

Announcement

CIPF Predoctoral Training Fellowships 2022

The **Príncipe Felipe Research Center Foundation (CIPF)** is a cutting-edge biomedical research institution whose mission is to understand the basic mechanisms of human disease and apply this knowledge to the development of new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. We strive to translate discoveries to improve the quality of life for patients. The prestigious scientists of the CIPF are researching many of the most relevant and costly diseases of today's society — illnesses that urgently require new scientific insights and expanded treatment options: cancer, neurodegenerative diseases, diabetes and metabolic diseases, and rare diseases.

The CIPF currently has 22 research groups that work in four scientific programs. These research teams have active collaborations with clinicians and the international health sector to explore the translation of our breakthroughs from the bench to the bedside. The main goal is to generate high-impact biomedical knowledge, thereby producing results that are transferable to applications in the health system. The research center, located in Valencia, occupies an area of 32,000 m² and it is equipped with the most advanced infrastructures, facilities and technological equipment.

More research, better health.

1. Objective of the call:

The **CIPF fellowship program** was developed to promote excellence in the training of outstanding students who wish to pursue biomedical research and who intend to perform additional postdoctoral training to pursue a career as principal investigator. In the current call, **five fellowships** will be awarded.

The selection process will evaluate the applicant's achievements and capacity, as well as the scientific quality of the project and host laboratory. The PhD projects must be novel and feasible, and in the field of biomedical research with the aim of elucidating disease mechanisms and acquiring new scientific knowledge.

Funded by: Janssen

Janssen is the pharmaceutical company of the international corporation Johnson & Johnson. During these two years of the COVID19 pandemic, **Janssen** has positioned themselves as an exemplary world leader in vaccine

development: their unique vaccine against Sars-COV-2 was approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) in 2021 as an effective single-dose vaccine.

Janssen is not only committed to product development such as their COVID19 vaccine, they clearly recognize and support the key role of basic laboratory research in the drug pipeline process. Paul Janssen, founder of the company, was a physician who obtained a PhD in Pharmacology from Ghent university. In over 150 countries, **Janssen** has divisions where they bring together creative minds and cutting-edge ideas to help treat, cure, stop, and prevent some of the most complex human pathologies. **Janssen** partners with innovative academic researchers in several therapeutic areas including metabolism & cardiovascular, immunology, infectious diseases and vaccines, neuroscience, oncology, and pulmonary hypertension.

Scientific training and public engagement are essential components of the **CIPF**. The **CIPF** and **Janssen** share similar institutional values of excellence, collaboration, innovation, and equality. Moreover, both recognize that attracting talented, passionate students to biomedical research is key for future discoveries that may lead to new therapies or drugs for disease treatment or prevention.

2. Terms and Conditions of Fellowships:

The grant will provide a stipend to the selected student based on the **CIPF** salary tables using the R1 category (predoctoral student).

CIPF promotes women in science and diversity in the research workplace. Our equality plan offers flexibility to achieve a healthy balance between work and personal responsibilities such as caring for children or elderly family members. These policies include, for example, flexible working hours.

The **CIPF** has committed to complying with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (EU Charter & Code) by developing its human resources strategy for researchers (**HRS4R**) and through its open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment policy (OTM-R). The HRS4R supports research institutions and funding organizations in the implementation of the EU Charter & Code in their policies and practices. Research institutions that implement the EU Charter & Code principles are rendered more attractive to researchers looking for a new employer or for a host for their own research project. CIPF was awarded HRS4R recognition in July 2020 ([more information](#)).

The fellowship provides the salary and does not include a funds to cover consumables for the laboratory, travel, courses, etc.

The **CIPF** fellowship is incompatible with any other predoctoral fellowship. The awardee is obliged to notify the **CIPF** if she/he receives a similar award and/or contract and will be required to renounce one or the other. The fellowship is also incompatible with any other contractual or statutory commitments that may restrict the student's dedication to fully devote their time and abilities to their PhD research project.

The program is designed to capture outstanding students who are able to compete in other public and private doctoral fellowship programs. Therefore, **grant-holders are strongly encouraged to use the one-year period to apply for equivalent grants from those public or private institutions deemed appropriate by the CIPF.**

Grant holders will provide the **CIPF** with the administrative and legal documents required for their employment contract: Census Registration in Spain, DNI/NIE (Spanish Identity Document), Spanish Social Security Number, Spanish account bank number. If the grant holders cannot provide the documents before April 1 2022, they may forfeit their fellowship award.

The research grant holder expressly authorises the **CIPF** to make whatever use it deems appropriate of the findings and reports submitted for the grant application or to justify the work carried out (except their publication) to undertake whatever proceedings may be necessary with the individuals or institutions that may be partially or fully funding the grant awarded.

However, in accordance with Law 14, of 27 September 2013, approving the Supporting Entrepreneurs and their Internationalization, they may exercise the intellectual property rights deriving from their own research training activities, depending on their contribution, as established in the revised text of the Intellectual Property Act, approved by Royal Legislative Decree 1/1996 of 12 April 1996.

3. Duration:

One year with possible yearly renewal up to 3 years maximum, subject to availability of funds.

Grant holders will sign a one-year contract. Renewal of the contract requires a favourable report from the mentor and the **CIPF** related to the progress of research objectives as agreed to by the grant holder in the period established.

4. Start date:

April 11, 2022

5. Host Group Requirements:

It is imperative that the student receives support and direction from a mentor who is an established group leader interested in the development of young scientists and in the progress of the thesis project.

- The PI must have a funded project(s) from a competitive call with which to support the work of the thesis project of the student.
- The application includes information on the history of the PI and the group in supervising and training students
- The call permits applications from individual PIs or from two PIs who will co-direct the thesis project. In the case of co-PIs, the thesis Project must reflect the synergy or complementarity of the two groups and the application must include coordination details of how the student will be supervised by both groups.
- A group may present only one application.
- Research groups that received support from the last “Intergrupos” call may not participate in the current application.
- Mixed units are not eligible for the call.

6. Candidate Requirements:

At the time of application, the applicant must:

- Hold a Bachelor’s degree in biology, chemistry, biochemistry, biotechnology, or related field. If not from a Spanish university, the degree must be homologated or in the process of being homologated in Spain.
- Have completed a Master’s program in a relevant field and be enrolled or complete the conditions for registration in a PhD program within Spain.
- Display high level of motivation to perform biomedical research and pursue a career as an independent investigator.
- Candidates will be required to provide information about other grant proposals submitted to competitive calls and the results obtained after the review of their proposals.

At the time of award activation, the candidate must have completed initial coursework and be at the stage of the program where s/he can devote full-time effort to research or activities related to the development into an independent researcher.

7. Evaluation Criteria:

CIPFs Research Support Unit (RSU) will perform initial triage of applications to eliminate submissions that do not meet the stated requirements. A special commission of external scientists will be appointed to review the applications.

To judge the merit of the application, reviewers will comment on the following criteria:

- **Criterion 1 - Summary for Non-Scientists – 5%**

How well written is the lay summary in explaining to a non-scientist audience the research proposed and its importance?

Does the Lay Summary adequately explain the major health problem being addressed by this study?

Does it provide specific questions and how the projects will address them?

Does it provide information on the overall impact of this work and the potential advances in the field?

- **Criterion 2 - Evaluation of the Applicant – 30%**

Does the applicant have the potential for a research career?

Is the applicant's career plan specified in the application?

Is the applicant's academic record competitive and consistent with the assessment provided by letters of reference?

Does the applicant have prior research experience, publications and/or granted projects?

Does the applicant have prior participated in additional research calls?

Is there a clear rationale supporting the need for the proposed training?

What is the sponsor's assessment of the applicant?

Does the applicant have plans to perform a postdoctoral fellowship? Are their career goals explained clearly in the Personal Statement of the candidate's biosketch?

- **Criterion 3 - Training Plan and Group Environment – 35%**

The fellow will only receive a stipend from the award, and thus, additional support for the proposed work must come from PI's laboratory. Therefore, the proposal will likely be related to the group leader's

currently funded work. The proposal must contribute towards the training and career development of the applicant.

Training/mentoring Plan (2-page limit)

Is the proposed mentor an independent investigator?

Does the PI have the experience to direct the proposed training, as evidenced by a track record regarding productivity, funding and prior trainees?

Does the PI have adequate current funding to support the applicant's project?

Does the PI and research group demonstrate familiarity with the applicant's career and developmental goals and provide a comprehensive plan that supports the applicant's career goals, which should be outlined in the Personal Statement section of the applicant's biosketch?

Is there a plan for instruction in the scientific method and good practices of research as stipulated in HRS4R? The reviewers will evaluate the adequacy of the proposed training in relation to the following: conflict of interest, authorship, plagiarism, data management, human subjects and animal use, laboratory safety, research misconduct, research ethics.

Does the scientific environment of the group contribute to the probability of a successful learning experience? Is there evidence of a group commitment?

○ **Criterion 4 - Evaluation of the Scientific Project - 30%**

The trainee and mentor should collaboratively provide a well-structured, novel proposal aimed at answering a biological question related to the molecular/cellular basis of a human disease. **(3-page limit)**

Is the research proposal appropriate for the applicant, given his/her academic background, experience and career interests? Is a timeline of milestones provided?

Does the proposal contain the right balance of challenge, importance of the research question, and feasibility in relation to the applicant's experience and training?

Does the Proposed Project include a specific hypothesis and describe the applicant's role?

For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting.

Does this study address an important, unresolved biomedical question?

Does the science accelerate the discovery, interpretation and application of scientific knowledge to enhance and treat a human disease?

8. Rights of research trainees:

Briefly, anyone receiving a fellowship grant has the right to:

- Take part in the CIPF's activities in accordance with internal regulations.
- Obtain the necessary support from the CIPF to carry out their research activities, including the research support services.
- Exercise the intellectual property rights deriving from their own research activities, depending on their contribution, as established by the revised text of the Intellectual Property Act approved by Royal Legislative Decree 1/1996 of 12 April 1996.

9. Obligations of research trainees

Without being exhaustive in nature, and in all cases in line with the provisions of Law 14, of 27 September 2013, approving the Supporting Entrepreneurs and their Internationalization, grant beneficiaries have the obligation to:

- In any written documents deriving from the research work undertaken, state their affiliation to the CIPF with the expression "With the support of a CIPF Predoctoral Training Fellowship".
- Notify the CIPF if any other grant or similar subsidy is awarded or there is any interruption to the grant period due to force majeure.
- Attend and participate in the CIPF's research seminars, workshops and other activities organised by the CIPF for research personnel, as well as any initiatives organised or facilitated by the CIPF to enhance their training or to promote their integration in the CIPF's community.
- Integrate in the scientific community of the CIPF in the spirit of scientific collaboration.
- Carry out the research work in accordance with the criteria established by the CIPF
- Apply for competitive grants, especially the ones for the recruitment of early-stage research staff. The beneficiaries of these grants will receive the salary stipulated herein, and they will renounce the CIPF/Janssen grant.
- In the year prior to joining the CIPF they should have taken the necessary steps to apply for and obtain from the State or any other public or private

- institution any grants or subsidies they may be entitled to (due to their personal circumstances or activity) to pursue these doctoral studies, or otherwise undertake these procedures during the first year of the grant.
- Accept the grants that the CIPF may obtain from other individuals or organisations to partially or fully offset the grant, so long as this substitution does not involve the fellow having to accept lower remuneration.
 - Request permission from the CIPF to undertake research activities at other centres.
 - Accept any obligations incumbent upon him/her as a result of being covered by the Social Security system.
 - Abide by the internal regulations of the CIPF, especially employment conditions and health and safety regulations.
 - Respect the ethical implications of the research activity being carried out.
 - Must enjoy their holidays during the natural year. If the fellow doesn't apply for their holidays, these days will be lost and irrecoverable. Neither will be paid in the final payslip.
 - Adhere to the conditions and obligations set forth in this document.
 - Should any of these obligations not be fulfilled, the CIPF will have the right to revoke the grant.

Deadline for Application: March 11, 2022

Documents Required for Application:

- CVA (FECYT) of candidate including a one-page Personal Motivation statement
- Academic records of Bachelor's and Master's degrees with final grade average
- Two letters of recommendation. (References may not include the group leader presenting the application.)
- CVA (FECYT) of group leader
- Training Plan that must include a timeline (2-page limit, see criteria for more info).
- Scientific Doctoral Project (3-page limit, including background, hypothesis and objectives, workplan, and timeline).

For more information, contact RSU (researchsupport@cipf.es).