

## Guide for applicants

**Deadline of the call for applications: March 31, 2023**

### Selection procedure

#### Eligibility criteria of the applicants

1. Applicants must have a **master's degree** (or be in the process of obtaining one) or have a **University degree equivalent** to a European Master's (5-years duration) to be eligible at the time of the deadline of the call;
2. There is **no nationality or age criteria**, but applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in France for **more than 12 months** in the 3 years immediately before the deadline of the call (MSCA Mobility rule), namely **between the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2023**;
3. Applicants must declare to be **available to start the programme** on schedule.

In order to comply with the eligibility criteria, the applicants will provide the following documents:

1. **English translated transcripts** from the master's degree (or equivalent 5 years degree). A copy of the master's degree or a certificate of achievement will be required later on for the final registration;
2. **International curriculum vitae** and a **cover letter** explaining the reasons that lead him/her to prepare a PhD, why he/she applies to this offer and his/her professional project (guidelines will be given to the applicants in order to help him/her in the writing of his/her letter);
3. **Two academic reference letters**;
4. A **statement** duly signed on the mobility rules, availability and conflicts of interest (template to be signed at the end of the guide for applicants).

#### Application requirements:

The applicants are allowed to apply to only one PhD project among the available ones. Multiple applications of one candidate will automatically make all his/her applications ineligible. Applicants should commit in their application to following H2020 ethical principles and guidelines.

The criteria for the selection of the fellows are described in the table below. They will be used to establish a score that will serve as a basis for ranking applicants, according to specified scoring percentages.

#### Criteria for the Round 1: applicants' pre-selection

DETAILS	SCORING %
Criterion 1: Academic excellence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence of the Academic background, Academic records, Honors, Letters of support, Participation to international research projects, exchange programmes and conferences.</li> <li>• Ability to be trained to AI techniques.</li> </ul>	60%
Criterion 2: Experience	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training experiences: scientific &amp; non-scientific courses, soft skills, work experiences.</li> </ul>	10%
Criterion 3: Motivation and qualities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional project.</li> <li>• Motivation for the AI4theSciences programme, its 3i dimensions and to join the research environment of PSL University.</li> <li>• Volunteering, community service, etc.</li> </ul>	30%

### Criteria for the Round 2: applicants' selection

DETAILS	SCORING %
Criterion 1: Academic excellence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence of the Academic background, Academic records, Honors, Letters of support, Participation to international research projects, exchange programmes and conferences.</li> <li>• Ability to be trained to AI techniques.</li> </ul>	45%
Criterion 2: Motivation and qualities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic maturity: appropriation of the thesis project (stakes and contexts)</li> </ul>	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of the presentation (oral expression, skills for synthesis, English level)</li> </ul>	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maturity of the professional project: capacity to project her/himself within five years in terms of career development.</li> </ul>	5%

### Evaluation process

For each round (pre-selection and selection), a grade between 1 (lowest grade) and 5 (highest grade) will be given to each of the above items. These grades are given in respect to the weighted sum of the criteria, indicated in the table above. At each round, a general threshold of 3/5 will be given so that applications under this threshold will not be considered.

- **Round 1:** One general ranking with laureate and reserve list is made based on the grades of applications. All candidates are informed of their scores and ranking. Among the best applicants, a maximum of two candidates per proposed PhD subject are selected for an audition interview and, when possible, one is put on the waiting list. If the equality of grades of laureates does not allow to select only two candidates for a given PhD project, a vote of the Selection Committee is used to choose the two laureates for interview. Laureates are reminded of all necessary information to prepare for the interview. They have to confirm their participation to the interview. If a laureate cancel, then the one applicant of the waiting list of the same PhD project is called (if there is one).
- **Round 2:** The grading procedure mentioned above is used to grade each candidate after their interview. One general ranking is made with the notations of rounds 1 and 2 - considering a weighted sum of 20% of the grade of round 1 and 80% of the grade of round 2. If two candidates obtain the same score, priority will be given to the one having the best score in round 2 in Academic excellence, then Academic maturity, and then the Quality of the presentation. A vote of the Selection Committee is used if this procedure does not permit to rank the candidates. This provides the ranked list. The candidate ranked first is selected, then the candidate ranked second is selected if he/she did not apply to the same PhD project as the one on rank one. Then the candidate ranked third is selected if he/she did not apply to the same project as the ones on ranks 1 and 2, and so on until we select the number of laureates indicated in the call. The list obtained this way is called the main list. The selected applicants on the main list are informed of their selection. The others are set on a waiting list according to their rank and informed of their rank on the waiting list. If one of the selected candidates of the main list cancels, the first in the waiting list who did not apply to a project that is already present in the main list is called. The others on the waiting list are informed of their new rank in the waiting list. This procedure is

repeated until the number of laureates indicated in the call confirm their participation in the program or the end of the ranked list is reached.

- This procedure allows to focus on the excellence of the candidates first, and on the adequation with the PhD project they apply to.

## The “AI4theSciences” principles

“Artificial intelligence for the Sciences” has embraced the MSCA principles.

The project will aim to foster excellence in the training, mobility and career development of researchers. It will have a very high level of requirement in terms of transparency in the selection, recruitment and career management of the young doctorates. It will offer attractive working conditions and promote gender equity and inclusiveness in the pursuit of excellence. It will include public actions and aims to inform the public about the societal challenges of research.

AI4theSciences will promote the "3i" rule, with interdisciplinary, international, and intersectoral (linked to the non-academic sector) PhD projects. In addition, all the candidates must respect the MSCA "mobility rule", i.e. not have lived more than 12 months in the project country since the last three years.

PSL University will strictly implement the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers promoting open recruitment and attractive working conditions. Being the only way to guarantee scientific excellence, ensuring equal opportunities will be a continuous imperative for PSL.

In the application process, there will be no limit on the graduation date for applicants, to integrate applicants who changed disciplines, or with career breaks for personal reasons such as health, personal issues or projects. Both our selection process and training programme respond with the needs of students with a limited financial capability to apply and study in our premises. All the timings give a perfect equality of treatment between candidates from all nationalities.

A request for MSCA Special Needs Allowance will be made by the beneficiary recruiting a PhD with disabilities. The allowance will cover the additional costs that PhD with disabilities face due to the increased costs of their mobility.

PSL will also promote gender balance during the selection process and will ensure equality of treatments during the three years of PhD study.

## Condition of recruitment

- Type of contract: temporary (36 months) contract under the French labour legislation in force, respecting health and safety, and social security
- Job status: Full-time
- Hours per week: 35
- Annual leave: 25 days per year (“congés annuels”)
- Envisaged starting date: 01-09-2023
- Salary: 2 269 € (gross salary per month)
- Eventual complementary activities may be accepted or proposed by the co-supervisors (maximum of 64h/year for teaching, 32 day/year for specific missions).
- Short stay(s) or secondment in France or abroad may occur or are expected depending of PhD offers.
- Job contract will be delivered by the component school of PSL involved in the PhD project. PhD diploma are all prepared in the component school and delivered by PSL.

## Statement of the 'AI4theSciences' applicant

To whom it may concern,

I, .....,

hereby certify that I apply for a PhD project of the AI4theSciences programme, after having taken into knowledge and accepted the following:

- Being available to participate to auditions (round 2) and to start the training programme in France, at the beginning of September 2023.
- Respecting the MSCA "mobility" rule and conflicts of interest principles.
- Being committed to Horizon 2020 principles and ethical expectations.

Kind regards,

Date:

Signature



## Contact information

For any additional information and to submit final application, candidates are invited to write to the AI4theSciences team PSL: [ai-for-the-sciences\\_team@psl.eu](mailto:ai-for-the-sciences_team@psl.eu)



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