

# **GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS NOVEMBER 2015**

**CNIC IPP**

**CNIC International Postdoctoral  
Programme**

## Contents

### THE ESSENTIALS

- Purpose
- Structure
- Duration
- Who can apply?
- Which research topics are supported?
- What does the funding cover?
- How does it work?
- How to apply

### ELIGIBLE RESEARCHERS

- Level of experience
- Mobility criteria

### EVALUATION AND SELECTION

- Pre-selection
- Selection

### THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- The topic of the project
- Preparing the project proposal

### APPOINTMENT CONDITIONS

- General employment conditions
- Technical conditions and infrastructure

### HOW TO APPLY

- Presenting your proposal

### SCHEDULE AND INFORMATION FOR THIS CALL

- Indicative timetable
- Further information and help
- Other considerations

## THE ESSENTIALS

### Purpose

The proposed CNIC International Postdoctoral Programme (CNIC IPP) is aimed at supporting trans-national mobility of postdoctoral researchers and to broaden and deepen their individual competence, particularly in terms of acquisition of complementary skills needed to become an independent group leader in the future. The programme offers fellowships for researchers who hold a PhD Degree at the time of the application deadline. Applicants will be free to propose a research topic within one of the available research groups at the CNIC. The only limitation will be that the proposed research fits within the CNIC's overall focus on cardiovascular research.

Scientific merit will be evaluated in relation to the active research period (excluding any career break period).

### Structure

The present call offers eight (8) fellowships. A maximum number of eight fellowships will be awarded in this call.

### Duration

Each fellowship will be awarded for a period of three years. Candidates will start within two months of the acceptance of the fellowship.

### Who can apply?

Postdoctoral researchers of any nationality can apply.

To be eligible, applicants must, at the time of the deadline for submission of their individual fellowship application, fulfill the following requirements:

1. Hold a PhD that must have been awarded no more than six years prior to the deadline for applications. Exceptions (maximum of three years) will be made for:
  1. Candidates with children. One additional year can be claimed per child (if the child is younger than a year only the number of months corresponding the age of the child will be granted).
  2. Documented career brakes.
2. Have a minimum of one publication as first author in an international peer reviewed journal.
3. Meet the following transnational mobility condition: candidates must not have resided or carried out their main activity in Spain for more than twelve months in the three years immediately prior to the deadline for proposal submission.

### Which research topics are supported?

Applicants will be free to propose a research topic within any of the Research Areas at the CNIC. The only limitation will be that the proposed research fits within the CNIC's overall focus on cardiovascular research.

### **What does the funding cover?**

Funding is provided to cover the salary of the researcher and an allowance for travel and related costs.

### **How does it work?**

Following the publication of a call, applications are submitted by candidates within the specified deadline and the candidate's CVs will be evaluated by the Selection Committee against a series of predetermined criteria.

Pre-selected candidates will be asked to prepare a research proposal and a career development plan. They will be invited to visit the CNIC and asked to present their project proposals in a short presentation to the Selection Committee. Pre-selected candidates will also be individually interviewed.

In a second step, project proposals, presentations, interviews and reference letters of pre-selected candidates will be evaluated by the Selection Committee according to predetermined selection criteria.

Selected candidates will be expected to begin the fellowship within two months of acceptance.

### **How to apply**

This Guide contains the essential information for you to prepare and submit a proposal for the CNIC IPP. In a first stage, applications (Application Form and applicant's CV) are submitted electronically via the CNIC website ([www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es)). Candidates of interest will be requested to send additional information via email ([cnicipp@cnic.es](mailto:cnicipp@cnic.es)). Detailed instructions are available in this Guide.

## ELIGIBLE RESEARCHERS

Applications are to be submitted on line ([www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es)). Candidates can apply to up to four research groups within the CNIC as they choose. Applications will be registered, acknowledged and their contents entered into a database to facilitate the evaluation process.

To participate in the CNIC IPP, you must be able to satisfy a number of eligibility criteria at the time of the deadline for submission of the proposal. After the deadline, submitted proposals will be checked for eligibility based on the information provided by the applicant. Proposals that do not meet the criteria as well as incomplete ones will be rejected without being evaluated. Non eligible candidates will be contacted by the Human Resources Department and informed about the exclusion of their candidature.

These eligibility criteria will be checked based on the information provided by the applicant in the Application Form and Curriculum Vitae. If at a later stage, an eligibility criterion is found not to be fulfilled, the proposal will be immediately rejected.

### Level of Experience

CNIC International Postdoctoral Programme is directed exclusively at *Postdoctoral researchers* that fulfil both of the following requirements:

- 1 Candidates must hold a PhD Degree that must have been awarded no more than six years prior to the deadline for applications. Exceptions (maximum of three years) will be made for:
  1. Candidates with children. One additional year can be claimed per child (if the child is younger than a year only the number of months corresponding the age of the child will be granted).
  2. Documented career brakes.
- 2 Candidates must hold a minimum of one publication as first author in an international peer reviewed journal.

The time limit for fulfilment of the above conditions is the date of the deadline for submission of proposals.

### Mobility conditions

In order to participate in this programme, researchers **from any nationality** must comply with the following rule:

“At the time of the deadline for submission of proposals, applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity in Spain for more than twelve months in the three years immediately preceding the reference date. Short stays such as holidays will not be taken into account”

## EVALUATION AND SELECTION

### Pre-selection

All eligible applications will be evaluated by a Selection Committee chosen for their expertise on the different candidate profiles. This Committee will be composed of three CNIC Senior Group Leaders, four Scientist of international prestige external to the CNIC and the CNIC's Management Director who will act as observer.

All eligible applications will be assessed at this stage according to the following pre-selection criteria:

<b>Pre-Selection Criteria Candidate's CV (55 points)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Number and relevance of publications	0-30
Fellowships obtained under competitive calls	0-10
Participation in international meetings	0-10
Other merits (teaching, supervision, mobility and knowledge transfer)	0-5

A minimum score of 45 points will be necessary for a candidate to be pre-selected. A maximum of three candidates for each available position will pass the pre-selection stage. The candidates ranking the highest number of points will be pre-selected.

Evaluation forms (candidate's CV) from each member of the Selection Committee will be received by the Science Management department and the mean score will be calculated for each eligible candidate and used to rank the applications.

Candidates who are unsuccessful at this stage will be contacted and informed about the outcome of the Pre-selection.

## Evaluation of Projects and oral Interviews

Preselected candidates will be asked to write and present a project proposal, in collaboration with a group leader of their prospective Program, which will include a career development plan for the fellow. These candidates will be also invited for interview and references will be collected for them.

The Selection Committee members will receive documentation detailing the criteria to be assessed at this step and their specific weighting, as shown in the following table:

Evaluation of projects and oral interviews (45 points)		Weighting
Performance of candidate (20 points)	Project defence and basic scientific knowledge (presentation)	0-10
	Independence and motivation (interview)	0-10
Project Proposal (21 points)	Interest, originality	0-7
	Quality, feasibility	0-7
	Impact on the career development of the candidate	0-7
References (4 points)		0-4

Evaluation forms (projects and oral interviews) from each member of the Selection Committee will be received by the Science Management department and the mean score will be calculated for each pre-selected candidate.

## Selection and final score

Upon completion of the two stages of the evaluation, candidates will be ranked on the sum of their pre-selection (55 points) and project evaluation/oral interview scores (45 points). The maximum possible score will be 100. A minimum score of 80 points will be required for a candidate to be selected.

The eight candidates with applications that score the highest will be awarded fellowships. In the case of equal scoring, applicants with a higher mean score from the external members of the Selection Committee will be selected. In the cases where the equal scoring persists, all Committee members will be asked to re-evaluate those proposals to decide which candidate should be finally selected.

Candidates who have not been awarded a fellowship but who score above 80 will be placed on a reserve list. Candidates on this list might be selected in the event that a higher ranked applicant withdraws.

The final list of the successful and reserve candidates will be published on the CNIC's website ([www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es)). All candidates will be contacted and notified about the selection outcome. They will be given appropriate information about the scores obtained, the comments of the Selection Committee members relating to the weaknesses and strengths of their proposal, and the highest and the lowest scores that have obtained a fellowship.

Successful candidates will be invited to sign an acceptance letter. Candidates will be expected to start the fellowship within two months of acceptance.

## THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

### The topic of the project

Applicants will be free to propose a research topic within any of the research Areas at the CNIC. The only limitation will be that the proposed research fits within the CNIC's overall focus on cardiovascular research.

The CNIC is structured into **three Research Areas** covering cardiovascular pathologies from the molecular perspective to the clinical reality: Vascular Pathophysiology; Cell and Developmental Biology and Myocardial Pathophysiology

For further information about the CNIC's Research Groups please visit our website ([www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es)).

### Preparing the project proposal

Preselected candidates will be asked to write and present a short project proposal, in collaboration with a group leader of their prospective Research Area. The project proposal should include the following sections:

- Title
- Abstract
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Ethical issues table
- Career Development Plan for the fellow

### Ethical issues

Project proposals will be excluded from the call if they do not meet the internationally recognised Code of Conduct for Researchers and fundamental ethical principles, including those reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and Spanish law relating to biomedical research, personal data protection and bioethics



The research proposal should be accompanied by a completed Ethical Issues table (see below) to facilitate identification of ethical issues related to the proposed research.

*ETHICAL ISSUES TABLE (to be presented with the research proposal)*

Research on Human Embryo/ Fetus	YES
Does the proposed research involve human embryos?	
Does the proposed research involve human fetal tissues or cells?	
Does the proposed research involve human embryonic stem cells (hESCs)?	
Does the proposed research on hESCs involve cells in culture?	
Does the proposed research on hESCs involve the derivation of cells from embryos?	
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	

Research on Humans	YES
Does the proposed research involve children?	
Does the proposed research involve patients?	
Does the proposed research involve persons not able to give consent?	
Does the proposed research involve healthy adult volunteers?	
Does the proposed research involve human genetic material?	
Does the proposed research involve human biological samples?	
Does the proposed research involve human data collection?	
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	

Privacy	YES
Does the proposed research involve processing of genetic information or personal data (e.g. health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction)?	
Does the proposed research involve observation or tracking the location of people?	
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	

Research on Animals	YES
Does the proposed research involve research on animals?	
Are those animals transgenic small laboratory animals?	
Are those animals transgenic farm animals?	
Are those animals non-human primates?	
Are those animals cloned farm animals?	
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	

Research Involving Developing Countries	YES
Does the proposed research involve the use of local resources (genetic, animal, plant, etc)?	
Is the proposed research of benefit to local communities (e.g. capacity building, access to healthcare, education, etc)?	
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	

Dual Use	YES
Research having direct military use	
Research having the potential for terrorist abuse	
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	

Other Ethical Issues	YES
Are there <b>OTHER</b> activities that may raise <b>ethical Issues</b> ?	
If <b>YES</b> please specify:	

After completion of the evaluation process, successful candidates will be invited to sign an acceptance letter. Prior to the signing of this letter, the Program that the fellow is to join must present the CNIC with the set of reports and authorisations from the Clinical and Research Ethics Committees and other collective bodies responsible for overseeing the fulfilment of the internationally recognised fundamental ethical principles and the relevant Spanish laws relating to the previously identified ethical issues raised in the research proposal.

In the case that a research project cannot obtain the appropriate Ethics approval, the CNIC will exclude this project for funding, and may offer the fellowship to a candidate on the reserve list.

#### Career Development Plan

The CNIC offers researchers opportunities to deepen their scientific-technical skills and broaden their experience through participation in complementary training activities offered by the Centre.

In addition to the research performed within the CNIC Research Areas, several technical units provide major infrastructural support and services in state-of-the-art scientific-technologies, both to the CNIC's own research groups and to external users. These units also provide expert training to CNIC researchers in the use of specialised equipment and techniques. Currently, the following technical units operate, with the possibility of additional ones being created in the future: cellomics, microscopy, proteomics, genomics, gene targeting, transgenesis, viral vectors, advanced imaging, and bioinformatics.

Researchers also have the possibility to participate in the large number of seminars and workshops that take place on a regular basis at the Centre. These currently include the following events:

- Weekly international seminar series
- Ad hoc scientific seminars (usually 1-2/week)
- CNIC internal seminar series
- Institutional retreats
- CNIC International Conferences (annually)
- Focused cardiovascular research workshops (2-3 days)

The CNIC also promotes the development of of researchers' complementary skills. To this end, a series of internal workshops and presentations are organised on a regular basis in which interested researchers of all levels are welcome to participate. Currently, the following classes, courses and workshops are being offered:

- Research ethics and bioethics
- Writing of proposals/grant applications
- Research project management
- Introduction to technology transfer/patent applications
- Language courses (English, Spanish)

Apart from the in-house complementary training, the Centre also directly finances the participation of researchers in relevant courses organised by other institutions. Finally, the Centre's Human Resources policies encourage the continuous training of all staff through the flexible salary scheme, which allows employees to make significant tax savings when participating in training courses.

## APPOINTMENT CONDITIONS

The CNIC is an international centre currently in a phase of expansion. The Centre has a solid commitment to high quality research, and as such advocates equal opportunities in employment for men and women, Spanish nationals and citizens of other countries, and disabled people. The guiding principles of the CNIC's employment policy are transparency and merit.

Thanks to the Foundation's legal status and important contributions from the private sector, the CNIC has an internationally competitive remuneration plan offering highly attractive scientific career opportunities.

With its modern infrastructure and an open-minded philosophy that allows scientists to choose the direction of their research, the CNIC offers unique career building opportunities in the area of cardiovascular research.

## General employment conditions

### Employment contracts

Selected fellows will be offered **employment contracts** specifically governed by *Ley 14/2011, de 1 de junio, de la Ciencia, la Tecnología y la Innovación* (Law on science, Technology and Innovation)

Salaries will be in accordance to the internal salary scales in force at the CNIC. Annual gross salary will be within in the scale 27.000 - 37.442,55 €. Fellows will be placed in the scale according to their previous experience.

### Travel allowance

Each fellow will receive a travel allowance of 1,500 € per year.

### Language Training Programme

The CNIC will offer selected fellows training in English and Spanish to give them the language skills needed in an international scientific environment and to foster their full integration into Spanish life.

### Other benefits

The CNIC social cover not only respects the rights of workers established under national legislation but also improves many aspects of these rights by establishing internationally competitive salaries, giving greater flexibility with regard to work and family life balance, and providing additional social benefits for maternity, paternity and child care or periods of ill health. These **benefits** are detailed below.

- Flexible Salary Package

This is a personalized remuneration system that enables each employee to decide how to receive his/her yearly income so that it best matches his/her personal and family needs, permitting significant tax savings.

- Life Insurance

In addition to the public social security system which offers full cover to all workers, the CNIC offers an additional private "Life Insurance" for death or permanent disability due to illness and double indemnity in the event of an accident.

- Civil Liability Insurance

Selected Fellows will be covered and supported with regard to the possible repercussions their work might have on third parties.

- Work and Family Life Balance Plan

The CNIC offers selected fellows significant measures to assist in achieving work and family life balance. Modern criteria for work and family life balance are taken into consideration when establishing flexible working hours, maternity and paternity leave, leave of absence in other situations and various kinds of support needed to help solve a family problem.

## Technical conditions and available infrastructure

### Building and Technical Units

The CNIC is housed in a splendid building inaugurated in 2006. The building has a total floor space of 23,000 m<sup>2</sup>, and is located on the *Chamartín Campus* of the "*Instituto de Salud Carlos III*" (National Health Institute) in Madrid. The building has a capacity to house over 500 scientists and is fitted with the latest generation of technological equipment.

Core support facilities (**Technical Units**) include proteomics, genomics, cellomics, dynamic and quantitative microscopy, gene targeting, viral vectors, transgenesis, bioinformatics and cell culture suites.

The CNIC Technical Units provide key Scientific Services to the CNIC's research groups and to external users by arrangement. These facilities are staffed by experts who not only provide research services, but are also sources of instruction and training. As such, the Unit's staff constitute a major educational resource for those wishing to diversify or explore new avenues of research. In addition, the core facilities carry out their own research, in collaboration with other centres and research groups, aimed at improving and advancing technologies for cutting-edge biomedical research.

The CNIC counts also with a facility, within the Atherothrombosis, Imaging and Epidemiology Department, devoted to the latest multimode cardiovascular imaging techniques for precise anatomic and functional cardiovascular studies. The Advanced Imaging Unit covers echocardiography (3-dimensional, stress, contrast and transesophageal), vascular ultrasound, nuclear perfusion and metabolic imaging, cardiovascular computed tomography, and cardiovascular magnetic resonance. The creation of this unit provides an exceptional opportunity to develop cutting-edge cardiovascular research.

For further details about the Technical Units and other facilities, please visit our website ([www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es)).

### General and Administrative Support

Each researcher is assigned laboratory and office space according to his/her category. Apart from general administrative and logistics support (general services, reception, security, cleaning, maintenance, general administration, bio-security, and other services of a similar nature), selected fellows will have direct support within their Programs through specialized Research Assistants and Managers.

Moreover, selected fellows, like all CNIC researchers, will be supported by the **specialized support Units** that will facilitate the development of their research and provide training:

- Project Office (support in relation to acquisition of competitive funding and management of national and international projects)
- Technology Transfer Office
- Scientific Training
- Communication
- Revision and Editing in English (manuscripts, grant applications, etc.)
- Library and Scientific Documentation
- Bio-security and Radiation Protection Department

## HOW TO APPLY

### Presenting your proposal

The presentation of a proposal includes 2 stages:

#### Pre-selection

Applications must be submitted online at [www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es).

Candidates must complete an **application form**, which asks for general information about the applicant and about eligibility for this call. Candidates must also select the CNIC Research Areas in which they are interested (from 1 to 3).

Further information about the CNIC Research Groups can be found on our website ([www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es)).

A *curriculum vitae*, in English, must be attached to this application form (".doc" or ".pdf" formats) and must include the following information:

- Academic qualifications
- Postdoctoral experience
- Grants and/or fellowships awarded
- Scientific management experience
- Mobility (stays in other centres)
- Career breaks
- Publications
- Other merits
- Contact information for 3 referees

The **deadline for submission** of applications for pre-selection is **23 December 2015 at 12.00 noon Madrid local time (Central European Time)**.

Once the application is submitted an acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to the applicant. The acknowledgment of receipt will include a reference number that should be included in any further correspondence.

**Incomplete applications or applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered.**

### Final Selection

Pre-selected candidates will be asked to write and present a **project proposal**, in English, in collaboration with a senior group leader of their prospective Research Area. The project proposal should include the following sections:

- Title
- Abstract
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Ethical issues table
- Career Development Plan for the fellow

A template and instructions for preparing the project proposal, including the Ethical issues table, can be found on our website ([www.cnic.es](http://www.cnic.es)).

The **maximum length** of the project proposal is **5 pages** (excluding figures and tables, the ethical issues section and the career development plan ). The minimum font size allowed is 11 pt with single line spacing and standard margins of 1.5 cm.

The proposal form must be sent by e-mail to the following address: [cnicipp@cnic.es](mailto:cnicipp@cnic.es), including the names of the applicant and the assigned Group Leader, indicating the reference number in the "Subject" box.

The **deadline for submission** of the project proposal will be communicated to the candidates, as well as the dates for any interviews.

### **Submitting your proposal**

For the FIRST STEP of the presentation of your proposal, please note that you must fill all the mandatory fields in the appropriate format, including your CV and the verification image and press the "submit" button. You will receive a confirmation e-mail after the on-line application form has been submitted.

Proposals must be submitted on or before the deadline specified. Call deadlines are absolutely final and are strictly enforced.

Please note that **only one proposal per applicant** will enter into the evaluation. Errors discovered in proposals submitted on-line can be rectified by simply submitting a corrected version. So long as the call has not yet closed, the system will select the latest submitted proposal for entry into the evaluation process.

## REDRESS PROCEDURE

The redress procedure may be submitted by a candidate after the communication on his/her application ineligibility or upon reception of the feedback on the outcome of the evaluation, if she/he thinks that there has been a shortcoming in the way a proposal has been evaluated.

The request for redress should be sent by e-mail to the following address: [cnicipp@cnic.es](mailto:cnicipp@cnic.es), indicating the reference number in the "Subject" box.

The request for redress must also be sent by post to the following address:

CNIC International Postdoctoral Programme  
Scientific Training Department  
Fundación Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Cardiovasculares Carlos III  
Melchor Fernández Almagro, 3  
28029 Madrid – Spain

The redress procedure is not meant to call into question the scientific judgement made by the Selection Committee; it will look into procedural shortcomings and into factual errors. The request for redress will be raised within 20 days from receiving the related communication. A Redress Procedure Committee will examine all such complaints and does not itself evaluate the proposal. The Board may recommend the evaluation or the re-evaluation of the proposal. A reply will be sent to the complainants not later than one month after the deadline for redress request.

## TIMETABLE AND INFORMATION FOR THIS CALL

### Indicative timetable for this call

Publication of call	<i>3 November 2015</i>
Deadline for submission of proposals	<i>23 December 2015</i>
Eligibility check	<i>7 January 2016</i>
Pre-selection of candidates	<i>29 January 2016</i>
Selection of candidates	<i>4 March 2016</i>
Notification to candidates	<i>7- 15 March 2016</i>
Start date of fellowships	<i>May-June 2016</i>



## Further information and help

- **CNIC Website**  
<http://www.cnic.es>

- **CNIC Help Desk**  
e-mail  
[cnicipp@cnic.es](mailto:cnicipp@cnic.es)

Telephone  
+34 91 453 1200 (Extension 4235)

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. In accordance with the provisions of article 5 of Organic Law 15/1999 of 13 December on the Protection of Personal Data, we inform you that personal data collected as a consequence of the current session will be incorporated into an automated file called HR registered in the Spanish Agency of Data Protection under the ownership of the Foundation National Center for Cardiovascular Research CARLOS III, its purpose being to process your registration and participation in this notification/announcement, as well as to track your career and professional training by sending different corporative material of the Centre to the address you provided. There is no expectation of the transfer of personal data to any third party outside to the Center. Also, you may exercise your right to object to the treatment described, as well as the rights of access, rectification and deletion of information provided to the Centre by contacting the following address: National Center for Cardiovascular Research Carlos III (CNIC), Calle Melchor Fernández 3, (28029) Madrid.

The processing of your personal information as described in the previous section is necessary for the Centre to manage your registration in this training event, without which, the inscription will not be possible.

2. The ongoing development of this programme shall be subject to CNIC budget availability. If necessary, the CNIC may approve the temporary suspension or alteration of the contributions made to the programme.

3. The research personnel in training Industrial Property Rights and those of the persons participating in CNIC training programmes or carrying out training stays at the CNIC will be governed by the norms published in the CNIC web site:

[http://www.cnic.es/en/formacion/propiedad\\_industrial.php](http://www.cnic.es/en/formacion/propiedad_industrial.php)

4. The "Code of Good Corporate Governance and Code of Ethics" of the CNIC must be followed by all participants of this programme.

[https://www.cnic.es/doc/transparencia/codigo\\_buen\\_gobierno\\_y\\_codigo\\_etico.pdf](https://www.cnic.es/doc/transparencia/codigo_buen_gobierno_y_codigo_etico.pdf)