1. About MoRE

MoRE is a mobility programme for highly experienced researchers. The programme is run by Region Västra Götaland and co-financed by the EU within the framework of the Fp7-People-COFUND programme. MoRE is a means of strengthening research-driven clusters, increasing transnational mobility and improving the career development of individual researchers. The overall programme objectives are:

- Attract internationally experienced researchers to Västra Götaland and increase international exchanges.
- Promote researcher mobility and career development for researchers.
- Position internationally competitive research and innovation milieus.
- Stimulate international research and innovation alliances and collaboration.
- Strengthen research-driven clusters within prioritised areas.

MoRE will run for four years, starting in February 2014. The programme will provide mobility opportunities for 18 highly experienced researchers.

2. Definitions and general information

2.1 Request for evaluation

The experts will be asked by e-mail to agree to review one or more applications. Together with the request, the expert will receive an abstract of each application that she/he is being asked to review. Experts are asked to respond within five working days and to return the letter of appointment along with the bank details for payment of fees.

2.2 Letter of appointment

Before proceeding with evaluations, experts sign a letter of appointment, including a confidentiality agreement and a note on conflicts of interest. Confidentiality rules apply at all times before, during and after the evaluation. Only after the signed letter of appointment and the declaration of confidentiality and conflicts of interest have been returned to the MoRE Programme Manager will the experts receive all the relevant application documents.

2.3 Conflicts of interest

Under the terms of the letter of appointment, experts must declare beforehand any known conflicts of interest with regard to the candidate, the host organisation or the planned scientific work. The expert must have no personal connections with the applicant or any professional interest in the applicant, e.g., the expert must not have been the applicant’s supervisor or employer nor have or have had any family link to the researcher.

The expert must inform the Programme Manager immediately if a conflict of interest becomes apparent during the course of the evaluation. The Programme Manager will then take whatever action is necessary to avoid the conflict of interest situation.

2.4 Useful documents

Before proceeding to the evaluation, the experts should consult the following documents:

- Programme description
- Call text
- Guide for Applicants
The documents can be downloaded from the programme website [www.vgregion.se/more](http://www.vgregion.se/more).

2.5 Deadline
The deadline for the evaluations is 1.5 months after the call deadline. The Programme Manager will notify the exact date together with the “Request for evaluation”.

2.6 Remuneration
Experts are remunerated with a fixed amount per reviewed application. Payment will only be made for evaluations that are delivered on time. Payment will be made after the Evaluation Reports have been delivered.

3. How are the applications evaluated?

3.1 Applicant
The MoRE applicant is a research and innovation milieu in Västra Götaland\(^1\) together with a highly experienced researcher.

3.2 Application
The application consists of the following documents:
- Application form
- Project description
- Ethical issues table
- Commitment/Supporting letter
- Career plan
- CV

Additional appendices:
- Document explaining why hESC are needed, their origin and the quantity to be used (mandatory for projects using hESC)\(^2\)
- Documents confirming the calculated budget items

3.3 Eligibility
The eligibility criteria are outlined in the Programme and in the Guide for Applicants. The Programme Manager conducts an eligibility check before allocating applications to experts. The evaluators should thus assume that all applications are eligible and need to be evaluated. Even if the expert suspects there is an eligibility issue with a specific application, she/he should nevertheless proceed with the evaluation without allowing it to affect the scoring.

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\(^1\)Definition of a research and innovation milieu: Universities, Science parks, Research institutes and University hospitals.

\(^2\) Human embryonic stem cells (hESC).
3.4 Evaluation process
Region Västra Götaland uses senior experts that includes both Swedish and international experts. The experts are drawn from the public, private and academic sectors and within different scientific and professional fields. Each application is evaluated remotely by three experts, who each produce an Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Reports are summarised and prioritised by the Programme Board, who is responsible for the final ranking of the applications. The Regional Development Committee then makes the formal decision and the Programme Management Team at Region Västra Götaland notifies all applicants.

4. Advice to the experts

4.1 Evaluation Reports
This section of the Guide for Evaluators focuses on each expert’s – your – individual evaluation.

Form an opinion based on your own expertise. Do not consult with other experts and do not, under any circumstances, contact the applicant.

If you are asked to evaluate more than one application, it is advisable that you evaluate all applications first, before finalising your scores and specific comments. This will enable you to see the full spectrum of applications allocated to you.

Many evaluators find it useful to make comments that highlight what they perceive to be the weak points and strong points for each criterion and then use this to make their assessment and assign a score.

The exact meaning of the scores 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0 (excellent, good, fair, poor, very poor, fail) is described in Section 4.2. The question therefore is which of these scores best describes the application. Remember, however, that the score is not sufficient for your evaluation to be fully understood. Do not be afraid to give your frank opinion and support it with an appropriate score. Your specific comments are invaluable.

4.1.1 "Do's and Don'ts"
- Write your comments using full and clear sentences for each criterion.
- Avoid summarising the application. The applicant and the Programme Board know what the application is about.
- Use strong and weak points based on the given sub-criterion; everything that is included in your Evaluation Report must be briefly justified. You must not use general statements such as: “The research could have been described better”.
- Avoid generalisations such as “Country X is weak in this area!” If it is necessary to make this type of comment you should instead say, for example: “It has not been demonstrated in the application that the host has the capacity to run this project”.
- Do not assume or anticipate the quality of an institution (even prestigious institutions), it must be clearly detailed and demonstrated in the application.
- Avoid statements such as “the candidate has few publications for his/her age”. Publication rates vary widely across disciplines and age is not a criterion. If you believe the track record of any participant is inadequate then, use a phrase such as “It has not been demonstrated in the application that the proposed researcher has a track record strong enough to carry out this project”. Please take into consideration the
possibility that the applicant has resumed a research career and assess the total time spent in research.

- The budget estimate must reflect what the applicant expects to do to develop his/her research project and career. Do not hesitate to comment on the budget and expenses that do not seem appropriate or necessary.
- Above all avoid writing personal comments and insults.
- Check the consistency of scores and comments (see tables below).
- Consider only the material included in the application.
- Ethical issues are of considerable importance and you should make a note of those raised by the proposed project. Ethical issues should not affect your evaluation but will need to be addressed by the Programme Management Team who will need to consult an ethics expert.
- In the case of a proposal using human embryonic stem cells (hESC), you must mention in your evaluation report, if the use of hESC is justified and necessary for the success of the project.

4.1.2 Role of the Programme Board
The role of the Programme Board is to rank proposals based on experts’ evaluations and according to defined selection criteria. The Programme Board will then draft a Common Evaluation Report for each application, based on the experts’ Evaluation Reports. The Programme Board will subsequently draft a ranked list of all the applications. The ranked list will be passed on to the Regional Development Committee for a formal decision.

4.1.3 Feedback to applicants
The formal decision (rejection/approval) will be sent to all the applicants in the form of a written letter, sent by e-mail and normal mail. The letter will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the application, as well as the reasons for approval/rejection.

4.2 Evaluation criteria
The evaluation criteria are:

1. Relevance of the project

   A. How consistent is the project with the specific direction of the MoRE programme and how does it contribute to the impact of the programme? (Notably in terms of further developing and strengthening the competitiveness of research-driven clusters in Europe through international collaboration and researcher mobility)

   - assessment of the project’s contribution to the strengthening and/or further development of research-driven clusters in Europe
   - assessment of the project’s contribution to strategic, cross-border alliances (geographical, sectoral, etc.)
   - a clear focus on European societal challenges$^3$ and/or needs-driven research will be considered favourably

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$^3$ Societal challenges, such as those outlined in the EU’s Research and Innovation Programme, Horizon 2020
B. **How consistent is the project with the general objective of EU COFUND?**
*(Notably in terms of the mobility - transnational and other - of researchers in Europe and of the programme’s contribution to the career development of researchers)*

- assessment of the mobility the project is aiming for (genuine international mobility periods, as well as mobility or collaboration between academia/industry/public sector)
- assessment of the potential for acquiring competencies during the project to improve the prospects of reaching and/or reinforcing a position of professional maturity and independence at a high level
- commitment by the participating host milieus to the career development of the researcher, including a career development plan and potential to develop complementary and non-scientific skills
- assessment of the overall working conditions of the researcher

2. **Quality of the project, the researcher and the host organisation**

A. **Research, development and innovation quality of the proposed project/collaboration:**

- research quality of the project, including research methods and methodology: inter- and multidisciplinary aspects
- originality and the innovative nature of the project, with reference to the “state of the art” in the research field
- assessment of the project’s contribution to strengthening excellence and to solving societal challenges in the specific research field
- strategic importance of the research field, taking into account, for example, future economic growth in the area and the potential to excel internationally

B. **Merits of the researcher:**

- academic merits in relation to stage of career (considering career breaks), research experience and level of independence
- demonstrated expertise in the research field of the proposed project
- researcher’s scientific network, including the non-academic network
- publications
- teaching, supervision, and management experience
- knowledge transfer and public awareness activities
- experience in the development and/or management of research-driven clusters, and experience of transnational and intersectoral collaborations are considered favourably

Merits of researchers are not only measured in terms of number of publications but also based on a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management and public awareness activities, in accordance with the recommendations in the Code of Conduct for the recruitment of researchers.
C. **Assessment of the quality of the participating milieus** (in Västra Götaland and abroad):

- position of the participating milieus within the research field in an international comparison
- position of the participating milieus in an integrated academia-industry-public sector context

3. **Feasibility**: i.e. capacity and credibility concerning the implementation of the proposed project:

A. Realistic project timeline, management plan, budget and deliverables. Practical arrangements, including administrative support for the researcher
B. Capacity of the participating milieus to support the research project, including the quality of the infrastructure/facilities
C. Capacity of the participating milieus to establish and maintain long-term collaboration and to establish long-term links with industry/the public sector

4. **Exploitability/utilisation**: i.e. the capacity to convert the collaboration into benefits

A. Assessment of the benefit to the participating milieus, and associated companies/public sector
B. Assessment of the benefits to society and/or commercial exploitability
C. Assessment of the benefit to the researcher in terms of new knowledge and skills

**Scoring**

0. **Fail**. The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.

1. **Very poor**. The criterion is addressed in a cursory and unsatisfactory manner.

2. **Poor**. There are serious inherent weaknesses in relation to the criterion in question.

3. **Fair**. While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correcting.

4. **Good**. The proposal addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible.

5. **Excellent**. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

The relative weighting used to evaluate the applications is summarised in the table below. The maximum score is 190 points. A minimum of 114 points is required to pass the evaluation. This is an average of three points per criterion.
### Evaluation criteria

#### 1. Relevance of the research/the collaboration

- a) contribution to the strengthening and/or further development of research-driven clusters in Europe
- b) contribution towards strategic alliances across borders (geographical, sectoral, etc)
- c) focus on societal challenges and/or user- or needs-driven research and innovation
- d) genuine international mobility periods, mobility or collaboration between academia/industry/public sector

#### 2. Quality of the research/the collaboration, the researcher and the participating milieus

**Quality of the research/the collaboration**

- a) quality of the research, including research methodology and method, inter- and multidisciplinary aspects
- b) originality and innovative nature of the research, with reference to the state of the art in the research field
- c) contribution to strengthening excellence and/or to solving societal challenges in the specific research field
- d) strategic importance of the research field considering e.g. future economic growth in the area and potential to excel internationally

**Merits of the researcher**

- a) academic merits in relation to stage of career (considering career breaks), research experience and level of independence (including e.g. publication track record)
- b) demonstrated expertise in the research field of the proposed project
- c) researcher's scientific network, including non-academic network as well as knowledge transfer activities
- e) teaching, supervision, and management experience
- g) experience in the development and/or management of research-driven clusters, and experience with transnational and intersectoral collaborations

**Quality of the participating milieus**

- a) position of the participating milieus within the research field and in an international comparison
- b) position of the participating milieus in an integrated academic-industry-public sector context

#### 3. Implementation: i.e. capacity and credibility concerning the feasibility and implementation of the proposed project/collaboration

- a) Realistic project timeline, budget and outcome of the research/the collaboration. Practical arrangements including administrative support for the researcher
- b) Capacity of the participating milieus to support the research project: including quality of infrastructure/facilities as well as researcher’s career plan
- c) Capacity of the participating milieus to establish and maintain long term collaboration and to establish long term links with industry/the public sector

#### 4. Impact: i.e. the capacity to convert the collaboration into benefits, including exploitability and utilisation

- a) benefit to the participating milieus, and associated companies/public sector
- b) benefits to society and/or commercial exploitability
- c) benefit to the researcher in terms of new knowledge and skills

#### 5. Overall assessment

Overall assessment

*Total / percentage*
5. Contact

Questions about the Programme in general or the call/evaluation in particular can be directed to the MoRE Management Team:

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Additional information about the Programme is available on the Programme website: www.vgregion.se/more.