

MCAA Research Funding Working Group

Activity report (September 2023 to December 2024)

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Research Funding Working Group (RFWG):

This internal MCAA Working Group focuses on the involvement of MCAA in funding proposals for the benefit of MCAA. It will also assist Chapters and WGs with developing training activities, and in disseminating information related to proposal writing and funding opportunities.

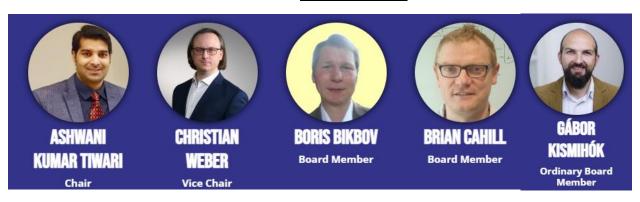
Aims and objectives:

- ✓ Create and maintain basic administrative and practical information on the MCAA to facilitate the involvement of MCAA in funding proposals.
- ✓ Develop a database collecting data concerning available sources of research funding.
- ✓ Encourage MCAA members and external partners to contribute to the funding database.
- ✓ Assist chapters to exploit the database for compiling and promoting regionspecific opportunities.
- ✓ Develop and maintain contacts with current and potential partners for funding opportunities

Activities:

- Training activities run in conjunction with Chapters, other WGs, and/or external partners;
- Dissemination of information on research funding opportunities via the MCAA portal, social media, and any other forms of communication
- Establish best practices, documentation, methodology and task forces to allow the MCAA to be part of proposals in a timely and effective manner;
- Develop funding proposals for the MCAA, and participate in funding proposals developed by others
- Communicate with the MCAA Board to assess the strategy of MCAA involvement in funding proposals.

RFWG BOARD



Contact us: research-funding@mariecuriealumni.eu



Collaborated with



























Activity Organised by RFWG

1. Session Name: PS05: How to win a Competitive MSCA Global Postdoc Fellowship

Date of Session: 15/03/2024 **Time of Session**: 14:15 - 15:15

Place of Session: MCAA Conference in Milan

Session Organiser:

Brain Cahill, Grant Manager and MCAA RFWG

Moderator: Irene Pellicena

Rapporteur of the session:

Ashwani Kumar Tiwari, Chair of RFWG

Speaker:

- 1. Asuncion Lopez Varela: A Vice Chair in the evaluation process of the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship
- 2. Dario Pellizzon: the Head of Research of Ca' Foscari University who specializes in the MSCA Global Postdoc Fellowship
- 3. Angela Bellia: a researcher who was twice MSCA Postdoctoral Fellow, including once as a Global Fellow.

Abstract:

The MSCA Global Postdoctoral Fellowship is a 3-year fellowship that facilitates research mobility between Europe and third countries with a return phase of 1 year at a European Institution. Do you have excellent research ideas with potential global impact? Then an MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship can be a path for supporting your career development. Join this grant writing session and meet successful applicants, evaluators, and research officers to learn how to write a competitive MSCA grant.

Significance

The MSCA global postdoc fellowship is a significant opportunity for individual researchers to enhance their research and personal skills. It also provides two ways to transfer knowledge and build leadership skills. MSCA global postdoc is very competitive, and you should have to score more than 93 to win the global postdoc fellowship. MSCA is also much focused on excellence and open science during evolution of proposal



Figure: With the speakers at the MCAA conference 2024 in Milan

2. Workshop on Research funding in Europe: Grants and Scholarships for Latinoamerican scientists

Date: 27 May 2024.

Language: Spanish (for better interaction with most LATAM assistants)

Event platform: Hybrid mode

Participation: More than 100 on Zoom and more than 200 via YouTube

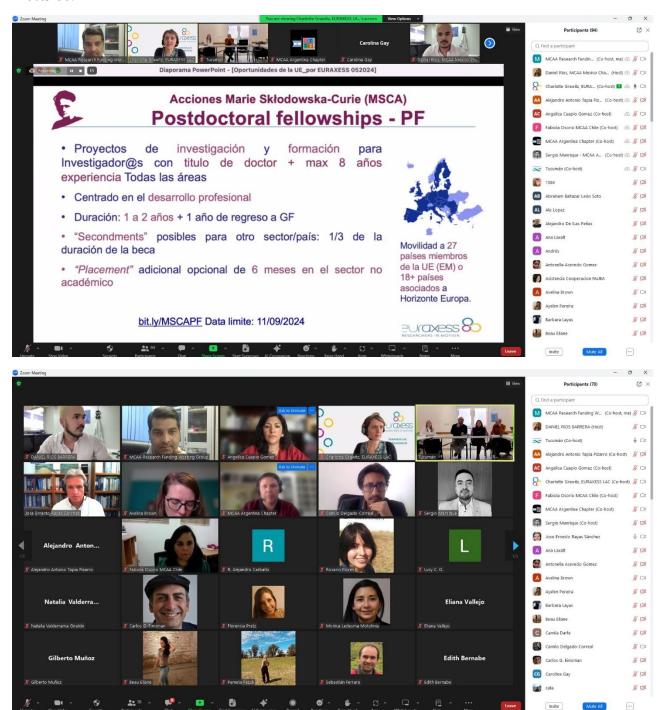
Poster of event



Summary:

The planning of this workshop was initiated by the Chair of RFWG and received support from the Chair of the Mexico chapter, Andean Caribbean Chapter, Argentina Chapter and Chile Chapter. Many participants (online and offline) attended this workshop. The workshop provided the information and tools for the funding schemes available for Latin American scientists in the EU zone, especially the Horizon Europe and the Marie Curie Actions. Charlotte Grawitz (Euraxess), Luis Palassezzi, Virginia Albarracin (MCAA members), and Esther Marhofen (DAAD). Members of the EU liaison office in Argentina were invited and delivered their lectures. Members of MCAA working group Chapters were also presented. The workshop increased the visibility of MCAA and also allowed the dissemination of the EU programs and Euraxess work for researchers in Latam. The workshop encouraged participants to apply to programs and provided a platform for networking and making international contacts.

Pictures:



3. Title: Online lecture on "Education and career opportunities in Climate Change, Development and Sustainability" Dr. Laksmi K. T. V. – Associate professor, JNU, New Delhi – 10067.

Date: 05/06/2024 at 18:00 pm (IST) (On the occasion of World Environment Day, 5 June 2024)

A total participant was 46

Collaborate with: Sustainability Group

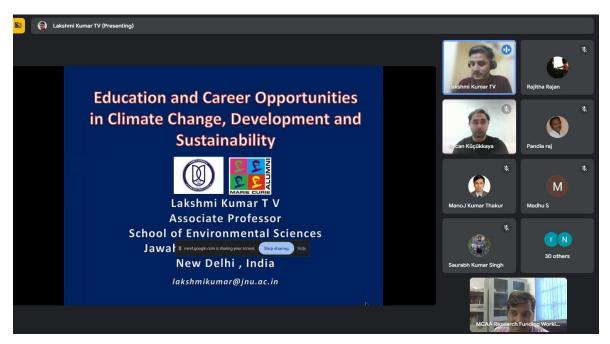
Poster of event

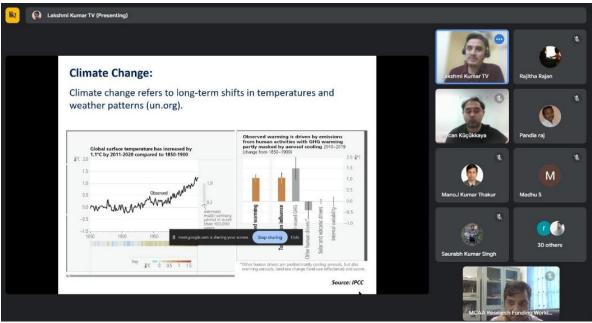


Summary:

On the occasion of World Environment Day 2024, MCAA initiated an awareness program through an online meeting by connecting many people from different science streams on the same dice. Dr. Ashwani Kumar Tiwari, Chair of RFWG, started the program by introducing the key speaker of the event. Mr Polat from MCAA Sustainability Group informed us about the role and importance of MCAA and working groups. Dr. Lakshmi Kumar, Associate Professor, School of Environmental Studies, JNU, delivered an important lecture on "Climate change, development and sustainability". Dr. L. Kumar initiated his talk by focusing on the reasons behind the increasing changes in the climate of the earth. He crucially sheds light on the critical impacts of climate change on environmental entities. He says that mortality due to heat waves through climate change interventions has increased throughout the decade. It needs time to implement CCDR low-carbon development strategies to reduce emissions from different industrial activities for a better future. He further pointed out some national and international scenarios regarding the availability of different institutions that provide a platform to teach climate-related science subjects such as environmental science and earth science. Some skill development courses such as artificial intelligence (AI) and weather modelling practices can make us more interactable with the environment and its different components involving climate change as well, he further added. He concluded by explaining that the previously available documents and advanced appropriate vision of addressing climate change-related problems and their solutions can make the future suitable for both the environment and human communities.

Pictures of the online lecture:





4. Topic: PhD in Europe with MSCA doctoral network program

Speaker

Dr. Mayank Mishra

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellow (IF) at the Universidade do Minho in Portugal

Date of webinar: 11 July 2024

Time of Webinar: 4:00 pm (16:00) (Indian Standard Time) to 5:30 pm (17:30) Indian Standard Time) time zone/12:30 PM (Central European Summer Time) to 2:00 PM (Central European Summer Time)

Platform: Google Meet

Link to join the webinar: meet.google.com/ccg-whcj-wmu

Organiser: MCAA Research Funding in collaboration with MCAA India and Japan Chapters and the

Indian National Young Academy of Sciences (INYAS) Contact email: research-funding@mariecuriealumni.eu

Total participants: 30 plus

Poster of event:

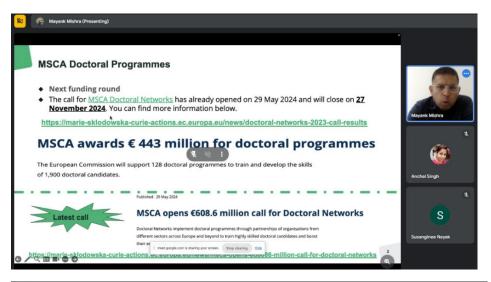


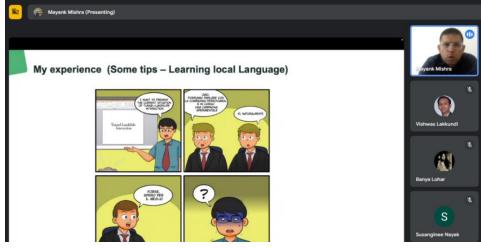
Summary:

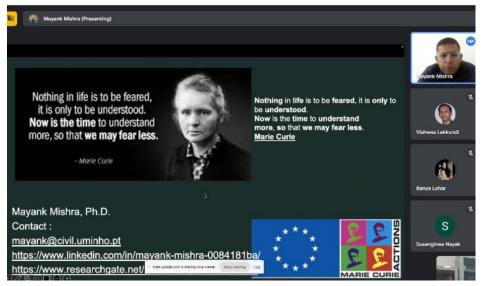
The talk was organized to guide master degree students who want to pursue their PhD studies in Europe via MSCA doctoral programs. The talk answered questions that students have, in addition to some questions they haven't yet thought of about carrying out doctoral research in Europe. The talk delved into several topics, such as the selection procedure for doctoral candidates, the importance of MSCA fellowships for master students, some success stories of previous applicants who have succeeded in securing a PhD position abroad, some tips and suggestions, and the speakers experience of a PhD degree in Europe. The speaker also summarized the findings of his PhD thesis and how students can benefit from research data and its comparisons with field observations. The talk was mainly for aspiring Ph.D. students. Further, practical tips about the importance of having some publications during a master's thesis, foreign training and industry experience, and internships with industry experience were also highlighted in the talk. The talk is primarily intended for those considering pursuing a PhD in Europe through MSCA doctoral programs. For this, award criteria such as excellence, impact, quality, and efficiency of the implementation were summarized. If one is in the process of applying for a PhD degree in Europe, then the lecture has many learnings too, from which you can upgrade yourself a

little more, for sure. The talk was concluded by the famous quote of Marie Curie: "Nothing in life is to be feared; it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less."

Picture of event:







5. **Title of the program**: A brainstorming session on "To Know About MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions) Doctoral Network".

Speaker: Audrey Arfi, European Commission, European Research executive Agency, Unit REA.A1 MSCA Doctoral Network.

Date: 07/08/2024; **Time:** 18:00hr (Indian time)/14:30hr (Belgium time)

RFWG organised with the collaboration of:

School of Environmental Sciences (SES), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi-

INYAS (Indian National Young Academy of Science)

EURAXESS India

MCAA India Chapter

MCAA Andean Caribbean Chapter

MCAA Communication Working Group

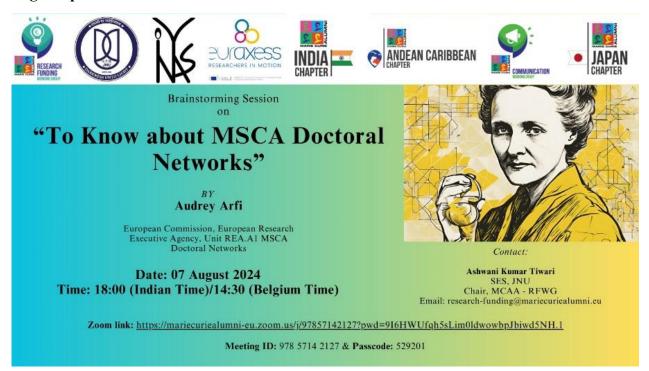
MCAA Japan Chapter

Total Participants: 104 researchers from India, Nepal, Europe, and Latin America, as well as various institutions.

Duration of the program: 80 minutes

Meeting Host: Ashwani Kumar Tiwari, Chair MCAA-RFWG, Member of INYAS

Program poster:



Summary:

- The meeting was started with the welcome address by the Host at 18:00hr.
- Viswas discussed the brief introduction of the MCAA Indian Chapter. He described the persons working with the group and discussed the goals and benefits to the beneficiaries.

- Pankaj briefly discussed the INYAS (Indian National Young Academy of Science). He covered the diversity of activities conducted by INYAS to increase scientific awareness among the diverse population levels. He also discussed the two important activities, PRAYOJAN for postdoctoral fellowships and WISDOM to support women in research.
- Samrat introduced the EURAXESS. The key point of his discussion was how it benefits the research and science communities worldwide to get information about the opportunities for research in Europe.
- Ashish, Chair of the Communication working group, welcomed and introduced the speaker.
- The speaker, **Audrey Arfi**, enlightened the audience researcher with a detailed description of the MCAA-DN. The key context of her lecture was
 - o Different dimensions of MSCA working
 - o Different levels of the DN
 - o Expected outputs for Doctoral candidates and participating organisations
 - o Strategies
 - o Doctoral networks a bottom-up scheme
 - Mode of implementation
 - Eligibility of Participants and countries
 - Funding mechanism
 - o Criteria of award
 - o Procedure to apply

Ended with the important resource link.

- Afterward, the Q&A started with the questions that were dropped in the comment section. The questions are related to the criteria for organisations, Age limit and Publications.
- The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Sergio Manrique, MCAA Andean Caribbean Chapter.

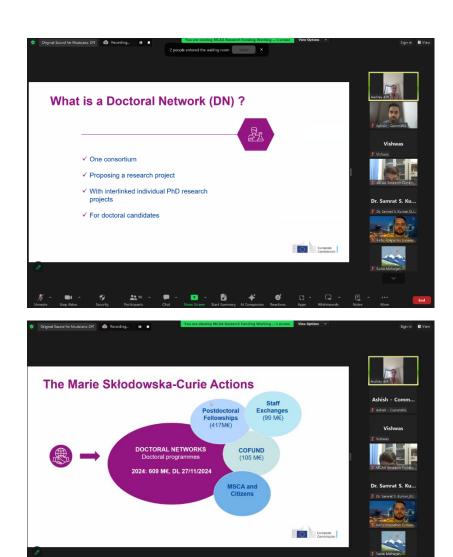
About Participants:

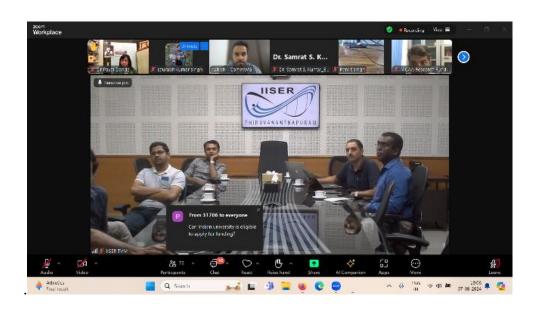
The event was attended by a diverse group of 104 individuals, including students, researchers, and academicians from various countries such as India, Nepal, Europe, Latin America, and Japan. In addition, the event included the participation of two prestigious academic institutions from India: Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Thiruvananthapuram (IISER TVM) in Kerala. The event was jointly organised by JNU, and an impressive number of JNU students and staff members took part. In addition, a delegation of Professors from the Chemistry Department at IISER TVM actively participated and engaged in discussions with the speaker and host regarding the potential involvement in the MDSA DN call.

Conclusion:

The program was highly participatory, informative, and successful. The Speaker presented comprehensive information on the MSCA doctorate network and its global importance, including details on the application guidelines, the scholarship, and other available facilities. Additionally, the Speaker discussed the opportunity for a collaborative academic and industrial PhD through this call. A delegation of professors from the Chemistry Department of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Thiruvananthapuram (IISER TVM) in Kerala, India, have expressed interest in participating in the MDSA DN call.

Pictures:





6. Report on the Online Session on Scientific Writing, Peer Reviewing and Publishing Landscape

Date: 27th Aug 2024, 3 pm to 4.30pm IST

RFWG organised with the collaboration of:

- School of Environmental Sciences (SES), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi-110067
- INYAS (Indian National Young Academy of Science

Poste of event:



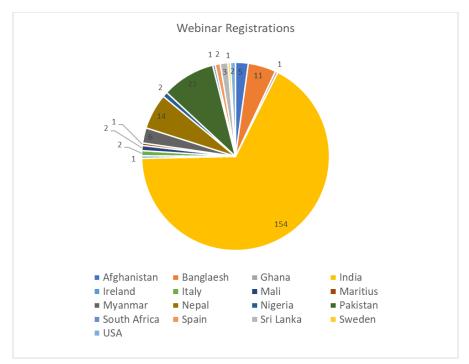
More details, contact: lakshmikumar@jnu.ac.in & ashwani.enviro@gmail.com

Summary:

Training on scientific writing of articles provides the aspirants, a comprehensive way forward in professionally presenting the research findings to the scientific community. Various technical aspects of scientific writing such as the credentials of authorships, inclusion of data sources, acknowledging the non-author contributors will be dealt with. Further the learning of the peer reviewing processes will enable the scientific experts / researchers to know the various steps such as review without any bias, making the recommendations on the publication of the manuscripts. The publishing landscape caters the vast information on the different appropriate avenues to publish the manuscripts which will help to bring the limelight for the manuscripts and the authors in the scientific and research community.

Knowing the importance of the above, the School of Environmental Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, organized an Online Session on Scientific Writing, Peer Reviewing and Publishing Landscape" on 27th Aug 2024 from 3.00 pm to 4.30 pm IST. This event has been associated with the Research Funding Working Group – Marie Curie Alumni Association (RFWG-MCAA) and the Indian National Young Academy of Science (INYAS). The speaker of the session is Dr. Jamie Males, Executive Editor of PLOS Climate Journal.

The session enlightened the participants on the various aspects of the topic, with numerous examples and illustrations. The session was highly interactive, and the participants thoroughly enjoyed the session and the topic. The registrations of the webinar are 229 from seventeen (17) countries. The list of the countries with the number of registrations is provided in the figure.

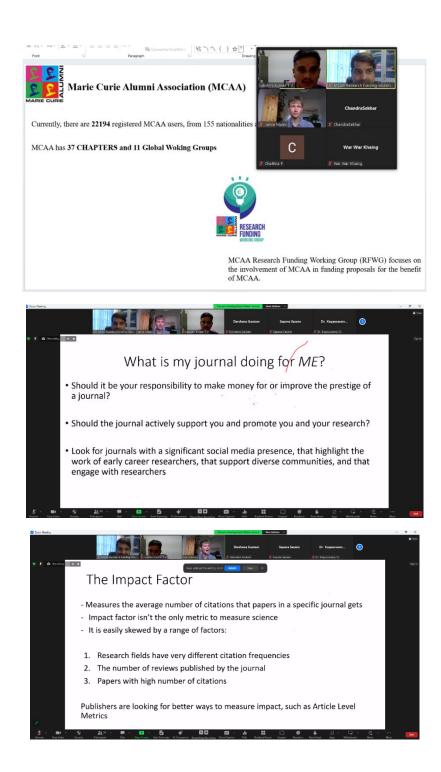


The webinar has started with the welcome address of Dr. Lakshmi Kumar TV, SES, JNU. Dr. Ashwani Kumar Tiwari, Chair, RFWG-MCAA & Member, INYAS has briefed the activities of RFWG-MCAA and INYAS. Later, the speaker took over the session. After the talk is over, participants interacted with the speaker and there were around 10 to 15 questions. Finally, Dr. Ashwani Kumar Tiwari has

delivered the vote of thanks acknowledging the SES, JNU; RFWG-MCAA and INYAS along with the speaker and the participants.

The webinar flyer and a few screenshots of the webinar are appended below.,

Pictures:



7. Title: How to Secure Research Funding for Environmental Sustainability: Aligning with

Global Goals and the MSCA Green Charter

Speaker: Dr Polat Goktas, University College Dublin, Ireland

RFWG organised with the collaboration of:

• Sustainability Group

• Communication Working Group

Total participants: 54 from India and European countries

Poster of Event:



Abstract:

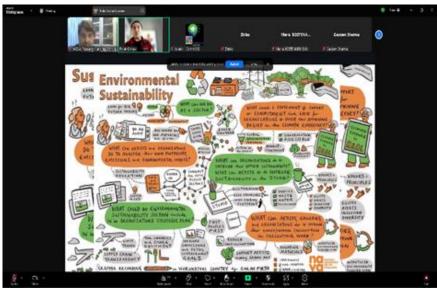
With sustainability at the forefront of global research priorities, understanding how to secure funding for environmentally focused projects has become essential. Drawing on examples from the MSCA Green Charter and my own experiences, I will illustrate how sustainable research practices can be integrated into the projects and how to effectively communicate their impact. Attendees will learn how to frame their research in a way that resonates with funding agencies by addressing key environmental challenges and showcasing the alignment of their work with long-term global objectives. Whether you are new to sustainability-focused research or looking to enhance your funding proposals, this talk will offer actionable insights on how to create compelling proposals that contribute to environmental sustainability and meet the expectations of funding bodies. Join us to discover how to make your research an integral part of the global sustainability movement.

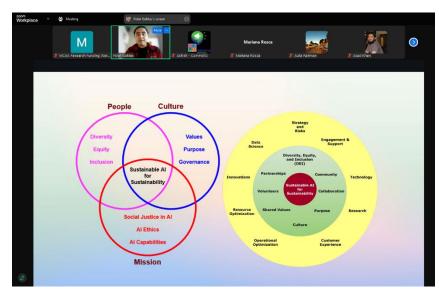
Summary:

The event was very successful. A total of 54 participants from India, Europe and South Africa participated. Dr Polat Goktas provided beneficial information to the participants on how to secure the funding for Environmental Sustainability.

Picture:







8. Title: ECR grantee experiences

RFWG collaborated with:

Japan Chapter

Date 12 September 2024

Poster of event:





9. Title: How to Secure Research Funding for Environmental Sustainability: Aligning with Global Goals and the MSCA Green Charter

RFWG collaborated with:

- Japan Chapter
- Chine Chapter
- India Chapter
- South Asia Chapter

Poster of event:





Represent RFWG as a Chair at several programmes:

1. At Belgium Embassy, New Delhi, India, 28 June 2024

Represented the MCAA-RFWG at the Belgium Embassy and met the Chair of the Indian Chapter and discussed collaboration. Also, met a newly selected MSCA Post-doc researcher (in the middle in the right side picture) (Dr Mayank Krishana, Host country: Spain) and informed him about the MCAA and how to join it.



2. Horizon Europe R&I Info Day 2024

Explore Research and Funding Opportunities in Europe Chandigarh, 30 August 2024







Horizon Europe R&I Info Day 2024

Explore Research and Funding Opportunities in Europe

Chandigarh, 30 August 2024 Venue: Taj Hotel Chandigarh

Time: 9.30-5.30pm IST

DRAFT AGENDA

9.30-10.00am	Registration & Welcome
10.00 - 10.45	 Introduction of Dignitaries & Lightning of Lamp Dr. Praveen Kumar, Career Development Working Group Chair, Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA) Welcome & Opening Address Mr. Pierrick Fillon-Ashida, First Counsellor and Head, R&I Section, Delegation of EU to India Shri Vijay Nadda, Global Educationist and Organising Secretary, Vidya Bharti (North Zone) Key note address Mr. Thierry Devars, Policy Officer, MSCA-Unit, DG EAC, European Commission, Brussels Dr. Pritpal Singh, Executive Director, Punjab State Council for Science & Technology (tbc) Professor (Dr.) Renu Vig, Vice Chancellor, Punjab University (tbc)
10.45 - 11.00	Overview of the Day's Event by Dr. Praveen Kumar, MCAA & Dr. Samrat S. Kumar, EURAXESS India
11.00 - 11.15	Tea & Coffee Break
11.15 - 12.30	 EU-India Partnership on Research & Innovation and cooperation opportunities with focus on Horizon Europe mobility programmes (MSCA, ERC) Dr. Vivek V. Dham, Advisor, R&I Section, Delegation of the EU to India – "Horizon Europe Calls (AI, Biofuels, Health, Food & Agriculture, 6G, Polar)" Mr. Thierry Devars, Policy Officer, MSCA-Unit, DGEAC, European Commission, Brussels – "Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)" Dr. Ashwani Tiwari, Chair, Research Management Working Groups and Dr. Vishwas Lakkundi, Chair Indian Chapter - "MCAA in a nutshell" Dr. Samrat S. Kumar, Country Coordinator, EURAXESS – "Research and Funding Opportunities in Europe"

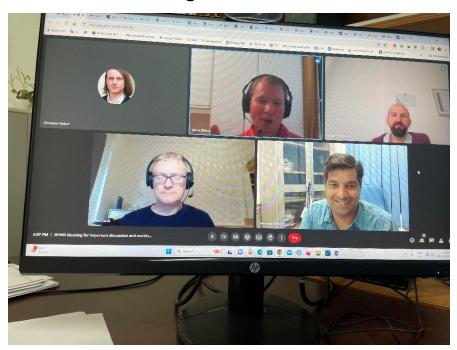
Attended the Marie Sklodowska -Curie Actions (MSCA) Satellite Event, EuroScinece Open Forum at Katowice, Poland and Represented the Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA)-Research Funding Working Group at the event.



Attended MCAA Annual conference in Milan, in March 2024 and Represented Research Funding Working Group at the event.



RFWG Members Meetings





Online Meetings with other MCAA chapters and associations

