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**ESSENTIAL**

***E**volving **S**ecurity **SciencE** through **N**etworked  
**T**echnologies, **I**nformation policy **A**nd **L**aw*

**EJD**

**WP 5 – Training Programme (Training)**

**LEAD PARTNER – NTNU**

**D5.17– Fellow’s Handbook for Secondment with user-  
partner network**

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## List of abbreviations

ESR	Early Stage Researcher
SB	Supervisory Board
GA	Grant Agreement
NFI	Netherlands Forensic Institute



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## Introduction

The aim of this deliverable is to provide guidance to the ESSENTIAL ESRs undertaking secondments as part of their programme of study. It is however, not intended to replace other faculty or university guidance, so ESSENTIAL ESRs should always refer to their Faculty, School, Programme guidelines.

Secondments are a period of time spent at another organization within the consortium with the aim of implementing the ESR's individual research project. Secondments can take place either at another academic institution within the consortium or they can be inter-sectoral secondments (between the academic and non-academic sectors)<sup>1</sup>.

## Chapter 1 - Secondment requirements

Secondments are a compulsory part of the ESRs degree. According to the ESSENTIAL Grant Agreement there are two types of secondments envisaged:

- Type 1: this type of secondment requires the ESR to spend at least 12 months carrying out research with another academic consortium member;
- Type 2: this type of training involves a secondment of 3 to 6 months to one of the industry partners; e.g. NFI or Synergetics (and eventually with law enforcement agencies from within the many existing partners from existing or previous research projects). This type of secondment is aimed to provide the ESR with specialised professional skills that the ESR would not experience in a classical academic context.

## Chapter 2 - Rationale for secondments

- While both type 1 and type 2 secondments have been already included in the ESSENTIAL Joint Doctoral Programme design, the rationale for each secondment should be clearly evaluated by the supervision team of each ESR and approved by the SB;
- The aims, objectives and appropriate learning outcomes for the secondment should be clearly defined and agreed upon by the supervisory team;

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/sites/mariecurie2/files/msca-itn-fellows-note\\_en\\_v2.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/sites/mariecurie2/files/msca-itn-fellows-note_en_v2.pdf)



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- The benefits of secondments over and above those mentioned in the ESSENTIAL GA should be identified.

## **Chapter 3 - Selection and allocation**

- ESRs should have equal opportunity of access to a secondment to ensure they can benefit from the learning it provides. This has partially been ensured by including already in the programme design the secondments envisaged for each ESR - though the scheduling may be altered in accordance with their individual development needs;
- Any process of selection or allocation of ESRs to secondments should be clear and transparent and notified to all ESSENTIAL ESRs.

## **Chapter 4 - Practicalities**

- The secondment must be relevant to the ESRs research project and provide an appropriate level of experience. Therefore, any secondment request must be first approved by the respective ESR's supervision team;
- Secondments are expected to be full time;
- Where the ESRs wish to go on secondment to an institution outside the consortium and the ESR wishes to spend the time agreed with the supervisors there and the consortium is not expected to incur additional costs that secondment might be permissible provided that it is approved by the SB;
- Each secondment request will be analysed individually and accommodation covered depending on ESSENTIAL funding availability and if request is reasonable;
- When institutions have their own funding, separate from the ESSENTIAL project funding and wish to assist one or more ESRs in their secondments and the SB so approves, then this is also permissible;
- Where by virtue of their enrolment in an institution, the ESR would be eligible for funding of any activity and such funding is separate and outside the ESSENTIAL funding, the ESR may avail himself/herself by that funding if so awarded by that institution;

## **Chapter 5 - Roles, responsibilities and requirements of the entities responsible for organizing the secondments**

- Consortium members hosting ESRs during their secondment will try to assist the ESRs in finding suitable accommodation by using institutional facilities (where possible) or providing information on accommodation options –

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however it is the responsibility of the ESR to identify and secure their own accommodation during secondments;

- Consortium members hosting ESRs during their secondment will assist ESRs in meeting any visa/residence requirements (e.g. by providing formal invitations). ESRs should check what are the legal requirements in the country of destination and allow for sufficient time for the visa application process to be completed before their secondment;
- Consortium members hosting ESRs should clearly outline all terms and conditions of the secondment. The academic and pastoral services that are provided to ESRs whilst on secondment must also be clearly outlined and communicated;
- The hosting institution of the ESR must maintain effective channels of communication with ESRs and the secondment provider about the secondment at all times as part of effective monitoring and evaluation;
- There should be at least one identified point of contact at the hosting institution for ESRs whilst they are away on secondment (this would preferably be a member of the supervision team);
- There should also be an identified point of contact at the secondment provider for ESRs while they are on their secondments;
- Secondment providers must provide the opportunity for ESRs to gain demonstrable skills and knowledge which adequately match the learning outcomes of their programme of academic study;
- Secondment providers must be able to demonstrate possession of their own policy, procedure and best practice in support of all legal, moral and ethical obligations relevant to the secondment. This includes being able to provide evidence of adequate and appropriate health and safety and risk management procedures etc. To ensure the above criteria are met, information regarding services available to ESRs are included in D5.22 Report on Wellness and Work Balance Activities, while health and safety guidelines for each ESSENTIAL partner organization can be found in D5.21 Report on Health and Safety;
- Secondment providers must engage and communicate with both the ESRs and their host institutions throughout the entire duration of the secondment, providing updates on progress or issues as requested;
- Providers must also provide the opportunity for the ESRs to give feedback after completion of the secondment.

## **Chapter 6 - Roles, responsibilities and requirements of the ESRs**

- All information concerning roles, responsibilities and requirements of an ESR should be made explicit and clear;

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- ESRs should consult regularly with their host institution to prepare themselves adequately for the secondment and ensure that they are aware of all issues relevant to the secondment;
  - ESRs must take responsibility for meeting the norms and expectations for professional conduct in the particular field of work that they are undertaking;
  - ESRs should maintain consistent and effective communication about the secondment with their host institution and the secondment provider and provide feedback on any issues to their host institution as requested.

## **Chapter 7 - Quality Assurance**

- Host institutions must make every effort to evaluate individual secondment opportunities and practices against a strict internal and external quality assurance process checklist before making available to ESRs; This includes validating each secondment closely against institutional policies to help ensure that any ESR secondment is valuable, measurable, safe, non-exploitative and as closely aligned to a path of academic study and personal/professional career development as possible;
- As part of the monitoring and evaluation of secondments, host institutions should use feedback from ESRs and secondment providers to make appropriate changes and improvements to quality and best practice;
- The ESSENTIAL staff involved in organizing the secondments should have the necessary skills and resources to fulfil their roles at a good level of quality.

