



Innovation in Vision Research Postdoctoral Training Network

Appendices for Applicants

The deadline for completed applications is:

October 5, 2026 4:00pm IRISH TIME

Applications submitted after this time will result in applications being deemed ineligible.

Please read the Terms and Conditions and Guide for Applicants on the INNOVISION website, as well as this document, thoroughly, prior to submission.

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Appendix 1: Application Process and General Information

General Information

The Application Template on the INNOVISION website is part of the overall application, and must be uploaded into the online application form linked on the website. In addition to this document, you must submit the listed documents in the Guide for Applicants, which include:

- Applicant CV (Dora Compliant, max 5 pages)
- Your Ethics Self Assessment (use the Guide to your Ethics Self Assessment and Sex/Gender Dimension in Research for support)
- Your Budget Proposal (max 1 page, template provided)
- Main Supervisor CV (Dora Compliant, max 3 pages)
- Co-Supervisor/Seconding Supervisor CVs (up to 3 additional supervisors may be listed in the application. Dora compliant, max 2 pages)
- Supervisor Endorsement Forms (for each listed Main, co-, and seconding supervisor)
- ***Additional: If selecting a secondment supervising organization not currently listed on the INNOVISION website, you must also include a "Secondment Agreement Form".***
- ***Optional: A 1-page personal statement which may include information not already specified in the application. Template is available on the INNOVISION Website.***

All forms, documents, templates, and guides are available on the INNOVISION website.

Additional information will be requested within the Portal, which you must enter in adhering to word limits set. An indicative word document for this (INDICATIVE APPLICATION TEMPLATE Part 1) is available on the INNOVISION website, but should not be used for the actual application. This is a guide to help you prepare for the information being requested to assess your eligibility for the application.

The application portal is structured so that you enter your personal information first, followed by uploading the required documents. The portal will tell you if you are meant to enter information directly into the text boxes available, or if an upload is required. Please only submit the required documents for your application. Additional documents will not be considered.

Please note that a guide to the online application system is provided as a separate document, available on the INNOVISION website (Guide for Applicants).

The final stage of submitting your application is confirming your agree to the Privacy Statement and that all information provided is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

Selecting your Supervisor(s):

Main Supervisors must be selected from the official list of eligible supervisors provided on the INNOVISION website, and this list is limited to those based at the three recruiting organisations: South East Technological University, Experimentica, or the University of Iceland. Main supervisors must provide a Dora Compliant CV (Max 3 pages) which emphasizes their alignment to the proposed project, and the Supervisor Endorsement Form.

Applicants should contact their proposed Main Supervisor as early in the process as possible to confirm their interest in taking on the proposed project.

Co-Supervisors may be selected from any department or area within the recruiting organisation selected for your proposal (up to 2 co-supervisors). They must also agree to participate in the programme and are required to submit both the Dora Compliant CV (Max 2 pages) and the Supervisor Endorsement form.

Your Main Supervisor and your Co-supervisors may help you establish key points in your project, but ultimately INNOVISION is a bottom-up style application. As such, the applicant should propose the research project, and supervisors should only be responsible for supporting the application.

Seconding Supervisor: Though it is not required at the time of application, it is highly encouraged that INNOVISION applicants identify a proposed seconding host for at least one, and up to nine, months of their contract. The INNOVISION website includes a non-exhaustive list of available secondment hosts and supervisors. Secondments should be one, two, or all three, of the following:

- International (not in the same country as the recruiting organization)
- Interdisciplinary (if your main work is in pharmaceutical chemistry, your secondment may be in public health, for example.)
- Intersectoral (either recruited to Industry, and second to a university, or vice versa)

Secondment Supervisors must provide a CV (Dora Compliant, max 2 pages) and a Seconding Supervisor Endorsement Form. For proposed secondments at institutions or organisations not currently listed on the INNOVISION website, a Secondment Agreement Form is also required at the time of application.

Academic qualifications and Applicant Eligibility

Applicants with degrees awarded outside the EU must demonstrate that their qualifications are equivalent to the Horizon Europe requirements of a doctoral degree (PhD) or at least four years of full-time research experience. Equivalency should be established in reference to recognised frameworks such as the [European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#) and the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Applicants will be asked to indicate the corresponding level and award type in the application form. To support this process, resources such as the Quality and Qualifications Ireland/NARIC Foreign Qualifications Database or the EQF–NFQ comparison document may be used. Applicants may also seek guidance from the International Office (or equivalent) of their awarding institution, or from the International Office of their proposed host organization.

Examination results, qualification names and other information entered included in the Applicant CV must correspond exactly with information provided on relevant official transcripts/parchments/diploma supplements. In particular, applicants should not convert examination results into another grading system, such as GPA. Successful applicants will be required to provide official certified transcripts/parchments/diploma supplements before awards are confirmed. If the language of a transcript/parchment/diploma supplement is not English, successful applicants will be required to provide an English translation.

If the language of a transcript/parchment/diploma supplement is not English, the name of the degree and overall result if expressed verbally/in non-numerical format (such as, for example, “mention très honorable avec félicitations du jury” or “отлично/otlichno”) must be provided in the language of the transcript/parchment/diploma supplement as well as in English. It is not sufficient to provide only English translation/equivalent of the name of the degree or result.

In case of discrepancies between results provided in the application form and those on an official document, offers of awards may be withdrawn.

Mobility Rule:

Applicants may not have resided or carried out their main activity (research, work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting organization for more than twelve months in the previous 36 months immediately prior to the **deadline of the call (in this case, October 5, 2026)**. Please note that this is not the anticipated start date of the fellowship (which is anticipated in Q1 2027.) The INNOVISION Management Team may request proof of your eligibility aligned to the mobility rule during the eligibility check or throughout any stage of the application process.

English language competency:

INNOVISION fellows must be able to communicate to the requisite standard through the English language. A statement confirming same by the main host institution will be required as part of the verification of the application.

As a guide, the minimum expected level of English language competency is level C1 on the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\)](#) scale. Applicants should undertake a self -assessment of their English language competency using the framework before completing the application form. The CEFR self -assessment grid is available here . For the purposes of the scheme, the scale has been expanded to include an additional "native speaker" option.

If English is your second/additional language and you have undertaken an internationally recognized English language exam/test (including but not limited to TOEFL, IELTS or PTE), you can provide details of your exam/test in the application form. Please note that the INNOVISION Management Team reserves the right to request evidence of your exam/test result after the application deadline. Applicants should therefore only include information about such English language exams/tests for which they can provide the relevant documentary evidence. In case of discrepancies between exam/test results provided in the application form and those on an official document, or where applicants are unable to provide the relevant documentary evidence if required by the IRC, offers of awards may be withdrawn.

Fellowship proposal abstract and lay abstract of proposed research

You will be required to provide an abstract of your fellowship proposal (to include research as well as career development and training aspects of the proposed fellowship) and a lay abstract of proposed research. It is important to note differences between the two abstracts, in particular that the former covers all key aspects of the proposal while the

latter should be formulated for the purposes of non-expert audiences and should focus solely on the proposed research.

Note also that elsewhere in the application form, applicants are required to indicate the 'primary area', discipline' and 'other research area' under which their proposed research programme fits (see Appendix IV for further information on Research Classification, and the document Research Characterisation, available on the INNOVISION Website).

Proposed Project Description and Definitions:

The project description will feature Excellence, Impact, and Implementation sections. All tables, figures, references, and any other element pertaining to these sections must be uploaded in the main document PDF for these sections. Total length cannot be more than 10 pages, including references.

DEFINITIONS

Deliverable: A report that is sent to the Commission or Agency providing information to ensure effective monitoring of the project. There are several types of deliverables (e.g., a report on specific activities or results, data management plans, ethics, or security requirements).

Impacts: Wider long-term effects on society (including the environment), the economy and science, enabled by the outcomes of R&I investments (long term). Impacts generally occur sometime after the end of the project. Example: The deployment of the advanced forecasting system enables each airport to increase maximum passenger capacity by 15% and passenger average throughput by 10%, leading to a 28% reduction in infrastructure expansion costs.

Milestone: Control points in the project that help to chart progress. Milestones may correspond to the achievement of a key result, allowing the next phase of the work to begin. They may also be needed at intermediary points so that, if problems have arisen, corrective measures can be taken. A milestone may be a critical decision point in the project where, for example, the consortium must decide which of several technologies to adopt for further development. The achievement of a milestone should be verifiable.

Objectives: The goals of the work performed within the project, in terms of its research and innovation content. This will be translated into the project's results. These may range from tackling specific research questions, demonstrating the feasibility of an innovation, sharing knowledge among stakeholders on specific issues. The nature of the objectives will depend on the type of action, and the scope of the topic.

Outcomes: The expected effects, over the medium term, of projects supported under a given topic. The results of a project should contribute to these outcomes, fostered in particular by the dissemination and exploitation measures. This may include the uptake, diffusion, deployment, and/or use of the project's results by direct target groups. Outcomes generally occur during or shortly after the end of the project. Example: European airports adopt the advanced forecasting system demonstrated during the project. Research output: Results generated by the action to which access can be given in the form of scientific publications, data or other engineered outcomes and processes such as software, algorithms, protocols, and electronic notebooks.

Results: What is generated during the project implementation. This may include, for example, know-how, innovative solutions, algorithms, proof of feasibility, new business models, policy recommendations, guidelines, prototypes, demonstrators, databases and datasets, trained researchers, new infrastructures, networks, etc. Most project results (inventions, scientific works, etc.) are 'Intellectual Property,' which may, if appropriate, be protected by formal 'Intellectual Property Rights.' Example: Successful large-scale demonstrator: trial with 3 airports of an advanced forecasting system for proactive airport passenger flow management.

Section Specific Details for your Application Form (Max 10 pages, inclusive of figures, + one page GANTT Chart and up to 2 pages of References)

Excellence: In the Excellence section, applicants will need to describe how their project relates to vision health and the global crises of sight loss. Applicants should detail the proposed research design and methodology that will be employed and the impact of their research on society. Applicants must also refer to the benefits of 'programme wide' training.

Impact In the Impact section, applicants should provide a description of plans for the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. This may include, for example, gaining research skills and techniques, enhancing communication skills, developing research management experience, networking, and other transferable skills during the period of the fellowship. Applicants should also detail how the fellowship will enable the acquisition of skills relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector. Applicants will be required to explain how being involved in the INNOVISION COFUND will impact their career. The Vitae website and Researcher Development Framework is an excellent career development resource that you may find useful when preparing your career impact statement.

An outline of how the fellowship will enable the applicant to acquire competencies that improve the prospects of reinforcing a position of professional maturity, diversity and independence should also be included. The application should also include proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results, both in academic and non - academic settings, and proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences.

Implementation: In the Implementation section, applicants will need to detail a timeline for carrying out their proposed research, and upload a GANTT chart, using a template that includes INNOVISION COFUND training events. Please consult the Horizon Europe MSCA PF Guide for Applicants for further information on the criteria for completing the Excellence, Impact and Implementation sections.

Information that may be included in your DORA Compliant CV (Max 5 pages)

Research Awards: Applicants can include any research awards or recognition received in their DORA Compliant CV.

Relevant work experience: Please provide details of your relevant work experience in reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent post. Include details of, for example, any postdoctoral research, research assistant posts, relevant teaching posts and/or enterprise employment.

Breaks in your research career: Applicants can provide details of any periods of leave from research (for example, due to parental leave, long -term absence through illness or working in industry).

Publications & other research outputs: Applicants can provide details of their top five (most significant) peer-reviewed publications (including peer-reviewed journals, articles, books, book chapters etc.) and details of other publications or research outputs as long as the entire document is within the 5 page limit (e.g. non-peer-reviewed publications, research awards achieved, creation of data sets and databases, conference papers, patents, excavations, public broadcasts, stage performances, creative writing (such as novels or poetry), creative productions, exhibitions, etc.).

Professional achievements: This section provides the applicant with an opportunity to outline key contributions made as a researcher. These could include, but are not limited to, academic activities and/or support; contributions to individuals or teams and collaboration; engagement outside the academy including policy engagement and knowledge exchange; contributions supporting an improved environment and culture for researchers, including Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Additional Documents:

Ethics and Sex/Gender Dimension in Research Self-Assessment: Applicants are required to carefully consider the ethical implications of their proposed fellowship. As specified in the INNOVISION Terms and Conditions, INNOVISION is subject to ethical requirements applicable under Horizon Europe. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with all relevant documentation, including rules and procedures in place in their proposed host institutions as relevant.

Where ethical issues may arise in the research, applicants are required to submit to the INNOVISION Ethics Review Committee a written statement that full consideration has been given to the ethical implication of the research proposal as part of their self-assessment.

Full ethical approval from the relevant HEI/RPO Ethics Committee is not required at the application stage. However, if the application is successful, evidence of full ethical approval will be required before activities for which ethical approval is needed commence, but no later than 3 months after the start date of the fellowship.

It is the applicants' responsibility to identify any potential ethics issues, to handle the ethics aspects of their proposal, and to detail how they plan to address them. This will be part of the assessment criteria used to evaluate the proposals, and in the monitoring of funded projects. Applicant researchers will be required to complete an Ethics Self-Assessment, as part of their application, which will follow current Horizon Europe guidelines, and will be assessed during the evaluation process.

Applicant researchers must explain in detail how they intend to address the ethical issues flagged, in particular with regard to the research objectives (e.g., study of vulnerable populations, cooperation with a Third Country, etc.); the research methodology (e.g., clinical trials, involvement of children and related information and consent/assent procedures, data protection and privacy issues related to data collected, etc.); and potential impact of the

research (e.g., dual use issues, environmental damage, malevolent use, etc.). If a proposal requires access to archival material in private custodianship or archival material with restricted access, written evidence of appropriate permission to consult such material must be furnished to the INNOVISION Management Team.

Also, to ensure that all participants are familiar with best research practices, all awardees will be required to complete the Epigeum Research Integrity online training, which will be made available to all INNOVISION Fellows, by month three of their fellowship start date.

Sex/Gender Dimension Statement: All applicants to INNOVISION are required to complete the Sex/Gender Dimension statement in the application. This is included in the Ethics Self-Assessment Form.

Indicative budget: The INNOVISION COFUND programme will cover training and research expenses (including secondment costs of up to nine months, if applicable and within institutional guidelines), up to an amount of €18,000 per year per fellow, for a total of €45,000 over thirty months. However, the coordinating organization, SETU, withholds €15,000 from each researcher (€5,000 per year) to run the annual training workshops and INNOVISION wide congresses. This means researchers have **€30,000 to spend during the lifecycle of their projects**, and this should include supporting the costs of secondments as necessary.

Applicants are required to outline in their application how they plan to use the remaining allowance for the implementation of their fellowship.

International expert evaluators will be instructed to consider the appropriateness of the proposed budget to the fellowship proposal.

The funding categories are:

- Essential research supplies, such as small consumables
- Laptop or desktop computer not to exceed €1500
- Pay-as-you-go access to national research infrastructure
- Software and hardware critical for the proposed research
- Archival research costs
- Conference travel and participation (including network wide events)
- Generic and/or specialist disciplinary skills training
- Secondment costs aligned to institutional policies on reimbursement for travel and per diem rates
- Dissemination and communication
- Other costs e.g., publishing and write-up costs

Only eligible vouched expenses necessary for implementation of the fellowship, incurred the funding term and invoiced during the funding term will be funded.

Applicants should indicate the total amount to be requested across the lifetime of the award. An appropriately itemised budget is required, for example the cost and justification for individual pieces of computer equipment and software should be listed separately, while small consumables such as general lab or stationary supplies should be grouped.

Please note below clarifications regarding some of the above categories:

“Software and hardware critical for the proposed research ”: Hardware and software critical for implementation of the proposed fellowship is to be purchased in the first year of the award. A maximum of €1,500 applies for the purchase of a laptop or desktop computer. The INNOVISION management team recognises that in exceptional circumstances, applicants may request the purchase of a laptop or desktop that exceeds this limit. In those instances, applicants must provide detailed justification that will be subject to review on a case -by-case basis. There is no guarantee that the exceptional cost will be approved.

“Conference travel and participation” : Only conference-related travel costs should be included in this category. Travel costs related to other fellowship activities should be categorized under other headings (for example under “archival research costs” if related to travel to archives, under “generic and/or specific disciplinary skills training” if related to training, or under “other costs”).

Ineligible costs include:

- Membership fees
- Subsistence/per diem rates for general living costs. Subsistence rates for secondments are only applicable if abiding by recruiting organisations policies
- Living expenses (e.g., rent, food and phone)
- Capital items, apart from hardware critical for implementation of the proposed fellowship
- Stipends for students and salary for research assistants or similar. No student/staff costs can be covered from the allocation for eligible direct research expenses.
- Supervisors payment

Personal statement: Applicants are expected to demonstrate their suitability for an INNOVISION fellowship. They should explain why a fellowship is the appropriate next step at the current stage of their career. It is important to outline how applicants intend to maximise the potential benefits of the fellowship as well as its intersectoral and international dimensions.

The personal statement also gives applicants the opportunity to provide additional relevant information which has not been included elsewhere in the application, for example, reasons for proposing the chosen research topic, and the applicant's attributes, experience and achievements to date that demonstrate their capability to successfully implement the fellowship.

Appendix II: Training and Secondment Information

Individual Training

Each fellow will implement a 30-month individual research project at host institutions of their choice, and will be required to go on at least one secondment of 1 month, to no more than 9 months, in duration. Secondments must international, interdisciplinary, and/or intersectoral.

Individual training both in the recruiting organization and in seconding organization(s) should take account of both research skills and transferable skills (e.g., leadership skills, IP management, presentation skills). Research skills will be acquired through hands-on training, under supervision of or in collaboration with team members. Fellows also have the possibility to follow relevant courses (e.g., methodology/discipline-specific advanced training) at their host organisations. There is no required number of research courses to follow, as this will depend on the training needs of the fellow. The individual training plan will be included in the fellows' proposal and evaluated at recruitment stage. Transferable skills will be acquired through dedicated courses and through hands-on training.

In terms of courses, when appropriate, supervisors will help to contact the dedicated offices (such as the Staff Development Office, or equivalent). Whenever a relevant training opportunity is not available at the recruiting or seconding organization, availing of it elsewhere will be treated as an eligible cost. It is expected that each fellow will complete at least two relevant training modules (or equivalent) per year of employment.

In terms of research ethics training, all INNOVISION fellows will need to complete the research ethics Epigeum online training or an equivalent. Epigeum is available at SETU and will be made available to any fellows not recruited at this organization that do not have in-house access to an equivalent course.

Through on-the-job training, fellows will learn how to manage their projects (including progress monitoring, financial management and risk management), undertake dissemination, exploitation (if relevant) and communication activities, lead a team or meetings and develop other relevant skills.

Finally, the supervisory panel will support the fellow in knowledge transfer activities, facilitating synergies between the recruiting organization and the secondment hosts. In particular, each INNOVISION fellow will:

- present their project and the INNOVISION COFUND programme at least once while in their recruiting organisation
- present their project and the INNOVISION COFUND programme (briefly if appropriate) at least once while in their seconding organization

Purpose of the Secondment:

Promoting good communication across disciplines and industries is one of INNOVISIONs key priorities, and this is highlighted by the diverse set of currently available secondment hosts listed on the INNOVISION website.

In addition to inviting a wealth of stakeholders to the INNOVISION COFUND training and conference events, engagement with the non-academic sector will take the form of fellows' secondments and study visits. INNOVISION fellows are required to take a secondment of between 1 and 9 months, which can be inserted at any point of the fellowship (with supervisors' agreement).

Research skills will be acquired through these secondments, with a focus on transferable skills, intersectoral/interdisciplinary/international knowledge transfer, and collaboration, which will be acquired through dedicated courses when these are available, but mostly through hands-on experiences (e.g., tailor-made presentation style, commercial research practices, interfacing with stakeholders).

Fellows may also undertake study visits (modelled on MSCA guidelines), which will consist of being based on the premises of a host or partner, for a period of 1 -2 weeks and shadowing a staff member (managerial level or higher). These study visits will give fellows a grasp of working outside of their recruiting organisation, including specific ways of mentoring and knowledge transfer. Responsibility for proposing/agreeing a commitment with an organisation rest with the applicant. Organisations available on the INNOVISION website focused on integration of Public and Patient Involvement and Engagement are eager to support these visits.

Please see the INNOVISION website for the non-exhaustive list of currently available seconding organisations and hosts, and work with your Main Supervisor at the proposed recruiting organization to identify ideal potential secondments.

INNOVISION COFUND programme-wide training

A crucial element of this COFUND project will be developing a well-integrated critical mass of interdisciplinary experts in ocular health and vision research. To support this, INNOVISION fellows will benefit from programme-wide training opportunities. The training allows for networking, interaction, and communication, and for presenting the fellows' research results to the wider research community. Relevant training sessions will be integrated into the programme, reflecting the expertise of the consortium members, including lab-based research expertise, public and patient involvement, public health, translational and industrial scale-up, and more.

The INNOVISION COFUND will organise four large in-person training events over the five-year period of the COFUND. and a final conference, as well as a Monthly Seminar Series. The costs related to attending these training events (including the travel costs of fellows during the outgoing phase) are covered by the fellows Research Training Funds and should be accounted for

the in the fellows proposed budgets. To facilitate work -life balance and organisation, fellows will be notified of the dates well in advance. As INNOVISION aims to recruit in two cohorts, it is planned that there will be some overlap across congresses taking place from Y2 onwards, and within the monthly seminar series.

To best complement training modules offered at recruiting and seconding organisation level, the learning objectives of these programme-wide training events will focus on developing:

- unique interdisciplinary understanding of vision health research, gained from the interaction with the other fellows (presentations, structured workshop-style initiatives);
- importance and value of Public and Patient involvement in all stages of vision health and ocular research;
- extraordinary abilities to communicate research to other sectors and non-scientific communities;
- in-depth understanding of the link between research and policymaking, and practical advice on how to channel findings to policy makers;
- career development and intrapreneurial/entrepreneurial activities in vision and health research

Training events will also facilitate new interdisciplinary ideas, by featuring workshop-style activities in small groups, in which fellows from different disciplines will work together (first structured discussion in arranged small groups, followed by collective sharing of findings and further brainstorming). To allow for ideas and initial contacts to springboard into sustained long-term cooperation, the monthly seminar series will continue to embed these learnings and create more casual opportunities to share research, learn from experts, and engage with each other across institutions and projects.

Training events will involve some elements of informal networking with all fellows, training partners, and recruiting and host organisations.

Appendix III: Guidance on the Sex/Gender Dimension Statement

While there are research projects in which biological sex and/or gender may not be relevant in terms of the research content, it is well established that, where relevant, not integrating sex and gender analysis into the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of the research can lead to poor results and missed opportunities.

The following is provided to help applicants complete the sex/gender dimension statement in the application. This is taken from the Toolkit Gender in EU-funded research¹, which aims to give the research community practical tools to integrate gender aspects into their research, including gender equality (equal outcomes for women and men) and integration of sex/gender analysis in research content. Please also refer to <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/> for examples of case studies in Science, Health and Medicine, Engineering and Environment.

A Summary from the ‘Toolkit Gender in EU -funded research’

The best possible research validity: Research should take into account the differences between men and women in the research population, so the results will be more representative. General categories such as ‘people’, ‘patients’ or ‘users’ do not distinguish between men and women. Research based on such categories may well draw partial conclusions based on partial data. For example, research on a new breast cancer treatment should include male patients, so as to draw a complete picture. Most basic research with animal models focuses on males to the exclusion of females (Zucker et al., 2010; Marts et al., 2004). Research on economic migrants cannot limit itself to male points of view if it wants to understand the whole migrant population.

Research ideas and hypotheses: The relevance of biological sex and/or gender for and within the subject matter needs to be analysed and an assessment made as to whether these are relevant variables. The formulation of hypotheses can draw upon previous research and existing literature. Indeed, the body of knowledge on sex/gender issues has been steadily growing over recent decades and can serve as interesting reference material to build new hypotheses for future research.

Project design and research methodology: While research methodologies may vary, they all strive to represent (aspects of) reality. Whenever this reality concerns humans, any sound methodology should differentiate between the sexes and take into account the men’s and women’s situations equally. Groups such as ‘citizens’, ‘patients’, ‘consumers’, ‘victims’ or ‘children’ are therefore too general as categories.

Research implementation Data collection tools (such as questionnaires and interview checklists) need to be gender-sensitive, use gender neutral language, and should make it possible to detect the different realities of men and women. This will help to avoid gender bias. For example,

¹ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c17a4eba-49ab-40f1-bb7b-bb6faaf8dec8>

answers to be provided by the ‘head of household’ are not necessarily valid for all household members.

Data analysis: In most research concerning human subjects, data is routinely disaggregated by sex, which would logically lead to analyses according to sex. However, to date this is still not common practice. Systematically taking sex as a central variable and analysing other variables with respect to it (e.g., sex and age, sex and income, sex and mobility, sex and labour) will provide significant and useful insights. Involving gender-balanced end-user groups in the course of the research is also a good way of guaranteeing the highest impact.

Dissemination phase – reporting of data: Collecting and analysing sex and/or gender specific data is not enough if it is omitted from the published results. Sex and/or gender should be included in ‘mainstream’ publications as it is as much part of daily reality as any other variable studied. Specific dissemination actions (publications or events) for sex and/or gender findings can be considered. Institutions and departments that focus on gender should be included in the target groups for dissemination. Publications should use gender-neutral language.

CHECKLIST FOR SEX AND/OR GENDER IN RESEARCH CONTENT

Research ideas phase:

- If the research involves humans as research objects, has the relevance of biological sex and/or gender to the research topic been analysed?
- If the research does not directly involve humans, are the possibly differentiated relations of men and women to the research subject sufficiently clear?
- Have you reviewed literature and other sources relating to differences in the research field?

Proposal phase:

- Does the methodology ensure that (possible) sex/gender differences will be investigated: that sex/gender differentiated data will be collected and analysed throughout the research cycle and will be part of the final publication?
- Does the proposal explicitly and comprehensively explain how sex/gender issues will be handled (e.g., in a specific work package)?
- Have possibly differentiated outcomes and impacts of the research on women and men been considered?

Research phase:

- Are questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, etc. designed to unravel potentially relevant sex and/or gender differences in your data?
- Are the groups involved in the project (e.g., samples, testing groups) gender-balanced? Is data analysed according to the sex variable? Are other relevant variables analysed with respect to sex?

Dissemination phase:

- Do analyses present statistics, tables, figures and descriptions that focus on the relevant sex/gender differences that came up in the course of the project?
- Are institutions, departments and journals that focus on gender included among the target groups for dissemination, along with mainstream research magazines?

- Have you considered a specific publication or event on sex/gender-related findings?

Appendix IV: Resources on Data Management Plans and FAIR Principles

A Data Management Plan (DMP) is a key element of responsible research practice. It outlines how data will be handled during and after a project, ensuring that it is collected, stored, processed, preserved, and shared in ways that are ethical, secure, and aligned with the principles of **FAIR data** (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable). Within Horizon Europe, including MSCA actions, a DMP is a mandatory deliverable within the first six months of a project and must be regularly updated throughout its lifecycle.

When preparing a DMP, researchers should consider the following steps:

1. **Describe the Data**
 - Define the types of data to be collected or generated (quantitative, qualitative, images, models, software, etc.).
 - Identify formats, standards, and expected volume of data.
2. **Ethical and Legal Considerations**
 - Explain how personal or sensitive data will be anonymised or pseudonymised.
 - Address compliance with GDPR, copyright, licensing, and consent.
3. **Documentation and Metadata**
 - Specify the metadata standards and practices used to ensure clarity and discoverability.
 - Ensure metadata supports reuse and proper citation.
4. **Storage and Backup**
 - Identify secure storage solutions during the project (institutional servers, cloud-based systems, encrypted storage).
 - Outline regular backup procedures.
5. **Preservation and Long-term Access**
 - Plan for archiving data in recognised repositories.
 - Detail how long data will be preserved and under what conditions.
6. **Data Sharing and Reuse**
 - Explain what data will be openly accessible, under which licences, and any justified restrictions.
 - Highlight opportunities for reuse by the wider research community.
7. **Responsibilities and Resources**
 - Assign roles for data management across the research team.
 - Identify institutional or external support (libraries, IT services).

FAIR Principles in Practice

- **Findable:** Data should be assigned persistent identifiers (e.g., DOI) and described with rich metadata that is indexed in searchable resources.
- **Accessible:** Data and metadata should be retrievable using standard protocols, with clear information on authentication and authorisation where needed.
- **Interoperable:** Data should use recognised vocabularies, formats, and standards to ensure it can be combined and integrated with other datasets.

- **Reusable:** Data should carry clear licences and detailed provenance information, enabling verification, replication, and reuse in future research.

Key Resources for Preparing a DMP

- DMPonline, (<https://dmponline.dcc.ac.uk/>) including templates
- Science Europe (2018): (<https://scienceeurope.org/our-priorities/open-science/research-data-management/>) Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management
- Horizon Europe & MSCA Guidelines (https://rea.ec.europa.eu/open-science_en): Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data
- OpenAIRE – The OpenAIRE2020 Project (<https://www.openaire.eu/openaire2020-project>)
- FAIR Data Principles (FORCE11) (<https://force11.org/info/the-fair-data-principles/>)
- ROAR – Registry of Open Access Repositories (<https://roar.eprints.org/>)
- OpenDOAR – Directory of Open Access Repositories (<https://opendoar.ac.uk/>)
- Registry of Research Data Repositories (<https://www.re3data.org/>)