



GEMINI FUND
National Program for the Development of Astronomy and Related Sciences
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2009

1. OVERVIEW

This program is developed within the general scope of the "Agreement on Scientific Cooperation for the Development of Chilean Astronomical Research" dated October 25, 1993 between the "Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica" [National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research] (CONICYT) and the "Consorcio Astronómico" GEMINI [GEMINI International Astronomical Consortium], a project of international cooperation with the participation of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Chile, Australia, Argentina and Brazil.

CONICYT is the beneficiary and manager of the "Fondo para el Desarrollo Nacional de la Astronomía Chilena y Ciencias Afines" [National Fund for the Development of Chilean Astronomy and Related Sciences].

2. PROGRAM GOALS

The Program has been devised to contribute to the development of national astronomy. It is sought to encourage research, teaching and training of human resources in astronomy, both on an observational and theoretical basis, and in related sciences in academic institutions throughout Chile. The related sciences that have been contemplated, which should involve cutting-edge technological developments related with the astronomical observatories in Chile, are: physics, electric/electronic engineering, software engineering and mechanical engineering. The program is open for receiving any proposal that may have a positive impact on the development of excellence on national astronomy and related sciences.

3. REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION

The following institutions and/or persons may file proposals and receive financial resources for this call:

- a. Non-profit, public or private national legal entities that develop or undertake to develop research or teaching work on astronomy or related sciences. They include, among others, universities and research centers and institutes. For the

case of joint applications between two or more institutions, one of them must be designated as the main institution; or

- b. Individuals: researchers or faculty of national universities.

4. FUNDING

The maximum funding limit for legal entities per project is **USD 100,000**, per year of execution, and for the case of individuals, the financing limit per applicant and per project is **USD 20,000** per year of execution.

5. LINES OF ACTION

The resources contributed by the Fund may be used to finance one or more of the following action lines:

1. Initiatives to disseminate astronomy in teaching programs in regional universities: Master classes on astronomy delivered to the entire university community by renowned Chilean or foreign astronomers, etc. The successful bids will preferably be those involving lectures in two or more national institutions.
2. Organization of congresses, seminars and specialized courses with the participation of renowned foreign scholars.
3. Institutional proposals that make use of opportunities offered by international observatories for the development of Engineering in connection with Instrumentation, Experimental Astronomy and Virtual Observatory in Chile.
4. Sabbatical internships (between 6 months and 1 year) of foreign faculty in national universities with postgraduate programs for the development of joint projects of research, to consolidate those postgraduate programs.
5. Sabbatical internships (between 6 months and 1 year) of Chilean faculty in foreign institutions for the development of joint projects of investigation.
6. Research visits (up to 6 months) of astronomers from Chilean universities with postgraduate programs to take place in national universities that do not have courses of study in astronomy, with the purpose of delivering lectures, seminars, participate in courses, in teaching programs, and in general, to share experiences in the areas of research and teaching.
7. Insertion of high-level, Chilean or foreign "senior" researchers in national universities. This implies that the academic unit has the institutional support to fill an additional position. The Fund may assist in co-financing the position with an amount maximum up to USD 40,000 per annum, the first year and of USD20.000 in the second year.

8. Post-doctorate positions in national universities for Chilean or foreign astronomers, for maximum amount up to USD 25,000 in annual fees and up to USD 5,000 for associated expenses. Priority will be given to postdoctorates using the Gemini Telescopes.
9. Purchase of minor scientific equipment, software and bibliography, and support to accepted publications in ISI journals or mainstream alike.
10. Provision of minor infrastructure.
11. Grants for students to be applied exclusively by national universities.
 - a) Master or doctorate grants for Chilean and foreign students starting their studies for a period of up to two years.
 - b) Support grants for performing doctoral theses, for Chilean and foreign students for a period of up to three years.

The proposals should be developed in an annual period of time with a maximum of two years, except for those including doctoral theses grants.

6. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

National institutions:

- Description of the project on the application form available at www.conicyt.cl/astronomia
- Resume of the project coordinator and executive team, including only the publications of the last 5 years.
- In the case of joint presentations, identification of the participating institutions..
- For projects that require equipment, include a description of them and the required materials, including quotations and supporting documentation.
- Letter of commitment and sponsorship of the applicant institution. For recruitment of "seniors" researchers in permanent positions that must have a letter of the Rector or Dean, that ensures continuity of their office.

Proposals for Individuals:

- Filled application form (attached).
- Resume, as per the attached guideline.
- For the case of an internship or research visit in Chile or abroad, a letter of support from the academic institution and/or research institution where the internship and/or visit will be conducted; and a letter from the institution to which the researcher is certifying his sabbatical period.

7. DELIVERY OF DOCUMENTATION:

Applications must be entered in www.conicyt.cl/astronomia. The site must complete an electronic background 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 meet all the specifications laid down in these bases and in the attached forms will not be accept; the failure of these shall be grounds for declaring a candidacy out of the bases.

8. APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline for submission of proposals expires on Thursday, April 30, 2008 at 15:00 hrs.

9. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The evaluation of proposals will be conducted by external evaluators appointed by CONICYT. The main factors to consider in the evaluation, in order of priority are:

- Quality and relevance of the proposal, either in the field of research or teaching or both.
- Consistency between the objectives and the required amounts in the proposal.
- Academic quality of the applicant university unit.
- Academic background of the project's coordinator and of the executing team.
- Priority of the teaching and research lines for the university.
- Ability to maintain actions through time, beyond the requested financial support.

The decision on the successful applications will be made by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund's Board, lead by the President of CONICYT, and comprised of representatives of CONICYT, astronomers of the Chilean community, a representative of the GEMINI International Astronomical Consortium, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a representative of the Ministry of Finance, based on the evaluation of the proposals by a team of external specialists evaluators.

The GEMINI-CONICYT Fund's Board reserves the right to reduce the budgets to be assigned and the duration of the projects.

CONICYT will pass the resolution that approves the decision and the chosen proposals.

10. NOTIFICATION

Once the contest process results have been decided, the final outcome will be posted on CONICYT's Web Site. Additionally, the successful participants will be notified by mail.

12. 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 4 weeks or 28 days to deliver all the documentation requested by CONICYT, necessary for the signing of agreements between CONICYT and the beneficiaries of the proposals. Not receiving the documentation within the prescribed period, will cause the institution to lose the funding.

In the case of institutional applications, the applicant institution will be the direct beneficiary of the resources, who must deliver security for the faithful use of resources and manage them as the terms have been specified in the agreement. Likewise, it must provide a physical space and contribution in infrastructure, personnel and support in all possible ways for the successful execution of the project, to achieve success. At the same time will also be responsible towards CONICYT for the timely delivery of both progress reports and final reports concerning the project under execution as well as for the respective reports of expenses and the custody of the transferred resources.

For the case of individuals, an agreement will be signed between CONICYT and the researcher; that establishes the term, and all those clauses that safeguard the purposes of this Contest.

12. TRANSFERS

The transfers of funds by CONICYT shall be subject to the compliance with the following conditions:

1. Entire processing of the resolution approving the agreements;
2. Delivery to CONICYT of the respective guarantee(s), insurance policy of immediate execution or bank guarantee card (immediately executable insurance or bank bond)

funding for which the Fund GEMINI-CONICYT will deliver an additional 3% calculated on the total amount of approved budget

3. Delivery and approval of the rendering on accounts and technical reports of the projects, the deadlines for which will be set forth in the agreements, and
4. Availability of resources by CONICYT.

13. COMPLETION OF THE PROJECTS

A project will be rendered as completed when its goals and undertaken outcomes have been complied at CONICYT's satisfaction and the final report and the rendering of accounts have been approved.

14. RESTRICTIONS

Those researchers who currently have any pending situations with CONICYT, rising from defaults in previously funded projects, including ALMA projects, may not apply in this invitation to tender.

CONICYT reserves the right to interpret the sense and extent of these terms and conditions in case any doubts or conflicts should rise with regard to their content and application.

For further information, please contact CONICYT's Astronomy Program at (562) 435-4343 or email: areyes@conicyt.cl

Santiago, March, 2009