Call for PhD 1 fellowship (DC4)

MSCA – Doctoral Network

Lectin LIgands for Modulation of ImmuniTy = LLiMiT

LLIMIT is a European doctoral training network dedicated to advancing immunomodulatory glycoscience. Its aim is to equip a new generation of researchers with the skills to design and develop ligands targeting immune-related lectins—an innovative but underexplored therapeutic strategy against immune disorders, one of today's major global health challenges. The consortium unites 7 academic institutions with accredited PhD programs in organic and medicinal chemistry, molecular biology, structural biology, immunology and pharmacology, each with strong expertise in glycoscience. They are joined by 7 non-academic partners and a graduate and research academy, ensuring comprehensive, cross-sector training that spans fundamental science, translational research, and entrepreneurship. Key objectives of LLIMIT include: a) recruiting and training 14 doctoral candidates in a joint, research-based program supported by expert supervision and specialized training events, b) advancing innovative research on immune lectins and carbohydrate ligands, covering the full early drug discovery pipeline: from target identification and validation, through advanced glycochemistry and drug design, to hit and lead discovery; c) establishing a sustainable foundation for European excellence in glycodrug and immunomodulatory research; d) developing a common glycodrug curriculum across participating institutions to standardize and strengthen education in this field; e) building and maintaining long-term partnerships that ensure continuity in training, research, and innovation well beyond the project's duration.

DC4 PROJECT TITLE. ***Design and synthesis galectin-9 inhibitors***.

Host Institution: Department of Chemistry, Lund University (ULUND, Sweden.

Duration: 36 months, April 2027 - March 2030* (*possible extension of 1 year).

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ulf Nilsson

Co-supervisors: Prof. Dr. Marko Anderluh, University of Ljuböjana, Slovenia, and Dr. Björn Borgström, RG Discovery AB, Lund

DC4 PROJECT. The research programme of DC4 aims to discover inhibitors of galectin-9 and galectin-9-targeting PROTACS.

PLANNED SECONDMENTS. 1. University of Ljubljana (Prof. Dr. Marko Anderluh): 2. University of Düsseldorf (Prof. Dr. Philip Lang): 3. RG Discovery AB, Lund (Dr. Björn Borgström).

PhD School enrolment: PhD School in chemistry at Lund University

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The position is open to candidates of any nationality, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for Doctoral Candidates (DCs) funded under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), as defined in Section 1.3.2, "Recruited researchers", of the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027.

The applicant must apply at the Lund University application web site (https://lu.varbi.com) and comply the specific application requirements by **15th January 2027**, clearly indicating in the subject "*Application for DC4 position*".

At the time of recruitment, the successful candidate must not have been awarded the doctorate degree and must not have resided, nor carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Sweden for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the first day of employment.

The salary of the DCs will be paid according to the MSCA rules. See: https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/funding/msca-doctoral-networks-2026

CANDIDATE PROFILE

- has been awarded a second-cycle qualification, *or*
- has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second cycle, *or*
- has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.
- The specific entry requirement of 120 credits (courses, or a combination of courses and degree project) is defined by the research orientation of the project. This typically means courses in chemistry, but may also include courses with substantial content in, for example, molecular sciences, mathematics, life sciences, materials science, or physics. The specific qualification may also have been obtained through other equivalent education, which is assessed on a case-by-case basis
- completed their M.Sc. or equivalent and have not acquired, since, more than 4 years (full-time equivalent) research experience.
- passed a course in advanced theoretical organic chemistry (or equivalent)
- passed a course in advanced practical organic chemistry (or equivalent)
- good ability to work independently and to formulate and tackle research problems.
- good written and oral communication skills
- good ability to cooperate
- very good knowledge of English, spoken and written
- practical experience of carbohydrate chemistry
- practical experience of medicinal chemistry
- practical experience of studying carbohydrate-protein interactions
- practical experience of analytical methods (LCMS, NMR, HPLC, IR)
- international experience (studying, internship or research work abroad for a period of at least 1 month)
- Consideration will also be given to good collaborative skills, drive and independence, and how the applicant, through his or her experience and skills, is deemed to have the abilities necessary for successfully completing the third cycle program.

Information also available at: https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ and https://llimit.eu/.