

HORIZON 2020

PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION



IMPROVE-PD
New frontiers in  **Peritoneal Dialysis**

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

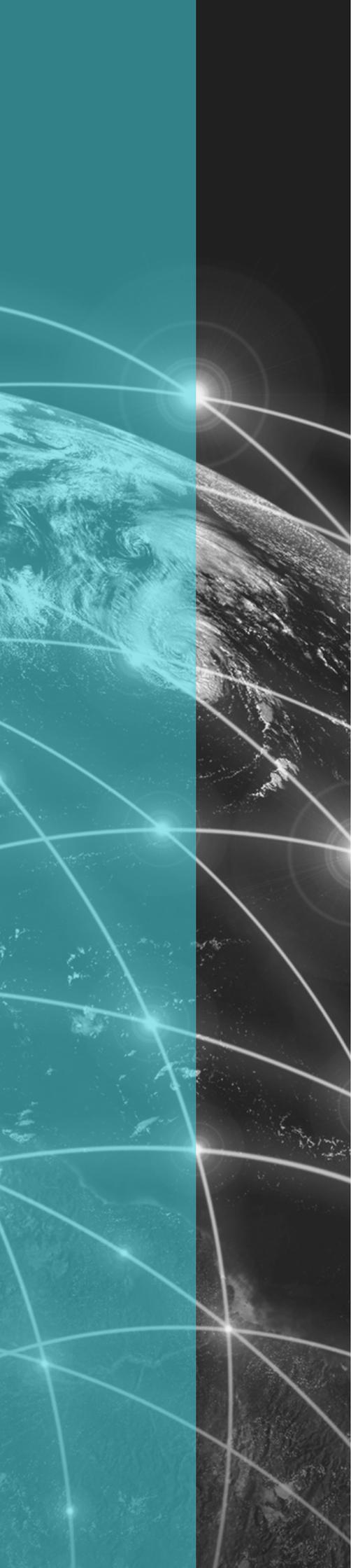
DEADLINE
June 10, 2019



IN SHORT

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

- Project's full title: Identification and Management of Patients at Risk – Outcome and Vascular Events in Peritoneal Dialysis
- Funding programme: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks- European Training Networks. Horizon 2020. European Union
- Vacancies: 15 Early Stage Researchers (ESR) will be hired for 36 months
- Deadline of the call: candidates can submit their application forms up to June 10, 2019
- Starting date of the ESR contracts: July-September 2019
- Consortium: 11 hosting organisations from Spain, United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Austria, Germany and The Netherlands
- Coordinating institution: Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Spain)
- Selection process based on the combination of local and European decision-making levels



INTRODUCTION

IMPROVE-PD is a project funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme under the initiative Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks.

IMPROVE-PD's main aim is to connect leading academic and industrial researchers who will collaborate in the shared goal of understanding the mechanisms of inflammation-driven cardiovascular disease in Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) patients, developing individualized approaches to identify those at risk, and testing new therapies in them.

IMPROVE-PD will offer 15 young scientists (Early Stage Researchers, ESRs) the possibility to work in close partnership with 22 institutions located in 9 different countries in an excellent, multidisciplinary and intersectoral pan-European PhD-level training programme delivered by outstanding academic, clinical and industrial stakeholders.

Network-wide and local training activities including academies and satellite modules associated with large nephrology conferences, combined with individual research projects, intersectoral secondments and short laboratory visits, will provide key generic skills including valorisation, entrepreneurship and intellectual property management and will prepare ESRs for future roles as highly skilled research leaders in Europe.

MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE - ITN

The purpose of “Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (ITN-ETN)” is to train a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial and innovative early-stage researchers, able to face current and future challenges and to convert knowledge and ideas into products and services for economic and social benefit.

The projects funded by this Programme aim to raise excellence and structure research and doctoral training, extending the traditional academic research training setting, and equipping researchers with the right combination of research-related and transferable competences. They will provide enhanced career perspectives in both the academic and non-academic sectors through international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility combined with an innovation-oriented mind-set.

The scope of the “Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (ITN-ETN)” Programme is to hire & train ESRs, to exploit complementary competences of the participants, and to enable networking activities through the organisation of workshops and

conferences to facilitate sharing of knowledge, new skills acquisition and the career development of researchers.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The IMPROVE-PD consortium for the first time unifies the large PD registries and biorepositories available worldwide, in order to characterise the PD patient's clinical, social and treatment-related risk profile. Previously unexplored molecular pathways will be addressed, based on recent findings of consortium members concerning characterization of the PD patient population and peritoneal/systemic inflammation-immune response patterns.

The expertise of the consortium will be used to test new targeted therapies such as innovative PD fluid additives reducing inflammation, led by an SME which successfully conducted a phase II trial for such a novel PD fluid, supported by an SME specialised in drug target discovery as well as the leading manufacturers of PD solutions.

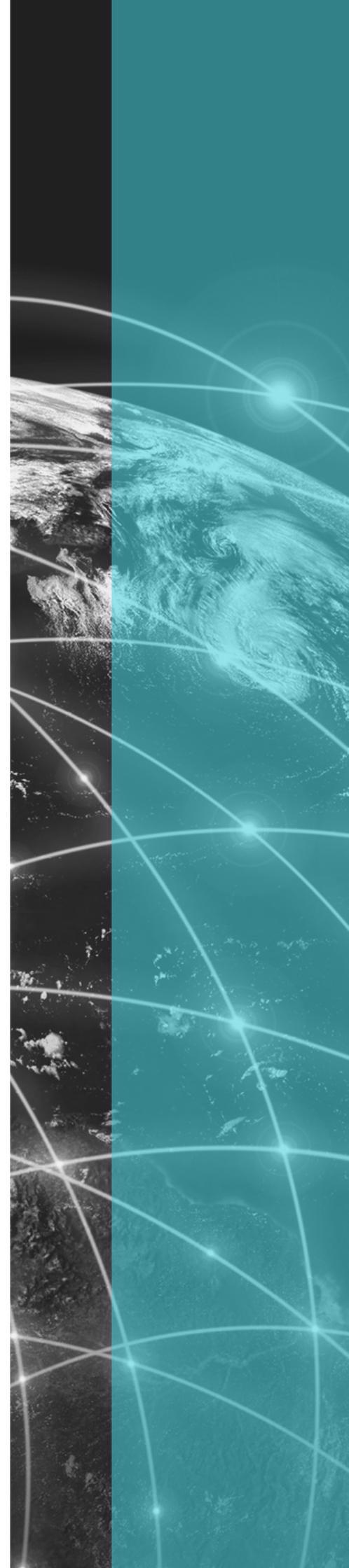
IMPROVE-PD aims to reduce inflammation-related cardiovascular disease and mortality in PD patients by enabling tailored medicine approaches targeted to the individual characteristics of the patient. To achieve this, the consortium will:

1. Identify the patient at risk who will benefit from individualizing therapy, by comprehensively evaluating established international PD patient cohorts and bio-repositories for known and novel markers of inflammation and adverse outcomes.
2. Develop mechanistic understanding of how perturbation of local and systemic inflammatory-immune response leads to adverse cardiovascular outcomes, using state-of-the-art models, together with relevant samples from patients.
3. Perform early phase testing of new therapies, improving evaluation of anti-inflammatory/immune modulatory PD fluids and additives, and mechanistic work on their effects, using biomaterial from relevant experimental models and samples from patients.

MEMBERS OF THE CONSORTIUM

The whole consortium is formed by 22 organisations being the following ones the hosting entities which will directly hire ESRs:

1. Universitaets-Klinikum Heidelberg. Germany
2. University of Keele. United Kingdom
3. INSERM Nancy Clinical Investigation Centre. France



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4. Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Spain
 5. Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Spain
 6. Université Catholique de Louvain. Belgium
 7. Cardiff University. United Kingdom
 8. Amsterdam University Medical Center. The Netherlands
 9. Zytotec GmbH. Austria
 10. Baxter Healthcare. Austria
 11. epsilon 3. Austria

ESRs will be able to apply for secondments in the following organisations, also members of the consortium:

1. Dutch Kidney Foundation. The Netherlands
2. The European Peritoneal Dialysis Association. United Kingdom
3. Fresenius Medical Care. Germany
4. Kidney Research UK. United Kingdom
5. Medical University of Vienna. Austria
6. Servicio Madrileño de Salud- Instituto de Investigación del Hospital Universitario La Paz. Spain
7. University of Ghent. Belgium
8. Renal Registry UK. United Kingdom
9. Australia/New Zealand Renal Registry. Australia
10. Poznan University of Medical Science. Poland
11. Institut de Recerca Biomèdica de Lleida. Spain

DESCRIPTION OF THE VACANCIES

15 ESRs vacancies will be filled on the research field of peritoneal dialysis and cardiovascular related effects.

Early stage researchers (ESRs) will be hired under a full-time contract with a duration of 36 months at one of the 11 hosting institutions.

The salary rate for the ESRs is the one established by the European Commission according to the country hosting each ESR. Researchers will also receive a mobility allowance and, if some requirements are met, a family allowance.

The research of ESRs would preferably lead to the awarding of a PhD in scientific domains relevant to the topic of the IMPROVE-PD project.

ESRs will have both a supervisor and a co-supervisor as well as industrial and academic mentors. ESRs will be trained through a structured and comprehensive learning programme and will participate in national and international training events and conferences.

All ESRs will spend time not only at the hosting institution but also in secondments in the facilities of other partners (research institutions, universities and companies) participating in the consortium.

ELIGIBLE CRITERIA

Early-Stage Researchers can be from any nationality.

They must, at the date of recruitment by the hosting organisation (expected in July-September 2019), be in the first 4 years of their research careers (full-time equivalent research experience*) and have not been awarded a doctoral degree.

Mobility Rule: researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date.

Compulsory national service, short stays such as holidays, and time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention are not taken into account.

*Full-Time Equivalent Research Experience is measured from the date when the 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).

ESR PROJECTS

Candidates can apply to become Early Stage Researchers in the following projects:

ESR1

Project Title: Longitudinal Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) risk profiling and cardiovascular (CV) outcome analysis.

Hosting organisation: Universitaets-Klinikum Heidelberg

Location: Heidelberg (Germany)

ESR2

Project Title: The peritoneal and vascular histology, transcriptome and proteome in uraemia and PD.

Hosting organisation: Universitaets-Klinikum Heidelberg

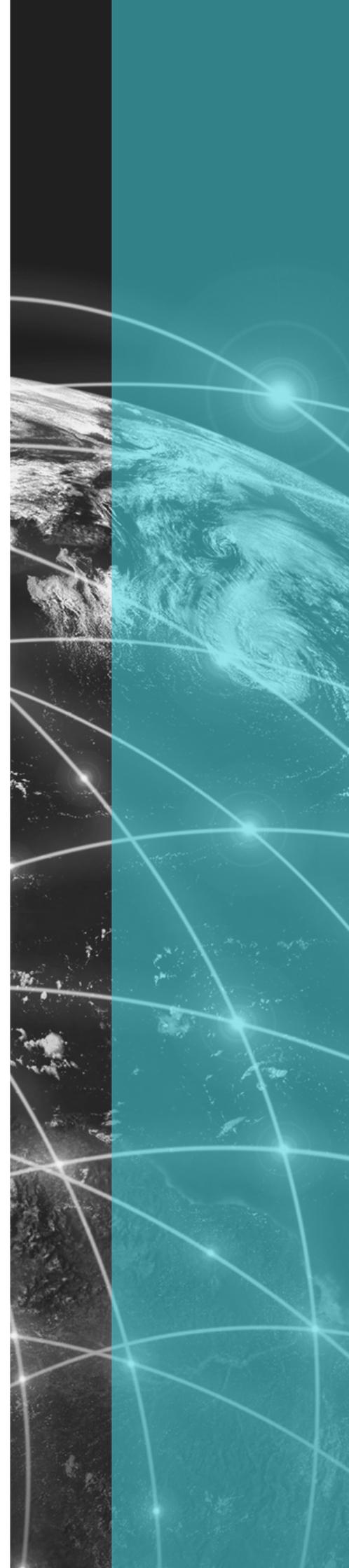
Location: Heidelberg (Germany)

ESR3

Project Title: Inter-relationship of intraperitoneal inflammasome to systemic inflammatory response, hypoalbuminaemia and worsening cardiovascular and hydration status.

Hosting organisation: University of Keele

Location: Keele (United Kingdom)



ESR4

Project Title: Developing a pro-fibrotic cardiovascular disease fingerprint associated with CV outcomes in PD.

Hosting organisation: INSERM Nancy Clinical Investigation Centre

Location: Nancy (France)

ESR5

Project Title: Evaluation of mesothelial to mesenchymal transition (MMT)-biomarkers in peritoneal dialysis (PD) and in cardiovascular disease (CVD)

Hosting organisation: Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Centro de Biología Molecular Severo Ochoa

Location: Madrid (Spain)

ESR6

Project Title: Humoral factors communicating peritoneal to systemic inflammation and cardiovascular disease.

Hosting organisation: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Location: Madrid (Spain)

ESR7

Project Title: The role of the peritoneal barrier in controlling the local-systemic inflammatory link.

Hosting organisation: Université Catholique de Louvain

Location: Belgium (Brussels)

ESR8

Project Title: Mechanisms of cardiovascular damage following bacterial peritonitis.

Hosting organisation: Cardiff University

Location: Cardiff (United Kingdom)

ESR9

Project Title: Hyaluronan (HA)-regulation of vascular smooth muscle cell phenotype in peritoneal dialysis.

Hosting organisation: Cardiff University

Location: Cardiff (United Kingdom)

ESR10

Project Title: Impact of local inflammation on progression of vascular calcification and uremic cardiomyopathy.

Hosting organisation: Amsterdam University Medical Center

Location: Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

ESR11

Project Title: The Role of the Microbiome for Cardiovascular Risk and the Mode-of-Action of a Novel Dipeptide containing PD Fluid.

Hosting organisation: Zytotec GmbH

Location: Vienna (Austria)

ESR12

Project Title: From Mechanism to First-in-Human Application - Cardiovascular Effects of a Novel Kinase-Inhibitor-containing Cytoprotective PD Fluid.

Hosting organisation: Zytoprotec GmbH

Location: Vienna (Austria)

ESR13

Project Title: Preclinical study of a novel peritoneal dialysis fluid based on Stevioside as osmotic agent.

Hosting organisation: Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Centro de Biología Molecular Severo Ochoa

Location: Madrid (Spain)

ESR14

Project Title: Translation of research into development of a commercial PD fluid.

Hosting organisation: Baxter Healthcare

Location: Vienna (Austria)

ESR15

Project Title: Using big data from the public domain for in-silico screening compounds with therapeutic potential in PD.

Hosting organisation: epsilon 3

Location: Vienna (Austria)

For more information on each ESR project, please visit www.improvepd.eu

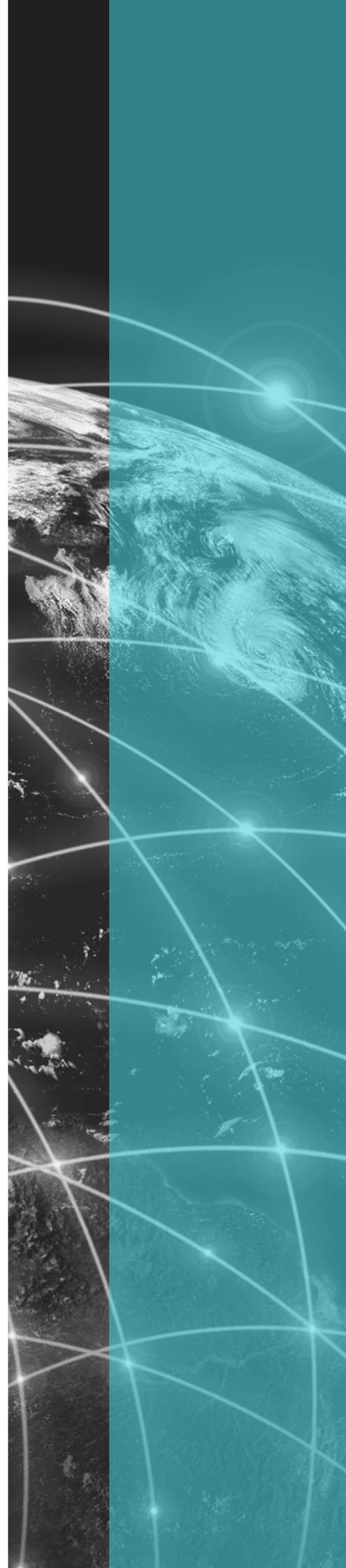
SELECTION PROCEDURE

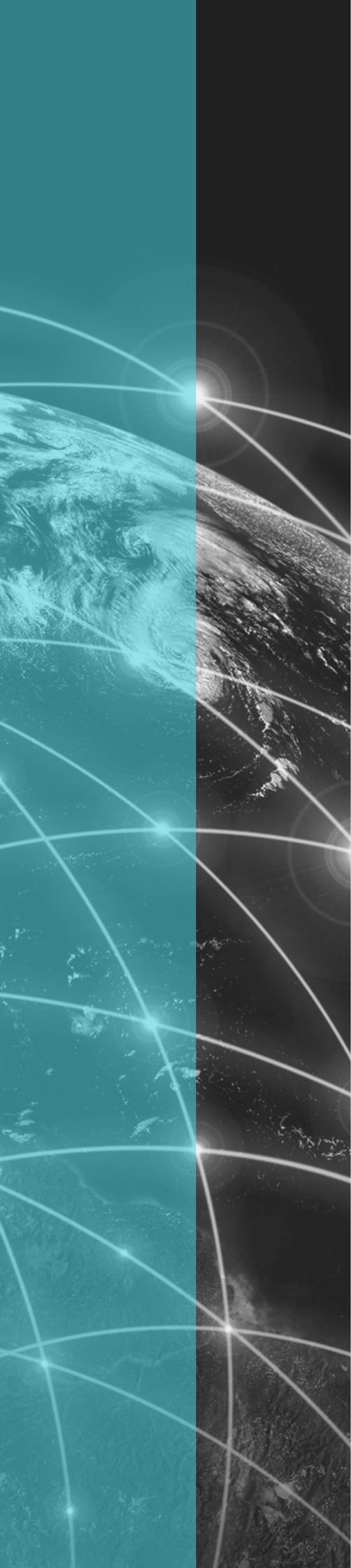
The candidates will be assessed and selected by each hosting organisation based on common rules set in this international call as well as in the European and national applicable legislation.

A Local Evaluation Committee in each hosting organisation will assess the candidates for each ESR project. All applications will be evaluated and scored. Face-to-face and online interviews with the candidates with higher score will allow to make the final decision.

All pre-selected candidates will be assessed by an International Evaluation Committee. This Committee will verify the eligibility and relevance of all the candidates.

Finally, each Local Evaluation Committee will select the final candidate in each organisation.





In sum, the candidates will be assessed and selected locally following the common procedure set in the international call and with the verification of all the candidates by an International Evaluation Committee.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE & DEADLINE

Interested eligible candidates will submit the application form available in the project website: www.improvepd.eu

The application form has to be completed in English and submitted by June 10, 2019, together with a Curriculum Vitae.

During the assessment process, the candidates can be requested to provide with more information and documentation.

Those candidates with a higher score will be also invited to participate in face-to-face and/or online interviews.

The application form must be submitted via email to the following email address: applications@improvepd.eu

Application forms and CVs will be distributed to the hosting organisations responsible for the ESR project in which the candidates are interested in.

Candidates may apply for one or more ESR vacancies by mentioning it in the application form, up to a maximum of 3 ESR projects applied by the same candidate.

Candidates may contact at call@improvepd.eu in case they have questions about the process and the ESR projects.

For more information, you can download:

[Marie Skłodowska-Curie Guide for applicants](#)

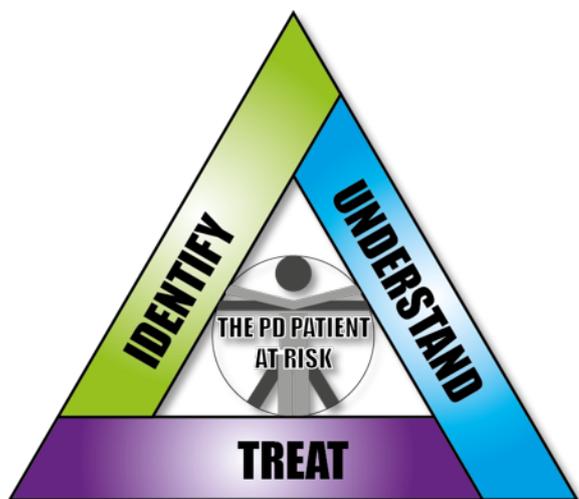
[Marie Skłodowska-Curie Work Programme](#)

Final notice:

This document describes the guidelines agreed by the consortium of the IMPROVE-PD project to hire ESRs, but it is not considered an official document since the process for hiring the candidates will be done locally by each beneficiary of the project, according to national applicable regulation. Furthermore, the content of this document does not reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

ACTION FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

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