



Specific requirements

The project involves hands-on experimental work with animals, feeds and animal-derived biofluids in research facilities and commercial operations, in accordance with ethical and animal welfare regulations. It also includes collaboration with industry and academic partners. Occasional travel to experimental farms or partner facilities may be required for project activities, and the doctoral candidate must be able to travel independently to these sites. These activities constitute an integral part of the project and are required for its successful completion. The candidate also should be willing to travel for short research secondments and training events organised within the FEATURE Doctoral Network.

Doctoral (PhD) position in “Effect of using food industry co-products or insect meal on the diet of pigs and poultry on meat quality” – DC10

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Network FEATURE (Future feeds for sustainability in European livestock production) invites applications for one fully funded PhD position for 36 months (full-time) at the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia (Kmetijski inštitut Slovenije), Slovenia.

The doctoral research project will investigate the impact of feeding food industry co-products and/or insect meal on the intrinsic meat quality, and the role of gut microbiome and animal metabolism on meat quality.

The candidate will assess nutritional composition of meat (minerals, vitamins, fat content and composition - fatty acids), meat technological properties (water holding capacity, texture, oxidation, flavor profile), gut microbiome and will apply multi-omics and bioinformatics approaches.

The doctoral candidate will also collaborate with other PhD students within the FEATURE network to assess broader environmental and socio-economic impacts of replacing conventional feed ingredients with food industry co-products and/or insect meal in livestock diets.

Benefits

- Fully funded PhD position for 36 months under the MSCA Doctoral Networks scheme
- Competitive MSCA living allowance, mobility allowance and family allowance, in accordance with MSCA regulations
- Employment contract with the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia
- Access to state-of-the-art research facilities and international research environment
- Interdisciplinary and international training, including transferable skills
- Participation in training schools, workshops and conferences
- Secondments with academic and industrial partners across Europe
- Individual Career Development Plan

Applicants must meet the MSCA Doctoral Network eligibility criteria, in particular:

- must be an First-Stage Researcher (R1), i.e. not in possession of a doctoral degree at the time of recruitment
- must comply with the MSCA mobility rule: the applicant must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Slovenia for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately prior to the recruitment date
- must hold a Master's degree (or equivalent) in animal science, agricultural sciences, food science, biology, biotechnology or a closely related discipline, allowing enrolment in a doctoral programme

They should demonstrate:

- a strong interest in animal nutrition and food quality
- a basic understanding or interest in monogastric physiology and feed and meat quality evaluation
- competence in data handling and statistical analysis (e.g. R, SAS, or similar tools)
- good analytical, problem-solving, and organisational skills
- ability to work effectively in an interdisciplinary and international research environment
- strong written and spoken English communication skills
- motivation to participate actively in training, collaboration, and mobility within the MSC network
- experience with animal nutrition trials, feed, meat analysis, or -omics data interpretation would be an advantage but is not required, as full training will be provided.

Selection Process

Eligible candidates will be evaluated based on: academic excellence and previous research experience, motivation and suitability for the research project, alignment with the objectives of the FEATURE Doctoral Network.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an online interview, which may include a short presentation of their academic background, research experience and interests, and motivation for applying. Interviews will be conducted in English following a structured, fair, and transparent evaluation procedure.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application once the process is completed. The successful candidate will then proceed with formal enrolment in the doctoral programme at the University of Ljubljana.



Funding

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How to apply

All applications must be submitted through the **FEATURE Doctoral Network online submission portal**:

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/401891>

DEADLINE
1 March 2026
at 12:00 (CET).

Applications submitted by e-mail or by other means will not be considered.