



## **ALMA FUND**

### **For the Development of Chilean Astronomy**

### **CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2010**

#### **1. OVERVIEW**

The ALMA program is framed within the “Scientific Collaboration Agreement to Promote Astronomy Research”, signed on October 28, 2003, and its subsequent modifications, by the Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica (CONICYT), the 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).

This agreement establishes a fund to aid in the development of Chilean astronomy, and this fund is to be managed by CONICYT in consultation with a Mixed Committee composed of just as many Chilean members as ALMA executives.

#### **2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

This Program is designed to aid the development of Chilean astronomy and prepare it to use ALMA to its maximum potential, through the financing of research, dissemination and human resource projects in the area of Astronomy and related sciences.

#### **3. ACTIVITIES**

This aid may include, for example, the financing of the following activities:

- Postdoctoral Positions: the hiring of new professors, post-doctorates and technicians.
- Development and reinforcement of graduate study programs
- Theoretical or technological initiatives
- Other initiatives to develop the national study of astronomy which may find it difficult to obtain alternative sources of financing.

#### 4. 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** (universities, research centers, science organizations or societies, etc.), public or private, independent or associated with others, that perform or promise to perform research work or teaching in the area of astronomy astrophysics and/or astronomy instrumentation, **in conjunction with a lead researcher** for the project, who must have ties to the institution. When two or more universities apply together, one of them must be designated the principal institution.
- b. **Individuals:** researchers or academics from national universities.

More than one project may be presented to this Call for Proposals.

Only institutions may include within their proposal the hiring of permanent positions.

#### 5. PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS

##### Institutional Applications:

- **Application Form.** The applicant must complete the application form available on the Conicyt website [www.conicyt.cl/astronomia](http://www.conicyt.cl/astronomia), 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.

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

### Individual Applications:

- **Application Form.** The applicant must complete the application form available on the Conicyt website [www.conicyt.cl/astronomia](http://www.conicyt.cl/astronomia), 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.
- **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.

## 6. 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.

## 7. FINANCING

7.1. The maximum amount of financing per Project is **US\$100,000 (one hundred thousand dollars) per year of execution.**

7.2. 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 travel and other minor expenses.

- 7.3. In accordance with an agreement signed by CONICYT and INNOVA Chile, instrumentation and technological development projects that are approved by the 2010 grant competition may also apply for complementary financing from INNOVA Chile.

## 8. EVALUATION, PRE-SELECTION AND FINAL DECISION

- 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 merit and relevance of the projects shall be performed by external evaluators named by the ALMA-CONICYT Committee.

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 entity.
- Academic experience and career path of the principal researcher and the project execution team.
- Sustainability of activities over time, beyond the financial support requested.

**During this call for proposals, preference shall be given to those proposals that involve:**

- a) Collaboration between different Universities and Departments of the same or other Universities
- b) Post-doctorates that use the APEX and ALMA telescopes.
- c) In light of the initiation of Early Science for ALMA, in this call for proposals, priority shall be given to projects that emphasize developments aimed at supporting a Chilean ARC<sup>1</sup>.

**8.3 Mixed Committee**, created by Resolution No. 1686 of May 5, 2010, governed by the President of CONICYT and made up of two astronomers from the Chilean community named by CONICYT, four representatives named by the authorities of the ALMA Project and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, shall be the organism responsible for suggesting to CONICYT –based on the technical

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<sup>1</sup> In order to better utilize the ALMA telescope, a Chilean ALMA – CONICYT Research Center (ARC, Alma Research Center) will be created, and will be responsible for providing operational support to Chilean astronomers, both during observations in ALMA prior to functioning as well as for the data collected after initiating operations. For more information, please check the Conicyt Astronomy Program web site.

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 abovementioned committee.

## 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 ALMA-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<sup>2</sup>, 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 ALMA-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 ALMA-CONICYT FUND Project No..."*
- 10.7. **Institutional Support.** The Institution must provide a physical space and support in the area of infrastructure and human resources, in order to ensure the successful execution of the project.

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<sup>2</sup> The date to be considered may be either the date of the publication of the job advertisement, or the request for publication made to the international agency.

## **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 **Friday September 3, 2010 at 16:00 hrs**, at which time the system will close automatically.

**For more information please send an e-mail to: [www.conicyt.cl/oirs](http://www.conicyt.cl/oirs)**

Santiago, July 2010