



# Mobility for Regional Excellence 2020 Programme Description

*Version 13 June 2018*



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 754412.

# 1 Introduction and aims of MoRE2020

In 2014 Region Västra Götaland (VGR) launched a new programme for the transnational mobility of experienced researchers, the Mobility for Regional Excellence Programme (MoRE). The programme was launched as a four year pilot, co-funded by FP7/Marie Curie, starting in February 2014. The purpose of MoRE was to attract international researchers to Västra Götaland's excellent research and innovation milieus and to offer researchers from Västra Götaland the opportunity of visiting and working at excellent research and innovation milieus abroad.

Mobility for Regional Excellence 2020 (MoRE2020) is the continuation of the successful MoRE programme, co-financed under Horizon 2020. MoRE2020 provides experienced researchers with the chance to develop their skills and gain valuable new experiences in internationally renowned research and innovation milieus with excellent working conditions and strong triple helix components. It aims to increase the attractiveness of research and innovation careers in Europe, to foster excellence across the Union through smart specialisation, and to increase international and sectoral cooperation.

## 2 Background and rationale for MoRE2020

The "Strategy for growth and development in Västra Götaland 2014-2020" (VG2020), lays out the groundwork for the creation of an attractive, responsible and internationally competitive knowledge region for women and men. By 2020, the region shall be characterised by good opportunities for education, research and innovation, entrepreneurship and internationally competitive industry. The MoRE2020 programme contributes to the growth of Västra Götaland as a leading knowledge region through its connection to the regional areas of strength and prioritised development areas identified in VG2020 (see Section 4).

### **Competitiveness of regional clusters**

Region Västra Götaland has the possibility to become a leading knowledge region in Europe, and was most recently classified as an Innovation Leader by the EU Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2017. The region hosts five universities, strong research and innovation milieus, the headquarters of the Research Institute of Sweden and successful milieus for entrepreneurship and innovation. Global knowledge-intensive companies contribute to Västra Götaland's ranking as one of the most innovative regions in Europe.

Smart specialisation is a strategic EU approach to economic development through targeted support for research and innovation, and the identification of areas with the greatest potential for growth. For Region Västra Götaland, smart specialisation represents a strategy for global competitiveness through the identification of areas in which the region excels and has clear advantages over other regions. The strategy builds on existing strengths, but also prepares and paves the way for new areas that may arise with shifts in industry or society. In Västra Götaland, *areas of strength* have long been an important part of the regional development strategy, shown in the 13 prioritized areas which have been identified by the public sector, the private sector and academia, and which make up the 13 thematic research priorities in MoRE2020.

## International mobility

International research mobility contributes not only to the career development of individual researchers, but to the development of research milieus and society in general. Researchers associate mobility with the opportunity to develop and acquire skills from working with new colleagues in a new environment and to build up an international network, and thus better future career prospects. Studies show that internationally mobile researchers often perform better when compared with their peers, and in general place a high value on the effect of mobility on their careers.

For research milieus, the addition of international researchers leads to an increased exchange of ideas, knowledge, methods, and traditions, while at the same time contributing to a more heterogeneous and creative workplace. Mobility also allows for the recruitment of expertise which can contribute to a greater degree of competitiveness for the milieu.

Benefits are not just limited to the researcher and his or her employer, however. International mobility enables the exchange of knowledge and experience, which are key elements in the innovation process, especially when mobility encourages collaboration between academia and industry. Therefore, international mobility is an important factor in a well-functioning regional innovation system.<sup>1</sup>

Fostering the development of skills and competencies of researchers, enabling the recruitment of excellency in various branches, and promoting collaboration between nations and sectors all contribute positively to Region Västra Götaland's goals for 2020, namely an increased international competitiveness achieved through focusing on areas of strength.

## 3 Programme objectives and target groups

The Mobility for Regional Excellence Programme 2020 shall contribute to the following objectives:

- Attract internationally experienced researchers to Västra Götaland and increase international exchanges.
- Promote researcher mobility and career development for researchers.
- Position internationally competitive research and innovation milieus.
- Stimulate international research and innovation alliances and collaboration.
- Strengthen research-driven clusters within prioritised areas.

### The target group

MoRE2020 targets **experienced researchers** who are either in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience.<sup>2</sup> The application is submitted jointly by the researcher and the employing **research and**

<sup>1</sup> Research mobility facts and statistics have been taken from the evaluation of the first MoRE programme by the firm Ramböll in "Internationell forskarmobilitet: underlag för framtida utformning av MoRE", 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Full-Time Equivalent Research Experience is measured from the date when the applying researcher obtained the degree entitling him/her to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the researcher is recruited, even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged. (Source: Horizon2020 Work Programme 2016-2017, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions)

**innovation (R&I) milieu** located within the borders of Västra Götaland. Therefore, the applicant to MoRE2020 is both the experience researcher and the R&I milieu in Västra Götaland. Eligible research and innovation milieus are universities, science parks, research institutes and university hospitals. These milieus should have strong triple-helix components within the given area and with an active mutual exchange of approaches to problems, competences and skills, knowledge and technology.

## 4 Key features of MoRE2020

MoRE2020 is a moderately scaled programme which will offer grants to 20 fellows over a period of five years. Key features of the MoRE2020 programme are:

### **Internationality**

MoRE2020 funds both incoming and outgoing mobility of researchers. There are no geographical restrictions regarding collaborating host research and innovation milieus abroad, though incoming applying researchers must carry out their work within Västra Götaland. The programme is open to experienced researchers of all nationalities, excepting outgoing mobility to a third country (i.e. non-EU member or associated country), where applying researchers must be nationals or long-term residents of an EU Member State or associated country.<sup>3</sup>

### **The 12 month grant**

Successful applicants to MoRE2020 will be awarded a 12 month grant for the proposed research project. The project must be *completed* no later than 24 months after the applicant has received the official decision from Region Västra Götaland. In practice, this means that a MoRE2020 fellow may choose to delay the start of his or her project, or divide the project up into shorter periods of time. The whole research period must be spent at the host research and innovation milieu, i.e. for outgoing mobility the R&I milieu abroad, and for incoming mobility the R&I milieu in Västra Götaland. Exceptions apply in the case of secondments with, or hosting by, a collaborating end-user, see the Collaboration section below.

### **Smart specialisation – Västra Götaland's areas of strength**

The content of the project proposals must relate to at least one of the research and innovation intensive areas prioritised by Region Västra Götaland:

- Sustainable transport solutions
- Life science
- Green chemistry
- Marine environment and the maritime sector
- Urban development
- Material sciences
- Sustainable production
- Information and communication technologies
- Energy

<sup>3</sup> Associated countries: Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia, Armenia.

- Textile/Fashion/Design
- Cultural and creative industry
- Food production/Agriculture and forestry
- Tourism

The focus of MoRE2020 projects should be on solving societal challenges through user-driven research. Relevant, interdisciplinary research is encouraged.

### **Collaboration**

Project proposals must clearly demonstrate how the project contributes to the development and strengthening of the competitiveness and internationalisation of research-driven clusters in Västra Götaland. The applying researcher is expected to actively develop the international collaboration between the two participating research and innovation milieus for the entire duration of the project. After the project comes to an end, the aim is for the different collaborations to continue, deepen and/or be complemented by additional forms of activities.

In order to strengthen triple-helix collaboration, the programme also involves companies or other end-users (in the public or private sector) as collaborative partners to MoRE2020 fellows. These partners may contribute by hosting fellows, providing training, supporting technical skills, and/or actively participating in activities relating to the projects. Financial support from the collaborating end-user is not required. End-users should represent the relevance and needs-based aspects of the proposed research, i.e. how the research may be applied outside of academia.

All MoRE2020 applications must include a specific supporting letter from a company or another end-user (e.g. hospital, municipality) in their application. Such a letter must show how the end-user will be involved in the research project and collaborate with the fellow, particularly relating to the utilisation and dissemination of the research. As with the collaborating research and innovation milieus, end-users, fellows, and milieus should seek to continue collaborating even after the end of the project period. The end-user may not be the same organisation as the employing R&I milieu or the collaborating R&I milieu abroad.

There is no geographical restriction on collaborating end-users and they may be in the host country or elsewhere. However, if an end-user intends to support the applying researcher by hosting him or her, this must take place in the same country as the host research and innovation milieu. For further information regarding end-users, see the Guide for Applicants.

### **Employment**

For both incoming and outgoing mobility applications, the application submitted to MoRE2020 must be from a research and innovation milieu in Västra Götaland *together with* an experienced researcher. For incoming mobility, the host milieu and the employing milieu are the same. For outgoing mobility, the employing milieu is the research and innovation milieu in Västra Götaland, while the host milieu is the collaborating research and innovation milieu abroad.

Stipends are not permitted as a basis for salary.

Only full employment benefit schemes are supported. Employment benefits include those established under Swedish law and include a minimum of 25 days holiday per year and a 40-hour working week. MoRE2020 fellows must sign a **fellowship agreement** with the

respective employing organisation which, among other things, guarantees their rights according to Swedish employment law (this includes, for example, health insurance and paid-time off). Both the applying researcher and the employing research and innovation milieu in Västra Götaland are responsible for endorsing and ensuring the terms and conditions that will be set forth by Region Västra Götaland upon acceptance of the MoRE2020 grant.

### **Career development**

When setting up the project proposal, the applying researcher should be the project leader and he/she is expected to perform the majority of the work with the active support of the participating milieus. The applying researcher is also expected to actively develop collaboration between both research and innovation milieus and the collaborating end-user for the duration of the project. When submitting the proposal, the applying researcher must enclose a career plan including a presentation of planned activities and training to achieve career goals. The career plan must be supported by the research and innovations milieus and in particular by the appointed supervisors.

Since the MoRE2020 programme has such a strong focus on societal challenges and user-driven research, which both require multidisciplinary solutions, it is necessary that the fellows receive training in how to produce academic research that creates value for both society and industry. The need for training in non-research oriented transferable skills will be specifically addressed by offering all MoRE2020 fellows individual guidance, training and support regarding innovation and utilisation. The Chalmers University of Technology Innovation Office (CIK) has been appointed to carry out this task for both incoming and outgoing MoRE2020 fellows.

### **Gender balance**

At the end of the programme, the gender balance of MoRE2020 fellows funded under the programme should be at least 40-60%. If two or more applications are assessed to be equivalent in the evaluation process, the underrepresented gender will be given priority. Applications from researchers who have had career breaks (parental leave, extended sick leave etc.) will not be viewed negatively in any way and the career breaks will have no bearing on the overall evaluation of the merits of the applying researcher.

## **5 Funding**

For each fellow, the MoRE2020 programme pays **870 000 SEK** as a contribution to salary (including social security contributions), mobility allowance and OH costs. The remainder of the salary (including social security contributions), mobility allowance, OH costs, and any other costs (consumables, equipment, conference fees etc.) have to be covered by the collaborating R&I milieus. Co-financing may also come from the collaborating R&I milieu abroad. Half of the contribution will be disbursed when six months of the research project have been completed and the other half will be disbursed following the completion of the 12 month research project.

### **The following conditions must be fulfilled:**

MoRE2020 fellows must receive a minimum living allowance (salary including social security contributions) of **at least 41 000 SEK/month**. Fellows must also receive a mobility

allowance of **at least** 13 000 SEK/month (including social security contributions if applicable). The total remuneration for each fellow must be **at least** 54 000 SEK/month, including salary, social security contributions and mobility allowance. The whole remuneration amount (i.e. including mobility allowance) is subject to national taxation rules. There is no upper limit on salary nor mobility allowance and the total project budget should exceed 870 000 SEK. Co-financing from the employing R&I milieu is a requirement.

The salary and social security contributions cannot be co-financed by other EU sources. The mobility allowance, overhead costs and other costs (e.g. consumables, equipment, conference fees etc.) may be co-financed through other EU funds such as the European Structural and Investment Funds, but not through funding from the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.

*Example of a budget which fulfils the minimum requirements:*

Cost category	Cost/month (SEK)	Contributors to cost category
Salary including social security contributions	41 000	EU (Horizon 2020) and VGR contribute to this cost category  Other funding sources (R&I milieus, national research funding, private funding, etc.) can contribute to this cost category. Other EU funding may not contribute to this cost category.
Mobility allowance including social security contributions, if applicable	13 000	VGR contributes to this cost category  Non-H2020 EU funding can contribute to this cost category Other funding sources (R&I milieus, national research funding, private funding, etc.) can contribute to this cost category
Overhead costs	20 500	VGR contributes to this cost category  Non-H2020 EU funding can contribute to this cost category Other funding sources (R&I milieus, national research funding, private funding, etc.) can contribute to this cost category
Research and training costs	<i>Dependent on project</i>	R&I milieus cover costs in this category  Non-H2020 EU funding can contribute to this cost category Other funding sources (national research funding, private funding, etc.) can contribute to this cost category
<b>TOTAL /MONTH</b>	<b>74 500</b>	

*In this example, the amount proposed for living allowance (salary including social security contributions) + mobility allowance complies with the minimum requirement: living allowance (41 000 SEK/month) + mobility allowance (13 000 SEK/month) = 54 000 SEK/month. Overhead costs are calculated at 50% of the living allowance. Research and training costs are dependent on the project and are not included.*

## 6 Assessment and evaluation

MoRE2020 will consist of a minimum of three calls for proposals over a two year period. Each call cycle is approximately seven months, of which three months make up the period when applications may be submitted and four months are dedicated to the selection of possible candidates and the decision making process.

Eligible proposals are assessed by independent national and international experts. The experts carry out remote evaluations on an independent basis. All experts use the same evaluation criteria when assessing the proposals, and each proposal will be evaluated by four experts. The experts assess the proposals' excellence, impact and implementation. More information about the evaluation criteria can be found in the Guide for Evaluators. Under this period, applications will also be reviewed by the MoRE2020 Ethical Board to ensure all ethical requirements are met.

Following expert review, the evaluations are then summarised and prioritised by the Programme Board, which is responsible for the final ranking of the applications. Therefore, the weighted scores set by the experts do not equal the final ranking. The final, official decision is made by the Regional Development Committee of Region Västra Götaland. After this formal decision, the Programme Management Team notifies all successful and unsuccessful applicants within two weeks.

## 7 Ethics

An ethical issues table is included in the application documents and must be completed by all applicants. If a proposal contains ethical issues, applicants must complete an additional ethics self-assessment which should be submitted along with the application and will be screened by the MoRE2020 Ethical Board. It is both the employing and future host organisation's responsibility to help applying researchers to apply for all ethical approvals needed for their research. MoRE2020's Ethical Guidelines can be found in the Guide for Applicants.

In the case of incoming and outgoing mobility, both the relevant ethics rules of Horizon 2020 as well as the applicable international, EU, and national law of the employing and future host organisation must be respected to ensure that research undertaken under the MoRE2020 programme complies with all relevant ethics principles and regulations. Ethically sensitive research may not commence until all approvals have been received.

In the event that MoRE2020 receives a proposal involving the use of human embryonic stem cells (hESC), there will be specific procedures, described in the Guide for Applicants. Research using hESC may not commence until approval has been granted.

MoRE2020 projects are expected to uphold a high standard of research integrity. During the duration of the MoRE2020 Programme, Region Västra Götaland will ensure that participating milieus implement and uphold the principles set out in the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> [European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#)