

## 2024 CALL FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR PREDOCTORAL CONTRACTS FOR DOCTORAL TRAINEES (formerly FPI grants)

### APPENDIX I. Rules of the call

#### 1. Object of the call

The main object of the grants for predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees is to increase the number and quality of new doctors by allowing trainees to carry out their doctoral theses within the best projects of research groups with scientific and academic solvency in universities, public research bodies and other research centres.

#### 2. Grants and remuneration

A total of 31 grants<sup>1</sup> are offered for predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees in 2024, as laid down in the State Training Subprogramme within the framework of the 2021-2023 State Plan for Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation, under the auspices of Order CIN/1025/2022, of 27 October. The award of predoctoral grants is subject to the regulations set out in the aforementioned order.

The management of the call for applications for predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees is entrusted by the State Research Agency (AEI) to the institutions to which the grants are assigned.

The grants and other subsidised items are paid by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation through the AEI. They are jointly funded by the FSE and the UPC (allocated to budget item 175.71/GEN).

The grants for predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees include the following items: a grant to cover the contracts (gross pay and employer's contribution), a grant to cover the cost of compensation at the end of the contract and an additional grant to cover the expenses arising from research stays in R&D centres and doctoral enrolment fees, in accordance with the provisions of Article 13 of the Order approving the call for early processing for the year 2022 of the procedure for awarding grants for Knowledge Generation Projects and actions for the training of predoctoral research staff associated with these projects, within the framework of the 2021-2023 State Plan for Scientific and Technological Research and Innovation.

According to the call, the gross pay of the predoctoral contract, divided into 12 payments that will include extraordinary payments, is as follows (to be adjusted in line with current salary tables when appropriate).

**First year of the contract:** pay equivalent to 60% of the salary set for Group I contractual staff in the salary table included in the Single Collective Agreement of Contractual Staff of the General State Administration.

**Second, third and fourth years of the contract:** pay equivalent to 75% of the salary set for Group I contractual staff in the salary table included in the Single Collective Agreement of Contractual Staff of the General State Administration.

If the predoctoral researcher has had a contract in another institution without completing its maximum duration, the pay will correspond to that set out in the provisions of Article 7 of Royal Decree 103/2019 and the AEI's call, taking into account the period under contract at the other

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<sup>1</sup> This call precedes the final decision on the projects funded by the State Research Agency (AEI) and the European Social Fund Plus (FSE+) and the final award of predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees. It is therefore conditional on the final decision on the projects.

institution.

Deductions are applied to the gross pay in accordance with current regulations. When the contracts have been formalised, the beneficiaries are paid at the end of each month.

For any additional grants to cover the expenses arising from stays in R&D centres and doctoral enrolment fees, a single payment of €7,000 per person is authorised. It may be allocated to the following:

- a) Funding stays made by the beneficiaries during the entire period of the grant (both the predoctoral stage and the postdoctoral orientation period) in R&D centres other than those to which they are attached, to allow them to carry out activities aimed at improving their training and furthering their doctoral theses. The stays must involve a degree of mobility and/or internationalisation that could not be attained as a result of the previous academic training, or as a result of other factors such as residence or nationality. However, under no circumstances should the stay cause a delay in the completion of the doctoral thesis. In the postdoctoral orientation period, these stays can be used to complement the predoctoral training and orient the future lines of work of the postdoctoral stage.

The stays may be in other public or private R&D centres, including foreign or Spanish companies, provided that they are in a different location from the centre to which the predoctoral researcher is attached. The stays must have a minimum duration of 30 calendar days without interruption, counted from the date of incorporation at the host centre, and they must take place within the term of the contract. The stays must be authorised by the principal investigator of the project, the director of the department to which the doctoral student is attached and, if the duration is more than three months, the vice-rector for Teaching and Research Staff.

- b) Covering the expenses arising from enrolment for academic supervision on the doctoral programme in the academic years in which the beneficiary is enrolled during the term of the grants for predoctoral contracts. The fees for management of the academic record are not covered by the grant. If the grant recipient withdraws from the programme in the first three months, they will have to return the amount of the enrolment fee for academic supervision on the doctoral programme.

### **3. Structure and duration of the grants**

The UPC will contract the beneficiaries under a predoctoral contract in accordance with the provisions of Article 21 of Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation, and Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March, on the Statute of Predoctoral Trainee Researchers. The contracts must be full-time.

The grants will have a maximum duration of four years (48 months). However, the contract may be terminated if the beneficiaries fail to pass the annual assessment by the academic committee of the doctoral programme.

When the person contracted has a disability, the contract can be extended to six years, including extensions, taking into account the characteristics of the research activity and the extent of the limitations to performing it.

In accordance with Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation, the awarding of the doctoral degree will mark the end of the training stage of the research staff and the start of the postdoctoral stage intended for professional improvement and specialisation. From this moment on, the aim of the contracts covered by this grant will be postdoctoral orientation for a maximum of 12 months, without exceeding the total of four years established for the grant.

If the beneficiaries leave the doctoral programme, the contract will be terminated and the grant will be lost.

The award of a predoctoral research grant in no way implies a commitment on the part of the

University to later hire the beneficiary as UPC staff.

Temporary disability and periods of full-time leave for gestation, risk during pregnancy and infant feeding, childbirth, maternity, paternity, adoption, fostering for the purposes of adoption or temporary foster care, and accumulated infant feeding leave, or similar situations related to the above, such as leave for reasons of work-life balance or the care of minors, relatives or dependants, and the time devoted to leave of absence for the care of a child or relative or due to gender violence during the term of the contract will cause the contract to be extended for an equivalent amount of time. In situations of temporary disability arising from pregnancy, beneficiaries may request the interruption and extension of the performance deadline for the duration of the leave.

In other cases of temporary disability, beneficiaries may request the interruption and extension of the performance deadline when the leave is for a period of at least two consecutive months.

Periods of part-time leave for birth, maternity, paternity, adoption, fostering for the purposes of adoption or temporary foster care, and reduced working hours for infant feeding, the birth of a child who is premature or hospitalised after birth, legal guardianship, the care of minors who have cancer or a serious illness, relatives who have had an accident or a serious illness or dependants, or due to gender violence, or reduced working hours for similar situations related to the above and for reasons of work-life balance or the care of minors, relatives or dependants during the term of the contract will cause the contract to be extended for an equivalent amount of time.

#### **4. Termination of the contract**

The predoctoral contract will be terminated at the end of the period set out in the contract or for any other reasons provided for in Article 49 of the Workers' Statute. If the doctoral thesis is defended before the expected end date of the contract, the contract will continue for postdoctoral orientation for a maximum period of 12 months, up to the maximum duration of the contract. If the contract is terminated as a result of a complaint, the party making the complaint must provide a minimum of 15 days' notice of the termination.

Failure to enrol for the doctoral programme in the periods provided for by the University, except during the postdoctoral orientation period, is grounds for termination of the contract.

Termination of the contract also entails the loss of validity of the residence and work permit.

At the end of the contract, the contracted person has the right to receive compensation of an amount equivalent to that provided for fixed-term contracts, as determined in Article 49 of the recast text of the Workers' Statute Law.

If the contract is terminated or the contracted person withdraws during the execution of the grant, the beneficiary may evaluate, select and hire another person, meeting the requirements established in the aforementioned article, the applicable labour legislation and Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March. The period from the termination or withdrawal from the contract and the new person starting work must not exceed three months.

Regardless of whether different people are contracted in the framework of the performance, the maximum duration of the performance is four years and the amount of the grant is stated in Article 14.5 of the call.

#### **5. Rights and obligations of research staff**

##### Rights

- a) The rights outlined in Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation, amended by Law 17/2022, of 5 September (Art. 13, which amends Art. 14), and Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March, on the Statute of Predoctoral Trainee Researchers (Art. 12).

b) To have the appropriate means and facilities for carrying out their duties within the limits arising from the application of the principles of effectiveness and efficiency in the allocation, use and management of these means and facilities by the organisations for which they provide services and within the available budget.

c) To have consideration and respect for their scientific activity and assessment, in accordance with public, objective, transparent and preestablished criteria.

d) To use the name of the entities for which services are provided in the undertaking of their scientific activity.

### Obligations

a) The obligations outlined in Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation, amended by Law 17/2022, of 5 September (Art. 14, which amends Art. 15), and Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March, on the Statute of Predoctoral Trainee Researchers (Art. 13).

b) To align with the priorities of the European Research Area and with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Research Staff (Charter & Code), to promote institutional measures that are aligned with the European initiative of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R), and to promote excellence in research, an attractive work environment and a framework of actions to support the professional development of research staff.

c) To respect the principles set out in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and in Article 11 of Royal Decree 103/2019 and have the rights and duties recognised by current legislation, the UPC's internal regulations and articles 12 and 13 of Royal Decree 103/2019.

d) To notify the organisations for which they provide services of all findings, discoveries and results that may be subject to legal protection, and to collaborate in the protection and transfer of their research results.

e) To participate in meetings and activities of the governing and management bodies of which they form part, and in the processes of assessment and improvement that are required of them.

f) To channel their research towards the achievement of the strategic objectives of the entities to which they provide services and to obtain or collaborate in the processes of obtaining the permits and authorisations that are required before starting their task.

g) To inform the entities to which they provide services or that finance or supervise their activity of potential delays or redefinitions of the research projects for which they are responsible, and of the finalisation of projects, or the need to abandon or halt projects earlier than planned.

h) To enrol each academic year in the UPC doctoral programme throughout the duration of the grant.

i) In all scientific output, and especially in publications arising from it, the affiliation of the interested party to the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya must be stated, in accordance with the provisions of Point 2 of the regulations on the structure of the UPC's research units (CG 6/11 2006) and the institutional affiliation guidelines established by the UPC, with express reference to the call, the granting body (the State Research Agency) and co-financing by the FSE+.

j) To communicate relinquishment of the grant 15 days before the completion date, through a written communication to the Personnel Service.

## 6. Training in university teaching competencies

Trainee researchers can teach up to 180 hours during the term of the predoctoral contract, without exceeding 60 hours per year in any circumstances, in accordance with Article 4.2 of Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March (Statute of Predoctoral Trainee Researchers). They may not be responsible for the subject or for its programming, and the inclusion of their teaching in their CV must be certified by the academic units. If trainee researchers wish to teach they will be financially compensated for it.

## 7. Requirements for candidates

To be admitted to the selection process, candidates must meet the following requirements when they submit their application:

- a) Being enrolled full-time or admitted to a doctoral programme at the UPC for the 2024-2025 academic year at the time of submitting the application. Those who are not enrolled or admitted to a doctoral programme at the time of applying but are able to do so on the date of formalisation of the contract may also apply for this grant.
- b) Not being holders of a doctoral degree.
- c) They must not have received any other grant of a similar nature lasting more than 12 months on the deadline for submitting applications.
- d) Having a thesis supervisor who is a member of the research team of the funded project to which they are attached.

When they formalise the contract, the beneficiaries of the grant must be enrolled in a doctoral programme. They must remain in the programme throughout the duration of the contract, except for the postdoctoral orientation period.

## 8. Applications

The application must be completed by the candidate in accordance with the provisions in the following paragraphs.

Submission of applications:

Candidates may only submit their applications in the UPC e-services portal: [Call for grant applications for predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees](#). They must attach the necessary documents.

In accordance with the provisions in Article 45 of Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on the common administrative procedure of public administrations, the official website within the general website <https://rdi.upc.edu/ca> will be the official means of communication for this call. The instructions and notifications of this call will only be communicated through this official website.

The following documents must be attached to the application:

- a) A copy of a valid Spanish ID card (DNI), foreigner ID card (NIE) or passport. The copy of the passport may only be presented by foreigners who do not reside in Spain. Foreign residents in Spain must provide a copy of the NIE.
- b) If the applicant studied at universities other than the UPC, including those located abroad, they must provide a copy of the personal academic transcript of the courses completed (degrees, bachelor's degrees or master's degrees) stating the grades obtained for each

subject, with the corresponding quantitative marks, the credits taken and the date on which the qualifications were obtained, together with a sworn translation of the same if applicable.

- c) If the applicant studied at a foreign university, the average grade equivalency statement for the bachelor's and master's degrees, using the form of the Ministry ([link](#)).
- d) A curriculum vitae adhering to the CVA template, which is available on the website of the [call](#).
- e) Proof of any degree of disability.

Candidates may make only one application for a single R&D project to which they wish to be assigned.

## 9. Period for submitting applications

You may submit your application from **14 October to 2 p.m. on 27 October 2024 (Barcelona local time)** through the UPC e-services portal using the procedure [Call for grant applications for predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees](#).

If the application is incomplete or is not accompanied by the necessary documents, you will be required to remedy these problems within 10 working days and warned that if you fail to do so, it will be considered that you do not wish to pursue the application, subject to a prior decision that must be issued in the terms provided for in Article 21 of Law 39/2015. This requirement is expressed in the document requirement lists published on the website of the [call](#). Submitted applications cannot be reformulated during the amendment period.

## 10. Admission of candidates

Following the deadline for submission of applications, the provisional list of admitted and excluded candidates and the reasons for the exclusions is published on the official website of the [call](#). Applicants can remedy any defects that led to the exclusion or present any claims they consider appropriate through the corresponding procedure in the UPC e-services portal within the period provided (the amendment procedure). At the end of this period, the definitive list of admitted and excluded applicants will be published on the UPC web page and the [electronic noticeboard](#).

In accordance with the provisions of Article 45 of Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on the common administrative procedure of public administrations, publication on the official website of the [call](#) and the [electronic noticeboard](#) is considered sufficient notification to the candidates.

## 11. Selection process

The grants are awarded through a competitive system, in accordance with the assessment and selection procedures set out in these rules, and with the assessment criteria that are detailed below.

The people who take part in the selection of candidates or in the verification of compliance with the conditions must expressly state that they have no conflict of interest and sign a declaration to this effect in accordance with Article 61.3 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 18 July. If they do have a conflict of interest, the affected persons must refrain from taking part in these actions, in accordance with Article 23 of Law 40/2015, of 1 October, on the legal regime of the public sector.

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria (maximum 100 points):

Assessment criteria	Score
1. The candidate's academic and/or scientific-technical background	0–50

1.1. Scientific and technical contributions	0–45
1.2. Mobility and internationalisation	0–5
2. The candidate's suitability for the research activities that will be carried out in the funded project	0–50

Description of the assessment criteria

### **1. The candidate's academic and/or scientific-technical background**

#### 1.1. Scientific and technical contributions

The candidate's academic record, other curricular merits and their suitability for the tasks to be carried out are assessed on the basis of their training and professional experience.

#### 1.2. Mobility and internationalisation

The relevance and impact on the research career of the candidate's stays in national and international centres and/or in the industrial sector are assessed, taking into account the prestige of the host organisation and of the activity carried out in it.

### **2. The candidate's suitability for the research activities to be carried out**

The suitability of the applicant for the programme, project or research activities to be carried out is assessed on the basis of their previous training and experience. The added value that the completion of the project will represent for their research career and the value provided to the centre and the host researchers will also be taken into account.

If any applications have a tied score, the decision will be made in favour of the application with the highest score in criterion 1; in case of equality, the highest score in criterion 1.1, followed by criterion 1.2 and criterion 2. If the tie continues, it will be decided by drawing lots.

The application with the highest score for each of the projects will be proposed for funding, for each of the grants associated with each research project, as long as the applications have a score equal to or higher than 75 points (out of 100).

When the principal investigator of the project has evaluated the applications in accordance with the established criteria, the candidate shortlist is published on the website for the [call](#). Applicants may present any claims they consider appropriate within 10 working days. During the claims period, no documents that were not submitted before the application submission deadline may be submitted. At the end of the period, once any claims have been resolved, the vice-rector for Research issues the final decision on the call, which includes the list of applicants who have been awarded the grants and the reserve list. This definitive decision is published both on the official UPC website ([call](#)) and the [electronic noticeboard](#).

## **12. Incorporation**

The selected applicants must state whether they accept or reject the grant within five calendar days from the final decision on the awards and submit the necessary documents (a copy of the enrolment for academic supervision on the doctoral programme at the UPC in the 2024-2025 academic year, if they have not submitted it before). Subsequently, the Personnel Service will ask them to present any other additional documents that are necessary to proceed with their recruitment.

If the selected applicants fail to submit the required documents within the established period, it will be understood that they have relinquished the grant.

Non-EU foreigners who are waiting to obtain their residence and work permit and who cannot join the programme on the scheduled date must request an extension of the deadline for joining from the Personnel Service.

If the analysis of the documents presented reveals that there is a falsehood or omission in any of the data entered in the candidate's application, in their identity or in their enrolment in the doctoral

programme, the candidate will lose the right to the grant, which will be awarded to the next person on the candidate shortlist published.

Beneficiaries of the grant must start within three months from the day after the publication of the decision on the web page of the Agency, or they will be considered to have relinquished the grant.

### **13. Intellectual and industrial property rights and dissemination of results**

Grant beneficiaries retain all intellectual property rights, including any industrial property rights, arising from their involvement in research training, in accordance with their contribution, current legislation and the UPC's own regulations:

- Law 17/2022, of 5 September, amending Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation.
- Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March, on the Statute of Predoctoral Trainee Researchers.
- Governing Council Decision CG/2022/05/23, of 5 July 2022, which approved the modification of the UPC's regulations on industrial and intellectual property rights.

### **14. Compatibility**

Receipt of this grant is incompatible with any other employment contract and with receiving any salary-type payment if it harms the research and training purpose of the grant and/or occurs at the same time. It is also incompatible with receipt of any other grants that have a similar purpose.

### **15. Progress report**

The contracted person and the principal investigator of the PID project must submit two scientific and technical progress reports: an interim report and a final report covering the entire period of execution of the grant, including the postdoctoral orientation period if applicable, using the forms provided on the web page of the [call](#). The interim report must be presented between the 20th and the 21st month of implementation of the grant and the final report during the month following the end of the contract. The interim report must be presented between the 20th and the 21st month of implementation of the grant and the final report during the month following the end of the contract.

If the progress report is considered unfavourable, the grant and the contract will be terminated.

If the beneficiaries fail to submit progress reports, they must return any amounts received and not justified.

### **16. Processing of personal data**

In accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 April 2016, on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, which repeals Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), and Organic Law 3/2018, of 5 December, on personal data protection and the safeguarding of digital rights, we inform you that the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) is responsible for processing the personal data contained in the application.

The purpose of the processing of the personal data is to manage this call for applications and its legal basis is the fulfilment of a public-interest mission.

The Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya will not transfer or communicate your personal data, except in the cases provided for by law or when it is necessary for the purpose of processing the data.



The personal data provided will be conserved as long as is needed to fulfil the purpose for which they were collected and to determine any liabilities stemming from them.

Interested parties may exercise the right to data access, rectification, erasure and portability and to restrict or object to processing, as provided for in the prevailing legislation, through the e-services portal: <https://seuelectronica.upc.edu/ca/Tramits> or by writing to the data controller at the postal address C/ Jordi Girona, 31, 08034 Barcelona. If you consider that your rights have not been adequately respected, you may notify the data protection officer at the postal address Plaça Eusebi Güell, 6, Edifici Vèrtex - 08034 Barcelona or by e-mail at [proteccio.dades@upc.edu](mailto:proteccio.dades@upc.edu). Data subjects may also file a complaint with the Catalan Data Protection Authority (APDCAT) on its website.

The Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya will carry out any necessary actions to comply with the principles and duties established in the regulations on the protection of personal data that apply to it. To this end, and in accordance with the aforementioned regulations and laws on administrative procedures, we hereby inform you that identifying details may be published in the call's web portal.

In compliance with current regulations, the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya guarantees that it has adopted the technical and organisational measures necessary to maintain the required level of security, taking into account the nature of the personal data processed.

## **17. Appeals**

The resolution approving the call for grants for predoctoral contracts for doctoral trainees exhausts administrative remedies. Interested parties may file an appeal to the contentious-administrative courts within two months from the day following the notification, without prejudice to the possibility of filing an optional motion for reconsideration to the body that issued it within one month from the day following notification, in accordance with Article 6.4 of Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on Universities (LOU), modified by Organic Law 4/2007, of 12 April, Article 54 of the UPC Statutes (Agreement GOV/43/2012), of 29 May, Article 8.3 of Law 29/1998, of 13 July, regulating administrative litigation jurisdiction, and Article 123 et seq. of Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on the common administrative procedure of public administrations.