



**RÉPUBLIQUE
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« EU-DOCS FOR SMUCS » MSCA COFUND

Call for applications - Webinar

Tuesday 4th November 2025



Co-funded by
the European Union

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INTRODUCTION

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MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS

Part of **Horizon Europe**, the **MSCA** are the European Union's flagship **funding program** for **doctoral education** and **postdoctoral training of researchers**.

MSCA principles:

- + **Excellence**
- + **Mobility**
- + **Bottom-up and open to the world**
- + **Excellent recruitment, working conditions and inclusiveness**
- + **Effective supervision and career guidance**
- + **Open science and responsible research and innovation**
- + **European Green Deal**
- + **Synergies**

<< EU-DOCS FOR SMUCS >> – MSCA COFUND

The program is designed to provide **interdisciplinary training** for doctoral students, based on the combined strengths of its European and international partners, and involves the **joint supervision of theses** by La Rochelle Université and its academic partners.

Each doctoral student will benefit from **double supervision** and **a diploma awarded by two universities**.

Three fundamental principles:

- + **Cotutelles thesis**
- + **Excellence and interdisciplinarity**
- + **Transversal skills**

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All applications will first go through an eligibility check based on:

- + Compliance with the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie mobility rule**: applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in France for more than 12 months in the last three years before the call deadline.
- + Ability to prove a **master level**. Applicants already in possession of a PhD title are not eligible. Researchers who have successfully defended their doctoral thesis, but who have not yet formally been awarded the doctoral degree will not be eligible.

The applicants will be informed of their eligibility (completeness of application file, adherence to mobility rule, research level, adherence to security requirements) by e-mail after the call closure. Only eligible applicants will be evaluated at the 1st selection round.

HOW TO APPLY?

The application should be completed in **English** and submitted along with the **mandatory supporting documents**.

- + **Resume** (giving a detailed account on your marks, and assessment of your level of English) – max 5 pages
- + **Cover letter** – max 2 pages
- + **Proof of identity** (passport or ID card)
- + **Master's diploma** (or equivalent)
- + **Filled application form** (fully dated and signed)

Applications must be sent no later than **12th December 2025** at eudocs_cofund@univ-lr.fr

THESIS SUBJECTS

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LIST OF THESIS SUBJECTS

- + **1. Artificial intelligence-driven design and development of antimicrobial materials upon transductive/inductive graph neural network approaches for biomedical applications**
[Partner university:](#) [Catholic University of Valencia \(UCV\), Spain](#)
- + **2. Disentangling the influence of natural and man-made threats on prey-predator interactions in coastal ecosystems**
[Partner university:](#) [Bangor University, UK](#)
- + **3. Mechanisms of wild seal movements – a computational approach (SealMove)**
[Partner university:](#) [Rostock University \(UROS\), Germany](#)
- + **4. Public Water Management in Coastal Areas**
[Partner university:](#) [Rostock University \(UROS\), Germany](#)
- + **5. Fast simulation of particle flows for the next generation of green energy systems**
[Partner university:](#) [University of Seville \(USE\), Spain](#)
- + **6. Study of the mechanical behavior and stability of partially saturated heterogeneous soils on the seafloor**
[Partner university:](#) [University of Calgary \(UC\), Canada](#)
- + **7. Knowledge-Driven Generative AI for Precise Reconstruction of Coastal Historical Buildings via Digital Twin Modelling**
[Partner university:](#) [Technical Uni. of Civil Engineering of Bucharest \(UTCB\), Romania](#)
- + **8. Interactions between contaminants and parasitic helminths in coastal predators: insights from a declining population of common terns (ParaConT)**
[Partner university:](#) [University of Oldenburg \(UO\), Germany](#)

LIST OF THESIS SUBJECTS

- + **9. Multi-disciplinary knowledge management of Coastal Area publications**
[Partner university: University of Helsinki \(UH\), Finland](#)
- + **10. HYCOAST - Influence of grain boundaries in high-pressure HYdrogen COASTal storage materials for green hydrogen**
[Partner university: FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany](#)
- + **11. Towards Fair and Explainable Lightweight Multimodal Learning Models for Effective Document Understanding**
[Partner university: South East Technological University \(SETU\), Ireland](#)

TIMETABLE

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The project timetable is designed to ensure that:

- + The thesis does not exceed **36 months**.
- + The doctoral student spends a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of **9 months** at the **academic partner**.
- + The doctoral student spends **3 months** on secondment with a **non-academic partner**.

Each thesis must include a **3-month secondment at a non-academic partner**, during which doctoral students will be able to:

- Experience SmUCS challenges from a practical perspective in a working environment related to their field of activity.
- Present the research activity to the host organization, sharing potential solutions and having the opportunity to reflect with stakeholders on how this can meet their future needs (impact and dissemination activities).
- Contribute to any ongoing reflection within the structure in relation to their field of research.

YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT BY PROPOSING YOUR OWN THESIS TOPIC?

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You'll need to identify:

- + Your co-supervisor at **La Rochelle Université**
- + Your co-supervisor (outside La Rochelle Université)

Feel free to use the [RIIS platform](#) to help you identify EU-CONEXUS researchers ready to co-supervise your thesis, or contact the [EU-CONEXUS Project Development Support Office](#).

- + The **non-academic partner** with whom you will be seconded for a period of 3 months

Non-academic partners can be chosen from the list of EU-DOCS for SmUCS project partners. This list may be extended depending on the relevance of the secondment to the thesis topic. If you need help identifying a non-academic partner, please contact: eudocs_cofund@univ-lr.fr or campusinnov@univ-lr.fr.

SUBJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- + Theses must be **co-supervised** by a **researcher attached to a La Rochelle Université research unit** and a **researcher attached to a foreign university capable of awarding a doctoral degree**.
- + Alignment of the subject with the program's objectives: **quality of the subject**, response to the challenges of the [Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability](#) (SmUCS)
- + **Quality of supervision** provided by co-supervisors (approval from doctoral schools and research laboratories)
- + **Compliance with EU rules** on research ethics and **response to SmUCS challenges**
- + Identification of a **non-academic partner** or a specific company/professional field for the secondment

TIMELINE

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TIMELINE

- + **13 October – 12 December 2025: Call for applications** 2 months
- + **December 2025: Eligibility check** 1 month
- + **January – April 2026: Peer review** (reviewers identified by the European Science Foundation) 3 months
 - 2 independent international reviewers with on-topic expertise
 - 2 final marks over 100 – ranking of all candidates
 - PC – first ~20 candidates invite to an interview + provision of feedbacks (2 reports issued by ESF)
- + **End of April – beginning May 2026: Interviews by the Interview committee** 4 days
- + **June 2026: Funding list & decision**
 - Approval of the Steering Committee
 - Contract Establishment by HR
- + **September 2026:** Recruitment of the PhD students
- + **Beginning of the thesis in La Rochelle Université (France)**

INTERVIEWS

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- + Each member of the interview committee will provide an assessment based on **100** with four criteria (each being on 25):
 - Quality of the presentation and communication skills
 - Motivation
 - Interest and relevance of the SmUCS challenges addressed
 - Quality of the research project

- + The HR for research manager will prepare the **interview report**, with comments and score (average of the marks of the 6 members of the Interview Committee).

JURY MEMBERS

+ 3 international experts

+ 4 internal members

- A representative of **LRUniv Doctoral School**
- A representative of **EU-CONEXUS PhD programme**
- The two **co-supervisors** of the thesis (giving one common mark)

+ 1 representative of LRUniv HR for research team



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