KEY-RSU

TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Training and professional development opportunities for KEY-RSU postdoctoral researchers

Five years of scientific training, transferable skills, international experience and progression towards research independence.

36 months	24 months	6 researchers
MSCA co-funded Phase 1	RSU-funded Phase 2	4 MVI + 2 SSRC

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions | Choose Europe for Science

Project No. 101313381 | Rīga, Latvia

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

1 Research and career development at KEY-RSU

KEY-RSU offers a five-year postdoctoral research and career-development pathway at Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU). Researchers carry out their own research projects while participating in transferable-skills training, subject-specific learning, interdisciplinary exchange and international or intersectoral mobility.

The programme supports progression towards independent research and a range of career options in academia, healthcare, industry, public policy and other research-related professions. Researchers are hosted by the Institute of Microbiology and Virology (MVI) or the Social Sciences Research Centre (SSRC) and can engage with the wider RSU research community.

THE TRAINING FRAMEWORK KEY-RSU combines a common skills curriculum, a mandatory secondment and tailored scientific training with RSU institutional learning opportunities. Specific activities are chosen according to research and career-development needs.

2 Programme-wide training

All KEY-RSU postdoctoral researchers take part in a shared Transferable Skills Training Curriculum covering the areas below. Training is delivered through programme activities and relevant RSU services; information on individual sessions and participation arrangements is provided in the programme training schedule.

Core learning area	Illustrative focus
Research ethics and integrity	Responsible conduct, research ethics, ethical decision-making and responsible authorship.
Open Science and research data	FAIR principles, data management planning, reproducibility, responsible data sharing and data security.
Research and grant management	Project planning, scientific writing, proposal development and competitive research funding.
Research impact and engagement	Research communication, public engagement, science for policy and interaction with stakeholders.
Leadership and professional skills	Teamwork, leadership, mentoring, supervision, collaboration and professional communication.
Innovation and intersectoral skills	Intellectual assets, knowledge valorisation, entrepreneurship and academia–industry collaboration.

The training offer also includes scientific seminars and an interdisciplinary summer school. RSU Research Week, Doctoral School seminars and workshops, and Scientific Journal Club provide opportunities for scientific exchange, presentation and professional networking. Participation in specific events is organised through the relevant programme activities.

3 RSU Doctoral School and institutional learning opportunities

The RSU Doctoral School brings together consultations, seminars, workshops and networking activities that support research skills and professional development. Its services cover areas relevant to both biomedical and social-science researchers. Activities and consultations are available according to the current offer and the relevant registration arrangements.

Type of support	RSU support and learning opportunities
Research design and analysis	Consultations on research design, data processing and interpretation; statistics using R and Excel; statistical reporting; bioinformatics and multi-omics analysis where relevant.
Data and ethics	Research-data management consultations, advice on personal-data handling and links to the relevant institutional ethics and data-protection services.
Funding and project preparation	Consultations on preparing national and international research proposals and grant applications.
Scientific writing and publishing	Guidance on research writing in English, scientific manuscript content, literature and database searches, EndNote reference management and publishing.
Innovation and intellectual assets	Consultations on intellectual property protection and patent-information searches.
Research community	Scientific Journal Club, research seminars, Research Breakfast and other networking activities organised at RSU.

Other university-wide learning opportunities

- English for Research: RSU offers activities supporting written and oral scientific communication in English, including research writing and presentations. Researchers can consult the current Doctoral School schedule for upcoming sessions.
- Centre for Educational Growth: RSU offers continuing education and resources for academic staff in university teaching, digital learning, research-related skills, academic integrity, communication and leadership. Participation depends on the relevant activity and staff eligibility conditions.
- Research Week: RSU's biennial research event brings together biomedical, health and social sciences through conferences, workshops and interdisciplinary exchange with academic and non-academic audiences.
- Research data infrastructure: RSU Dataverse and the national DataverseLV ecosystem support training and practice in FAIR research-data management and responsible sharing, with appropriate protection of restricted and sensitive data.

4 Research-specific and interdisciplinary development

Alongside shared programme training, researchers can develop project-specific scientific and methodological skills through their RSU host environment and other suitable training opportunities. These may include specialist courses, workshops, research-infrastructure training, scientific conferences and methodological exchanges with partner organisations.

Host research environment	Examples of relevant skill development
MVI — biomedical research	Experimental design, advanced molecular and cellular methods, omics and bioinformatics, imaging, translational research, and biosafety-related training where applicable. Use of specialised research facilities remains subject to authorisation, training and capacity.
SSRC — social sciences	Qualitative and quantitative methods, interviews and surveys, comparative research, mixed-methods design, digital research, responsible handling of sensitive participant data, stakeholder-engaged research and policy-relevant communication.
Across RSU	Interdisciplinary seminars and collaborations connecting biomedical, clinical, public-health and social-science expertise; methodological advice and opportunities for scientific exchange.

Access to specialised facilities, research participants, datasets, software or external services is arranged in accordance with the scientific project, available resources and the applicable approvals, licences and institutional procedures.

5 International and intersectoral secondments

Each KEY-RSU postdoctoral researcher will undertake a mandatory secondment of 6–12 weeks. The placement provides an opportunity to acquire complementary skills, experience another research or innovation environment and develop international or intersectoral networks. Secondments are primarily organised through the KEY-RSU Associated Partner network and tailored to the researcher's project and training needs.

The programme's Associated Partners include Aarhus University, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), Nagasaki University, the University of Skövde, the University of Iceland and SIA APPLY. Other organisations involved in the programme may contribute relevant expertise. The secondment host and activities are agreed individually; participation in a particular host organisation or access to particular facilities is not automatic.

SECONDMENT ARRANGEMENTS The destination, duration, learning objectives, supervision and practical conditions of each secondment are agreed with the researcher and the host organisation. A formal secondment arrangement is required. Researchers remain employed by RSU and retain employment-related social protection during the secondment.

6 Scientific supervision and career support

Each researcher is supported by a main supervisor and a co-supervisor, who provide scientific guidance, complementary expertise and career-development support. Additional specialists may contribute where appropriate. During a secondment, a mentor at the host organisation supports the agreed training activities.

Scientific meetings, feedback and structured progress reviews support the researcher's development towards greater independence. Training priorities are tailored to individual research and career goals and reflected in the researcher's Career Development Plan.

Professional experience beyond courses

- Participation in research-group seminars, scientific discussions and cross-disciplinary exchange.
- Opportunities to present and discuss research at conferences, RSU Research Week and other research events.
- Development of networking, stakeholder engagement, research communication and science-for-policy competencies.
- Where appropriate and permitted by programme and employment arrangements, experience in mentoring, student support, guest lectures or teaching-related activities.
- Guidance towards leading research initiatives, competitive funding applications and independent research trajectories.

7 Development across the two phases

Phase	Development emphasis
Phase 1 — 36 months (MSCA co-funded)	Structured programme-wide training and project-specific methods development; supervised research, ethics and data-management training, interdisciplinary exchange and implementation of the mandatory secondment. Progress reviews and adaptation of development activities.
Phase 2 — 24 months (RSU-funded)	Continued employment, supervision and career support, with greater initiative in research planning, collaborative leadership, funding development, dissemination, methodological deepening and future career pathways. Further training or mobility may be pursued where relevant and feasible.

8 Participation and access to support

- The KEY-RSU shared curriculum and mandatory secondment are integral parts of the programme. Individual training activities are selected and scheduled to support the researcher's scientific work and career direction.
- Doctoral School consultations, academic-staff development activities, scientific events and other RSU services have their own schedules and participation arrangements. Availability may depend on registration, language, eligibility and capacity.
- Participation in external courses and conferences, use of specialised infrastructure and secondment arrangements depend on relevance to the research project, necessary approvals and the agreed logistical and financial arrangements.
- Training, mobility, supervision, teaching-related experience and other development activities are planned in accordance with the researcher's employment conditions and agreed KEY-RSU responsibilities.

Explore RSU training and research services

Current training events, consultation opportunities and registration information are available from the relevant RSU services:

Doctoral School | Staff training | Research Week | Research portal | Dataverse