



Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Network  
RESCUE

Guide for Applicants

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1 June 2026

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## 1. About MSCA Doctoral Networks

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Networks are part of the Horizon Europe programme. They provide high-quality doctoral training through international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary research projects. Doctoral Candidates (DCs) are employed full-time for 36 months, enrolled in a doctoral programme, and benefit from attractive salaries, mobility opportunities, and comprehensive social security coverage.

## 2. About the RESCUE Project

[RESCUE](#) (Remediation Enhanced by Subsurface Characterisation & monitoring Using geophysical Evaluation) addresses the urgent challenge of soil and groundwater contamination across Europe. By integrating non-invasive geophysical methods with advanced remediation technologies, RESCUE bridges environmental engineering and geophysics to support sustainable remediation. The network spans topics from fundamental understanding of contaminant behaviour and geophysical signatures, through high-resolution site characterisation, to monitoring contamination and remediation processes, and socio-economic, legal and sustainability assessment. RESCUE aims to train a new generation of highly employable researchers capable of transforming remediation practice in Europe.

The project starts on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2026 and lasts for 4 years.

## 3. Structure of the Doctoral Programme

Each of the 15 Doctoral Candidates will be recruited for 36 months (or 48 months in some cases). The programme includes local doctoral training at the host institution, network-wide activities and training events, interdisciplinary research collaboration, and multiple secondments to academic and non-academic partners across Europe. Secondments are an integral part of the programme and require international mobility.

## 4. Open PhD Positions

RESCUE is offering 15 PhD positions hosted by leading European universities and research institutes. Each position is embedded in a supervisory team and includes secondments. Applicants may apply for up to three positions, ranking them in order of preference. A detailed overview of each position (title, host institution, supervisors, objectives, expected results, secondments) is provided on the [RESCUE website](#).

## 5. Who Can Apply – Eligibility Criteria

Applicants of any nationality are welcome, provided they meet all MSCA eligibility criteria:

- 1) they must hold a relevant Master's degree or equivalent at the time of recruitment;

- 2) they must not hold a doctoral degree at the time of recruitment;
- 3) they must comply with the MSCA mobility rule, i.e. not have resided or carried out their main activity in the country of the recruiting institution for more than 12 months in the 36 months prior to recruitment. Compulsory national service, short stays such as holidays and time spent by the researcher as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention are not taken into account;
- 4) they must fulfil the academic requirements for enrolment in the doctoral programme of the host institution;
- 5) they must have sufficient English proficiency in both writing and speaking (min. B2-upper intermediate).

## 6. Application Procedure

Applying is done exclusively via the application form on the [RESCUE website](#). Candidates may apply for up to three positions. Candidates will have to upload proof of English proficiency, undergraduate and graduate transcripts and a curriculum vitae. They will also provide contact details of 2 references. Only complete applications submitted before the deadline will be considered.

Timeline:

- Vacancies posting: 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2026
- Deadline for application: 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2026, 23:59 CET
- Inviting pre-selected candidates for interviews: 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2026
- Interviews: 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2026, Ghent (Belgium) or online
- Final selection: 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2026
- Expected starting date: between November 2026 and January 2027

## 7. Selection and Recruitment Process

Pre-selection based on MSCA eligibility criteria will be carried out centrally by Ghent University. Eligible applications will be sent to the respective supervisors, who will make a shortlist of the 3 best candidates per position against predefined criteria:

- Academic excellence and research potential;
- Relevance of background;
- Motivation and capacity for interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research;
- Communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills;
- English proficiency and compliance with MSCA mobility rules.

These candidates will be invited for an interview on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> of September in Ghent (Belgium). Candidates are encouraged to attend the interview in person, but online interviews will also be

possible. In case of in person presence, selected candidates will be offered the possibility to have their travel and accommodation costs reimbursed (up to max. EUR 250). Interviews will be conducted by a selection committee per Work Package, consisting of representatives from the recruiting institution, at least one external co-supervisor and at least one representative of a non-academic partner in the consortium. Interviews will follow a harmonised and bias-aware procedure. Final decisions will be validated by the Recruitment Committee.

After the final selection, candidates will be contacted by their respective recruiting institution to start the formalities for the recruitment and PhD enrolment.

The aim is that all candidates start between November 2026 and January 2027, so they can attend the kick-off meeting in Ghent that will normally take place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of January.

## 8. Employment Conditions

Successful candidates will be recruited under full-time employment contracts in accordance with MSCA regulations and national legislation. Contracts include social security, pension rights and parental leave. Doctoral Candidates will receive a remuneration package that comprises a **living allowance** (EUR 4 010, multiplied with the [country correction coefficient](#) of the hosting institution's country), a **mobility allowance** (EUR 710), and, where applicable, a **family allowance** (EUR 660). The above amounts correspond to the gross employer salary and are subject to national taxes and deductions applicable in the host institution's country. Additional support, including a Special Needs Allowance, may be granted in duly justified cases.

The guaranteed PhD funding is for 36 months (i.e. EC funding, additional funding is possible depending on the host institution). In addition to their individual scientific projects, all candidates will benefit from further continuing education, which includes secondments, a variety of training modules as well as transferable skills courses and active participation in workshops and conferences.

## 9. Equal Opportunities and Ethics

RESCUE is committed to equal opportunities, gender equality, and diversity. The recruitment process follows the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The selection procedure is designed to ensure transparency, fairness and avoidance of bias.

## 10. Data Protection

Personal data will be processed solely for recruitment purposes and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data will be handled confidentially by Ghent University and shared with consortium partners only where necessary for evaluation.

## 11. Further Information

Specific questions about the PhD projects can be addressed to the respective supervisors, more general questions about the selection procedure to the RESCUE coordination team at Ghent University. Contact details are available on the project website.

## 12. Relevant Documents

- [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025; Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions \(European Commission Decision C\(2025\) 2779 of 14 May 2025\)](#)
- [Information note for Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellows in doctoral networks](#)
- [The European Code of Conduct for research Integrity \(revised edition 2023\)](#)
- [The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#)