

Version 1.1

## **CHARLESTON Programme**

**Charles University Programme for Postdoctoral Researchers**

### **GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS**

Co-funded by European Union

Call: Charleston26

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HISTORY OF CHANGES		
Version	Publication Date	Change
1.0	2. 3. 2026	Original version
1.1	4. 5. 2026	Secondments and exchanges have been removed from the Training Costs category. (Page 16)

## 1) INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **Charleston Programme**, a postdoctoral fellowship opportunity at **Charles University**, designed to support outstanding postdoctoral researchers in advancing their careers. This programme provides fellows with the **freedom, resources, academic environment as well as non-academic experience** to conduct independent research at one of Central Europe’s leading universities. With financial support, access to cutting-edge facilities, and guidance from top scholars, fellows can fully focus on their scientific ambitions. This **Guide for Applicants** outlines everything you need to know: from eligibility and application procedures to evaluation criteria and key deadlines—to help you navigate the application process with confidence.

## 2) PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The Charleston Programme seeks to attract outstanding postdoctoral researchers to conduct research across various faculties and institutes of Charles University. Each fellowship will span 24 months plus additional mandatory non-academic secondment lasting between 3 and 6 months. The programme will feature two application calls, one in 2025 and another in 2026.

The Charleston Programme is built around three key themes:

- Contributing to the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(UN SDGs\)](#),
- Enhancing career development support for postdoctoral researchers, and
- Providing fellows with valuable intersectoral experience through compulsory non-academic secondments.

## 3) FUNDING OF THE PROGRAMME

Charleston programme is anticipated to five years: Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 – Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, 2029. The total budget is 4,776,000€. It is co-funded by the Horizon Europe – Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions (50%) and Charles University internal funds (50%).

## 4) RESEARCH AT CHARLES UNIVERSITY

With seventeen faculties and four institutes covering nearly all scientific disciplines, Charles University is the largest research and academic institution in the Czech Republic, serving over 54,000 students and employing 9,000 staff. Recognized for its research excellence, Charles University is ranked among the world's top 300 universities (QS Ranking 2025 - 265th in global comparison, 92nd among the best European universities).

Charles University's Faculties and Institutes		
<a href="#">Catholic Theological Faculty</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Medicine in Plzeň</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Social Sciences</a>
<a href="#">Protestant Theological Faculty</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Medicine in Hradec Králové</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Physical Education and Sport</a>
<a href="#">Hussite Theological Faculty</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Humanities</a>
<a href="#">Faculty of Law</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Arts</a>	<a href="#">Institute of the History of CU and Archive of CU</a>
<a href="#">First Faculty of Medicine</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Science</a>	<a href="#">Centre for Theoretical Study</a>
<a href="#">Second Faculty of Medicine</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Mathematics and Physics</a>	<a href="#">Centre for Economic Research and Graduate Education</a>
<a href="#">Third Faculty of Medicine</a>	<a href="#">Faculty of Education</a>	<a href="#">Environment Centre</a>

## 5) SUPPORTED SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES

Fellows have the freedom to select their research topics based on the bottom-up principle, with no predefined scientific disciplines set by the programme. Postdoctoral research projects from any faculty or institute at Charles University are welcome, provided they contribute to the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## 6) UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Project proposals must specify their alignment with one or more Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and provide a justification of the alignment.

**Refer to this website:** [https://sdgs.un.org/#goal\\_section](https://sdgs.un.org/#goal_section) to see the full list of the SDGs.

Each SDG is further defined by specific targets and indicators. The proposal should clearly outline how the proposed project will contribute to the selected SDG(s) in detail.

There are three main advantages in aligning your research to the SDGs: it can help you identify and articulate the broader context and significance of your research topic. By linking your research to one or more SDGs, you can show how your work contributes to solving a global problem or advancing a global aspiration. Second, it can help you find and access relevant literature and data sources related to your research. Some journals, databases, and platforms have adopted the SDG framework to classify and organize their content. SDG keywords or indicators are already used to help researchers retrieve the most relevant information for SDGs. Third, it can help you communicate your research to a wider and more diverse audience. The SDGs are widely recognized and understood by various stakeholders, such as policymakers, practitioners, media, and the public. Using the SDG language and symbols, you can

make your research more accessible and comprehensible to those who are interested in or affected by your research.<sup>1</sup>

Applicants are encouraged to consult [the University of Auckland SDG Keyword mapping](#) for a list of keywords associated with each SDG. This resource serves as a guide to inspire applicants and facilitate the alignment of their research with the SDGs.

By supporting the achievement of the SDGs, the Charleston Programme aligns with Charles University's internal Sustainable Development Strategy, where the SDGs serve as a core pillar. At the same time, the SDGs are in line with EU missions, including Horizon Europe, which co-funds the programme.

## 7) CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF THE FELLOWS

The programme places a strong emphasis on the career development of postdoctoral researchers. Selected fellows will have access to a variety of training opportunities.

The postdoctoral researcher is required to participate in a minimum of three (3) workshops or training sessions throughout the project's duration. Postdoctoral researchers can choose training sessions from the list of workshops provided on the programme coordinator's [website](#) or select other relevant training topics aligned with their proposed project. The chosen workshops should be included in section 1.2 of Part B1.

In addition to the supervisors responsible for overseeing the postdoctoral researcher's scientific progress and performance, each fellow will have access to mentors through Charles University's [Mentoring Programme](#).

Particular career development arrangements should be described in section 2.1. of the proposed project (Part B1).

## 8) SECONDMENT AT A NON-ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

The programme aims to strengthen researchers' adaptability in the labour market and foster closer collaboration between Charles University and the non-academic sector through hands-on experience. In addition to the 24-month fellowship, each funded project will include a mandatory non-academic secondment lasting between three and six months.

The list of non-academic institutions who have expressed their willingness to host fellows for their non-academic secondment can be found at this [link](#).

To explore the possibility of undertaking a non-academic secondment at one of these institutions, please contact the designated representatives listed on the programme's [website](#) via email.

If no suitable host institution is found within the existing network, the postdoctoral researcher may propose an alternative non-academic institution. Charles University will establish a partnership agreement with the selected institution where the secondment will take place.

Regardless of the chosen institution, the applicant must submit a "Letter of Commitment" (see Annex IV of this guide for the template). This document must include the non-academic institution's commitment

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.editage.com/insights/how-to-align-your-research-with-sdgs-to-showcase-societal-impact>

to hosting the fellow, the project title, the duration of the secondment, and the name of an external supervisor from the host institution.

The secondment is a mandatory component of the fellowship, lasting between 3 and 6 months. It may be divided into two periods and scheduled at any time during the fellowship, except for the first 60 days of the project. There must be no gaps between the academic and non-academic phases of the fellowship.

## 9) SUPERVISORS

The applicant must designate two supervisors to oversee their research throughout the project:

- a) an internal supervisor from Charles University,
- b) an external supervisor from the selected non-academic institution.

The proposal should justify the relevance of the chosen supervisors to the project.

**Prior consultation with both supervisors is necessary.** However, any contact between the supervisor and the applicant is strictly limited to formal consultations on research opportunities and disponsible equipment and premises. The supervisors are strictly prohibited to co-author the application.

The supervisors' names must be stated in the application:

- a) Internal supervisor from Charles University must confirm his/her position in the system
- b) External supervisor – the applicant fills in his/her name and as a proof of their approval the Letter of Commitment is uploaded

Here is a link to instructions: [How to find your supervisors](#)

The internal supervisor at Charles University must have a minimum of eight (8) years of experience post-Ph.D. The external supervisor at the non-academic institution is required to have a minimum of eight (8) years of working experience (no Ph.D. title is required).

## 10) CALL TIMELINE

The call timeline	
Call for proposals open	March 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2026 – <b>June 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 2 pm (Prague time)</b>
Eligibility check	June 2026
Scientific evaluation	July – September 2026
Interviews with selected candidates	August 31 <sup>st</sup> – September 9 <sup>th</sup> 2026
Steering Committee final decision	October 2026
Check of eligibility conditions, preparation of a grant agreement	October – November 2026
Projects start	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2026 – 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2027



**Online webinar** will be organized for applicants on Thursday March 19<sup>th</sup> 2026 at 1 pm Prague time. [Register here to take part in the webinar.](#)

## 11) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The eligibility criteria are as follows:

### a) Proposal

- a.1. Completeness - All parts of the application are submitted. For the structure of the application see chapter 14 of this Guide.
- a.2. Page limit - The Part B1 of the application does not exceed the given page limit of 15 pages including a start page and end page. All excess pages will be disregarded. The page limit for the CV is two pages. No other page limits are applied.

For detailed instructions on formatting Part B1, refer to Annex II of this Guide.

### b) Researcher

- b.1. Doctorate degree - The researcher must have at the date of the call deadline, successfully defended their doctoral thesis but not necessarily been awarded the Ph.D. In case the candidate has more than one Ph.D. degree, the eligibility is calculated on based on the date of the award of the first doctoral degree,
- b.2. Mobility rule - The researcher cannot have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the Czech Republic for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately prior to the call deadline.
- b.3. Employment at CU - At the call deadline, the applicant must not be an employee of CU.
- b.4. Research experience - Maximum 8 years from date of award of the (first) doctoral degree. This limit can be extended (in days) for the following reasons: Maternity leave; Paternity leave; Compulsory national service; Time spent not working in research; Long-term sick leave, Seeking asylum, Natural disaster, Clinical training.

### c) Project

- c.1. Project length - The project is planned for 24 months plus 3-6 months mandatory non-academic secondment. The total project duration will be between 27 and 30 months.
- c.2. SDGs - The project has stated one or more SDGs it aims to contribute to.

d) Supervisor

d.1. Experience – The supervisor at Charles University (internal supervisor) has minimum 8 years of research experience after completing their Ph.D. degree. The call deadline (June 1<sup>st</sup> 2026) is the decisive date for a calculation of the length of the supervisor's research experience.

e) Non-academic placement

e.1. Host institution – The proposed host institution for the mandatory secondment is of a non-academic nature<sup>2</sup>.

**Applications that do not meet one or more eligibility criteria will be rejected and will not advance to the scientific evaluation stage.**

**Selected candidates must provide proof of their eligibility regarding their researcher status (doctoral degree, mobility rule, and research experience) before signing the grant agreement. This can be demonstrated through the following documents:**

- Doctoral Degree: A verified copy of the diploma or confirmation of dissertation defence. (The document must be in English or other EU language.)
- Mobility Rule: Confirmation that applicant resided in the Czech Republic no more than 12 months in the period between June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, and June 1<sup>st</sup> 2026. This can be done by work agreement, employer's confirmation, rental agreements or other type of document proving the actual residency within the required period. A sworn statement is not a sufficient document. (The document must be submitted in English.)
- Research Experience: In case that Ph.D. diploma was issued prior June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018: applicants must submit a documentation that proves that the exceeding period was spent outside research. This can be done by confirmation about a parental/maternal stay issued by a relevant authority, work agreement covering a non-scientific job position, or employer's confirmation. A sworn statement is not a sufficient document. (The document must be submitted in English.)

To avoid delays in signing the grant agreement, ensure that all required documents are prepared by October 2026. The original versions of all documents confirming the eligibility should be brought to Prague. Failure to provide the necessary certifications will result in the rejection of the grant award.

Start date of the project

**The start of the project is expected between November 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 and March 1<sup>st</sup> 2027.** The administrators must be informed by email about the planned start date of the project by October 31<sup>st</sup> by latest. Before informing the administrators, the proposed start date should be discussed with the host institution and the non-academic secondment institution.

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<sup>2</sup> Non-academic sector defined by the MSCA Work Programme, 2023-2024

## 12) SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process includes the following stages:

### a) Eligibility check

Each proposal will be reviewed against the eligibility criteria outlined in Chapter 11 of this guide. This assessment will be conducted by the programme administrator at CU.

### b) Individual scientific evaluation

Proposals that pass the eligibility check will undergo an independent remote evaluation by two experts specializing in the proposal's scientific field, based on predefined evaluation criteria (detailed below). For highly interdisciplinary projects, a third evaluator may be assigned if necessary.

An online consensus meeting between the two independent experts will be held to determine the final score for each application. Up to eighteen top-ranked applicants from the independent evaluation will be invited for an online interview. Only proposals that achieve a minimum score of 70% will advance to this stage, hence eighteen being the maximum number of candidates invited to the interviews.

Criteria for individual evaluation

Criterion	Sub-criterion	Weight
1. Excellence	1.1. Quality and credibility of the research/innovation project; level of novelty, methodology, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects	50%
	1.2. Potential of the researcher to reach or re-enforce a professional maturity/independence during the fellowship	
	1.3. Potential of the proposed intersectoral collaboration with non-academic partners	
2. Impact	2.1. Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher	30%
	2.2. Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences	
	2.3. Contribution to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals	
3. Implementation	3.1. Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan including the appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources	20%
	3.2. Appropriateness of the management procedures, including risk management	

Each criterion will be valued on a scale 0-5 (0=missing information, 1=the criterion is not adequately addressed, 2=the criterion contains significant weaknesses, 3=the criterion is addressed with a number of shortcomings, 4=the criterion is very well addressed with only minor shortcomings, 5=the criterion is excellently addressed). The maximum value is 15 points (100%). The value can be stated to one decimal place. In order to avoid a recruitment of underqualified applicants, an overall threshold, applying to the sum of the 3 individual scores, is 70%.

In case of equal results, the preference will be given to the proposal scored higher in the criterion 1. Excellence. In case both proposals scored equal points in the criterion 1. Excellence, the preference will be given to the proposal scored higher in criterion 2. Impact.

### c) Interviews

Eighteen applicants (or less if less than 18 applications cross the 70% threshold) that received the highest score during the Individual evaluation stage will be invited to present their proposed project at an interview panel.

The Interview committee will consist of four independent experts and two members of the Programme's Steering Committee. CU employee of the HR department will be present to discuss the employment conditions to the applicant. The Programme coordinator will be also present to keep notes of the interview. The interviews will be executed online, in English, with an oral presentation of the applicant followed by the Q&A session.

The interview will last 30 minutes, with 15 minutes dedicated to the applicant's presentation and 15 minutes to a Q&A section. The shortlisted candidates should prepare a power point presentation and send it to [msca.charleston@cuni.cz](mailto:msca.charleston@cuni.cz) one day before the interview at the latest.

During the interviews, the following criteria will be evaluated:

Criterion	Weight
1. Scientific skills, including the strategic intent of the research and evidence of creative and innovative thinking	40%
2. Match between the candidate's profile and the hosting institution/group	30%
3. Communication and people skills, encompassing the ability to engage in scientific discussions, clarity and consistency of presentation, leadership skills, and the capacity to successfully execute the project	30%

Each criterion will be evaluated on a scale of 1-5, where 0 indicates missing information and 5 represents excellent performance. For the interview stage, an overall minimum threshold of 70% applies. Candidates who do not reach this threshold at the interview stage will not be considered for recruitment.

### d) Final evaluation score

The final evaluation score will be determined as follows: the individual evaluation score (maximum 15 points) will contribute 50%, and the interview score (maximum 15 points) will account for the remaining 50%. In the event of a tie, preference will be given to the proposal with a higher interview score.

### e) Ethics review

The ethics review will be conducted by Charles University's Research Integrity Officer based on the ethics self-assessment questionnaire included in the application.

Proposals recommended for funding, along with those on the reserve list, will undergo an ethics review to ensure compliance with established ethical principles. The process will adhere strictly to Horizon Europe's ethical standards for research. It will begin with an Ethics Screening, and if necessary, proceed

to an in-depth Ethics Assessment. The review may result in ethics requirements that become contractual obligations. For a list of prohibited and restricted research activities, refer to Chapter 13 of this Guide.

#### f) Final decision

The Charleston Programme's Steering Committee will approve the results of the individual evaluations and interviews, after which the final list of maximum twelve proposals recommended for funding, along with those on the reserve list, will be published on the programme's website. A minimum of four members of the Steering Committee must approve the results.

#### g) Redress procedure

##### Appeal against the results of the individual evaluation stage.

For procedural reasons, applicants may submit an appeal against the results of the individual evaluation stage. The appeal must be submitted within ten calendar days of the release of the results.

If the Steering Committee deems the appeal justified, the application will be re-evaluated by different evaluators. If, following the re-evaluation, the application receives a score equal to or higher than that of the application ranked 18th after the individual evaluation stage, the applicant will be additionally invited to the interview stage.

##### Appeal after the interview stage

An appeal against the interview stage may be submitted *before* the evaluation summary is sent to applicants, and only on procedural grounds. These may include, for example: fewer than four members of the Interview Committee being present during the interview; or a technical problem on a side other than the applicant's that prevents the interview from taking place in its full length. If the Steering Committee considers the appeal justified, the application will be re-evaluated by different evaluators. The appeal must be submitted within ten calendar days after the interview.

An appeal against the interview stage *after* the evaluation summary has been sent to the applicant is not permitted. Allowing such an appeal would give the applicant an opportunity to address weaknesses identified in the evaluation during a re-interview, which would be contrary to the principle of equal treatment.

A request for redress may be submitted by the applicant only via email to [msca.charleston@cuni.cz](mailto:msca.charleston@cuni.cz). The email must include a justification outlining the reasons for the appeal. Appeals submitted by any other person will not be accepted.

#### h) Equal opportunities

Female researchers are encouraged to apply. To promote gender balance, the programme administrator will ensure that at least 50% of the appointed independent evaluators are women. Additionally, all independent evaluators will receive training on Unconscious Bias to minimize gender biases and stereotypes during the selection process.

## 13) ETHICS GUIDELINES

Applicants must complete the Ethics Issues Table, which is included in Part B2 of the application. For the template, please refer to Annex III of this Guide.

The Charleston Programme strictly prohibits and will not fund the following research activities:

### 1. Prohibited research activities related to human cloning and human embryos:

- Human Cloning for Reproductive Purposes: Any research aimed at creating human clones for reproductive purposes.
- Genetic Modification of Human Germline: Research that intends to modify the genetic heritage of human beings in a way that can be inherited by future generations.
- Creation of Human Embryos for Research Purposes: The creation of human embryos exclusively for research or stem cell procurement.
- Destruction of Human Embryos: Any research that involves the destruction of human embryos, even if the embryos were initially created for another purpose.

### 2. Activities Violating Fundamental Rights

- Breach of Data Privacy and Protection: Research that violates GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) or other privacy laws is not eligible.
- Discrimination and Exploitation: Studies that involve discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or political beliefs.
- Unethical AI and Digital Technologies: Projects using AI for mass surveillance, deepfake manipulation, or social scoring similar to China's social credit system.
- Non-Consensual Research on Vulnerable Populations: Studies that involve minors, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups without proper consent mechanisms.

### 3. Military and Defence-Related Research

- Development of Weapons or Military Technologies: Any research with direct military applications is ineligible.
- Dual-Use Technologies (Military & Civilian): Projects with potential military applications require extra screening, and purely military projects are excluded.
- Research Benefiting Non-Democratic Regimes: Projects that could be exploited by authoritarian governments or used in human rights abuses.

### 4. Environmental and Health Concerns

- Research Causing Severe Environmental Harm: Projects leading to deforestation, biodiversity loss, or excessive CO<sub>2</sub> emissions without mitigation strategies.
- Risky Biomedical Experiments: Research involving gain-of-function studies on pathogens that could enhance their virulence or transmission.

### 5. Financial and Legal Violations

- Money Laundering or Fraudulent Financial Practices
- Involvement in Corruption or Conflict of Interest
- Links to Sanctioned Entities or Individuals
- Research Conducted in Breach of International Law (e.g., in occupied territories without proper authorization)

Some activities are not outright banned but require additional ethical scrutiny before they can be funded:

### Restricted Activities (Requiring Special Ethical Review)

- Use of Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs): While research using hESCs is allowed under certain conditions, it requires a rigorous ethics review, including compliance with national laws.
- Animal Testing: Projects involving primates and endangered species must justify the necessity and comply with the 3Rs principle (Replacement, Reduction, Refinement).
- Security-Sensitive Research: Research that could misuse AI, biotechnology, or surveillance technologies for military or unethical purposes undergoes a dual-use and security screening.

## 14) STRUCTURE OF THE APPLICATION

The Charleston grant application consists of the administrative forms (part A), the description of the proposed Project description (part B1), and the Ethics issues table (Part B2). All three parts are submitted via [Charles University's IS Veda online system](#).

**Important:** Once the proposal is submitted (by clicking the Submit button), no modifications can be made, even if the deadline has not yet passed. If you need to revise your proposal before the deadline, you must create a new record (i.e. new application) in the online application system. If multiple applications are submitted under the same applicant's name, only the one with the highest project number will be considered for evaluation.

### **a) Part A – administrative forms**

Part A is an online form.

It consists of the following tabs:

#### A1 – Information about the proposed project

Next to some predefined fields such as the call identifier, the applicant will fill in the proposal name, acronym, abstract, keywords, scientific discipline(s), and an affiliation of the proposal to one or more UN SDGs.

#### A2 – Information about the Applicants and the Supervisors

Personal details of the applicant, internal supervisor (at Charles University), and external supervisor (at non-academic institution) must be entered in this section. The applicant's **CV** must also be uploaded **(maximum 2 pages - All excess pages will be disregarded and not provided to the evaluators.)**. The internal supervisor must be chosen from a predefined list of CU employees. Additionally, a Letter of Commitment from the non-academic institution confirming its willingness to host the applicant for the mandatory secondment must be uploaded. For the Letter of Commitment template, refer to Annex IV of this Guide.

#### A3 – Budget of the proposed project

For detailed information on budget categories and their calculations, please refer to Chapter 15 of this Guide and Annex II (Project Description Template).

**Please refer to Annex I (*User Manual for Submitting Online Application Form*) of this Guide for detailed instructions on using the online submission system for the Charleston grant application.**

## **b) Part B – description of the proposed project & ethics**

Part B consists of two documents to be uploaded in PDF format: **B1 – Project description** and **Part B2 – Ethics issues table**.

Part B1 has a structure that corresponds to the evaluation criteria. Refer to Annex II of this Guide for the Part B1 template. Part B2 consists of the self-assessment of the ethics principles of the proposed research activities (Ethics issues table).

**The structure of Part B1 is following:**

### 1. Excellence

1.1. Quality and credibility of the project's research and innovation objectives, level of novelty, methodology, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects

1.2. Potential of the researcher to reach or reinforce professional maturity/independence during fellowship

1.3. Potential of the proposed collaboration with non-academic partners

### 2. Impact

2.1. Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher

2.2. Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences

2.3. Contribution to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

### 3. Implementation

3.1. Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan including the appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources

3.2. Appropriateness of the management procedures, including risk management

Detailed instructions for filling in the Part B1 of the application can be found in the Part B1 template (see Annex II of this Guide).

**Part B2** is self-assessment form related to the ethical principles of the proposed research activities (ethical issues table). Template of this form is available in Annex III of this Guide.

**The files shall be named as follows:**

project number\_Project\_description.pdf

project number\_Ethics\_issues\_table.pdf

e.g.: CHARL26\_002\_Project\_description.pdf

and uploaded into the IS Věda system

## 15) WHAT DOES THE FUNDING COVER

The Charleston grant consists of the following cost categories:

- Living allowance
- Mobility allowance
- Family allowance
- Research cost contribution
- Training costs
- Non-academic secondments costs

The secondment periods are an integral part of the postdoctoral fellowship. All monthly payments will be also provided during the secondment period.

### a) Living allowance

The living allowance is **4180€** per month. This amount includes all employer's social and health contributions as mandated by Czech legislation. In result **the gross salary is 3100€ per month** (amount stated in the work agreement).

### b) Mobility allowance

The mobility allowance is **400€** per month. It will be paid as a part of the salary. This amount includes all employer's social and health contributions as mandated by national legislation. In result the mobility allowance will **top-up the gross salary for 296€ per month** (amount stated in the work agreement).

### c) Family allowance

The family allowance is **200€** per month for postdoctoral researchers who have child or children under 18 years of age. It will be paid as a part of the salary. This amount includes all employer's social and health contributions as mandated by national legislation. In result the family allowance will **top-up the gross salary for 148€ per month** (amount stated in the work agreement).

The postdoctoral researcher's gross salary will be then calculated as living allowance plus mobility allowance plus family allowance (if eligible for the family allowance).

### d) Research cost contribution

The research cost contribution is **600€ per month**. It must be used for the benefit of the fellow. The following costs can be covered from the Research cost contribution:

- Consumables and Supplies: Purchase of materials, lab supplies, chemicals, and other consumables necessary for the research activities.
- Equipment: Costs for small-scale equipment essential for the project. Note that large-scale investments are usually not eligible.
- Travel and Subsistence for Research Activities: Expenses for fieldwork, data collection trips, or visits to research facilities.
- Publication and Dissemination Costs: Fees for open access publications, conferences, workshops, and other dissemination activities.
- Access to Research Infrastructure: Costs associated with accessing specialized equipment or facilities not available at the host institution.

## e) Training costs

A monthly allowance of **€200** will be available to the fellows to meet their additional training needs not covered by the Training opportunities of the Charleston Programme. This can include:

- Organization of Training Events: Expenses for workshops, seminars, conferences, and courses that enhance researchers' skills.
- Participation in External Training: Fees and travel costs for attending external training programs, courses, or conferences.
- Language Training: Costs for language courses if they are essential for the researcher's integration and project activities.
- Professional Development: Training in transferable skills such as project management, entrepreneurship, ethics, and communication.

## f) Non-academic secondments costs

The travel costs related to the non-academic secondments should be calculated based on the real cost forecast and must be in line with the [Rector's Directive No. 1/2026](#) on Employees' Business Trips, or its valid update respectively.

Calculation of the non-academic secondment costs (real cost forecast) must be present in the application (part 3 – Implementation). The applicant is eligible for secondment costs if the proposed secondment at a non-academic institution takes place in a different location than the location where the project is implemented (Prague, Plzeň or Hradec Králové). Secondments carried out in the same location are not eligible for secondment costs.

Use the Secondment related travel costs table in section 3 – Implementation of Part B1. Refer to Annex II of this Guide for Part B1 template.

The following restrictions apply to travel costs related to the secondment:

- Accommodation costs must not exceed €2,000 per month when outside of the Czech Republic, 1200€ in case the secondment takes place in the Czech Republic.
- Allowance for Personal Needs for a Business Trip to a Foreign Country (pocket money – “kapesné”) is not an eligible expense.
- Expenses for public transport are eligible only if incurred in economy class.

### Example of Secondment related travel costs distribution in the budget:

A secondment lasting 3 months in a non-academic institution in Bosnia and Hercegovina is proposed by the applicant.

1. Estimate the secondment related travel costs forecast – fill in a table in section 3 of Part B1:

Cost category	Unit cost in €	Number of units	Unit	Total costs
Accommodation	1000	3	month	3000
Meal allowance*	40	92	day	3680
Travel costs	1000	1	trip	1000

Other necessary costs	700	1	trip	700
<b>Total secondment related travel cost forecast</b>				<b>8380€</b>

\*Based on "Decree No. 489/2025 Coll., on Setting the Basic Rates of Foreign Per Diems for the Year 2026"

Total secondment related travel cost is 8380€.

In case of any unclarities, contact the programme coordinator.

## 16) EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

An employment contract between the selected postdoctoral fellow and the Charles University will be signed before the start of the project. The employment contract will cover the entire period of the fellowship, i.e. both the academic part and the non-academic secondment.

**Important: The fellow must be working exclusively for the project, i.e. undertake research activities on the Charleston project on a full-time basis,** without any other parallel employment. Part-time employment will be permitted only for personal or family reasons (such as childcare) and will be a subject of prior approval from the European Commission. Full-time engagement in the project will be confirmed by the fellows through the signing of the grant agreement.

Employees from EU/EEA countries that are signatories to the Framework Agreement on [cross-border telework](#) may perform remote work from their country of residence for up to 49.9% of their total working time, provided that at least 50% of their working time is carried out in the employer's country. In such cases, the employee and the employer must apply to the Czech Social Security Administration for an [exemption under the Framework Agreement](#) in order to maintain coverage under Czech social security legislation.

Employees from EU/EEA countries that are not signatories to the Framework Agreement on cross-border telework, as well as employees from the United Kingdom, are subject to the standard EU social security coordination rules. Accordingly, they may work from their country of residence for up to a maximum of 25% of their total working time without triggering a change in the applicable social security legislation.

During the secondment period, the postdoctoral fellow retains their employment status at CU. If the non-academic secondment takes place in a country other than the Czech Republic, the fellow will be sent abroad under a Travel Order. ([Rector's Directive No. 1/2026](#))

The researcher's total salary will consist of the combined amounts from budget category 1 – Living Allowance, category 2 – Mobility Allowance, and category 3 – Family Allowance (if applicable). For further details, refer to Chapter 15 of this Guide.

A list of CU's benefits which every employee is entitled to can be found [here](#).

## 17) CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Charleston Programme is designed to support the career development of postdoctoral researchers. Future career plans and trajectories should be outlined in Part 2.1 of Part B1.

Additionally, postdoctoral researchers will have access to Charles University's career development support for postdocs, which includes:

- Training opportunities

The training sessions and workshops are based on the European Competence Framework for Researchers. Visit the Charles University's [Postdoctoral Hub page](#) for an up-to-date list of the training offer.

- Mentoring programme

All postdoctoral researchers will be encouraged to participate in the Charles University Mentoring programme for postdocs. More information about the mentoring programme can be found on the Charles University's [Postdoctoral Hub page](#).

## 18) ON-ARRIVAL SUPPORT

Upon arrival, Charleston grantees requiring assistance with on-arrival matters may use the Charles University [Staff Welcome Centre](#) services.

## 19) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ section is available on the Charleston Programme website. [Click here to enter the FAQ section.](#)

## 20) CONTACT

**Charleston programme website:** <https://cuni.cz/UKEN-2185.html>

**Contact email:** [msca.charleston@cuni.cz](mailto:msca.charleston@cuni.cz)

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[Annex I – User Manual for Submitting Online Application Form](#)

[Annex II – Part B1 template – Proposed Project Description](#)

Annex III – Part B2 template – Ethics issues table

Annex IV – Letter of Commitment – non-academic institutions

Annex V – Definitions

**All annexes are available for download at website [Application](#).**