



ALMA FUND

For the development of Chilean astronomy

CALL OF APPLICATIONS 2009

1. OVERVIEW

This program is developed within the general frame of the “Agreement of Scientific Collaboration for the Development of Chilean Astronomical Research”, of October 28, 2003 and its subsequent modifications, between the Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica (CONICYT) and the European Southern Observatory (ESO), the Associated Universities Inc. (AUI), and the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ), executive organisms for the construction and operation of the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA).

The agreement establishes the creation of a fund for the development of the Chilean astronomy, which is to be administered by CONICYT in consultation with a Mixed Committee formed, in equal parts, by Chilean members and Alma’s executives.

2. PROGRAM GOALS

The Program is destined to support the development of the Chilean Astronomy and its preparation for the best use of ALMA. This support may include, for example, hiring new professors, post doctorates and technicians; development and reinforcement of curriculum of postgraduates programs; initiatives of theoretical or technological nature, without exclusion of other initiatives of development of the national astronomy for which may be difficult to find alternative financing sources.

3. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals may be presented by non-profit public or private, national institutions developing or committed to develop astronomical research, Astronomy teaching, Astrophysics and/or astronomical instrumentation.

Proposals must be presented by the above mentioned institutions duly represented, and for the principal investigator of the project.

4. FUNDING

The maximum financing limit for Project is USD 100,000 (one hundred thousand U.S. dollars) per year of execution. A same institution is allowed to present more than one project.

5. DURATION OF PROJECTS

The projects proposed must be developed in a period not less than one year and not longer than two years.

6. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- Description of the Project in the form of postulation available in the Web site of CONICYT www.conicyt.cl/astronomia.
- Letter of Commitment of the proposing Institution. For the hiring of fixed positions the letter must be of the director or dean and should assure the continuity of its position.
- Curriculum Vitae of the Project Coordinator and the executing team, that includes only publications of the last five years.
- In case of joint presentations, identification of the corresponding institutions taking part and their respective letters of commitment.
- In those projects that use equipment, include a description of it and materials required, including quotation and backing documents.

7. DELIVERY OF DOCUMENTATION

Applications must be submitted in www.conicyt.cl/astronomia . In this site the applicant must complete an electronic background formulary and then upload the application form, available on the same site, with the description of your project in pdf.

Proposals must be submitted in English.

Proposals that do not fulfill all the specifications given in these bases and the forms identified, will not be accepted; the failure of these, shall be a reason for declaring a candidacy out of the bases.

8. APPLICATION DEADLINE

The date to submit the on-line applications is due on **Friday May 15, 2009**; automatically closes at 12:00 hrs.

9. EVALUATION, PRE-SELECTION AND AWARDS

The merit and relevancy evaluation of projects and of the suitability of its proponents will be done by external assessors designated by the ALMA-CONICYT Fund Committee. The principal factors to consider in the evaluation, in order of priority, are:

- Quality and relevancy of the proposal.
- Consistency between the objective goals and the requested funds in the proposal
- Academic quality of the applicant university unit.
- Academic trajectory of the responsible researcher and of the executive team.
- Ability to support the actions in time, beyond the financial support requested.

The ALMA-CONICYT Fund Committee, headed by the President of CONICYT, and composed of two astronomers of the Chilean Community appointed by CONICYT, four representatives designated by the executive entities of the ALMA Project and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will be the collegiate organ entrusted to check the evaluations of the proposals, and to choose the proposals to be awarded funding; and to modify –if necessary- the budgetary requested allocations and/or the time for execution.

CONICYT will issue the selection resolution based on the propositions made by the ALMA-CONICYT Fund Committee

10. NOTIFICATION

Once the contest results have been decided, they will be published on the Web page of CONICYT. It will also be informed by mail to the selected applicants.

11. AGREEMENTS

Since the date mentioned in the letter of notification of approval of the proposals, the researchers and sponsors of the projects will have a **period of 28 days** to deliver all the documentation requested by CONICYT, necessary to sign the agreements that will establish rights and obligations of the parts, between CONICYT and the beneficiaries of the proposals. **Not receiving the documentation within the prescribed period, will mean the lose of the funding by the institution.**

The direct beneficiary of the funds will be the applicant institution, which should submit and administer the corresponding bond of indemnity according to the clauses of the agreement. Furthermore, the institution should provide a physical space and contribute with infrastructure, personnel and support in all possible ways for the successful attainment of the project. Also, CONICYT will consider to the institution responsible of the opportune delivery of the advance's reports and the completion report of the project execution, as well as submitting the corresponding expenses and caution of the transferred funds.

12. TRANSFERS

The transference of funds from CONICYT will be subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions:

- 12.1 Entire processing of the resolution that approves the agreements;
- 12.2 Delivery to CONICYT of the corresponding guarantee(s): bank guarantee, bearer promissory note or insurance policy of immediate execution, or equivalent document, for whose financing the ALMA-CONICYT Fund will provide an additional 3%, calculated on the total fund of the approved budget.
- 12.3 Delivery and approval of the expenses accounts and technical reports of the projects, which period will be established in the agreements, and
- 12.4 CONICYT availability of funds.

13. PROJECTS COMPLETION

A project will be considered completed when the objectives and results have been fulfilled to satisfaction of CONICYT, the final report and the expenses account have been approved.

14. RESTRICTIONS

It is expressly established that the natural or juridical persons who maintain debts or other contractual obligations with CONICYT will not be able to apply and/or to take part in the present call for proposals.

Santiago, February, 2009