

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.



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**.





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 intersectoral 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.





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

Ireland

Recruitment campaign for early-career academics in strategic areas, offering 50 positions.

Link



ATRAE - INCORPORATE TALENT

oain

A program for established researchers to develop their careers, fund a project and hire principal investigator for 3–4 years.

Link



ATTRACT Programme

xembourg

Supports promising junior researchers to set up research teams in national priority areas.

Link



BEWARE2

Selgium

Places researchers in joint appointments between Walloon companies and academic institutions.

Link



Choose France for Science

ance

Dedicated platform for applications to host international researchers

Link



Else Kröner Excellence Grants

ermany

Provides up to EUR10M annually to medical researchers.

Link



Emmy Noether Programme

Funds early-career researchers to lead junior groups and qualify for professorships in Germany.

Link



Ernst Mach Grants

ustria

For postgraduates and postdocs from non-European countries wishing to conduct research in Austria.

Link



Explorer Program

lgaria

Provides scholarships for young researchers in computer science and AI at INSAIT, Sofia University.

Link



EXPRO Programme

Czechia

Offers long-term funding to experienced researchers for ambitious research agendas.

<u>Link</u>



FCT Mobility

ortugal

Supports incoming and outgoing international mobility for PhD researchers across all fields.

<u>Link</u>



FCT-Tenure

rtugal

Supports permanent hiring of researchers to reinforce academic competitiveness in Portugal.

<u>Link</u>



FWF ESPRIT

Austria

Gives early-career researchers a chance to lead their own project.

Link



FWF Principal Investigator

ustria

Provides principal investigators and their teams with resources to pursue key research over several years.

<u>Link</u>



Grant researchers outside Europe

weden

Enables Swedish institutions to recruit leading researchers from outside Europe.

<u>Link</u>



Heisenberg Programme

rmany

Supports researchers qualified for professorships with up to 5 years of funding.

Link



Helmholtz Investigator Group

ermany

Five-year funding for international postdocs to lead research groups with potential tenure.

Link

HUN-REN Welcome Home

lungary

Supports top researchers (Hungarian or foreign) to set up research groups in Hungary.

Link



ICREA

An initiative that hires top international researchers to conduct long-term research in universities and research.

Link



Incoming Summer Research Internships

Summer internships for students with EUR2,000 scholarships to engage in research in Lithuania.

Link



INTER-ACTION Programme

Czechia

Bilateral research funding with selected third countries.

Link



Croatia

IP, UIP and DOK

These programmes fund research projects, independent careers, and doctoral training at Croatian institutions.

Link



taly

Italian Fund for Science

Supports research projects conducted by researchers in line with the ERC model.

Link



JUNIOR STAR

Supports early-career

researchers to establish independent teams and high-impact projects.

Link



Lendület (Momentum)

Funds young researchers to build research teams and reduce brain drain.

Link



Germany

Max Planck Postdoc Program

Career development support for international postdocs in the Max Planck Institutes.

Link



Mercator Fellowship

Allows longterm international collaborations through funded research stays in Germany.

Link



Estonia

Mobilitas 3.0

Supports recruitment of foreign researchers and returning Estonians for at least 24 months in R&D institutions.

Link



-ithuania

My First Research Team

Funds young researchers to lead teams; includes diaspora and foreign researchers.

Link



NWO

Offers funding across disciplines, with some calls open to international researchers.

Link



Odysseus Programme

Attracts foreign and diaspora researchers, offering funding and tenure-track or permanent positions in Flanders.

Link



P4SCIENCE Program

Targets international and returning researchers for positions at Federal Scientific Institutions in Belgium.

<u>Link</u>



Pathway Programme

Ireland

Supports postdocs transitioning to research leaders across disciplines in Ireland.

<u>Link</u>



PEARL Programme

Attracts established researchers in strategic areas to Luxembourg research institutions.

Link



PICOM Program

Postdoc program in mathematical sciences to boost national capacity, hosted at IMI-BAS.

Link



PLUMTRI

A platform offering information, among other things, on funding opportunities in Malta.

Link



Postdoctoral Fellowships

Czechia

International mobility fellowship for postdoctoral researchers to enhance their research profiles.

Link



Postdoctoral Fellowships

huania

24-month projects for early-career researchers across disciplines in Lithuanian R&D institutions.

Link



Research - Innovate 2021-2027

reece

Programme designed to support SMEs and research organisations in developing R&D projects.

Link



Cyprus

RIF

Offers various funding programs, some of which are open to international researchers.

Link



Research Grant Hungary

Ingary

Funds researchers to establish new scientific schools in Hungary.

Link



Research Professorship Programme

eland

Assists institutions to recruit world-leading researchers for professorial-level or similar leadership positions.

Link



Scholarships PhD Students

Slovakia

Funds excellent international PhD students (R1) at Slovak institutions.

Link



Fellowships for Researchers

Slovakia

Supports top foreign and Slovak researchers with competitive conditions at Slovak institutions.

Link



Science Hub Denmark

mark

An initiative for top international researchers in natural sciences, engineering, and life sciences.

Link



Ulam NAWA

Poland

Supports international researchers' visits to Poland for research and teaching.

Link



ULYSSE

elgium

Supports Belgian and international researchers with a strong track record to work at WBF universities for up to 3.

<u>Link</u>



University Excellence Initiative

Lithuania

Enhances R&D by attracting foreign researchers to Lithuanian universities.

Link



UPinLT - Internship

Lithuania

Supports international graduates in integrating into the Lithuanian labour market via paid internships.

Link



Walter Benjamin Programme

Germany

Postdoctoral funding for researchers, including refugees, to conduct independent projects at institutions in.

<u>Link</u>



Welcome to Poland NAWA

oland

Funds services and infrastructure for better international researcher integration in Poland.

<u>Link</u>



Zawacka NAWA - Incoming

Poland

Supports students and researchers coming to Poland under international agreements.

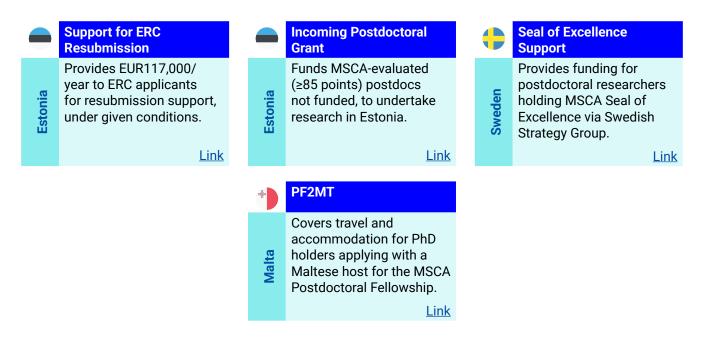
Link

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.



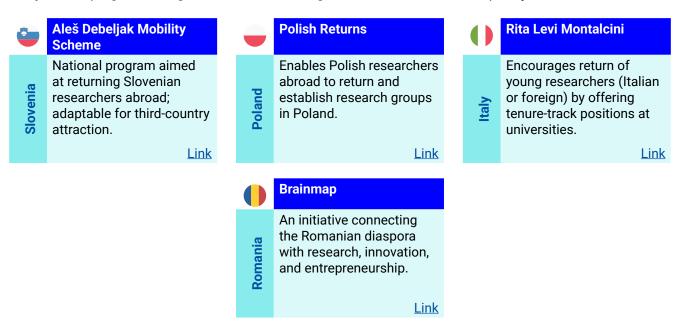
Additional national support for ERC and MSCA applicants

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.



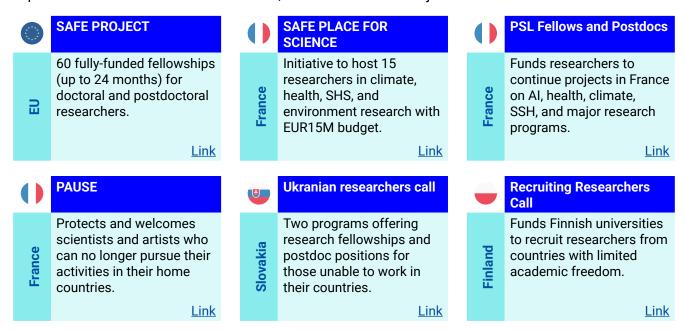
Scientific diaspora programmes

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.



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.



In addition, the <u>EURAXESS Science4Refugees</u> 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**.

<u>EURAXESS</u> 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:



;zechia

Long-term Residence Permit for Scientific Research, allowing thirdcountry researchers to stay for up to two years, renewable, provided they have a valid hosting agreement with a recognised institution.



Researchers are exempt from the immigration quota. Through a Residence Permit Exemption, researchers can access simplified registration for short-term work.



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.

Fast Track Work Permit



rance

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.



Visa for Research Activities as part of broader strategy to streamline residence permits for international researchers and their families.



lovakia

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.



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





Choose Europe

EURAXESS