

PIONEER JOINT CALL FOR INTEREST:

Preparing your 2027 MSCA Doctoral Network applications with support of PIONEER alliance



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Context :

The objective of [MSCA - Doctoral Networks](#) is to implement doctoral programmes by partnerships of organisations from different sectors across Europe and beyond to train highly skilled doctoral candidates, stimulate their creativity, enhance their innovation capacities and boost their employability in the long-term. This programme, which is part of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, aims to strengthen the skills and careers of Early-Career Researchers, based on the 3i principle:

- Scientific excellence and **I**nterdisciplinarity
- **I**nter-sectorality collaboration
- **I**nternational mobility

With a success rate of 8.7%, the European Commission funded 141 doctoral programmes in 2026. In the face of this competition, the PIONEER Alliance decided to join forces to support future application.

The [PIONEER Alliance](#) objective is aligned with the European ambition: it aims to facilitate peer collaboration to co-create an attractive and valuable environment for science, training and networking activities that will benefit to its future doctoral students and supervisors. To do so, the Alliance will support researchers, teachers/researchers, research managers who will coordinate or participate to a Doctoral Network proposal to be submitted to the 2027 call (deadline: mid-November 2027).

Reminder: you can choose between three categories of Doctoral Networks:

1. **Standard Doctoral Network.** They can involve both academic and industrial participants to jointly train Early-Career Researchers. No joint supervision or joint degree awarding is required even though this is the preferred option whenever possible.
2. **Industrial Doctorates (ID).** They train Early-Career Researchers who wish develop their skills and step outside academia, in particular in industry and business. Recruited Early-Career Researchers must be enrolled in a doctoral programme and jointly supervised by the academic and non-academic partners.
3. **Joint Doctorates (JD).** They provide a highly integrated type of international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration in doctoral training leading to a joint doctoral degree or multiple doctoral degrees awarded by the participating institutions. Recruited Early-Career Researchers must be enrolled in a joint programme and be jointly supervised

Doctoral Networks projects allow a consortium to recruit up to 15 Doctoral Candidates - DC (up to 540person/months) for 36 months. For Joint Doctorates, DC can be recruited up to 48 months.

Each Beneficiary must recruit at least one DC.

Recruited DC will receive monthly living and mobility allowances up to 4 960 Euros (gross amount). Other allowances can apply according to DC eligibility. The recruiting institution will receive a research, training and networking contribution up to 1 600 Euros. A country correction coefficient applies to the living allowance in order to ensure equal treatment and purchasing power parity for all researchers.



What is the point ?

- Attract highly qualified doctoral candidates from different parts of the world who are likely to become long-term collaborators.
- Develop innovative research projects funded by the European Commission
- Strengthen international, interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral collaboration networks
- Enhance the international appeal and visibility of the research teams

Objective of this Joint Call for Interest:

The objective of this joint call for interest is to facilitate future consortia of research teams that involves **at least two PIONEER members**, who decides to build a Doctoral Network proposal (all types).

The PIONEER grant support team is offering a training programme that will help coordinators and participants to better understand the objectives and framework of the call, finding appropriate expertise among PIONEER partners to complete the consortium when needed as well as better comprehend the expectations of the European Commission for each proposal section (Part B1 - Excellence, Impact and Implementation and part B2).

Am I eligible to this Joint Call for Interest?

You can participate to this joint call for Interest if you respect all the following:

- You are an academic/research manager/ from a research unit of one of the [PIONEER alliance member](#).
- You are considering to coordinate OR participate as a Beneficiary¹ or as an Associated Partner to a consortium who will submit a proposal to the Doctoral Network 2027 Call (deadline Mid-November 2027)
- Most of the consortium members are identified, even if you are still missing some expertise². If you are not part of an identified consortium but Doctoral networks interests you, you can still submit your interest and you will be contacted for the matchmaking events.
- Your consortium will involve at least two PIONEER members³. *The PIONEER grant support team will support you in finding a Pioneer partner if needed.*
- The topic of scientific project is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal 11 "Sustainable cities and communities" (renew and plan cities and other human settlements in a way that offers opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transport, waste management, clean air and green public spaces, while reducing resource use and environmental impact).

¹ Participating as a beneficiary means your institution will benefit from the European fund to recruit a PhD candidate)

² We invite you to start contacting peers from your scientific network including PIONEER partners with a pitch of your scientific project to identify interested collaborators.

³ The PIONEER Matchmaking Tool can help you finding appropriate profile:

<https://profiles.pioneer.uniza.sk/>



Process and support from PIONEER grant support Team:

IMPORTANT! Please note that this support from the PIONEER grant support team does NOT replace your internal process to submit a Doctoral Network proposal. You are invited to follow the usual internal process of your institution and contact your local support teams. In case your institution has an internal application approval procedure: you need to make sure that your institution approved your coordination or participation to a Doctoral network consortium.

The PIONEER grant Support Team offers comprehensive support throughout the process:

1. Submit your interest

Please complete the questionnaire below by **September 30th, 2026**.

Please check that you meet the above-described eligibility criteria.

[Click here to access the online questionnaire.](#)

2. Kick-off presentation: from interest to implementation

If you meet the eligibility criteria, you will be invited to participate to a kick-off presentation webinar (online) that will present in more detail Doctoral Network expectations (proposal content, evaluation criteria, your role as a coordinator or as a participant) and PIONEER support process.

3. Complete your consortium - OPTIONAL

In case your consortium is still missing expertise to reach your scientific objectives, the PIONEER support team will assist you in finding a relevant collaborator among PIONEER. This can involve pitching your project during a matchmaking meeting.

The matchmaking period will be organised between November 2026 and January 2027. All consortia should be completed with an identified coordinator by January 30th, 2027.

4. Writing your proposal

From February to June 2027 (dates to be defined), the PIONEER support Team will guide you through the project development process. To do so, a series of webinars will be organised online tackling the following: Writing tips – Excellence session ; Writing tips – Impact Session ; Writing tips – Implementation Session ; Writing tips – Part B2
Additional thematic webinars will also be offered according to experts availabilities.

Should you have any questions, please contact the PIONEER Grant Support Team: pioneer@univ-eiffel.fr

Deadline to submit your interest: September 30th, 2026