

GEMINI FUND

National Program for the Development of Astronomy and Related Sciences

2011 CONTEST GROUND RULES

1. BACKGROUND

This program is being implemented within the general framework of the "Scientific Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Astronomy Research," dated 25 October 1993, and its subsequent amendments, signed between the National Scientific and Technological Research Commission (CONICYT) and the GEMINI Astronomy Consortium, an international cooperation project that the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Chile, Australia, Argentina and Brazil participate in.

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

2. CONTEST OBJECTIVES

The program's goal is to contribute to the development of national astronomy by strengthening research, outreach, teaching and the development of human resources in astronomy, both in observational as well as theoretical terms, in addition to related sciences in academic institutions throughout Chile.

The related sciences considered are physics, electrical/electronic engineering, software engineering and mechanical engineering, as long as they involve state-of-the-art technological developments related to Chilean astronomical observatories.

In general this program is open to any proposal that might have a positive impact on the development of excellence in national astronomy and related sciences.

3. APPLICANTS

The following institutions and/or people can present proposals and receive financial resources for this process:

- a. **National Institutions** with a nonprofit legal status, public or private, that undertake or are committed to undertaking work in the research, outreach, or teaching of astronomy, astrophysics or related sciences **together with a main project researcher**, who must have a relationship to the institution. The institutions include, among others, universities, research centers and institutes, as well as institutions dedicated to outreach. Should two or more institutions choose to present themselves jointly, one of them must be designated as the main institution.
- b. **Responsible Researcher** with university sponsorship: researchers or academics with a PhD or equivalent degree with the sponsorship of an institution for higher studies in astronomy, astrophysics or related sciences.
- c. **Private Individual** with a PhD in astronomy, astrophysics or related sciences.

4. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

Institutional Proposals

- **Application Form.** The applicant institution's researcher must download and complete the application form in Word format from the CONICYT website, www.conicyt.cl/astronomia in the section "Concursos de Astronomía," Concursos en período de postulación."
- **Electronic Form.** An online form with general background information must also be completed upon submission of the application form.
- **Sponsorship Letter** from the associated institutions, where appropriate.
- In the event that permanent positions are hired, **a letter of commitment from the legal representative of the respective main institution or faculty dean guaranteeing the creation of the position** must be presented.
- **Résumés** of the main researcher and the executing team (where appropriate), including publications only from the last 5 years.
- **Quotations.** Projects that require equipment must include a description of it and the materials required, including quotations and documentation to back them.

Proposal from Responsible Researcher with university sponsorship

- **Application Form.** The responsible researcher must download and complete the application form in Word format from the CONICYT website, www.conicyt.cl/astronomia in the section "Concursos de Astronomía," Concursos en período de postulación."
- **Electronic Form.** An online form with general background information must also be completed upon submission of the application form.
- **Résumé** of the responsible researcher and the executing team (where appropriate), including publications only from the last 5 years.
- **Sponsorship letter** from the academic institution where the project will be undertaken.
- **Quotations.** Projects that require equipment must include a description of it and the materials required, including quotations and documentation to back them.

Proposals from Private Individuals

- **Application Form.** The private individual must download and complete the application form in Word format from the CONICYT website, www.conicyt.cl/astronomia in the section "Concursos de Astronomía," Concursos en período de postulación."
- **Electronic Form.** An online form with general background information must also be completed upon submission of the application form.
- **Résumé** of the responsible researcher and the executing team (where appropriate), including publications only from the last 5 years.

Proposals must be presented in English. Proposals involving publicity or outreach are exempted from this obligation.

Both the form as well as the annexes must preferably be attached in PDF format.

5. DURATION

The proposals must be developed within a period of one to two years. This deadline begins from the date that the entire administrative process approving the respective subsidy agreement has been completed.

If the project so requires and the application requests the hiring of an academic and/or postdoctoral researcher, the responsible institution or researcher, as appropriate, must send CONICYT a copy of the agreement signed between the parties. In these cases a maximum of

one year will be given to materialize the hiring and the validity of the agreement and the respective guarantee of faithful fulfillment, where appropriate, will be a total of three years.

6. FINANCING

- 6.1 The maximum financing limit for institutions, per project, is **\$ 38.000.000 (thirty-eight million Chilean pesos)** per year of execution.
- 6.2 The maximum financing limit for the **Responsible Researcher with university sponsorship and Private Individuals**, per applicant and per project, is **\$ 38.000.000 (thirty-eight million Chilean pesos)** per year of execution. In the case of people applying as **Private Individuals, the researcher will be unable to request funds for the procurement of capital goods.**
- 6.3 In the event that high-level researchers, Chilean or foreign, are inserted in national universities, the fund can collaborate with co-financing the position with up to **\$ 19.000.000 (nineteen million Chilean pesos)** in the first year and **\$ 9.500.000 (Nine million and five hundred thousand Chilean pesos)** in the second year. This assumes that the academic unit has the institutional support to fill an additional position for the new permanent hire.
- 6.4 Regarding postdoctoral positions at national universities for Chilean or foreign astronomers, up to an annual maximum of **USD\$ 17.000.000 (seventeen million Chilean pesos)** for wages can be financed, as well as up to **USD \$ 2.400.000 (two million and four hundred thousand Million pesos)** for associated expenditures. Priority will be given to postdoctoral researchers who are using GEMINI telescopes.
- 6.5 Only national institutions can apply for proposals that consider the hiring of academics and postdoctoral researchers.

7. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

- 7.1 Applications that do not comply with these contest ground rules, including the submission of all documents that must be attached, will automatically be considered as outside the rules and will not be resubmitted to the evaluation process.
- 7.2 **Technical evaluation:** The proposals will be assessed by external evaluators appointed by CONICYT.
- 7.3 **The GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council**, created via Exempt Resolution No. 2166 of 28 July 2009, presided over by the president of CONICYT and whose members include representatives of the CONICYT, members of the Chilean astronomers' community, a representative of the GEMINI International Astronomy Consortium and a representative of the Foreign Ministry, will be the professional body in charge of suggesting the beneficiaries, allocations, and duration of the proposals to be adjudicated to the CONICYT, based on the technical evaluations of the proposals.
- 7.4. The factors to be considered in the evaluation, both external as well as in the Council, are:

| Criteria | Weighting |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Quality and relevance of the proposal. | 50% |
| 2. Consistency between objectives and the amounts required in the proposal. | 10% |
| 3. Academic quality | 20% |

| | |
|---|-----|
| a) Of the main applicant institution, if the proposal consists in support for postgraduate students; b) Academic track record of the project's main researcher and that of the executing team. | |
| 4. Result and impact of the proposal | 20% |

7.5. The final passing grade of the project will be an average of the grades awarded both by external evaluators, which corresponds to 30% of the final grade, as well as by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council, which accounts for the remaining 70%.

7.6 **Decision Resolution:** Following the corresponding administrative procedure, the CONICYT will approve the decision and adjudicate the contest based on the proposal made by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council.

7.7. The ruling can consider a waiting list, should the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council deem it appropriate. Said waiting list can enter into effect in the event that one of those chosen renounces its option or cannot make use of it. This will strictly follow the order in terms of scores and according to the number of vacancies that have been produced. This waiting list can also enter into effect depending on the CONICYT's budget availability.

In the event that a waiting list is created, the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund Council will have to determine the minimum score to be placed on it.

8. CONTEST RESULTS

The results will be published on the CONICYT website once a decision has been made in the contest, which will include the waiting list in the event that there is one. In addition, all applicants will be informed via certified letter. Should the waiting list enter into effect, then the beneficiary or beneficiaries will be notified via certified letter.

In addition, all of the selected applicants will be informed in a letter sent by email.

9. OBLIGATIONS OF THE ADJUDICATED PARTY

9.1 Submission of documentation.

The Institution, Responsible Researcher or Private Individual behind the adjudicated project, as appropriate, will have a **deadline of 28 consecutive days (4 weeks)** from the date on the notification letter mentioned in point 8 to submit all of the documentation requested by the CONICYT and which is necessary to sign the agreements between the CONICYT and the institution and/or person whose proposals have benefited. **CONICYT will declare the adjudication without effect if it does not receive the documentation within the aforementioned period.**

9.2 Guarantees:

9.2.1 The applicant institutions that are not a part of the state administration must upon signing the agreement with the CONICYT guarantee the faithful use of resources and their administration, as stipulated by the clauses contained therein, by submitting a bank guarantee letter, an endorsable promissory note or an insurance policy with immediate execution. To finance it the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund will provide an additional 3% calculated on the basis of the total approved budget. The aforementioned guarantee must be provided every year and have a minimum validity of 15 months from the date that the agreement was signed on.

9.2.2 In the case of projects that require hiring people, two guarantees must be presented in the first year. The first guarantee, to cover the costs associated with contracting for the project, will be provided for the total amount of upon signing the agreement with the CONICYT. This guarantee must have a minimum validity of 15 months from the date that the agreement is signed. A second guarantee must be provided together with the agreement to hire the academic or postdoctoral researcher that is equivalent to the amount of the transfer that CONICYT made for this concept and it must have a minimum validity of 15 months from the date that the academic or postdoctoral researcher was hired on.

9.2.3 In the event that a **Responsible Researcher with university sponsorship and/or a Private Individual** is adjudicated, they must submit an **IOU with Special Mandate** in the name of CONICYT upon signing the agreement, so that, in the event of their failure to fulfill the obligations contained in the project's financing agreement, it can expressly undertake the actions indicated in the attached document "IOU with Special Mandate" in their name and representation.

9.3 Contracting

For projects that consider hiring permanent postdoctoral researchers or professors, the adjudicated Institution must publish a call to participate in the contest in a national or international media outlet at a minimum within the three months following the signing of the agreement, in addition to informing the CONICYT Astronomy Program of the matter.

9.4 **Submission of Reports.** The Applicant Institution, Responsible Researcher and/or the Private Individual adjudicated must provide the CONICYT Astronomy Program with a technical-scientific and financial report for every year of execution for the project, starting from the date of the resolution approving the subsidy agreement.

The **technical-scientific** report will describe the project's progress or results (including a description of the activities engaged in and, in particular, the results obtained in the period).

The **financial report** must render accounts for the expenditures made to date, for which, on the one hand, an online spending declaration system will be used, which must be updated regularly. On the other, the CONICYT must be sent a rendering of accounts in original documents according to the procedures indicated in the agreement. The payment of second installments will be conditioned on the approval of the accounts rendered.

In addition, a technical-scientific report **through 30 October every year, regardless of the time that the project has been in execution**, must be submitted.

In addition, in the case of projects that hire postdoctoral astronomers, it is requested that a work published in an indexed magazine (ISI indicator) be attached at the end of the project.

9.5. The beneficiary must retain all original documents to justify the expenses made with the funds provided in the context of this contest. This documentation must be available every time that the CONICYT requests it to oversee the proper use of the funds. In the event that a document is required and/or declared more than once then the project involved will immediately be terminated and the relevant actions will be taken for the funds provided to be returned in full.

- 9.6** It is absolutely forbidden to invest the funds transferred for the development of the project in financial instruments (be they long or short term, fixed income or variable) and it a condition for the unilateral termination of the project will have been fulfilled when such operations are engaged in.
- 9.7 Acknowledgements.** The contribution by the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund must be acknowledged in all of the activities that it finances, such as scientific publications and reports (articles in specialized magazines, theses, papers, etc.), in addition to outreach materials, with the following suggested text: *"This work received the support of the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund, Project No...."* In the event that equipment is acquired, a plaque must be affixed to it that identifies the project number and the GEMINI-CONICYT Fund as the source of financing.

10. TRANSFERS

- 10.1** CONICYT will transfer funds in annual installments at the beginning of each year of execution for the project and they will be subjected to compliance with the following conditions:
- Complete processing of the administrative action approving the agreement.
 - CONICYT budget availability.
 - **For non-state Institutions:** Submission of guarantee on the part of the main adjudicated institution to guarantee the faithful use of the resources allocated according to the stipulations contained in number 9.2.1 of these contest ground rules.
 - **For Responsible Researchers with sponsorship from a university and Private Individuals:** submission of an IOU and mandate signed by the researcher.
 - For the payment of second installments, submission and approval of the project's technical-scientific and financial report.
- 10.2** The transfer corresponding to the first year will be made in two installments in cases where human resources are hired. One will correspond to the operational costs at the beginning of the project and will be transferred once the administrative resolution approving the agreement has been fully processed and as long as the CONICYT has the budget for it available and the respective guarantee has been provided, where appropriate. The second installment will be paid once the hiring has materialized and prior submission of the corresponding guarantee, as appropriate.
- 10.3** The applicant institution will be the direct beneficiary of the resources in the case of institutional applicants. The beneficiary institution will have an exclusive current account, or else an exclusive cost center (exclusive budget account) to administer the incomes and expenditures related to the project.
- 10.4** If the adjudicated parties are Responsible Researchers with institutional sponsorship or Private Individuals, then the main researcher will be the direct beneficiary of the resources. Upon concluding the project the main researcher must transfer acquisitions to the Sponsoring Institution.

11. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS

The Astronomy Program can authorize justified modifications to the project at the request of the responsible researcher prior approval from the members of the Council and formalized

via the issue of the respective agreement modification. In particular, these requests can consider changes to the deadlines that had originally been established for the project.

12. CONCLUSION OF PROJECTS

The final report and the last rendering of accounts must be presented within the 30 days following the date of the project's conclusion according to the date indicated in the respective agreement, and they must be approved by the CONICYT.

A project will be considered concluded when the objectives and results it committed to have been fulfilled to CONICYT's satisfaction and the final report and rendering of accounts have been approved.

13. RESTRICTIONS

- 13.1 Under no circumstances will private individuals or legal entities with debts or other pending contractual obligations or commitments with the CONICYT be allowed to participate in this contest.
- 13.2 Members of the GEMINI-CONICYT Council will not be allowed to apply either.
- 13.3 No applications will be accepted outside of the deadline.

14. FULFILLMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF GROUND RULES

- 14.1 CONICYT reserves itself the right to interpret the meaning and scope of these ground rules in the event of any doubts or conflicts that might emerge regarding their contents and application.
- 14.2 CONICYT can at any time prior to signing and during the execution of the respective agreements verify total fulfillment of these ground rules and, more specifically, the precision and completeness of the background information presented in the respective applications made in the context of this contest, as well as those related to backing the required documentation. In the event that inconsistencies, omissions or incompatibilities are found, CONICYT will declare the adjudication void or else anticipate termination of the agreement.
- 14.3 The files of the applicants that were not adjudicated in this contest will not be returned.

15. APPLICATION DEADLINE

The final deadline for online applications expires irrevocably on **Friday 02 September 2011 at 12:00.**

For information on the contests and projects adjudicated in past years, visit <http://www.conicyt.cl/573/propertyvalue-2183.html>

For more information, please write to the following email: www.conicyt.cl/oirs

Santiago, July 2011