

**Quarterly  
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EURAXESS India Newsletter is a quarterly electronic newsletter, edited by EURAXESS India, which provides information of specific interest to European and non-European researchers in India who are interested in the European research landscape and conducting research in Europe or with European partners.

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Please email to [india@euraxess.net](mailto:india@euraxess.net) for any comments on this newsletter, contributions you would like to make, if you think any other colleagues would be interested in receiving this newsletter, or if you wish to unsubscribe.

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# EURAXESS INDIA

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PORTO

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**Portugal, The Quick Facts**

**Country Size:**

92.212 sq.km

**Population**

10,291, 027 (2017)  
2.5 migrant(s)/1,000  
population (2017 est.)

**Language**

Portuguese  
English is widely-spoken

**Capital**

Lisbon

**Median Age**

43.9

**Currency**

Euro

**Economy**

GDP Per Capita  
19.813 USD/person (2016)  
Unemployment Rate  
8.1% (2018)

To learn more about our unique country visit <https://www.visitportugal.com/en>.

# 1 EURAXESS Country in Focus: PORTUGAL

Centuries of history and culture, and a prime location and Mediterranean lifestyle, make Portugal the right place to learn and do science. Speaking the language of the future, Portugal is a hub for creativity and innovation, a gateway to the world. It is a unique place to live and share good memories.

## 1.1 Portugese research landscape

With one of the oldest universities in Europe, the University of Coimbra, founded in 1290, Portugal has a long tradition in education and research. The country has also made significant progress in the last 25 years in enhancing its national research and innovation system, by extending its reach to a larger share of the population, by broadening its scope to all areas of knowledge, by fostering strong links with society, in particular with economic actors, and by always striving for excellent research as defined by international standards. In fact, the Portuguese research and innovation system is structurally internationalised, in part because of the relatively small size of the country and the need to share expertise with a broader community, but also because of the strong policy vision that we can only push the boundaries of modern science and technology in collaborative efforts, that have to go above and beyond national borders.

The main funding agency in Portugal is the [Foundation for Science and Technology](#) (FCT), responsible for the implementation of the public policies that arise from the Ministry for Science, Technology and Higher Education. In 2016, the Government published its “Compromise with Knowledge and Science: the compromise with the future”, a strategic document that defined the policy ambitions up to 2020. Among them was the goal of reinforcing the scientific institutions, to expand and dignify the scientific careers, to continue the stimulus for internationalisation, and to develop, with the involvement of the scientific community, a set of [research and innovation agendas](#) in different thematic areas that should guide national policies up to 2030.

## 1.2 Facts & Figures

EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion is an initiative of the European Research Area (ERA) that addresses barriers to the mobility of researchers and seeks to enhance their career development. This pan-European effort is currently supported by 40 countries, of which we will profile one in our monthly EURAXESS India e-newsletter. Here we focus on Portugal.

Author: EURAXESS Portugal, Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia.

This country briefing on Portugal has been prepared by [EURAXESS Latin America and the Caribbean \(LAC\)](#)

**READ OUR EURAXESS countries in FOCUS:**

Focuses on other EU countries are available [here](#).

Portugal has 132 Higher Education Institutions [spread throughout the country](#), supporting a community of almost 360 000 students, 12% of which are foreigners. In fact, the number of foreign students in Portugal increased by 95% in the last 7 years, a clear sign of the attractiveness of the country.

The national research and innovation system includes [307 research centres](#) dedicated to all areas of knowledge; originating around 2000 doctorates completed each year, a 74% growth between 2000 and 2010. The strong and long-lasting support to S&T policies led to a 35-fold increase in scientific production in the last 25 years – actually, Portugal had the second highest average annual growth rate of publications between 2001 and 2014 within the EU.

The country also had a 45-fold increase in registered patents between 2001 and 2014. An innovation-friendly environment led to an annual rate of 31 000 new start-ups created every year, and almost 310 000 created between 2007 and 2015. This reflects a changing economic environment in the country, also reflected in the 130% increase of the technology-based firms between 2007 and 2010. To continue fostering this dynamic, the Government has recently launched the [Collaborative Laboratories \(Colabs\)](#), a new model of association between academia and the industry, where the main goal is to create skilled and scientific jobs in Portugal, both directly and indirectly, by implementing research and innovation agendas geared at creating economic and social value.

## 1.3 Bilateral and International Cooperation

Portugal has a number of active, bilateral agreements in Science and Technology, most under the responsibility of [FCT](#). These bilateral agreements normally support researcher mobility and, in some cases, collaborative projects. The historical and linguistic connection with Brazil has led to a strong bilateral cooperation, with frequent calls for researcher mobility ([CAPES](#) and [FAPESP](#)), and a dedicated legal regime to welcome Brazilian scientists and students in Portugal.

International cooperation is a fundamental characteristic of the Portuguese Research and Innovation landscape. Portugal has a tradition on bilateral agreement with several countries such as **Argentina** ([Cooperation Programme in S&T between Argentina and Portugal](#)), **China** ([Sino-Portuguese Programme for Cooperation in S&T](#)), **India** ([Indo-Portuguese Programme for Cooperation in S&T](#)), and the **USA** ([Fulbright Program](#)), among others.

Along with the bilateral agreements, the country is an active member of several international organisations, such as ESA, which is a part of the national [Space Programme](#), EMBO, EMBL or CERN. Portugal is also a very active participant in the [COST programme](#), as well as in [CYTED](#), the Ibero-American programme for science and technology for development.

#### About the Widening Fellowships

The results from the first years of MSCA in Horizon 2020 revealed the existence of a mobility gap across Europe and discrepancies between European countries in their ability to attract funding. To specifically address this gap in participation the new Widening Fellowships call will provide an additional opportunity to researchers of any nationality to acquire and transfer new knowledge and to work on research and innovation in Widening countries, including Portugal.

Taking advantage of its historical connection to the ocean, of the privileged geographical location, and of the expertise that has been built during the last decades, Portugal has recently promoted the creation of the [Atlantic International Research Centre \(AIR Centre\)](#), an intergovernmental initiative to foster collaborative research activities on climate, land, space and oceans. The AIR centre already has the involvement of Portugal, Brazil, Spain, Angola, Cape Verde, Nigeria, Uruguay and São Tomé and Príncipe, with the United Kingdom and South Africa participating as Observers.

## Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions in Portuguese institutions

Experienced researchers willing to move to Portugal can apply to an Individual Fellowship (IF) of the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions](#) (MSCA), irrespective of their country of origin.

**Portugal is in the list of widening countries**, and therefore, from 2018 to 2020, proposals above the quality threshold of 70% but not retained for funding through the MSCA IF call with a host institution in Portugal will be automatically reassigned to the Widening Fellowships call (unless the applicants explicitly opted-out).

### 1.4 Portugal as a destination

Besides its excellent universities and research centres, there are a number of reasons to justify the attractiveness of Portugal as a [study and research destination](#). Not only the sun, the food and the friendliness of the people, but also the reasonable [cost of living](#) and of [accommodation](#), the comprehensive [health system](#), or knowing that the country has been among the top 5 countries in the [Global Peace Index](#) for a number of years now. In fact, there are at least [10 reasons](#) to choose Portugal as a study and research destination. Find a [job](#) or a [hosting institution](#) and experience this beautiful country.

## 2 Hot topic “The unofficial guide to writing EU research grant proposals”



About the author, Sami Makeläinen

I am a technologist with more than 20 years of experience deep in and around the worlds of ICT, mobile and telecommunications, and the many exciting interfaces where they meet, and overlap.

Technically knowledgeable, analytical and pragmatic, I am also a humanist with a strong interest in the environments technology creates – the audio-visual, the social and business texture, and the emotion created by our interactions with technology and how that influences our behaviours, our perceptions and the places where we feel invited to engage in an increasingly digital world. For the past several years, I have been involved as an independent expert, commissioned by the European Commission, to evaluate FP7 research proposals (and more recently the Horizon 2020 program).

*Piece originally published by Sami Makelainen, an experienced FP7 and H2020 proposal evaluator, in his blog entry of the same title, accessible [here](#), and reproduced below as-is with his consent.*

For the past several years, I have been involved as an independent expert, commissioned by the European Commission, to evaluate FP7 research proposals (and more recently the Horizon 2020 program). Every time I do this, it entails reading hundreds or even thousands of pages of research proposals in a relatively short time period, so good, clear and concise proposal writing would be appreciated.

In order to help whoever is vying for funding via these channels, I offer the following advice. Please note that this is my individual view, not explicitly or implicitly condoned by the European Commission in any way, shape or form. Also note there are several experts independently reviewing every single proposal, so just writing it so that I like it will not get you any money. In other words, this advice comes with no warranty whatsoever, but here goes:

**Cut the complicated language.** One often wishes the writers would just get the basics of good writing right. Writing in a complicated way and using a wide range of meaningless buzzwords is not a sign that you know your domain, nor is it a sign of intelligence. At best it's a sign of laziness, at worst it's an attempt to cover up the lack of any real substance. Write simply. Do not try to complicate things unnecessarily; most of the time what you're doing is completely feasible to present in very simple terms – dump the buzzwords and the pretend-intellectualism. And, please, check that the sentences you write make sense. Because sometimes they make no sense whatsoever, or do not mean *anything*.

**Be realistic on impacts.** Too many times the applicants completely forget they are operating with finite time and resources. I know the EC asks for impact assessments, but this needs to be realistic. Any talk of “saving Europe” or similar grandiose statements through just this one research project is unrealistic and will be treated as such.

**Focus; don't try to achieve too much.** It may seem that the more goals you have in a project and that the wider they are, the better it must be. It's not. Have a clear focus, because that's the only way to achieve something. If you focus on everything, you're not focusing on anything and will accomplish exactly that. This is particularly important for Small or medium-scale focused research projects (STREP) proposals. You do NOT need to address every single element in the call.

**Don't do research for research's sake.** Anything that you attempt to do that goes beyond state-of-the-art must have an application or use

somewhere. It's not good enough to say that after you research topic X for three years, you'll have good grounds to continue the research.

**Don't waste money – get onto the 'lean' boat.** Just having multi-year funding from the EC doesn't mean you can use outdated project methodologies. Two iterations over three years is not "agile". There is also no reason for you not to borrow a page or two from the Lean Startup. The EC – really the European taxpayers – don't like to see their money wasted any more than a VC would. Keep in mind that most of the time part of the funding comes out of *your* tax dollars – would you invest in your project?

**Don't waste money, part II.** 15% of project funding to management overhead is unacceptable. That is proposing to buy loads of gear or services at unreasonable prices.

**Learn to pitch.** Something you should learn from the startups; make sure you develop a compelling pitch – why should your project be funded? Don't bury the lead on page 78, by when the reviewers will have lost any faith in you coming up with something good. It's essential for the abstract to be compelling and engaging.

**Learn to write (English).** I bet you were taught to write essays in school, and scientific articles at the university. Try to remember those lessons: Use clear layout. Break into appropriate sentences and paragraphs. Reference concisely, i.e. in a way that doesn't interfere with reading (superscripted [21] is good, [*Lastname 1, Lastname 2, publication XYZ, page B, 2010*] is not.). Use graphics, but make them clear. Check the spelling. Check the grammar. Write clearly. Avoid sentences that are like 100 words long. Avoid paragraphs spanning half a page. Pay attention to layout and pagination. Check the spelling and grammar again. Make sure the sentences make sense.

Did I mention you need to check the spelling and grammar? Surprising as it may be, it turns out we can't read minds.

*If, btw, your writing or scientific writing courses did not teach you these things, take a better one that does.*

**Be specific.** Particularly when discussing what it is that you're going to be doing beyond state-of-the-art, it's essential that you say something more than "research" this and that. And don't forget to be realistic, too; don't say you're going to achieve something awesome which is clearly unrealistic. It is, however, fine to say you will *try* to do something.

**Don't forget business fundamentals.** You need to have a story on how your thing could be used in the "real" world; often this means involving one or more business entities that somehow need to make money. Having a pure research-platform is fine, too, if it's justified – but "*build it and they will come*" usually does not go down well as a strategy. Remember to engage the relevant industry in your project.

**Innovate, sometimes radically.** Don't be afraid to propose something completely different as opposed to just progressing some field in an because

sometimes they do – don't be afraid to criticize them and propose alternatives.

**Don't fall for neomania**, i.e. making something new just for the sake of it being new. Not everything new or even innovative is worth doing – show that your use cases are *actually* useful and have demand, not merely “novel”. Novelty in and of itself is valueless; don't fall for technological solutionism either.

**Test your assumptions.** Another concept from the Lean Startup; too many proposals list as some their core thesis assumptions that are entirely untested. At worst they are the result of groupthink of a very unrepresentative group of researchers along the lines of “*We'd love this so why wouldn't everyone?!*”. If you base your project on assumptions, you need to test and validate those assumptions early. Oh, and on a related note: Gartner or some other analyst company saying so doesn't make it so.

**Get the right team;** trying to make advances in areas where the members are amateurs in and not even engaging the parties with the actual state-of-the-art technology guarantees you will not get anywhere. These are not funds purely for your internal competence development.

**Don't get stuck on the Europe bit;** don't hesitate to bring in non-European partners if you can; not all service-oriented architecture (SOA) is of European origin and engaging organizations outside Europe can bring substantial benefits.

**Manage the management right.** Think about using more modern project management tools than email and Word documents.

**Keep the big picture in mind.** Having experts onboard is good. Having experts who can see beyond their little domain and into the macro-level developments *and* understand their significance is better; you need to have an understanding of the macro-environment and trends and how they might affect what you are going to do.

Finally, **don't submit a bad proposal.** It just isn't worth it. It will not get funded and you will have caused reputational damage to all participating organizations and the people identified by submitting stupid things.



### 3 In Focus | Interview with Priyanka Dasgupta, the winner of Science Slam India 2017

I am a Zoologist having recently completed my Masters with a specialization in the area of Genomics, Metagenomics and Epigenetics from the University of Delhi.

I have been communicating science for the past 4 years working Science Express (DST/VASCS/MoEF/CEE funded project) as a Science Communicator.

I have also had my Science fiction directorial (short film) screened at the India International Science Film Festival 2017; I won the Fame Lab India (North) the Talking Science Competition in 2016. From where on since, I have attended workshops by British Council, Nature India, Welcome Trust DBT to hone my Science communication skills and have consequently spoken publicly in quite a few institutions. I am looking to make it in the Science Communication Studies and Policy Sector in order to be conducive in the decisions of Science that keep afloat our society.

Priyanka won last year's Science Slam Crown with her outstanding live performance called: *Theatre and the Mind: Effect of theatre on creativity and cognition; What goes on?* As the 1<sup>st</sup> prize winner, she was given a round trip to Europe to visit Brussels and a research institute of her choice.

In Europe, she had the opportunity of meeting experts in fields of Science Policy and Communication, visiting the cities of Edinburgh, London, Brighton, Brussels, Antwerp, Geneva, and Vienna. She would like to pursue her research career in Europe, and is currently preparing for an internship at Antwerp Zoo in Belgium.

#### **What motivated you for joining the EURAXESS Science Slam?**

**Priyanka Dasgupta:** Realizing the importance of Science Communication in today's uber fast world, I initially started looking into circles of Science which promoted and exchange of ideas beyond the closed doors of the laboratory. In one such Science Communication workshop I happened to meet a previous contender of the EURAXESS Science Slam. On further queries I found how this was a wonderful platform not only to launch yourself ahead in your research career but one which also ensured that inspiring synergistic exchange of ideas. That was it! I had to apply!

#### **The Science Slam helps to promote young Indian researchers in European research environments. In what ways was the trip to Europe important for your career?**

As a scientist from the field of Zoology, and looking to make a transition into Science Policy and Communication, (which as of now, is still a relatively smaller area in India) the Europe trip came as a great boon. I was able to meet the top Science Policy and Communication scientists and experts from the best institutions through Europe (Imperial College London, University of Edinburgh and Sussex to name a few).

This face to face interview that EURAXESS made possible, allowed me to discuss my options better with senior scientists. Apart from mere networking though, the interviews and meetings through Europe gave me a better understanding of the curriculum or the prospects that would be expected from a research career in Europe. I am glad EURAXESS gave me a chance at that.

#### **What were the most important experiences that you draw from your trip to Europe?**

Apart from getting to meet such amazing people, experts in their field, this trip also gave me a peek into the kind of working environment that I would come across in Europe. My travel gave me a deeper understanding of the culture, food, lifestyle of the people while at the same time making me realize that people everywhere, at the core, are the same. So one must not be afraid of the new or adjustment issues. Travelling absolutely solo for the first time

also was indeed an exciting experience, and amidst my hectic travel schedule, I can't go without a special appreciation for the ease of transport and travel across the cities. One thing this visit made clear to me, is that the world is waiting with open arms (well, as much it can), if only we can dare to walk out into it.

### **What did you learn about European research environments?**

I visited many institutions across Europe in my trip and found the atmosphere quite conducive to ideas and good quality research. Questions are approached with new outlooks and dealt with using the latest tech. The camaraderie amongst professors and students was also worth mentioning. At one of the retreat/conferences I attended while in Edinburgh, the guides, the senior most professors and the students sat outside on the wooden floors together while enjoying a nice meal and a view of the lake (at the retreat) . There was respect of course, but without the fear of approach that many a times comes with the ego of stature. Plus the diversity in the colleges, signified that if you work hard, nationality doesn't matter that much as science is a universal affliction.

EURAXESS made the connection to Europe quite easy for me. In general though, as a student from India, the process for scholarships and admissions (overseas) is quite vague for a newbie and I wish there were more such institutions to make each step of the way clearer.

### **Will you continue with research with or in Europe?**

I have been lucky enough to have got a position at the Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp, which is a base for Conservation studies apart from the practical conservation they are doing. I will be assisting with the development and public communication model of 'Zoo Science ' so that the public is more aware, better in connect with the plight of the animals and thus better armed to step up in their conservation. I am happy to start learning and grow further on from there.

### **What motivates you as a researcher?**

Have you ever been stuck on a puzzle? And when you figure it out, because the answer is so intelligent, the solution so elegant you can't help but be amazed. For me, being a researcher is a lifelong playground of such puzzles; of unravelling the mysteries of our world and engineering solutions to contribute to our world and society.

### **Which research path do you envision for your future career?**

Right now, my background as a firm zoologist and my masters specialization in genomics, metagenomics and epigenetics does not deter but strengthen me more to delve into the policy issues concerning the latest Biotechnology, genomics, medicine or energy projects and decisions being made around the world. With this base I am looking forward to policy and innovation studies in order to contribute to a better utilization and promulgation of the scientific knowledge, while maintaining the healthy and necessary dose of Science Communication.

*“My travel gave me a deeper understanding of the culture, food, lifestyle of the people while at the same time making me realize that people everywhere, at the core, are the same.”*

The LIVE Finals of the [EURAXESS Science Slam India 2018](http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess) will take place in Bangalore, on November 17<sup>th</sup>. This year's 1<sup>st</sup> prize winner will be given a roundtrip ticket to Europe, where he/she will have the opportunity to visit a European research institution of his/her choice.

**The purpose of the Science Slam is to make one's own research easily accessible and understandable to a general audience. Your presentation was on 'theatre and the mind'. How important are science communication skills for a researcher's career?**

*"This face to face interview that EURAXESS made possible, allowed me to discuss my options better with senior scientists. Apart from mere networking though, interviews and meetings through Europe gave me a better understanding of the curriculum or the prospects that would be expected from a research career in Europe. I am glad EURAXESS gave me a chance at that."*

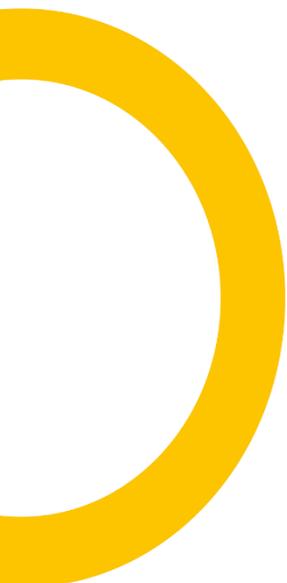
You could read a zillion books at home, acquire all that knowledge, might even devise a cure to some cancer by your theoretical genius, but use would all that be if not brought to the public and used as an adjuvant to the growth of our society.

In my talk I showed scientific evidence of how theatre boosts creativity and cognition in many cases. Science must be communicated to the public in an interesting way. Throughout humankind we have been studying; now we do know that the human brain can pick things up faster if they are interesting. So study, or science if communicated well, is not just a good awareness model it is also an incredible educative tool.

Communication is the vestibule that cradles together all of humanity. Communicating science forms the infrastructure that strives to maintain that base and lays the foundation for any future construction.

**Could you kindly share some tip to this year's EURAXESS Science Slam participants?**

Remember the way a small science experiment first made your eyes grow wide with wonder. Reinvoke that in yourself and if you can ignite the same delight that comes out of learning something new in the audience, you've done a pretty good job. Who knows, your talk might just inspire the next great discovery!



## 4 In case you missed it...

### 4.1 From our Flashnotes (July-September)

*(click on the respective link for more details)*

**Selected News and still open Calls (in order of publication on EURAXESS India website):**

**News:** [How to become a H2020 evaluator](#) – EURAXESS Tutorial

**Call:** [Postdoc Fellowships for International Female Researchers: WiRe - Women in Research at the University of Münster](#)

**Call:** [28 PhD positions within the Doctoral Programme, TALENT at the Faculty of Science, University of Copenhagen](#)

**Call:** [DST and DFG launching Joint Call for Proposals in Materials Science and Engineering](#)

**Call:** [IF@ULB - MSCA COFUND - First call](#)

**News:** [How to make the most of the EURAXESS Portal](#)

**Call:** [European Southern Observatory \(ESO\) fellowships and studentships](#)

**Call:** [17 Fellowships on GOT ENERGY TALENT H2020-MSCA-COFUND Project](#)

**Call:** [SWITZERLAND: 1st Call Open for PhD positions on GlobalP3HS programme in Public Health Sciences](#)

**Calls:** [Forthcoming ERC Calls this September - ERC Starting Grants & ERC Synergy Grants](#)

**News:** [How to Submit a MSCA-IF Proposal](#) – EURAXESS Tutorial

**Call:** [5th Indo - Spanish Joint Call For Technological Co-Operation In Biotechnology 2018](#)

**Call:** [Call for incoming fellowships in social sciences and humanities at European University institute \(EUI, Italy\)](#)

**Call:** [Global Stars Call for Proposals for Joint R&D Projects under EUREKA between India and the EUREKA member countries](#)

**Call:** [Call for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowships: RESPIRE 3 project](#)

**Call:** [Wellcome Trust International Training Fellowships in Health](#)

**Call:** [Call by the Volkswagen Foundation - Global Issues International Research Projects on Social Inequality](#)

**Call:** [ThinkSwiss Asia-Pacific scholarship program](#)

**News:** [Partnering tools for Horizon 2020 calls](#)

**News:** [Host institutions for your MSCA-IF application on EURAXESS Portal](#)

**News:** [EURAXESS Country Briefings on EURAXESS India](#)

**News:** [List of funding opportunities August 2018 - Relevant to India too](#)

**Call:** [TECO Grants. Short mobility grants from Europe to India](#)

## Event Outlook

<a href="#">Click on event title for more details)</a>	Location	Date in 2018
<b>1 Europe/Outside India</b>		
<a href="#">European Researchers Night 2018</a>	340 cities across Europe	28 September
<a href="#">ICAS11 Call for proposals</a>	Leiden, Netherlands	10 October
<b>2 India</b>		
<a href="#">Information and Preparatory events on the EU-India call on Next Generation Influenza Vaccine</a>	India	August-September
<a href="#">European Research Day 2018   Become EURAXESS Ambassador in India! - MSCA-Individual Fellowships Training &amp; Discover MCAA Indian Chapter</a>	Bengaluru	26 September
<a href="#">European Research Day 2018   Become EURAXESS Ambassador in India! - MSCA-Individual Fellowships Training &amp; Discover MCAA Indian Chapter</a>	New Delhi	28 September
<a href="#">European Higher Education Virtual Fair 2018</a>	Online	26-28 September
<a href="#">4th Communicating Research Out of the Lab-EURAXESS Event</a>	Chandigarh	6 October
<a href="#">European Higher Education Virtual Fair 2018</a>	Online	25-28 October
<a href="#">6th EURAXESS India Science Slam India – Live finals</a>	Bengaluru	17 November
<a href="#">EURAXESS Info Sessions/Days across India</a>	On request	September-December