



GEMINI FUND
National Program for the Development of Astronomy and Related Sciences
CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2010

1. OVERVIEW

The GEMINI program is framed within the “Scientific Collaboration Agreement to Promote Astronomy Research”, signed on October 25, 2003, and its subsequent modifications, by the Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica (CONICYT) and the GEMINI Astronomy Consortium, an international collaboration project with participation from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Chile, Australia and Brazil. European Southern Observatory (ESO), the Associated Universities, Inc. (AUI), and the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ), executive organizations involved in the construction and operation of the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA).

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

2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Program is designed to contribute to the development of national astronomy. It is aimed at strengthening research, teaching and training of human resources in the area of both observational and theoretical astronomy, and in related sciences at academic institutions throughout Chile.

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

The 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 for presenting proposals and receiving financial resources in this call for proposals:

- a. **National non-profit institutions**, public or private, that perform or promise to perform research work or teaching in the area of astronomy or related sciences, **in conjunction with a lead researcher** for the project, who must have ties to the

institution. These may include, among others, universities, institutes or research centers. When two or more universities apply together, one of them must be designated the principal institution.

- b. **Individuals:** researchers or academics from national universities.

4. PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS

Institutional Proposals:

- **Application Form.** The applicant must complete the application form available on the Conicyt website www.conicyt.cl/astro, in the Section “Concursos de Astronomía” (“Astronomy Calls for Proposals”), and “Concursos en período de postulación” (“Current Calls for Proposals”).
- **Electronic Form.** When sending the Application form, each applicant must also complete an electronic form with the general information regarding the institution and the proposed research project*.
- **Letter of commitment** from the associated institutions, when applicable.
- For the hiring of permanent positions, a letter must be written by the legal representative of the respective principal institution or the Faculty Dean, in which he or she ensures the continuity of his work position.
- **Curriculum Vitae** of the lead researcher and the project execution team (when applicable), including publications from only the last 5 years.
- **Price Quotes.** In projects that require equipment, include a description of the equipment and any other materials required, including price quotes and supporting documentation.

Individual Proposals:

- **Application Form.** The applicant must complete the application form available on the CONICYT website www.conicyt.cl/astro, in the Section “Concursos de Astronomía” (“Astronomy Calls for Proposals”), and “Concursos en período de postulación” (“Current Calls for Proposals”).
- **Electronic Form.** When sending the Application form, each applicant must also complete an electronic form with the general information regarding the institution and the proposed research project*.
- **Curriculum Vitae** of the principal researcher and the project execution team (if applicable), including publications from only the last 5 years.

* An application guide can be found on the above website.

- **Letters of support and certification.** For research sabbaticals or stays within Chile or abroad, a letter of support from the academic and/or research institution where the sabbatical and/or stay will be carried out, and a letter from the institution to which the researcher belongs, certifying the sabbatical period.

Proposals must be submitted in English. Proposals related to educating the general public and/or disseminating results shall be exempted from this obligation.

The form and any additional attachments should be attached preferably in pdf format.

5. PROJECT DURATION

The proposals must be executed over a period of one year to two years. This period will officially begin on the date of signing of the Resolution to approve the financing agreement.

6. FINANCING

- 6.1. The maximum amount of financing for institutions per Project is **US\$80,000.-** (eighty thousand US Dollars), per year of execution.
- 6.2. The maximum amount of financing for individuals per applicant and per project is **US\$20,000.-** (twenty thousand US Dollars) per year of execution.
- 6.3. In the case of hiring high-level Chilean or foreign senior researchers to work at national universities, the Fund may provide co-financing for the position of up to **US\$40,000.-** (forty thousand US Dollars) during the first year and **US\$20,000.-** (twenty thousand US Dollars) during the second. This assumes that the academic unit will have the institutional financial support to fill an additional position.
- 6.4. With regards to post-doctoral positions at national universities for Chilean or foreign astronomers, the fund may finance a maximum annual amount of **US\$36,000.-** (thirty-six thousand US Dollars) under the concept of salary, and up to **US\$5,000.-** (five thousand US Dollars) for associated costs. Priority shall be given to post-doctorate candidate that use GEMINI telescopes.

7. LINES OF ACTION

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

1. Initiatives to promote astronomy in teaching programs at regional universities: master's courses in astronomy directed towards the entire university community and taught by distinguished Chilean or foreign astronomers, etc. Preference shall be given to proposals that involve informative talks at two or more national institutions.

2. Organization of congresses, seminars and specialized courses with the participation of distinguished foreign professors.
3. Institutional proposals that take advantage of opportunities offered by international observatories to develop Engineering in the area of Instrumentation, Experimental Astronomy or Virtual Observatories in Chile.
4. Sabbaticals (between 6 months and one year) of foreign academics at national universities with graduate programs, in order to develop joint research projects and consolidate these graduate programs.
5. Financial supplement for sabbaticals (between 6 months and one year) of national academics at foreign universities, in order to develop joint research projects.
6. Research stays (up to 6 months) of astronomers from Chilean universities with graduate programs, at national universities without programs of study in astronomy, with the objective of holding conferences, seminars, participating in courses, in teaching programs, and, in general, to share experiences in the area of research and teaching.
7. Purchase of minor scientific equipment, software and bibliography, and support for accepted publications in ISI or mainstream magazines.
8. Provision of minor infrastructure.
9. Scholarships for students, to be requested exclusively by national universities.
 - a) Master's or Doctoral scholarships for Chilean and foreign students that will begin their studies for a period of up to two years.
 - b) Supplementary scholarships for Chilean and foreign students while writing their dissertations, for a period of up to three years.

8. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

- 8.1. Proposals that do not meet all of the specifications established in the present terms and conditions, including those that do not submit all of the required documents, shall be automatically disqualified and will not continue on to the evaluation process.
- 8.2. **Technical Evaluation.** The evaluation of the proposals shall be performed by external evaluators named by CONICYT. The main factors to consider in the evaluation, in order of importance, shall be:
 - Quality and relevance of the proposal.
 - Consistency between the objectives and the amounts required by the proposal.
 - Academic excellence of the applicant university.
 - Academic experience and career path of the project coordinator and the project execution team.
 - Priority given to the lines of teaching and research for the university.

- Sustainability of activities over time, beyond the financial support requested.

8.3. **The GEMINI-CONICYT Council**, created by Resolution No. 2166 of July 28, 2009, governed by the President of CONICYT and made up of CONICYT representatives, Chilean astronomers, a representative of the GEMINI International Astronomy Consortium, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a representative of the Ministry of Finance, shall be the organism responsible for suggesting to CONICYT –based on the technical proposal evaluations- the beneficiaries, financial allotment and duration of the winning proposals. Said Council may, at the same time, modify the requested budget allotment and the duration of the projects in their proposals to CONICYT.

8.4. Ruling Resolution: **CONICYT, via the corresponding administrative act, shall approve the ruling and decide the competition winner, based on the proposal made by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council.**

9. FINAL RESULTS

Once the final decision has been made, the results shall be published on the CONICYT website.

Additionally, the winning applicants shall be notified by mail.

10. WINNER OBLIGATIONS

10.1. **Submission of documentation.** From the date specified on proposal approval notification letter, mentioned in the previous section, the institution and/or researcher of the winning proposal, as is the case, shall have up **28 calendar days (4 weeks)** to provide all documentation requested by CONICYT, as needed for the signing of the agreement between CONICYT and the proposal beneficiaries. **If this documentation is not received within the time period established, CONICYT will render the prize ineffective.**

10.2. For institutional proposals, the applicant institution shall be the direct recipient of resources assigned for hiring, who at the time of signing the agreement with CONICYT shall guarantee the correct spending of the funds and their administration as established in the agreement clauses, in the form of a bank guarantee, an endorsable promissory note or an insurance policy of immediate execution or other type of guarantee of easy execution. To finance this guarantee, the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund shall provide an additional 3% of the total approved budget amount. This guarantee must remain valid for a minimum period of 15 months, starting from 30 days following the date of the signing of the agreement.

- 10.3. For individual proposals, the signed agreement between CONICYT and the lead researcher shall establish the term of effectiveness and all clauses that will ensure that the objectives of this Grant Competition are met. The winning researcher must submit a special mandate at the time of signing the agreement, in favor of CONICYT. In the event of non-compliance of the obligations associated with the project financing agreement, CONICYT may expressly carry out the actions set forth in the attached document "Special Mandate".
- 10.4. **Hirings.** Proposals that involve the hiring of post-doctorates or permanent professors must include a national and international call for applicants, which shall be informed to the Astronomy program within the three months following the signing of the agreement.
- 10.5. **Submission of Reports.** Each year the Lead Researcher shall submit to the CONICYT Astronomy Program a technical-scientific report and a financial report, counting from the date of the resolution approving the agreement. The technical-scientific report shall discuss the progress or results of the Project (including a description of the activities performed and, especially, the results obtained during the period), and the financial report must provide information on the expenses incurred to date. To this effect, an online expense declaration program shall be used, which must be updated regularly.
- 10.6. **Recognition.** The contribution provided by the GEMINI-CONICYT FUND must be recognized in all events financed by these funds, as well as in publications and scientific reports (articles in specialized magazines, theses, etc.), dissemination materials and scientific equipment, in accordance with the following suggested text: *This work was made possible by contributions from the GEMINI-CONICYT FUND Project No..."*

11. TRANSFER OF FUNDS AND GUARANTEES

The transfer of funds by CONICYT shall be made in annual installments, at the beginning of each year of execution of the project, and shall be subject to compliance with the following conditions:

- Full completion of the resolution to approve the agreement;
- Availability of CONICYT funds.
- **For Institutions,** the submission of a guarantee by the winning principal institution, to ensure appropriate spending of the allotted funds, in accordance with number 10.2. of the present terms and conditions.
- **For individuals,** the submission of a Mandate signed by the lead researcher.
- For the payment of second installments, the submission and approval of the technical-scientific report and the financial report of the projects.

12. PROJECT COMPLETION

The final report and last accounting report, must be presented within the 30 days following the date of project completion, as established in the respective agreement, and these must be approved by CONICYT.

Projects shall be considered to be completed when they have proven to CONICYT that they have satisfactorily met the objectives and expected results, and the final technical and expense reports have been approved and the respective settlement has been signed.

13. RESTRICTIONS

13.1. Individuals or institutions that have debt or other obligations or contractual commitments pending with CONICYT, may under no circumstances participate in the present grant competition.

13.2. Members of the ALMA-CONICYT Fund Committee at the time of application shall also be excluded from participating.

13.3. No late applications will be accepted.

14. COMPLIANCE AND INTERPRETATION OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

14.1. CONICYT reserves the right to interpret the meaning and scope of the present terms and conditions in the event that questions or concerns arise with regards to 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 the present terms and conditions and, more specifically, the exactness and completeness of the background information presented in the applications submitted to the present grant competition, and in relation to the support of required documentation. If incongruities, omissions and/or incompatibilities are detected, CONICYT shall render the prize ineffective or may prematurely annul the agreement.

14.3. The information provided by applicants that are not awarded financing shall not be returned to them.

15. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The non-negotiable deadline for uploading proposals online shall be **September 9, 2010 at 16:00 hrs**, at which time the system will close automatically.

For more information about previous calls for proposals and their respective winners, please visit <http://www.conicyt.cl/573/propertyvalue-2183.html>.

For more information please send an e-mail to: www.conicyt.cl/oirs

Santiago, July 2010