

PROGRAMME FOR ATTRACTING SCIENTIFIC TALENT to SALAMANCA

FOUNDATION SALAMANCA CITY FOR CULTURE AND KNOWLEDGE

CALL FOR PROPOSALS for RESEARCH GRANTS

CALL SUMMARY

Objective	Incorporation of young leader researchers (PI researcher) to the R&D system of Salamanca. Selected candidates will be leading new research groups and setting new lines of research on the right tracks.
Total Budget	2.550.000 €
Number of grants	5
Max. Amount of the grant	510.000 €
Duration of the grant	3 years (2+1) with annual evaluation of performance
Deadline for submission	31 st October 2023
Location	Researchers will be funded by Foundation Salamanca City for Culture and Knowledge, but the development of their functions may be in any public researching institution in the region of Salamanca

1. Purpose of the programme

The purpose of the programme is to attract, retain and develop scientific talent at Salamanca with the aim of establishing promising new lines of research at research centers located in Salamanca. The sole evaluation criteria will be the scientific excellence of candidates and their proposals.

Objective of the call for proposal: incorporation of 5 young leader researchers as Principal Investigators to the R&D system of Salamanca. Selected researchers are expected to lead new research groups and setting new lines of research on the right tracks.

2. Grant details

The grant will have a maximum amount of 510.000 for 3 years, and will include the following concepts:

- **Salary of the candidate (70.000 €/yr):**
 - Specific contract linked to the execution of the research project presented.
 - 3 years (2 years + 1 year renewal) full time contract (37'5 hours/week) with annual evaluation of performance. At the end of the second year a single one-year renewal will be offered -provided a positive performance evaluation-.
 - The **total cost** of the PI salary will be 70.000 €/yr, including taxes and social security costs.
- **Additional funding (100.000 €/yr) for the development of the project. Project costs will include the following categories:**
 - Personnel costs to cover the salaries of the PI's team: predoctoral & postdoctoral positions, technical staff, other.
 - Equipment & access to large infrastructures
 - Consumables & Supplies
 - Travel & Subsistence expenses, conference fees
 - Publication fees, including those derived from open access policies

The total cost of this additional funding will not exceed 300.000 € for the 3 yrs of the grant (100.000 €/yr). The budget plan should be well justified in the proposal. Although this call allows the PI to have enough flexibility so as to use the economic resources included in the programme, it is highly advisable that the additional funding of 100.000 €/yr be destined in similar amounts both to personnel costs and equipment and supplies expenses. In case it is foreseen a remarkable deviation regarding these categories, the PI must properly justify it in his project.

On the other hand, every position to be funded through this grant should follow the principles set out in the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researcher, in particular regarding **recruitment processes and working conditions**¹. PIs will make their best effort to make any position offer visible at international, national, and regional level.

All expenses must be directly related to the research project selected for funding.

¹ https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/am509774cee_en_e4.pdf

3. Candidate requirements & profile

The programme is open to researchers of any nationality. The evaluation process will put particular attention in identifying scientific excellence irrespective of the gender, nationality or institution of the Principal Investigator. It will take into consideration any potential biases, and will take career breaks, as well as unconventional research career paths, into account. The evaluations will follow the principles of an open, transparent, merit-based recruitment process.

Eligibility

In order to be considered eligible, candidates should fulfill these minimum requirements:

- 1) Doctoral degree completed at least three years before the publication of this call.
- 2) Not to be disqualified in any of the ways listed in Law 53/1984, of 26 December, regarding the disqualification of personnel from the public administrations.
- 3) Not to have left the service of any of the public administrations for disciplinary reasons or be forbidden from carrying out public functions.

Profile

Candidates are expected to be young researchers with a very promising track record of early achievements appropriate to their research field and career stage, including significant publications (as main author) in major international peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scientific journals, or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals of their respective field. They may also demonstrate a record of invited presentations in well-established international conferences, granted patents, awards, prizes etc

Candidates are also expected to demonstrate intellectual independence with respect their former supervisors and evidence of maturity in their ideas. They have to present an ambitious & ground breaking line of research for the next 3 years.

Project

Proposal are expected to fall in any of the fields described below:

- ✓ Agriculture and Environmental & Biological Sciences
- ✓ Cellular Biology
- ✓ Computational Sciences
- ✓ Social Sciences
- ✓ Physics and Astronomy
- ✓ Engineering
- ✓ Clinical Research

The programme seeks to fund promising new lines of research to be set up at R&D centres in Salamanca. Proposals are expected to be on the frontiers of science in the aforementioned areas of research.

Proposal should be ambitious though feasible in the proposed timeline.

4. Submission of applications

Application submission period: since the date of the call publication till 31st October 2023 (12:00 am, CEST-local time in Spain)

Along with the established application form (Annex I), applicants must also submit:

- 1) A photocopy of their identity card or passport,
- 2) A photocopy of the doctoral degree certificate,
- 3) Letter of support from the host institution
- 4) Technical proposal (template 3) including:
 - a. Track record of past achievement, highlighting most significant results and proofs of independence (max. 2 pages)
 - b. Curriculum Vitae (max. 4 pages)
 - c. Research proposal (5 pages + budget)

Applications lacking any of these documents will not be taken into account in the selection process.

Application may be submitted either in English or Spanish and should follow the format of the templates provided in Annex I.

Applications will be assessed on the sole basis of the information contained in the documentation supplied as of the deadline for receipt of applications.

By participating in the grant process, candidates will be deemed to have read and accepted the terms and conditions of the programme, and consented to the use, disclosure and communication to third parties of the personal information contained in their application for

subsequent historical, scientific or statistical purposes in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (Organic Act 15/1999, 13 December).

Proposals will be sent, via mail, prior to the deadline date, to the following address salamancatalento@ciudaddesaberes.es

5. Evaluation criteria

Scientific excellence will be the sole criterion of evaluation. It will be applied in conjunction to the evaluation of both: the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project; and the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the Principal Investigator.

In particular, applications will be assessed after the following criteria²:

- 1. Scientific record:** Important achievements that have gone beyond the state of the art. Impact in the field. (40 points)
- 2. Leadership capacity:** Evidence of creative independence thinking and to propose ground breaking research. International recognition (30 points)
- 3. Quality of the research proposal:** Ground-breaking nature and novelty of the project idea, ambition and potential impact of the new line of research and feasibility of the research plan for the next 3 years. (30 points)

The assessment of proposals, in accordance with the merits provided in this section, will take into account the length of time since the candidate was awarded their PhD.

Candidate achievements, reputation and fundraising capacity (in relation to other national and international Excellent Science programmes and initiatives) will therefore be assessed in relation to the candidate's experience

The evaluation process will put particular attention in identifying scientific excellence irrespective of the gender, age, nationality or institution of the Principal Investigator. It will take into consideration any potential biases, and will take career breaks, as well as unconventional research career paths, into account. The evaluations will follow the "Open, transparent, merit-based recruitment principles (OTM-R) principles".

6. Evaluation and selection procedure

² These criteria are in line with the European Research Council evaluation processes

The selection process will be assisted by a Scientific Evaluation Committee, composed of both remarkable investigators with a senior profile and international reputation in their field of expertise, and several members designed by the main academic local institutions.

Evaluation process:

The evaluation committee will only consider strongest candidates with excellent leadership capabilities and an outstanding research record.

The Committee members will record their opinions in individual reports and give marks and comments in accordance with the evaluation criteria.

After completing the individual reviews, the members will discuss and assess the proposals in accordance with the evaluation criteria, arbitrate controversial opinions in individual reviews and establish a ranking list of proposals.

The applicants will receive individual feed-back on their final evaluation.

Final decision and selection:

The Foundation Salamanca City for culture and Knowledge will validate the list of selected candidates proposed by the Scientific Evaluation Committee and will establish a final list of candidates selected for funding.

In case further information is needed, candidates and heads of host institutions may be called for personal interviews.

The Foundation Salamanca City for Culture and Knowledge will offer the positions to the 5 candidates in the order proposed by the Scientific Evaluation Committee. The Foundation Salamanca city for Culture and Knowledge will decide and adopt the most suitable contracting relationship with the selected candidates.

Candidates will have to accept the position within a month from the official communication (personal email) of the result of the call, and they will have to present the definitive job offer from the host institution. Contractual relationship must start within six months after the acceptance of the position.

If the selected candidate could not demonstrate the commitment of the host institution or he renounces the position, the next candidate in the order established by the committee will be appointed. The positions may also be declared unfilled.

If the proposed candidate is from a non-EU country, he/she must comply with the necessary legal requisites in order to be contracted and affiliated to the social security.

7. Responsibilities of the grantees:

- Executing the project presented including work-plan implementation, management of resources assigned to the project, development of the research needed, data and results analysis and a dissemination plan of results.
- Application for external funding, ie: grants, programmes, private funding, public national funding, etc
- Promotion and the dissemination of the Programme of Foundation Salamanca for attracting scientific talent.

8. Research Integrity

Cases of scientific misconduct such as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or misrepresentation of data that may arise during the evaluation or throughout the life cycle of a funded project will be addressed and may be sanctioned by measures such as the rejection of proposals from evaluation, requests for measures to be taken by the host institution, reduction of the grant and suspension or termination of grants.

9. Notifications

All notifications will be made via personal email to the candidates.