

Long-Term Leave Guidance for MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships, Doctoral Networks and COFUND

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Long Term Leave policy and guidance

For Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships, Doctoral Networks and COFUND Guarantee grants, UKRI will be following MSCA’s standard policy surrounding long-term leave allowance. UKRI will use their standard processes to cover the costs using an ‘additional funding stream’ to honour what would have been allowed under the European Research Executive Agency (REA) following their eligibility criteria.

Long-term leave is defined as when the researcher goes on leave for longer than 30 days, for reasons other than annual leave. The person month contributions to both the researcher and the institution are suspended and replaced with long-term leave allowance.

The minimum eligible period for long-term leave is 31 consecutive calendar days.

If the long-term leave is required during the lifetime of an active grant, the host organisation is required to submit a completed long term leave calculator and a letter confirming eligibility via the relevant grant system by following the processes detailed in this document.

The calculation will follow MSCA budget allocation for contributions for recruited researchers for each work programme for personnel costs incurred by the employer in case of the researchers' leave. The amount is subject to all national legislation and internal policies of the host organisation. We advise that the host organisation's normal rules for duration and pay are followed. The percentage covered by the host organisation is the amount the research organisation would normally be responsible for paying and is dependent on the internal policies of the research organisation and may change over time. Any remaining percentage should be provided by social security contributions where applicable. The long-term leave allowance will be payable only for the percentage of time that the staff are contracted on the grant.

The host organisation is responsible for providing accurate information as to the length of leave taken, the researcher's full-time equivalent as a percentage (FTE %), the host organisation's long-term leave contribution per month (as a decimal), and the proportion covered by statutory sick pay or equivalent government support. Guidance and templates for calculating long-term leave allowance can be found in the next section of this document.

You are able to extend the Guarantee grant by the same number of person months as taken for the long-term leave. UKRI allow up to 12 months under a no cost extension which can be requested at the end of the grant following the process detailed in the next section of this document. If longer is required, this is considered on a case-by-case basis following the same process with additional rationale for going over 12 months.

By submitting a request to UKRI for long-term leave allowances, the host organisation confirms that the costs funded through UKRI are not being claimed from any other source, for example HM Revenue and Customs.

Long-Term Leave process

Here is a list of the processes you may need to follow which are expanded and detailed step by step in the next sections.

- Prior to the long-term leave period starting:
Suspend the grant (where work on the grant will pause) OR
Notify UKRI Guarantee team of upcoming long-term leave period.
- Calculate and claim the long-term leave allowance, after leave period has ended.
- Request a no cost extension to cover the long-term leave period, after leave period has ended.

Suspending the grant at the beginning of the long-term leave (where necessary)

In many cases, long term leave will result in work not being able to continue on the grant, therefore it is best practice to suspend the award at the beginning of the long-term leave.

Where work on the grant will continue and is not pausing completely, this process can be skipped. An extension equal to the long term leave period can still be requested after the leave period.

Step 1: Please raise a request through the system your grant was awarded from ('grant maintenance' request in Je-S or a 'change' request in the new Funding Service).

As only one attachment may be added to these requests, please insert any supporting documents into a single PDF attachment.

If you cannot find what you are looking for, or need support using either grant system for 'grant maintenance requests' or 'change requests' please contact one of the following:

For the Funding Service helpdesk:

Email: support@funding-service.ukri.org

Telephone: +44 (0) 01793 547490

For the JeS helpdesk:

Email: JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org

Telephone: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164

Step 2: Where prompted the request type should be: 'Grant Suspension' and a brief description for the reason for making this request will need to be provided

Step 3: Input the suspension date from which the grant should be suspended

Step 4: Attach a letter from someone capable of speaking on behalf of the host organisation, which documents the eligibility of the researcher going on long-term leave and the length of leave expected, noting that if a no cost extension will be needed that this will not exceed the duration of long-term leave.

Step 5: Provide a date from which the suspension is expected to end. This will be recorded as a 'review date', prompt UKRI to contact the host organisation to check if the grant is ready to be resumed.

UKRI will review the request and confirm if it is approved. UKRI may get in touch if more detail or clarification is required.

Notifying UKRI Guarantee team of upcoming long-term leave

If the long-term leave does not result in suspension of the award, it is still advised to notify UKRI Guarantee team ahead of the long-term leave period to confirm eligibility for claiming any long-term leave allowance after the end of the leave period. To do this please:

Step 1: Please raise a general 'grant maintenance' request in Je-S or a 'change' request in the new Funding Service if your award letter was issued through this system.

Step 2: Attach a letter from someone capable of speaking on behalf of the host organisation, which documents the eligibility of the researcher going on long-term leave and the length of leave expected. Please indicate if a no cost extension will be requested after the leave period, to cover the duration of long-term leave.

UKRI will review the request and confirm if it is approved. UKRI may get in touch if more detail or clarification is required.

Calculating and claiming the long-term leave allowance

Please only follow these steps after the leave period has ended and the full duration of the leave is known.

Step 1: Please find the [correct long-term leave calculator on the Long Term Leave webpage where this guidance](#) is located and follow the steps in the form to fill this out. There are different calculators with different exchange rates for long term leave occurring in the following exchange rate periods:

- Long Term Leave Calculator – 01 Jan 2022 – 31 Dec 2022
- Long Term Leave Calculator - 01 Jan 2023 - 31 Dec 2023
- Long Term Leave Calculator - 01 Jan 2024 – 31 Jan 2025
- Long Term Leave Calculator - 1 Feb 2025 – Jan 2026

If the long-term leave spans across two exchange rate periods, then the two different calculators will need to be used to calculate each period making up the total long-term leave. The totals of both calculators will be combined into one amount for the allowance to be paid via one 'additional funding stream'. A worked example using this method has been provided in the annex section of this document.

Step 2: Filling in the calculator:

- Please select “Type of Leave”, “Program Type”, in addition to inputting the start and end dates of the long-term leave in table. The researcher’s allowance will then be calculated automatically.
- The Host contribution is the fraction of the monetary amount the host is covering, for example, a 75% contribution from the host for a given month would be inputted as 0.75. The host contribution should be consistent with the host's policies and will not be reimbursed.
- Please fill-in the following within the "Table for Whole Month Input" for each month of long-term leave separately on each row:
 - “FTE” (input as a decimal).
 - “Host Contribution (as decimal)”.
 - “Government Contribution” – This is a set amount of money for the given month; government contribution will vary depending on the circumstances of the individual. (Government guidance of statutory sick pay can be found here: [Statutory pay and leave - GOV.UK](#)).
- If the time period claimed for is not a whole number of months, please complete the "Table for Fractional Month Input". An example using this method has been provided in the annex section of this document.
- The most up-to-date exchange rate will be used in the calculator, found in our guidance here: [Horizon Europe guarantee scheme: UKRI guidance – UKRI](#).
- Some worked examples are provided in the Annex at the end of this document.

Step 3: Once the calculator is complete, please raise a general ‘grant maintenance’ request in Je-S or a ‘change request’ in the new Funding Service if your award letter was issued through this system.

If you cannot find what you are looking for, or need support using either grant system for ‘grant maintenance requests’ or ‘change requests’ please contact one of the following:

For the Funding Service helpdesk:

Email: support@funding-service.ukri.org

Telephone: +44 (0) 01793 547490

For the JeS helpdesk:

Email: JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org

Telephone: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164

Step 4: (If not previously provided) please attach a letter from someone capable of speaking on behalf of the host organisation, which documents the eligibility of the researcher going on long-term leave and the length of leave, noting that if a no cost extension will be needed that this will not exceed the duration of long-term leave.

UKRI will review the request and confirm the amount to be paid. UKRI may get in touch if more detail or clarification is required.

Requesting a 'no cost' extension to cover the long-term leave period

Please only complete this process once the leave period has finished. It is best practice to make this request toward the end of the award.

UKRI allow up to 12 months under a no cost extension. You are able to extend the Guarantee grant by the same number of person months as taken for the long-term leave. If longer is required, this is considered on a case-by-case basis following the same process with additional rationale for going over 12 months.

Step 1: Please raise a 'grant maintenance' request in Je-S or a 'change' request in the new Funding Service if your award letter was issued through this system.

Step 2: Where prompted the request type should be: 'No cost extension' and please include in the description the reason for the extension is for long-term leave, noting any previous correspondence or approvals, and 'submit'.

UKRI will review the request and confirm if it is approved. UKRI may get in touch if more detail or clarification is required.

If you cannot find what you are looking for, or need support using the grant system please contact one of the following:

For the Funding Service helpdesk:
Email: support@funding-service.ukri.org
Telephone: +44 (0) 1793 547490

For the JeS helpdesk:
Email: JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org
Telephone: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164

Annex: Worked Examples

Please note, these examples are solely for the purpose of illustrating how to use the long-term leave calculator.

Calculating leave period in whole months, spanning only one exchange rate period

This covers sickness leave over the period from 01/02/2025 to 01/05/2025. The FTE is 100%, the host contribution is 0.3 FTE. The government contribution is £400 for the whole month period.

As the long-term leave period being requested in this example is during one exchange rate period, only one calculator form needs completing.

Step 1: Input details in first table:

Type of Leave:	Sickness
Reason for Leave if "Other"	N/A
Program Type:	Postdoctoral Programmes (MSCA COFUND)
Researcher's Allowance (€):	€ 3,980.00
Start Date:	01 February 2025
End Date:	01 May 2025

Figure 1: Details of leave.

Step 2: Input details for whole months:

Table for Whole Month Input:				
Month	FTE	Host Contribution (as decimal):	Government Contribution (Per Month) (£):	Total UKRI Contribution Due for Month (£):
1	1	0.3	400	1971.70
2	1	0.3	400	1971.70
3	1	0.3	400	1971.70

Figure 2: Table for 'whole month' input.

The total amount due for UKRI will then be calculated:

Table for Whole Month Input:

Month	FTE	Host Contribution (as decimal):	Government Contribution (Per Month) (£):	Total UKRI Contribution Due for Month (£):
1	1	0.3	400	1971.70
2	1	0.3	400	1971.70
3	1	0.3	400	1971.70
4				Input Values
5				Input Values
6				Input Values
7				Input Values
8				Input Values
9				Input Values
10				Input Values
11				Input Values
12				Input Values
Fractional Month Contribution (If Applicable)				£0.00
Total Cost Due from UKRI:				£5,915.10

Figure 3: Table for 'whole month' input with examples.

Calculating leave period in months and days, spanning two exchange rate periods

This covers maternity leave for an MSCA Doctoral Network grant for the period 10/12/2024 to 22/03/2025. The FTE is 70%, the host contribution is 0.2 FTE. The government contribution is £200 per month for the whole month period, and £300 for the fractional month period.

Step 1: Input details in first table:

Type of Leave:	Maternity
Reason for Leave if "Other"	N/A
Program Type:	MSCA Doctoral Networks
Researcher's Allowance (€):	€ 4,000.00
Start Date:	10 December 2024
End Date:	22 March 2025

Figure 4: details of leave.

Step 2: Input details for whole months (January and February) in the 1 Jan 2025 to 31 Jan 2026 calculator:



Table for Whole Month Input:

Month	FTE	Host Contribution (as decimal):	Government Contribution (Per Month) (£):	Total UKRI Contribution Due for Month (£):
1	0.7	0.2	200	1706.90
2	0.7	0.2	200	1706.90

Figure 5: table for 'whole month' input with example.

Step 3: Input details from step 1, and then input total fractional period (December and March), using both the 2024 calculator for December and the 2025 calculator for March:

Table for Fractional Month Input:

Total Number of Working days for Fractional Period	15
FTE for Fractional Period:	0.7
Host Contribution for Fractional Period (As Decimal):	0.2
Total Government Contribution for Fractional Period (£):	300
Total UKRI Contribution Due for Month (£):	£ 1,056.68

Figure 6: table for 'fractional month' input with example for March 2025

Table for Fractional Month Input:

Total Number of Working days for Fractional Period	14
FTE for Fractional Period:	0.7
Host Contribution for Fractional Period (As Decimal):	0.2
Total Government Contribution for Fractional Period (£):	300
Total UKRI Contribution Due for Month (£):	£ 994.78

Figure 7: table for 'fractional month' input with example for December 2024

Step 4: The total amount due from UKRI is the sum of the whole month and fractional components.

1706.90 +
1706.90 +
1058.68 +
994.78 =
£5467.26