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Lessons Learnt in Marie Curie International Reintegration Grant Process

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11.03.2011

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What is IRG?

- *Note: Program replaced with **Career Integration Grant**.*

Research funds for researchers returning to an EU nation after having spent **at least three years in a third country.**
Grant duration is 2 – 4 years.
Fixed 25,000 Euro / year funding level.

Eligibility:

Experience: at least 4-years full-time postgraduate
Nationality: Citizen of EU member or assoc. state
Mobility: at time of cutoff date, no more than 12 months in a member state or assoc. state in the previous 3 years

For details: **http://www.fp7.org.tr**

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IRG Stages

- Before starting to write your proposal
- Proposal writing process
- After getting accepted; negotiations, contract

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Before starting your proposal - 1

- Start as early as possible
- Read programme details throughly
- Contact your National Contact Point (NCP);
  - Any possible questions related to Marie Curie
  - They help a lot!
- Do a detailed plan for your proposal;
  - Research topics of current EU interest: Look at FP7 calls
  - Look at examples of successful IRG proposals; consider strengths or weakness of proposals

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Before starting your proposal - 2

- Research main groups/organizations conducting research in your proposed area
  - What will your project contribute?
  - Possibilities for finding EU collaborators
- Try to get support letters from collaborating reasearchers (i.e., advisors) in the third country.
- Note that proposed projects should be
  - **Beyond the state-of-the art,** have a key contribution to European excellence
  - **Well-matched** to researcher's background and host's expertise
  - **Foster long-term research ties** within EU and researchers in a third country

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Proposal Process

- I will go over my proposal “COMPSENSE: Compressive Data Acquisition and Processing Techniques for Sensing Applications”
- There are 4 evaluation criteria
  - Scientific and Technological Quality – 30%
  - Researcher – 30%
  - Implementation – 20%
  - Impact – 20%
- Each section graded between 0 - 5 points
- S&T and Researcher > 3; Total > 70

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Scientific and Technological Quality

Criterion 1. S&T QUALITY **(Threshold 3.00/5.00)**

Mark: 4.20

Weight: 0.30

Strengths
The project has a very good scientific and technological approach
The research is very innovative in a new field of image processing
The project could contribute to knowledge in applied research such as remote sensing, imaging, and distributed (wireless) sensor networks.
The proposal has valuable multidisciplinary aspects

Weaknesses
Research methodology is not adequately outlined and in particular there is a lack of detail on the activities that the applicant intends to deveop
The state-of-the-art should be more explicit and should also include EU contributions on the subject

Issues to be addressed when assigning an overall mark for this criterion:
- Scientific/technological quality, including any interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary aspects of the proposal
- Research methodology
- Originality and innovative nature of the project, and relationship to the 'state of the art' of research in the field
- Timeliness and relevance of the project

- Make sure novel, innovative and beyond state of the art
- Give more details about the methodology - be specific
- EU contribution is important
- Include references when describing state of the art

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Researcher - 1

Criterion 2. RESEARCHER	(Threshold 3.00/5.00)
	Mark: 4.50
Strengths *The researcher has a solid background in research.* *The scientific and technological aspects of previous research activities are of good quality* *The researcher shows independence and leadership qualities.* *There is a very good match between the researcher and the project.* *The researcher will positively benefit form the re-integration period.*	Weight: 0.30
Weaknesses *The competence of the applicant in project management is not demonstrated*	

Issues to be addressed when assigning an overall mark for this criterion:
- Research experience
- Scientific and technological quality of previous research
- Independent thinking and leadership qualities
- Match between the fellow's profile and project
- Benefit to the career of the researcher from the period of reintegration

- Don’t just list your jobs or summarize CV
- Emphasize projects / experience relevant to proposal topic
- Highlight key publications, accomplishments, collaborators
- Try to emphasize that you are the person Europe needs in the proposed research area.

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Researcher - 2

- Match between the fellow's profile and project
  - Summarize experience relevant to project; Research job (eg. RA,TA) in a relevant project
  - Published journals or attended conferences in the area
  - Coursework, Internships or industry experince in the area
  - Contacts / potential collaborators (both from EU or third country)

- Benefit to the career of the researcher from the period of integration
  - You can state that a motivating factor for returning to Europe was opportunities such as the Marie Curie IRG
  - State your ideals, vision
  - State how this grant can help you achieve those goals

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Implementation - 1

Criterion 3. IMPLEMENTATION	(Threshold 0.00/5.00)
Mark:	3.90
Weight:	0.20

Strengths
The research host is of good quality and has the necessary infrastructure for the project
Practical arrangements for the implementation and management of the project clearly outlined
Technical and administrative support will be available
Feasibility and credibility of the project is good

Weaknesses
The 3 years workplan is rather generic and the expected deliverables limited to progress reports
It remains unclear where the experimental activities will be carried out
The supervisor of the applicant has not been identified

Issues to be addressed when assigning an overall mark for this criterion:
- Quality of host organisation, including adequacy of infrastructures/facilities.
- Feasibility and credibility of the project, including work plan
- Management: Practical arrangements for the implementation and management of the scientific project

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Implementation -2

- Quality of host organization, including adequacy of infrastructures/facilities
  - Provide experience of host in relevant reserach area (any related previous project, research personnel that you could colloborate with)
  - Any existing international collaborations of the host
  - Capability to provide support to project (labs, personnel, equipment, facilities)
  - Project management experience of host (especially state if your host was part of an any EU project.)

- Practical arrangements for the implementation and management of the project
  - Details on how collaborations (within host, in Turkey, Europe and third country) will be pursued
  - Contribution to any European professional networks, conferences
  - Details about host support to project (including financial), a support letter from host might be beneficial
  - Academic qualifications of host personnel who can provide support
  - **Don’t forget to explicitly state who your supervisor(s) (scientist in charge) will be.**

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Impact -1

Criterion 4. IMPACT	(Threshold 0.00/5.00)
Mark:	4.40
Weight:	0.20

Strengths
The potential of transferring knowledge to host is high
There is capacity to develop lasting cooperation with the third country
The fellowship will contribute to scientific excellence by attracting a first class researcher
Contribution to European competitiveness is clear as the work proposed, aimed at addressing a key problem faced in remote sensing and distributed sensor networks, is of industrial relevance

Weaknesses
The absence of contacts with other EU research groups potentially limits the contribution to EU excellence

Issues to be addressed when assigning an overall mark for this criterion:
- Potential of transferring knowledge to host
- Capacity to developed lasting cooperation with the third country
- Contribution to scientific excellence by attracting first class researchers; or in the exceptional case where the researcher has already gained an employment position in Europe by producing a significant improvement in his/her employment condition or career prospects.
- Contribution to European excellence and European competitiveness
- Potential and quality of lasting professional integration (expected length of work contract, expected career development)

TOTAL	(Threshold 70.00/100.00)
Total:	85.40

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Impact -2

- Describe how you will positively effect the host institution
- Describe contacts with researchers in country and in EU
- Describe professional ties to third country and importantance of these in ensuring long relationship
  - Describe collaborative research visits and how IRG is critical to fund such collaboration
  - Obtain support letters from your third country colloborations
- State your research is important for Europe (you may reference open calls)
- Relationships and contacts with EU reserach groups are important for contribution to EU excellence

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Final Thoughts

- Emphasize contribution to EUROPE, not directly to TURKEY
- Have someone read your proposal.
- You may contact NCP for every question related to Marie Curie at every stage of the projects
- Be clear and emphasize your strong points in every part of the proposal
- Remember that all recommendations must be uploaded by the cutoff date (giving names not enough)
- Include support letters from your collaborators, both in-country, in-Europe, in third country and at host institution
  - These support letters are **optional and in addition to** the required 3 recommendations letters from colleagues overseas

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After you get accepted

- If your host is familiar with FP7, you are fine.
- Otherwise, both your host and you learn about obtaining PIC, LEAR etc. Request help from NCP.
- Negotiations and Agreement:
  - Be patient. It may take some time for the grant aggrement to be signed by both host and EC.
  - You may start implementing your project within the first 1 year after the grant is signed.
- So far, everthing has gone smoothly for me.

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Good Luck and Best wishes !