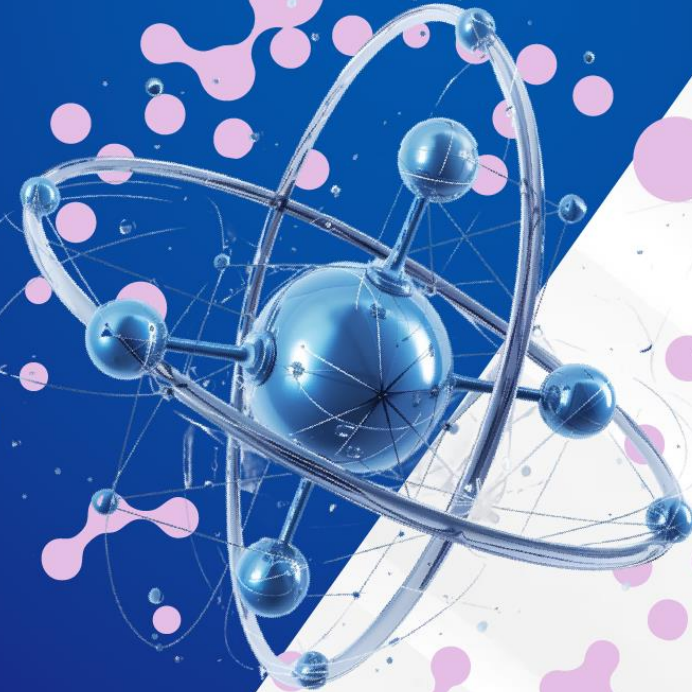


Marie
Skłodowska-Curie
Actions
30 years
*Curiosity that changes
the world*

**HORIZON EUROPE
MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS
2026 CALLS CONFERENCE
MSCA 30TH ANNIVERSARY IN TÜRKİYE**

 15 APRIL 2026

 ANKARA



CRAFTING A SUCCESSFUL MSCA-PF PROPOSAL IN THE AGE OF AI: LESSONS LEARNED

Burak Boyacıoğlu, Ph.D.
ERA Fellow

OUTLINE

- Background of the Fellow
- Overview of the AASE Project
- AASE Proposal Timeline
- Some Numbers
- Final Tips
- Sources

MY BACKGROUND

- **BSc** in Aeronautical Engineering (İTÜ, 2013)
 - Minor in Mechatronics (2014)
- **MSc** in System Dynamics and Control (İTÜ, 2016)
Thesis: Trajectory Planning of a Humanoid Robot Arm by Using RRT Method
- **PhD** in Aeronautics and Astronautics (University of Washington, 2022)
Thesis: Measurements and Observability Analysis for Biological and Aerospace Applications

Followed by

- Postdoctoral studies at the University of Nevada, Reno

AUTONOMOUS ACTIVE SENSING IN EARTHQUAKE VICTIM SEARCH (AASE)

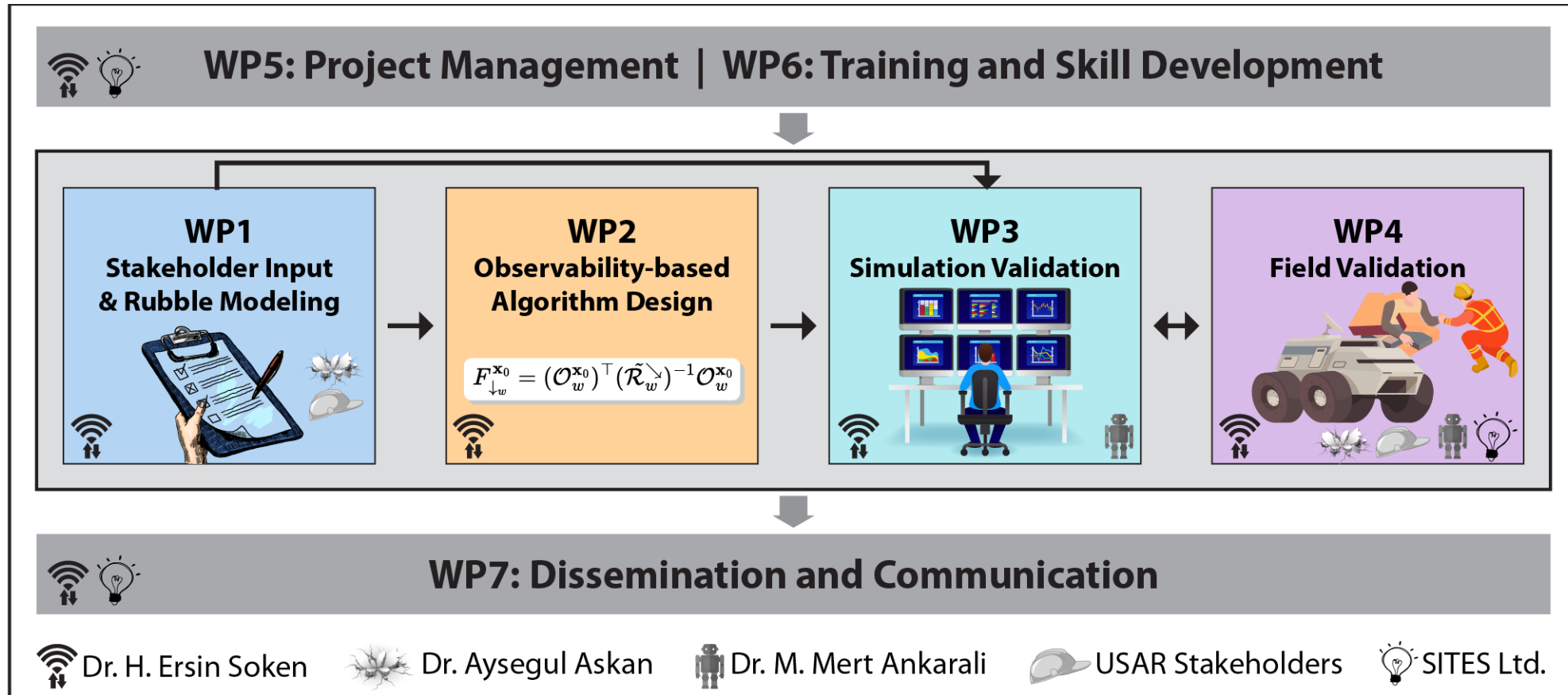


Figure 1: Overview of WPs, their interconnections, and the parties involved. The legend indicates which party contributes to each WP, with main supervisor Dr. Söken involved in all. The supervisory committee (Dr. Söken, Dr. Askan, and Dr. Ankarali; see Sec. 1.3.1) oversees the fellow's progress, while USAR stakeholders provide operational input. The secondment institution, SITES Ltd (see Sec. 1.3.4), contributes complementary expertise.

MY PROPOSAL PREPARATION TIMELINE

Date	Event
April 20, 2025	Screening of Alpha. at Istanbul Film Festival
April 30, 2025	Invitation to MSCA 2025 Calls Conferences
May 8, 2025	MSCA 2025 Calls Conference in Istanbul
May 30, 2025	Visit to AFAD in Yeşilköy
June 26, 2025	METU MSCA-PF Masterclass (1 st Session)
July 3-4, 2025	MSCA-PF Focus Group Training
July 5, 2025	Visit to AKUT in Ankara
July 25, 2025	Initial Contact with the Consultancy Firm
July 31, 2025	Application Deadline for the Pre-evaluation Support
August 6, 2025	Feedback on the Draft from METU Project Dev. Office
August 10, 2025	Earthquake in Balıkesir
August 22, 2025	Notification of Acceptance for the Pre-evaluation Support
September 10, 2025	Application Deadline for the MSCA-PF Call 2025

«It takes a village.»

SOME NUMBERS (2025 CALL)

- The number of applications went up from 10,650 to 17,058.
- The cutoff scores went up, e.g., it went from 94.8 to 96.8 for EF-ENG.

MSCA-PF-2025: Cumulative percentage of proposals above threshold, with a given score or higher (funding range marked in green)

Number of eligible proposals	2360 proposals	246 proposals	2786 proposals	1703 proposals	3368 proposals	328 proposals	1669 proposals	3208 proposals	67 proposals	15 proposals	129 proposals	111 proposals	193 proposals	16 proposals	107 proposals	530 proposals
Cut off score for funding*	96.4	95.0	96.8	96.8	96.8	97.0	97.0	96.4	97.6	93.4	96.4	97.0	95.8	97.4	97.2	96.0
Score equal to or above	EF-CHE	EF-ECO	EF-ENG	EF-ENV	EF-LIF	EF-MAT	EF-PHY	EF-SOC	GF-CHE	GF-ECO	GF-ENG	GF-ENV	GF-LIF	GF-MAT	GF-PHY	GF-SOC
100	0.21%	0.00%	0.11%	0.35%	0.45%	1.22%	0.06%	0.25%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.75%
99	0.81%	0.81%	1.08%	1.00%	1.75%	3.35%	1.62%	1.00%	5.97%	0.00%	0.78%	0.90%	1.04%	0.00%	2.80%	2.08%
98	2.80%	2.03%	3.84%	3.88%	4.16%	5.18%	4.61%	2.68%	10.45%	6.67%	2.33%	5.41%	3.11%	0.00%	6.54%	5.66%
97	7.20%	4.47%	8.47%	8.57%	8.52%	10.98%	9.65%	6.86%	14.93%	6.67%	11.63%	16.22%	7.25%	12.50%	13.08%	9.43%
96	12.03%	6.10%	13.60%	13.80%	13.39%	16.16%	14.86%	11.19%	23.88%	6.67%	17.83%	26.13%	12.95%	18.75%	22.43%	14.72%
95	17.25%	9.76%	20.53%	19.91%	19.57%	21.65%	21.63%	15.74%	26.87%	6.67%	24.03%	30.63%	20.73%	25.00%	32.71%	20.00%
94	22.33%	11.79%	26.85%	26.01%	25.59%	28.05%	27.62%	19.92%	34.33%	6.67%	32.56%	35.14%	27.98%	25.00%	40.19%	24.34%
93	28.09%	13.01%	33.17%	31.88%	31.15%	33.23%	33.91%	24.50%	43.28%	13.33%	37.21%	44.14%	33.68%	37.50%	47.66%	30.38%
92	33.05%	16.26%	39.45%	39.28%	37.38%	38.72%	40.14%	29.36%	47.76%	20.00%	42.64%	48.65%	37.31%	50.00%	55.14%	37.17%

- The cutoff score for the ERA fellowship went up from 92.2 to 95.6.

FINAL TIPS

- Take it seriously.
 - Odds are low.
 - **The Seal of Excellence** is always motivating.
- Understand the nature of Horizon Europe. Use the European Commission's language.
 - e.g., «All outputs will follow the FAIR principles (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable).»
- Show that you are capable of delivering what you promise. Support it with examples from your past work.
 - «Have you followed open science principles before?»
 - «Have you and/or your supervisor engaged in European research?»
- Focus on the positives.
 - The proposal may even give the impression that you have been thinking about this project for a decade.



SOURCES



**RADIANCE PF
Handbook 2025**



**MSCA-PF
Hosting Offers**



**mailto:
boyaciogluburak@gmail.com**

APPENDIX

Criterion 2 - Impact

Score: **4.70** (Threshold: 0 / 5.00 , Weight: 30.00%)

- **Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of researchers and contribution to their skills development.**
- **Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.**
- **The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts.**

Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of the researcher (including the contribution of their skills development):

Excellent

Suitability and quality of the planned dissemination and exploitation measures:

Excellent

Suitability and quality of the planned communication and public engagement activities:

Excellent

Strategy for intellectual property management and protection:

Excellent

Expected scientific impact beyond the immediate scope and duration of the project:

Good

Expected economical/ technological and/or societal impacts of the project beyond its immediate scope and duration:

Excellent

APPENDIX (CONT'D)

Criterion 1 – Excellence

Score: 4.80 (Weight: 50.00%)

Comments:

«The proposal lacks sufficient detail on simulation tools and measurable performance metrics, making it difficult to assess the feasibility and verifiability of the proposed strategies.»

«The proposal provides a generic description of sensor fusion and sensing strategies and lacks an adequate discussion on sensor positioning, measurement accuracy, and their impact on the proposed methodologies.»

Criterion 2 – Impact

Score: 4.70 (Weight: 30.00%)

Comments: «The proposal's scientific impact is limited, with unclear justification for the claimed improvements in detection time and false positives. The targeted reduction is not well explained or precisely defined, making the expected impact ambiguous.»

Criterion 3 – Implementation

Score: 4.90 (Weight: 20.00%)

Comments: «Possible limitations in algorithm performance and transferability from simulation to field testing are insufficiently justified in the risk assessment.»