information on both EU-wide and national immigration rules, tailored to different types of professionals, including researchers. It offers detailed, country-specific guidance on admission requirements, necessary documents, and application procedures. Available in multiple languages, the portal serves as a comprehensive and user-friendly guide for navigating the immigration process across the EU.





National initiatives that facilitate coming to Europe

In recent years, EU Member States have significantly expanded **tailored visa and residence initiatives to attract global research talent**. These programs are designed to cut red tape, accelerate entry procedures, and offer long-term security for researchers. Here's a look at how some countries are achieving this:

 Czechia	Long-term Residence Permit for Scientific Research , allowing third-country researchers to stay for up to two years, renewable , provided they have a valid hosting agreement with a recognised institution.
 Estonia	Researchers are exempt from the immigration quota . Through a Residence Permit Exemption , researchers can access simplified registration for short-term work.
 Estonia	Fast Track Work Permit for Non-EEA Researchers , coordinated by the Irish Universities Association. This initiative ensures rapid visa processing and allows accompanying family members to reside and work.
 France	A "Scientific Refugee" Visa Status aimed at at-risk scientists has been proposed . This planned scheme would grant expedited entry and extended residence to researchers fleeing conflict or persecution.
 Portugal	Visa for Research Activities as part of broader strategy to streamline residence permits for international researchers and their families.
 Slovakia	Innovation Visas with a focus on researchers and startups. These visas come with an accelerated application process for skilled professionals in R&D sectors.
 Cyprus	Golden Knowledge Programme encourages the retention of individuals engaged in research and innovation activities through a fast-track citizenship application.



Working in Europe

Recognition of qualifications and experience

Recognition of academic qualifications within the European Union is an essential step for researchers from third countries aiming to work or study in Europe.

[ENIC-NARIC](#) is a network that helps researchers get their qualifications recognised when moving between countries, especially across Europe. If you're a researcher coming from a country outside the EU, ENIC-NARIC can **guide you on how your degrees and academic credentials compare to those in your host country**. This can be important when applying for jobs, further studies, or professional licenses. Each country has its own ENIC-NARIC centre, and they provide clear, practical advice about recognition procedures. For country-specific information and contact details, you can visit the official ENIC-NARIC website.

Access to cutting edge research and technology infrastructures

Europe is host to some of the world's most **advanced research infrastructures**, forming a vibrant ecosystem of research and technology facilities. These include large-scale, internationally renowned institutions such as CERN, the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), IRIS, and emerging AI Gigafactories. These state-of-the-art infrastructures are **open and accessible to researchers**, acting as natural gravitation points for top scientists from Europe and around the world, fostering global collaboration and driving innovation.

The Research and Technology Infrastructures Strategy, that will be published in 2025, will ensure that researchers and innovators have access to these cutting-edge facilities and services that support scientific and technological excellence and industrial competitiveness. [\(NEW\)](#)

For more information



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