



## To the Mothers of Science 2026

### General Guidelines for Reviewers

#### Mission:

The **Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST)** recognises and supports **scientist mothers** striving to reach leadership positions and advance research in their respective fields.

<https://bist.eu/talent/mothers-of-science/>

#### Terms and conditions:

- Number of grants: 10
- Financial support: Salary top-up of €400 per month (gross)
- Additional benefits: Professional coaching programme and networking activities
- If the researcher is employed by an external institution, the fellowship can only be granted if she also maintains an active connection with one of the BIST centres.
  - The BIST community centre must be the institution issuing the monthly payslip, as the grant is paid through the salary.
- Duration: Up to 12 months, depending on the employment contract.
- The grant will terminate early if the employment contract ends before the scheduled 12 months.

#### Deadline and submission:

- Call open: **10 December 2025 – 23 January 2026**
- Online application form: [bist.slideroom.com](http://bist.slideroom.com)
- Shortlisted candidates will be notified before the interview phase, applicants are encouraged to save the interview dates in advance.

#### Calendar of actions

| Call for Supporting Grant    |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Activity                     | Dates   |
| Call open                    | 10 December 2025 – 23 January 2026                  |
| Evaluation                   | 24 January – 9 February 2026                        |
| Consensus meeting            | 10 February 2026 (online)                           |
| Personal Interviews          | 23-27 February 2026                                 |
| Notification of finalists    | 9 March 2026  |
| Earliest grant starting date | 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2026 (confirm in each centre) |



## Eligibility criteria:

Applicants must:

- Be the mother of at least one child at the time the call opens.
- Be actively conducting research at a BIST community centre as a PhD student, postdoc, research associate, or equivalent, with a valid contract or agreement (with BIST community centre or an external institution).
- Be aiming to advance their career, e.g., from postdoc to group leader or from senior group leader to a higher management role.
- Previous awardees may apply again if their personal or professional circumstances have significantly changed (e.g., new position, additional children).
- Submit the online application via [bist.slideroom.com](https://bist.slideroom.com).

## Evaluation criteria:

Candidates will be assessed based on:

- Scientific excellence and potential
- Motivation to pursue a leadership position in academia or industry

The evaluation board consists of three external experts in scientific careers (with additional experts added if needed). The committee will consider geographical balance, diversity of experience, and institutional representation.

While postdocs and junior group leaders are the preferred profiles, other candidates may be considered if they meet the eligibility requirements (e.g., recent mothers, researchers transitioning roles, etc.).

## Evaluation guidelines:

Evaluations are based on scientific merit, experience, and potential, ensuring equal opportunities and non-discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, age, culture, origin, religion, belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, or political opinion.

Career breaks or unconventional CV paths should not be penalized. Instead, they should be seen as valuable components of a diverse professional trajectory.

## Confidentiality and Ethics

- Evaluators must not contact applicants outside of formal procedures.
- All information shared by applicants is confidential and cannot be disclosed beyond the evaluation committee.
- Any conflict of interest (e.g., past collaborations, family ties, or close associations with a candidate) must be reported to the project manager.



## Selection Process

The selection process is organised in **four phases**:

1. **Remote Evaluation**
2. **Shortlisting of Candidates (Consensus Meeting)**
3. **Personal Interviews**
4. **Final Decision**

### 1. Remote Evaluation

Applications are assessed based on the materials submitted by each candidate.

The following evaluation criteria and weightings are applied:

| Criterion                                 | Weight |
|---|--------|
| Research outputs and merits               | 30%    |
| Expertise in research                     | 10%    |
| Other relevant expertise                  | 10%    |
| Motivation to reach a leadership position | 20%    |
| Plan to use the grant and expected impact | 30%    |

#### Scoring scale:

- 0 – Non-existent
- 1 – Poor
- 2 – Average
- 3 – Good
- 4 – Very good
- 5 – Outstanding

### 2. Shortlisting of Candidates (Consensus Meeting)

After the remote evaluation, the external selection committee will hold a formal online consensus meeting to agree on a shortlist of candidates to be invited for personal interviews.

The shortlist should include at least 15 candidates, ideally representing all BIST community centres.

### 3. Personal Interviews

Each personal interview will last approximately 20 minutes.

Candidates will give a 5-minute presentation describing their professional trajectory, motivations, and career plans for the next five years, particularly their goals towards achieving leadership positions in science.



The selection committee will then ask a standardised set of questions to all candidates, focused on:

- The clarity and content of the candidate's presentation
- The potential impact of the programme on her career

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**4. Final Decision**

The selection committee will prepare a ranked list of finalists and allocate the grants and coaching programme places accordingly.

Final decisions will consider:

- The ranking position of each candidate
- The representation of all BIST community centres
- Each centre's contribution to the programme

**Useful Links**

- [Mothers of Science Programme – BIST Website](#)
- [Application Platform \(Slideroom\)](#)