



Guide for applicants

Contents

1	Context.....	2
2	Research freedom.....	2
3	Grant	2
4	Principles and structure of the calls	3
4.1	Tentative schedule	3
5	Research topics in the thematic areas of the call	3
6	Eligibility Criteria.....	4
7	Evaluation process and criteria.....	4
8	Submitting an application.....	5
8.1	Preparing an application.....	5
8.2	Requirements for the second review stage.....	6
9	After the application	7
9.1	Redress procedure.....	7
9.2	Incorporation.....	7
9.3	Living and working in Barcelona.....	7
9.4	Post award requirements	8



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1 Context

PROBIST is a post-doctoral fellowship Program lead by the Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology. Altogether 61 fellowships will be awarded and implemented in top research in the Barcelona (Spain) area.

BIST brings closer together seven independent Catalan internationally recognized research centres. The centres participating in the PROBIST program are:

- Institute of Photonic Sciences (ICFO),
- Institute of Chemical Research of Catalonia (ICIQ),
- Catalan Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (ICN2),
- Institute for High Energy Physics (IFAE),
- Institute for Research in Biomedicine (IRB Barcelona),

Also affiliated to BIST:

- Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG),
- Institute for Bioengineering of Catalonia (IBEC).

2 Research freedom

PROBIST applicants will have complete research freedom. Applicants may subscribe to one or several generic research topics published with the calls. Once pre-selected they may design their research project proposal with a research group of their choice in the participating BIST centres.

Successful candidates will be hosted by the selected research group. They will have full access to facilities, seminars and training programmes of the BIST centres. Networking activities shall facilitate inter-centre and inter-disciplinary exchange and collaborations. PROBIST will offer fellows the opportunity to opt for secondments from a pool of international institutions with which BIST centres have institutional agreements or collaborations.

3 Grant

The fellowships are granted for 3 years including



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- Annual gross salary: 36.252,82€ plus a single payment of 1504,89 relocation support (Spanish tax and social security deductions apply),
- close mentoring and supervision through prestigious Senior Researchers,
- a personalized career development plan,
- a training program for scientific and transferable skills.

4 Principles and structure of the calls

The calls for candidatures will be open to everybody but special eligibility criteria and a multistep evaluation procedure will apply. There are no restrictions on gender, age, ethnic groups, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, and social or economic conditions. BIST and its associated centres are committed to pro-active policies on equal opportunities and gender issues.

Please review the eligibility and evaluation criteria and read carefully the instructions how to submit an application before applying.

Applications exclusively can be presented through the on-line application platform. You will be informed on the state of your application at all stages. The main means of communication during the formal process will be by e-mail. The entire selection process will be managed under strict control of privacy rules.

4.1 Tentative schedule

- Call 1: 1 September 2017 – Deadline: 1 November 2017
Interviews: from 15 to 19 January 2018 (exact days to be confirmed)
Incorporation foreseen for 03 to 04/2018 (*)
- Call 2: 1 February 2018 – Deadline: 1st April 2018
Interviews: from 28 May to 1 June 2018 (exact days to be confirmed)
Incorporation foreseen for 08 to 09/2018 (*)
- Call 3: 10 June 2018 – Deadline 15th September 2018
Interviews: from 12 to 16 November 2018 (exact days to be confirmed)
Incorporation foreseen for 01 to 02/2019 (*)
- Call 4: 1 December 2018 – Deadline 1st February 2019
Interviews: from 28 March to 1 April 2019 (exact days to be confirmed)
Incorporation foreseen for 06/2019 (*)

(*) the exact date of incorporation will be agreed with the host centre once the award is granted. The indicated entry dates are tentative and may be negotiated with the corresponding host centre.

5 Research topics in the thematic areas of the call

In each call, general research topics are published. You will be asked to assign the research of your choice to one of the topics. You have the freedom to apply within various topics.



The current research topics open for candidates are published on the PROBIST website.

6 Eligibility Criteria

To be admitted to the review process, candidates must comply the following eligibility criteria:

- Presenting complete applications including all requested compulsory information and documentation.
- Having not spent more than 12 months of the prior 36 months in Spain, at the time of the call deadline. You will be required to confirm your compliance through a self-declaration.
- Be in possession of a PhD degree at the time of the call deadline. Please provide evidence when you apply (e.g. scanned PhD-degree or documents that proof having read a successful PhD at the moment of the call deadline).
- Having not been awarded their PhD degree more than 5 years, at the time of the call deadline. Exceptions are made for documented periods of parental leave or serious illness. Other equivalent exceptions may be considered when properly documented and motivated by the applicant, e.g. in case of candidates from underdeveloped countries, minorities, and for applicants that pursued their studies under comparatively unfavourable conditions. Please provide evidence when you apply (for instance uploading additional documentation).
- Being main author in at least one publication in an internationally reputed journal at the time of the call deadline. Only accepted and published -in print or on-line- papers are eligible. Please provide evidence when you apply (for instance indicating citation in your CV).

7 Evaluation process and criteria

The evaluation of eligible candidates will be carried out by an external, independent selection panel. The evaluation will be objective, independent, free of conflicts of interest and the selection will be based on merits, equal opportunities and freedom of choice of research.

The review procedure will be carried out in various steps:

- First review by the selection panel reviewing the documentation submitted with the application. General suitability for PROBIST will be evaluated (review 1).
- Invitation of pre-selected candidates to prepare a research proposal with the groups they want to be hosted at. A research proposal that is finally submitted needs to have the hosting commitment by the corresponding GL. Presenting a proposal is a requirement for being invited to the next step (interview).
- Second review by the selection panel: interviews and presentation of the research proposal (review 2).
- Decision on awardees, reserve list and rejected candidatures.



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Selected candidates (awardees) will be offered the grant. Rejected offers may be offered to candidates from the reserve list.

The evaluation criteria to be applied to review 1 are:

- Based on application material presented:
 - Scientific achievements: results, previous research experience and skills, scientific results, awards, intersectoral and international links etc. (50%)
 - References: referees' evaluation, referees' experience (25%)
 - Motivation and potential impact on the candidate's career (25%)

Only candidates with an initial evaluation of 50% or higher are considered "pre-selected" and shall pass to the next step (so they are supposed to be good, above average).

The evaluation criteria to be applied to review 2 are:

- **Scientific achievements (40%):** assessed based on application material and panel interview: scientific results, references, previous research experience and skills, as well as fellowships and awards that had been obtained in the past.
- **Scientific merit of the research proposal (30%):** Scientific quality and originality of the proposal.
- **Impact on the candidate's career development and prospective, as well as strategic relevance (30%):** increased learning curve of the candidate; expose to new ideas and areas; interaction with different groups and centres, internationalization strategy, tech transfer (where applicable), etc.

Intended re-integration of scientists after a career break is encouraged. Equal opportunities is a principle for the selection process. BIST and the participating centres aim at equal gender balance and pay special attention to candidatures coming from unfavourable conditions.

Applicants will be informed on the progress at all stages of the process. The candidates being assessed in the second review stage will receive an evaluation report for their candidature. The default means for communication is e-mail.

8 Submitting an application

8.1 Preparing an application

The on-line submission platform for the first call will be open from 1 September 2017. The deadline for the submission of applications is 1 November 2017 end of the day (CET).

Please check the specific call parameters for detailed timelines and research topics [link].

Applications Checklist for the initial submission

Within the deadline the following documentation and information needs to be presented to be eligible:

1. Application form on personal data (on-line form to be filled in):



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- Basic personal data and contact information
2. Application form on background (on-line form to be filled in):
 - Specific background information on PhD title, previous works, results, awards, etc.
 - Upload of the PhD certificate or substituting document issued by the corresponding University
 - Indication of the preferred research topics (one or several)
 - Indication of reference persons who endorse your candidature
 - Additional information relevant for the application and the eligibility can be uploaded here-

3. Letter of motivation (document upload)

The cover letter addresses research interests and motivation for the application, as well as the applicant's background and suitability for the fellowship.

4. Curriculum Vitae (document upload)

Applicants should indicate their scientific and professional trajectory and include information on publications, awards or other scientific merits. Candidates with career breaks or variations in the chronological sequence of their career steps are welcome to apply.

Applications cannot be updated after the submission. Only complete applications are eligible.

After the deadline, applicants will be checked for eligibility. Non-eligible applicants will be rejected. The eligible candidates will be reviewed by the selection panel. Suitable candidates will be invited to present a research proposal with the group(s) of their choice for the second review stage (pre-selected candidates).

8.2 Requirements for the second review stage

The pre-selected candidates will receive the group leader's contact details of the research groups of their interest. They are given 3 weeks to prepare a **2 page research proposal with the group**. Candidates whose research proposals pose ethical concerns must indicate this in their proposal. In any case an 'Ethical Issues form' needs to be filled in and uploaded on the submission platform as part of the application. A research proposal that is finally submitted needs to have the hosting commitment of the corresponding group leader, in case of being finally selected. Presenting a proposal is a requirement for being invited to an interview.

The pre-selected candidates who have presented a valid research proposal will then be invited to an interview at the centre(s) where they have obtained a hosting commitment. The dates for the interview are published in the call information when the call is opened. Interviews should be on-site but can be remote if constraints exist. The focus will be on:

- The candidates' presentations of an executive summary of their background and research experience so far,
- Their justification of motivation for applying to the fellowship, as well as the expected impact it would have on their career prospective,
- The candidates' presentations of the research proposal.



As a tentative schedule, the interview will last 20 minutes plus 15 minutes of questions and answers.

Successful candidates will be awarded the fellowship or put onto a reserve list according to a shortlist created by the selection panel. Candidates not passing the 70% evaluation threshold will be rejected. Rejected candidates have the right to appeal in justified cases, like evidence of bias or conflict of interest by evaluators, evidence of failure to have reasonably followed the published evaluation procedure, factual errors by evaluators that have substantially altered the outcome of evaluation.

Awardees will be offered the fellowship that they would need to accept or reject within 1 week after the offer. Accepting the offer will start the incorporation process.

Applicants will be informed on the progress of their application at all stages of the process.

All personal data will be treated confidentially.

The link to the application platform can be found on the PROBIST webpage.

9 After the application

9.1 Redress procedure

In case you considered it necessary to redress the evaluation result, please direct your request through our contact form on www.bist.eu/probist indicating the programme (PROBIST) and the call deadline. Please state clearly the reasons for your redress. Only justified requests that indicate serious doubts with complying the principles applicable to the evaluation and selection procedure can be taken into account and evaluated.

9.2 Incorporation

Accepting the offer of the grant will start the incorporation process.

Requirements for starting your fellowship, in case of being selected:

- You will have to take care of obtaining Visa, work permit and the Spanish Social Security number. You will also need to register residency in Spain in order to obtain the necessary tax number. Your future host organization will provide support and orientation where possible.
- Sign a work contract with the host centre. The place of work will be at the host centre. The usual working conditions of the host apply to your fellowship.

9.3 Living and working in Barcelona



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An exhaustive description on work in life in Catalonia can be found at http://dps.gencat.cat/WebAcollida/AppJava/en/Catalunya/Catalunya.jsp@sub=0&pag=tc_m_412-87435-64.html.

9.4 Post award requirements

The fellows will participate in the generation of the scientific and review reports for the European Commission wherever this is necessary. The European Commission or BIST may require to give feedback on the program and the personal experience of the fellow in it.

Both can be necessary during and after the fellowship. In particular, the PROBIST Fellows will need to prepare a final report after the completion of their fellowship. This report should arrive the BIST project manager no later than eight weeks after the end of the fellowship.

