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SciLifeLab

Program overview for SciLifeLab PULSE

The SciLifeLab PULSE (Program for Future Leaders in Life Science) is a 60-month program funded by the EU Marie Skłodowska-Curie (MSCA) COFUND scheme. PULSE is coordinated by SciLifeLab, and will train 48 future leaders in Life Sciences through a 3-year postdoctoral fellowship. SciLifeLab PULSE has 11 implementing partners (Swedish universities), and 29 associated partners (research infrastructures, research institutes and companies in life sciences) that will contribute to postdoc training and host secondments.

The PULSE projects will be pursued in one of the following research areas:

- Academic track: Cell & molecular biology, Precision medicine & diagnostics, Evolution & biodiversity/planetary biology, Epidemiology & infection biology/Pandemic laboratory preparedness
- Entrepreneurial track with focus on Drug discovery and Development: Machine learning, Therapeutic oligonucleotides, Display and selection technologies, Proximity inducing agents

The PULSE program provides postdocs with access to state-of-the-art research infrastructure platforms, and a community of world-class researchers. The program will equip postdocs with transferable skills like science communication, sustainable leadership, and intellectual property rights, preparing them for successful careers in various sectors. The 48 postdocs will be recruited in two rounds:

- Call 1, 2025: 21 postdocs were recruited in the first call.
- Call 2, December 15 2025 – March 16 2026: At least 16 positions on the academic track and up to 11 positions on the entrepreneurial track

PULSE Evaluator Guidelines

These guidelines provide a framework for the evaluation of PULSE applications. **Evaluators play a crucial role in selecting the most promising candidates** who will contribute to the advancement of Life Sciences. It is important for evaluators to carefully consider all aspects of the evaluation criteria and to uphold the principles of fairness, transparency, and diversity.

General Information

- PULSE will follow the EURAXESS [Open, Transparent, Merit-based Recruitment procedures of Researchers \(OTM-R\)](#).
- Evaluators will be briefed on diversity and unconscious bias and will receive training on how to consider variations in candidates' CVs, including non-linear career paths and career breaks.

- External evaluators will be remunerated as recognition and partial compensation for their work with 75 EUR* per written proposal, and 50 EUR* per interview. **The amounts might be subject to Swedish income tax.*

Evaluation constellations & methods

Phase 1, written application: 3 external international evaluators for each application. Evaluation is carried out using SciLifeLab's web-based application system, Anubis. *Please find instructions on how this is executed at the end of this document.*

Phase 2, interview 1: 2 external international expert evaluators (not the same as in phase 1), 1 SciLifeLab expert evaluator, 1 HR representative and 1 independent observer. The HR representative joins at the end of the meeting for five minutes alone with the postdoc to answer HR related questions. Interviews are performed digitally via Zoom. *Curriculum Vitae, Proposal & References will be available in Anubis before the interview.*

Phase 3, interview 2: Three internal evaluators (the proposed PI, 1 additional representative from the intended host department, 1 SciLifeLab research area expert) and 1 independent observer. Interviews are performed digitally via Zoom. *Curriculum Vitae, Proposal & References will be available in Anubis before the interview.*

Key Steps

- **Eligibility and Completeness Check:** Ensure that applications meet the eligibility criteria and that all required documents are submitted, including Ethics self-assessment (if ethical approval is needed, this should be stated in the application). This step is carried out by the PULSE team.
- **Ethics Review and Approval:** Selected projects that require ethical approval must obtain it before starting. Evaluators are requested to check that ethical approval, when needed, is in place or that an ethics review is planned for.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** PULSE is committed to welcoming exceptional postdocs regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, disability, origin (social or national), religion, sexual orientation, language, political opinion, or economic condition. *Evaluators must ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and equally.*
- **Conflict of Interest.** All evaluators shall declare any conflict of interest related to their allocated applications. The declaration is done in the application system before starting the review process. If you are in doubt as to whether you have conflicts of interest regarding a given application, please contact your SciLifeLab Operations Office representative via pulse@scilifelab.se.
- **Unconscious Bias & Consistency:** The evaluator should be aware of the potential risk for any unconscious bias and how this may impact their review. The evaluator shall consistently apply the same standards of assessment to all proposals that are allocated to you for review.
- **Confidentiality/GDPR:** Evaluators must maintain the confidentiality of all application materials. The PULSE review process is carried out under confidentiality to protect the work and research ideas proposed by the applicants. You shall therefore, as an evaluator, maintain the confidentiality of applications and reviews. This means that all material is confidential and shall be treated as such. You may not discuss evaluation matters with anyone, including applicants, colleagues or other experts before, during or after the review. After the review process, all documents, whether paper or electronic, shall be returned to your contact at SciLifeLab Operations Office (via pulse@scilifelab.se), destroyed or deleted.

Scoring

Each criterion should be scored 0-5, according to descriptions in the table below. Evaluators should provide brief feedback comment, describing the scoring. The summary score and feedback comment will be communicated to the applicants after each selection step.

0	Insufficient. The proposal cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
1	Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
4	Very good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
5	Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion; shortcomings, if any, are minor.

Evaluation Criteria for written proposals (45% of total weighted score)

While evaluating the written SciLifeLab PULSE applications, please keep in mind that the SciLifeLab infrastructure will support the PULSE projects with scientific and technical expertise that complements the postdoc's own competencies.

	Excellence 50%	Impact 30%	Implementation 20%
Researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the candidate's research outputs/merits: publications, IP, data sets/tools etc. Research output to match time in science, e.g. related to if the candidate has just finished their PhD or if they have a few years of experience as a postdoc. Research experience and technical skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postdoc will benefit from the PULSE training program and gain new scientific, entrepreneurial and transferable skills. Research project and program training will increase researcher's future career opportunities on international and across disciplines and sectors. Motivation for the chosen track (academic or entrepreneurial). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete and ambitious career goals.
Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the project in terms of research and innovation – state of the art (quality/credibility). Timely for the field of research (original and innovative). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear output and added value through interdisciplinary, intersectoral and international exchange. Proposal contains initial plan for dissemination of results. Impact on the scientific field with novelty and originality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan is feasible. The expertise and technology needed are available. The work plan is realistic (coherent/effective).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The methodology is complete and appropriate. • Suggested Project partners/ secondment will strengthen the project. • Gender and diversity dimension. • Open Science. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will benefit the involved labs/institutes/ infrastructure/ organisations. • Future potential (innovation and translational output). • Communication and outreach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roles of the involved groups are clearly defined. • Project risks and how to address them
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Evaluation Criteria for first interview with external panel, 45 minutes (35% of total weighted score)

Project and career (60%)	Transferable skills (40%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of past research. • Presentation of proposed project. • Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic track candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ preparedness for research questions proposed. ○ Entrepreneurial track candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ innovation potential of proposed project. ▪ potential for advancing the proposed project from technical readiness level (TRL) 1-2 up to TRL 3-6 (exploitation of the DDD research infrastructure and partner testbeds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation. • Leadership and problem-solving capacity. • Oral English language proficiency.

Evaluation Criteria for second interview with internal panel, 30 minutes (20% of total weighted score)

Project and career (66%)	Transferable skills (33%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match between candidate's career goals, and suggested project with host group. • Justification to take part in the program at the host institution. • Understanding of proposed infrastructure. • Motivation for secondments and Associated Partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation. • Leadership and problem-solving capacity.

Brief evaluation timeline (Detailed timeline [here](#))

Evaluation phase	Preliminary dates
Phase 1: Evaluation of written applications	March 20-April 9
Phase 2-3: Online interviews	May 4-8, Interview 1 May 27-29, Interview 2
Final ranking of candidates	June 2 - 3
Decision (main and reserve list)	June 9
Communication of results to applicants	June 12

Instructions for Evaluation of written proposals in Anubis

1. We will set up an evaluator's account for you in Anubis. You will receive an email confirmation for this account with login information. If you do not receive any email confirmation, please check your spam folder. If still not found, please send an email to datacentre@scilifelab.se
2. Log in into <https://anubis.scilifelab.se/>
3. To download the files for the call, go to the call page (listed under “Closed calls”) and click the button in the upper right corner “Proposals in zip file”. The zip file contains an Excel listing all proposals, and the documents submitted for all proposals.
4. To see the proposals that were assigned to you, go to “My reviews” in the upper menu bar. If you have reviews that have not yet been finalized, the item “My reviews” will show the number of reviews that remains to be edited.
5. Go to each review in turn and edit it with your evaluation (grade and comment). Once you are done, click “Finalize”. Note that section 1-5 in the *Project Proposal* may not exceed 8.5 pages. *References* do not count toward the page limit. You can always go back and click “Unfinalize” if you need to modify your evaluation. Once the deadline for reviews has passed (April 9) you can no longer make any changes to the review.
6. The review is completed when no number with yellow background is visible in the top menu “My reviews”.

Instructions for Evaluation of interviews in Anubis

- 1-4. As above.
5. Go to each review in turn and edit it with your interview evaluation (grade and comment). Once you are done, click “Finalize”. You can always go back and click “Unfinalize” if you need to modify your evaluation. Once the deadline for reviews has passed (Interview 1 deadline May 11, and Interview 2 deadline June 1) you can no longer make any changes to the review.
6. The review is completed when no number with yellow background is visible in the top menu “My reviews”.

Contact Information

For all technical questions about the Anubis system, please email datacentre@scilifelab.se
For questions about the evaluation process, please email pulse@scilifelab.se

