



Comisión Nacional de Investigación
Científica y Tecnológica - CONICYT



GEMINI FUND - CONICYT

National Program for the Development of Astronomy and Related Sciences

2012 CALL FOR PROPOSALS GUIDELINES

1. OVERVIEW

This program is developed within the general framework of the "*Scientific Collaboration Agreement to Promote Astronomy Research*", dated October 25th, 1993, and its subsequent modifications, signed by the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT) and the GEMINI Astronomy Consortium, an international cooperation project with participation of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Chile, Australia, Argentina and Brazil.

CONICYT is the beneficiary and administrator of the Fund for the National Development of Chilean Astronomy and Related Sciences.

2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Program aims to contribute to the development of national Astronomy, by means of strengthening research, dissemination, teaching and training of human resources in both observational and theoretical Astronomy and its related sciences at academic institutions throughout Chile.

The related sciences considered, as long as they involve cutting-edge technological developments linked to astronomy observatories in Chile, are: physics, electrical/electronic engineering, software engineering and mechanical engineering.

In general, this program is open to any proposal that may positively impact the development of excellence in national Astronomy and related sciences.

3. APPLICANTS

The following institutions and/or individuals are eligible to apply and receive financial resources in this call for proposals:

- a. **National non-profit institutions**, public or private, which develop or promise to develop work on research, dissemination or teaching in Astronomy, Astrophysics or related sciences, **in partnership with a principal researcher** for the project, who must be tied to the institution. These institutions may include, among others, universities, research institutes or centers and institutions focused on dissemination. Whenever two or more institutions apply together, one of them must be designated as the main institution.
- b. **Principal Researcher with Institutional sponsorship**: researchers or professors holding a doctoral degree or equivalent, sponsored by a higher education institution with research in astronomy, astrophysics or related sciences.
- c. **Principal Researcher without Institutional sponsorship**: holding a doctoral degree in astronomy, astrophysics or related sciences. **In these cases, the**

researcher's application may not request funds to purchase capital assets or equipment.

4. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

Institutional Proposals:

- **Application Form.** The principal researcher in charge of the proposal of the applicant institution must download and complete the application form in Word format, available on CONICYT's web site www.conicyt.cl/, section "Concursos en etapa de postulación" ("Current Calls for Proposals"), "Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales" ("Department of International Affairs"). This form must be attached in PDF format.
- **Electronic Form.** An online form with general background information must also be completed upon submission of the application form.
- Attach in PDF format the **Letter of Sponsorship** of the Associated Institutions, if applicable.
- If the applicant institution intends to hire permanent positions, **a letter of commitment must be written by the legal representative of the respective main Institution or the Faculty Dean, in which he or she ensures the creation of his work position.** This letter must be attached in PDF format.
- **Attach the Curriculum Vitae in PDF format** of principal researcher and of the project execution team (when applicable), including publications from only the last 5 years.
- **Quotations.** For projects that require equipment, the application must include a description of the equipment and any other materials required, including quotations and supporting documentation (attach quotations and documentation in PDF).

Proposal from a Principal Researcher with Institutional Sponsorship

- **Application Form.** The principal researcher must download and complete the application form in Word format, available on CONICYT's web site www.conicyt.cl/, section "Concursos en etapa de postulación" ("Current Calls for Proposals"), "Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales" ("Department of International Affairs"). This form must be attached in PDF format.
- **Electronic Form.** An online form with general background information must also be completed upon submission of the application form.
- Attach the **Curriculum Vitae** in PDF format of principal researcher and of the project execution team (when applicable), including publications from only the last 5 years.
- Attach in PDF format the **Letter of Sponsorship** of the academic institution where the project will be carried out.
- **Quotations.** For projects that require equipment, the application must include a description of the equipment and any other materials required, including quotations and supporting documentation (attach quotations and documentation in PDF).

Proposal of a Principal Researcher without Institutional Sponsorship

- **Application Form.** The individual must download and complete the application form in Word format, available on CONICYT's web site www.conicyt.cl/, section "Concursos en etapa de postulación" ("Current Calls for Proposals"), "Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales" ("Department of International Affairs"). This form must be attached in PDF format.
- **Electronic Form.** An online form with general background information must also be completed upon submission of the application form.
- Attach the **Curriculum Vitae** in PDF format of the applicant researcher and of the project execution team (when applicable), including publications from only the last 5 years.
- Attach the **Postdoctoral Diploma** in PDF format.

The Proposals must be submitted in English. Proposals aimed at educating a general audience and/or disseminating results presented by Institutions or Researchers with or without Institutional Sponsorship, will be exempted from this obligation.

The form and any duly completed annexes should be attached in PDF format.

5. PROJECT DURATION

The proposals must be executed over a period of one to two years. This period will officially begin on the date when the entire administrative act has been carried out approving the corresponding funding agreement.

If the Project requires and requests in its proposal to hire professor and/or postdoctoral fellows, the hiring Institution must send to CONICYT a copy of the contract signed by both parties. In these cases, the project members will need to be hired within a maximum period of one year. Therefore both the agreement and the guarantee of faithful compliance, if any, must be valid for three years in total.

6. FUNDING

6.1. The maximum amount of funding for Institutions, per Project, is **\$38,000,000.- (thirty eight million Chilean Pesos)**, per year of execution.

6.2. The maximum amount of funding for a **Principal Researcher with Institutional Sponsorship**, per applicant and per project, is **\$38,000,000.- (thirty eight million Chilean Pesos)**, per year of execution.

6.3. The maximum amount of funding for a **Principal Researcher without Institutional Sponsorship**, per applicant and per project, is **\$38,000,000.- (thirty eight million Chilean Pesos)**, per year of execution. The **Principal Researcher without Institutional Sponsorship may not request funds to purchase capital assets or equipment.**

6.4. Taking into consideration the maximum funds mentioned above, whenever high-level Chilean or foreign researchers join a national university, the Fund may collaborate by co-funding the position with up to **\$19,000,000.- (nineteen million Chilean Pesos)** during the first year, and **\$9,500,000.- (nine million five hundred thousand Chilean Pesos)** in the second year. This is based on the assumption that the academic center has institutional financial support to fill an additional permanent position.

6.5. Taking into consideration the maximum funds mentioned above, whenever Chilean or foreign astronomers join a national university with postdoctoral positions, a maximum of **\$17,000,000.- (seventeen million Chilean Pesos)** of their salaries and a maximum of **\$2,400,000.- (two million four hundred thousand Chilean Pesos)** of their associated expenses may be covered by the fund. Priority shall be given to postdoctoral fellows that use GEMINI telescopes.

6.6. Only national institutions can apply for proposals that consider the hiring of academics and postdoctoral researchers.

6.7. Budget items that must be declared:

- a. Personnel: hiring researchers, postdoctoral fellows, funding for thesis students, master or doctoral students with scholarships and technical personnel.
- b. Trips: per diems and travel tickets.

- c. Operational Expenses:
 - Minor computer supplies – magazine subscriptions – office supplies and minor expenses.
 - Attendance to national or international congresses or events up to a maximum amount of \$15,000,000.- (fifteen million Chilean Pesos).
- d. Capital Assets: purchase of duly justified equipment.

7. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

- 7.1. Proposals that do not meet all of the terms and conditions established in these guidelines, as well as those that do not submit all of the required documents, will be automatically disqualified and will not continue on to the evaluation process.
- 7.2. **Technical Evaluation:** The evaluation of the proposals will be performed by external evaluators appointed by CONICYT.
- 7.3. **The GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council**, created by Resolution No. 1839, of November 9th, 2006, headed by the President of CONICYT and made up of CONICYT representatives, astronomers of the Chilean community, a representative of the GEMINI International Astronomy Consortium, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a representative of the Ministry of Public Finance, will be the organization responsible for recommending to CONICYT –based on the technical evaluations of the proposals- the beneficiaries, budget allocation and duration of the winning proposals. This Council may also modify the requested budget allocation and the duration of the projects in its recommendations to CONICYT.
- 7.4. The following factors will be considered by both the external and Council evaluations:

Criteria	Weighting
1. Quality and relevance of the proposal.	50%
2. Consistency between the objectives and the amounts requested by the proposal.	10%
3. Academic excellence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Of the main institution applying, if the proposal seeks to support postgraduate students; b) Academic experience of the principal researcher of the project and the project execution team. 	20%
4. Impact result of the proposal.	20%

Each evaluation criteria may be assigned a score from 0 to 5. It is allowed to use half points but not lesser fractions. In general, the approval threshold is estimated at three points.

The score guidelines are the following:

0. Does not qualify	The proposal does not qualify/or deal with the criterion under analysis or cannot be evaluated due to the lack of background information or to incomplete information.
1. Inadequate	The proposal does not qualify/or deal with the aspects of the criterion or presents serious inherent deficiencies.
2. Regular	The proposal does qualify/or deal in general terms with the aspects of the criterion, but there are important deficiencies.
3. Good	The proposal does qualify/or deal correctly with the aspects of the

	criteria although it requires certain improvements.
4. Very Good	The proposal does qualify/or deal with the aspects of the criterion in a very good way, even though some improvements are possible.
5. Excellent	The proposal does qualify/or deal in an outstanding manner with the aspects relevant to the criterion. Any weakness is minor.

- 7.5. The final approval score of the Project will correspond to an average of the scores given by the external evaluators, which will weigh 30% of the final score, as well as that given by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council, which will represent the remaining 70%.
- 7.6. **Ruling Resolution:** CONICYT, through the corresponding administrative act, will approve the ruling and will award the funds, based on the recommendations made by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council.
- 7.7. The ruling may include a waiting list, if deemed appropriate by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council. Whenever a winner forfeits his or her right to the funds or is unable to make use of them, this waiting list may be applied, in strict order of scores, according to the number of vacancies that open up. The waiting list will also be effective, according to CONICYT's budget availability. If there is a waiting list, the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council will determine the minimum score to be part of it.

8. RESULTS OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Once the final decision has been made, the results will be published on CONICYT's website, where the waiting list will also be included if it exists. The results of the call for proposals will be notified, additionally, via certified mail to all applicants. If the waiting list is used, the beneficiary(ies) will be notified via certified mail.

9. OBLIGATIONS OF THE BENEFICIARY

9.1. Submission of documents.

From the date of reception of the notification letter, mentioned under section 8, the Institution and/or principal researcher with or without Institutional Sponsorship of the winning proposal, will have up to **28 calendar days (4 weeks)** to submit all documents requested by CONICYT, that are required in order to sign the agreements between CONICYT and the institution or beneficiary of the proposals. **If these documents are not received within the established time frame, CONICYT will not provide the funds.**

- 9.2. The institutions that win the call for proposals, must present a certificate of inscription in the registry of collaborators of the State and Municipalities as an annex to the agreement signed by both parties. This is a mandatory requirement for CONICYT to be able to transfer the resources, as established under law N° 19862 dated August 2nd, 2003.

9.3. Performance Bonds:

9.3.1. Applicant institutions that are not part of the State administration at the time of signing the agreement with CONICYT will guarantee the proper use and administration of the funds, as established in the agreement clauses, by presenting a performance bond, an endorsable promissory note or an insurance policy of immediate execution. The GEMINI-CONICYT Fund shall provide an additional 3% calculated from the total approved budget amount to finance this guarantee, which must be valid until 90 days after the expiration of the agreement with CONICYT.

- 9.3.2. Principal researchers with or without institutional sponsorship, must present a Promissory Note with Special Mandate, in favor of CONICYT, at the moment of signing the agreement. This will allow CONICYT, in the event of non-compliance of the obligations contracted, to fill out the corresponding information on the amount owed, according to the calculations made by CONICYT and according to what is set forth in the respective agreements. For all legal effects derived from this instrument, the place of domicile will be the "comuna" ("county") and city of Santiago, extending the jurisdiction of their courts. The real address of the debtor must also be included.
- 9.4. **Hires.**
For projects that intend to hire postdoctoral fellows or permanent professors, the beneficiary Institution must announce the call for applicants through a national and international medium, within the three months following the signature of the agreement and must inform the Department of International Affairs of CONICYT.
- 9.5. **Submission of Scientific-Technical Reports.**
- 9.5.1. The applicant institution and/or the principal researcher with or without institutional sponsorship that receive the benefit, must submit to the Department of International Affairs of CONICYT a technical-scientific report for each year of execution of the project, counting from the date of the resolution approving the agreement for the grant.
- 9.5.2. The **report** must address the progress or results of the Project, including a description of the activities performed and emphasizing on the results obtained during the period.
- 9.5.3. In addition, **a technical-scientific report must be submitted on October 30th each year, regardless of the actual time the project has been in execution.**
Projects to hire postdoctoral astronomers will also need to submit a publication in mainstream journals (ISI indicator), along with the final report, at the end of the project.
- 9.6. **Statements of Expenses.**
- 9.6.1. The beneficiary must save all of the original documents that support the expenses paid with the funds transferred within the framework of this call for proposals. These documents must be available every time that CONICYT requests them with the aim of supervising the proper use of the funds. A statement of expenses must be submitted to CONICYT with the original documents, according to the procedures indicated in the agreement.
The original documents that make up the statement of expenses will be returned to the beneficiary upon their revision.
- 9.6.2. **The statement of expenses must be submitted at the end of one year from the date of the resolution that approves the agreement and must cover 100% of the transferred resources.**
- 9.6.3. In the event that a document was reported and/or declared in more than one program or more than once to CONICYT, this institution reserves the right to execute the anticipated termination, *ipso facto*, of the projects involved and request the total or partial restitution of the transferred resources. If the transferred resources are used for purposes other than those indicated in the project, they must be reimbursed to CONICYT.

- 9.6.4. The payment of second installments will depend on the approval of the statement of expenses, covering 100% of the transferred funds, and on the budget availability of CONICYT.
- 9.6.5. In addition, a progress report of the expenses carried out must be submitted through an online system of declaration of expenses, which must be updated regularly.
- 9.6.6. It is strictly forbidden to invest the funds transferred for the development of the Project in financial instruments (be they short or long term, of fixed or variable return). Should this be the case, CONICYT will unilaterally and immediately terminate the project.

9.7. **Acknowledgement.**

The contribution provided by the GEMINI-CONICYT FUND must be acknowledged in all of the activities funded by it, such as the scientific publications and reports (articles in specialized journals, theses, papers, etc.) and in dissemination materials, in accordance with the following suggested text: *"This work was made possible by contributions from the GEMINI-CONICYT FUND Project N°..."*. Whenever equipment is purchased, it will need to have a plaque indicating the number of the project and that the source of the contribution was the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund.

10. TRANSFER OF FUNDS

- 10.1. CONICYT will transfer funds in annual installments, at the beginning of each year of execution of the project, as long as the following conditions are fulfilled:
 - Full completion of the administrative act that approves the agreement.
 - Budget availability of CONICYT.
 - **For non-State Institutions:** the submission of a performance bond by the beneficiary main institution, to ensure proper use of the funds allocated, in accordance with clause 9.3.1 of these guidelines.
 - **For principal researchers with or without institutional sponsorship:** the submission of a Promissory Note and Special Mandate signed by the researcher, in accordance with clause 9.3.2 of these guidelines.
 - In order to receive second-year installments, the submission and approval of the technical-scientific report.
 - Before receiving any new transfers, the total amount of the funds previously provided must be settled, that is, 100% of the transferred funds.
- 10.2. In the case of applications from institutions, the requesting institution will be the direct beneficiary of the resources. The beneficiary institution must have an exclusive checking account, or an exclusive cost center (exclusive budget account) to manage the incomes and expenses related to the project.
- 10.3. If the beneficiaries are principal researchers with or without institutional sponsorship, the direct beneficiary of the resources will be the principal researcher. By the end of the Project, the principal researcher must transfer all purchases made to the Sponsoring Institution.
- 10.4. The funds transferred to the beneficiaries will be governed, in any regard, by Resolution N° 759/2003 of the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic.
- 10.5. No indemnities shall be paid (for lack of prior notice, annual holiday or vacations and for years of service, etc.) with funds of the project.

11. MODIFICATIONS TO THE PROJECT

The Department of International Affairs may authorize justified modifications to the Project as per request of the principal researcher, including modifications in the execution periods of the project, with prior approval by the members of the Council. The modification will be made official through the respective administrative act of CONICYT, even if CONICYT considers necessary to modify the agreement.

12. COMPLETION OF THE PROJECTS

The final report and the last statement of expenses must be presented within the 30 days following the date of project completion, in accordance to the date of the resolution that approves the respective agreement, and they must be approved by CONICYT.

Projects will be considered as completed when they have fulfilled their objectives and expected results to CONICYT's satisfaction and the final report and statement of expenses have been approved.

13. RESTRICTIONS

- 13.1. Individuals or institutions that have debts or other obligations or contractual commitments pending with CONICYT may not be beneficiaries of a project of this call for proposals.
- 13.2. Members of the GEMINI-CONICYT Council may not apply.
- 13.3. No late applications will be accepted.

14. COMPLIANCE AND INTERPRETATION OF GUIDELINES

- 14.1. CONICYT reserves the right to interpret the meaning and scope of these guidelines in the event that questions or concerns arise with regards to their content and application.
- 14.2. CONICYT may, at any time, before the signing of and during the execution of the respective agreements, verify total compliance with these guidelines and, more specifically, that the background information and required supporting documents of the applications submitted to the present call for proposals is exact and complete. Should any incongruities, omissions and/or incompatibilities be detected, CONICYT will render the grant ineffective or may prematurely terminate the agreement.
- 14.3. The background information provided by applicants will not be returned to them.

15. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The deadline for uploading proposals online on the website <http://spl.conicyt.cl> will close automatically on **May 07, 2012, at 12:00 p.m.**

For more information about calls for proposals and winning projects of previous years, please visit <http://www.conicyt.cl/573/propertyvalue-2183.html>.

To request further information, please send an e-mail to: www.conicyt.cl/oirs

Santiago, March 2012.