Your story:

Project objectives and research field:
The project aims the further development of novel anti-cancer therapeutics that have remarkable anti-tumour activity in cell culture models and have been shown to be well tolerated in vivo. The drugs are innovative and are based on a novel mechanism of action that has never been exploited previously in clinical practice.

Tell us why your topic is important and/or how it brings to advancement in your research field:
Nowadays, there is much excitement about tumour immunotherapy, but despite this majority of the solid tumours (80% of all tumours) do not respond that well to this therapy. Identification of novel therapeutics that effectively and selectively kill the cancer cells can be of critical significance.

What are the benefits of participating in a MSC action?
Obtaining an MSCA fellowship allowed me to continue my science research under the Career Restart Panel. I am still at the beginning of the project, but I expect that the
fellowship will help in the creation of new connections and collaborators and to open new opportunities for career development. It gives many opportunities for multidisciplinary research, which is critical for drug development. Another benefit of the fellowship is the opportunity to continue to work on the project that I was previously involved in because I believe that results from it may have translational and clinical significance. The success of our project will open new ways for the treatment of oncological diseases, but because Src kinases play a role in many different pathologies, the developed therapeutics may find application also for the treatment of autoimmune and neurodegenerative disorders, as well as for the treatment of parasitic protozoan infections such as malaria, sleeping sickness and leishmaniasis.

**Did you encounter any challenges during application/ implementation and did you get any help?**

I did my graduate and postgraduate studies in the US and there are significant differences in the grant application process in the US and the EU. I found writing of the MSCA application somewhat challenging in the light that it required previous skills, knowledge and experience specific for the programme. This can be a bigger problem especially in the widening countries, where not many host institutions have previous experience with the MSCA programme. I’ve got a lot of help from the NCPs in my country and without their assistance, I don’t think this would have been a success story.

**Why did you choose a widening country as a Host? What was the reason that convinced you? What is making you professionally happy here?**

The widening country hosting the project is my home country. I am returning after many years of studying and working abroad. I hope that I can bring home my expertise and contribute to the science here. Although I expect that there will be many challenges in doing science here, mostly from financial character, I also see that there are many opportunities for growth and development.

**Would you recommend others to apply? What useful advice/ tips can you give them?**

The programme gives excellent opportunities for career development and meeting new collaborators. I would recommend to everyone to apply. Writing the application requires a clear understanding of the intend of all sections and this may or may not be obtained simply by reading the instructions. My advice, especially for the widening countries, is to get help from the National Contact Points. The academic record of the researcher and especially of the supervisor is also an important consideration, as well as having a project that is novel and proposes state-of-the-art science objectives.