



Secondment Handbook

HORIZON-MSCA-2024-SE-01-01 · MSCA Staff Exchanges 2024

**Sustainable production of High Entropy Alloys
from Secondary metals**



Funded by
the European Union

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Seconded Staff

Under MSCA Staff Exchanges, two categories of staff are eligible for secondment:



Researchers

Researchers at any career stage — from doctoral candidates to senior/postdoctoral researchers — who are actively involved in the R&I activities of the project.



Administrative / Technical / Managerial Staff

Staff in administrative, managerial, or technical roles who are supporting the R&I activities of the project.



Staff with a purely administrative role (e.g., accountants) are NOT eligible — they are not considered to be actively involved in the R&I activities of the organisation. The same staff member cannot be funded simultaneously under two or more MSCA grants for the same activity.

Flexible Secondments



Flexible / Split Secondments

A secondment may be split into several stays with one or several beneficiaries or associated partners, as long as the total duration stays within the 1–12 month range.



Min. 1 Month (cumulative)

The minimum secondment duration per staff member is 1 cumulative month across all stays. Duration is counted from the day of departure to the day of return.



Max. 12 Months

The maximum total secondment duration per individual is 12 months, independently of the number of organisations visited. Max. 360 person-months for the whole project.

Staff Responsibilities

1

Prepare project documentation using official SUSHEAS templates and ensure all required signatures are obtained.

2

Provide all documentation at pre-secondment, during, and post-secondment phases as requested by the Home Institution.

3

Respect the Host Institution's working hours, safety protocols, and ethical guidelines.

4

Keep Home Institution, Host Institution, and Project Coordinator informed of any schedule changes or deviations.

5

Obtain written authorisation before sharing or publishing any results generated during the secondment.

6

Notify the Host Institution in advance, maintain active communication, and secure a formal invitation letter using the project template.

7

Enquire about visa requirements well in advance to ensure all necessary documentation is ready.

Home Institution's Responsibilities



1. Assign a Secondment Responsible

The Home Institution must designate a 'Secondment Responsible' who will be accountable for completing, updating, and tracking the Secondment Declaration file.



2. Inform & Follow Up

Inform the Project Coordinator about upcoming secondments of your staff and actively follow up on any changes to secondment duration through the Secondment Declaration file.



3. Archive All Documentation

Archive all documents related to staff secondments — requesting necessary documentation from the seconded staff, following up the process, and ensuring proper records are maintained for at least 5 years post-project.

Host Institution's Responsibilities

- 1.** Confirm the completion of secondment by signing the Secondment Agreement and Progress Report prepared by the seconded staff.
- 2.** Provide necessary guidance and advice regarding visas during secondment planning.
- 3.** Ensure that the research/work plan developed with the seconded staff is fully aligned with the SUSHEAS project proposal and objectives.
- 4.** Provide adequate office space, a workstation, and internet access during the secondment period.
- 5.** Provide technical guidance, monitor project progress, and facilitate professional networking as outlined in the agreed work plan.
- 6.** Ensure the seconded staff has required access rights to laboratories, libraries, databases, or specialised equipment necessary for the project.

Pre-Secondment Phase

Eligibility Criteria

- Have a valid legal link with the home institution for the entire duration of the secondment activities (e.g. employment contract or equivalent).
- Be employed by or formally enrolled at the home institution at the time of selection.
- Be working in a field directly relevant to the scientific and innovation objectives of SUSHEAS.
- Be able to participate in the planned SUSHEAS secondment activities as defined in the project work plan.



Contact Host Institution

Communicate with the host institution to confirm exact dates and tasks. Invitation letters and any visa-related documents can be requested from the host institution at this stage.



Contact Project Coordinator

Inform the Project Coordinator (via your Home Institution's Secondment Responsible) about the finalised secondment dates through the Secondment Declaration file.

Pre-Secondment Phase — Documentation



1. Formal Legal Link

A valid legal link with the sending organisation: Employment Contract or equivalent covering the planned secondment period.



2. Official Invitation Letter

Must be signed by the Host Institution to formally confirm hosting of the staff member, using the project template.



3. Secondment Declaration

The planned mobility must be stated in the Secondment Declaration file before starting. Staff must inform their Home Institution's Secondment Responsible for completion.

During Secondment Phase — Documentation

1

Secondment Agreement

Must be printed in two copies with handwritten signatures. One copy for the host institution, one for the home institution. Both parties retain a physical or digital copy.

2

Declaration of Eligibility

The appropriate eligibility criteria must be marked. The Home Institution retains a digital or physical copy.

3

Proof of Stay / Travel

Round trip travel tickets (flight or train tickets) confirming the secondment period.

4

Proof of Project Payment

Payroll or bank transfer statement confirming receipt, scaled proportionally to the secondment duration. Must show staff name and proportion.

5

Progress Report

Summary of key activities and tasks completed during the secondment. Must also be submitted to the Project Coordinator at the end of the stay.

Post-Secondment Phase

Talent home institutions are responsible for archiving all documentation for pre-secondment and during-secondment phases.



Archiving Responsibility

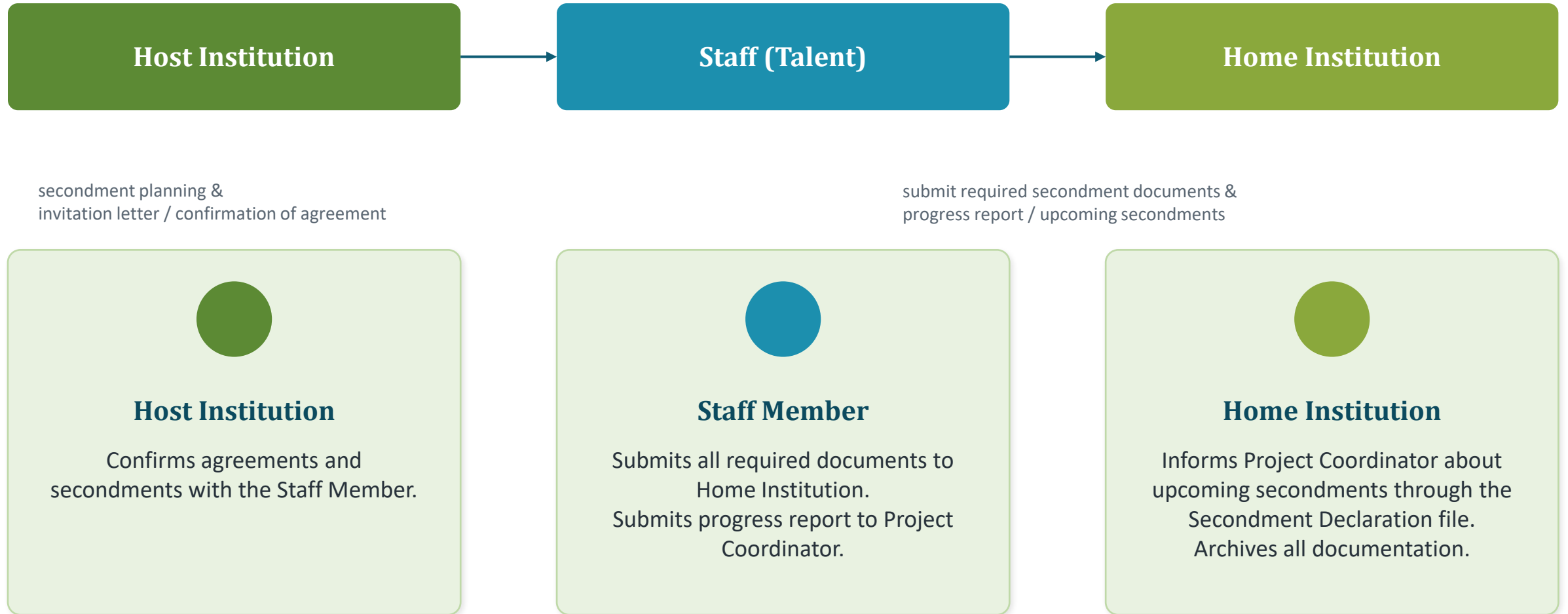
Each sending organisation is responsible for archiving and retaining all secondment documentation for every seconded staff member. Documents must be kept for a minimum of 5 years following the final project payment for potential audit purposes.



During an audit, each organisation is individually responsible for providing its own documentation.

The Project Coordinator shall not be held liable for the documentation of individual partners. Ensure your records are complete, properly signed, and securely stored from the beginning of each secondment.

Secondment Process Scheme



Visa Procedures

Staff are responsible for collecting all documentation required for their visa applications independently. They may use the official SUSHEAS project templates to obtain invitation letters from host institutions. For any additional documents, they should communicate directly with the host organisation's main contact person.



Schengen Area Citizens

Can travel visa-free to all Schengen member countries participating in the project. For stays exceeding 90 days, additional permits may be required.



Non-Schengen Citizens

Must verify visa requirements for each destination country well in advance. Contact the host institution and relevant embassy for country-specific conditions.

Key Steps for Visa Preparation

1. Check visa requirements for the host country well in advance (at least 8–12 weeks before travel).
2. Request the official invitation letter from the host institution using the SUSHEAS project template.
3. Consult the host institution's main contact person for any country-specific guidance or documentation needs.
4. Consult the relevant embassy or official government website for the most up-to-date requirements.

** Visa requirements apply to short-term stays and assume ordinary (non-diplomatic) passports. Always verify with the host institution and embassy.*

Budget Provisions & Allowance

1

Top-up allowance

The top-up allowance for the seconded staff member contributes to travel, accommodation and subsistence costs related to the secondment.

2

Special needs allowance

The special needs allowance contributes to the additional costs for the acquisition of special needs items and services for staff members with disabilities, whose long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments¹⁰⁰ are certified by a competent national authority, and of such nature that their participation in the action may not be possible without them (e.g. assistance by third persons, adaptation of work environment, additional travel/transportation costs). These special needs items or services must not have been funded from another source (e.g. social security or health insurance). The special needs allowance should be requested when the need arises.

3

Research, training and networking contribution

The research, training and networking contribution should cover costs for training, transfer of knowledge and networking activities, as well as research expenses.