



Comisión Nacional de Investigación
Científica y Tecnológica - CONICYT



ALMA-CONICYT FUND

For the Development of Chilean Astronomy

2011 CONTEST GROUND RULES

1. BACKGROUND

This contest is being implemented within the general framework of the "Scientific Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Astronomy Research," dated 28 October 2003, and its subsequent amendments, signed between the National Scientific and Technological Research Commission (CONICYT) and the European Southern Observatory, Associated Universities Inc. (AUI) and the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ), the executive institutions building and operating the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA). The aforementioned agreement establishes the creation of a Fund for the Development of Chilean Astronomy, the ALMA-CONICYT Fund, which will be administered by CONICYT in consultation with a Mixed Committee whose members will represent Chile and ALMA in equal parts.

2. CONTEST OBJECTIVES

The competition is oriented toward supporting of the development of Chilean astronomy as, for example, through the hiring of new astronomers, post-doctoral fellows and technicians, through strengthening of graduate studies and theoretical or technological initiatives, without exclusion of others, for which it is difficult to find alternative sources of funds. For this competition the Committee is interested in receiving applications that would include multi-institutional collaborations for the required infrastructural development, millimeter and sub/mm instrumentation, human resources, and experience in supporting the community in the preparation of proposals as well as data analysis and interpretation of results obtained with ALMA.

3. APPLICANTS

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

- a. **National Institutions** (universities, research centers, scientific associations, etc) with a nonprofit legal status, public or private, which undertake or are committed to undertaking work in the research or teaching of astronomy, astrophysics and/or astronomical instrumentation, **together with a responsible project researcher**, on the project who must have a relationship with the institution.
- b. **Responsible Researcher with institutional sponsorship:** researchers or academics from national universities who have the formal support of the institution they belong to.
- c. **Multi-institutions:** two or more national institutions and a coordinator associated with an institution. In this case, it must be indicated which institution is the main one.

Only institutions can apply if the proposal submitted considers the hiring of permanent staff.

4. FINANCING

The maximum financing limit for multi-institution projects is **\$180,000,000 (one hundred eighty million pesos)** for two years of execution.

The maximum financing limit for Institutional projects or those under a Responsible researcher with Institutional Sponsorship is **\$90.000,000 (ninety million pesos)** for two years of execution.

Each institution can submit more than one project to the contest.

5. DURATION OF THE PROJECTS

The proposals must be developed within a period of no less than one year and no more than two. 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 fellow, 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. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

Institutional Proposals:

- **Application Form.** The applicant must complete the application form available on 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.
- **Letter of commitment** from the applicant institution. For the hiring of permanent staff, the letter must be from its President or Dean and it must ensure the continuity of the position.
- **Résumés** of the main researcher and the executing team, including publications only from the last 5 years.
- Projects that require equipment must include a description of it and the materials required, including quotations and documentation to back them.

Proposals from responsible researcher with institutional sponsorship:

- **Application Form.** The applicant must complete the application form available on 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.
- **Résumés** of the main researcher and the executing team (where appropriate), including publications only from the last 5 years.
- **Letters of support and certification.** In the case of an internship or a research residency in Chile or a foreign country, a letter of support from the academic or research institution where the internship or residency will be done and a letter from the institution that the researcher belongs to, certifying his or her sabbatical period.

Multi-institution 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," "Concursos en período de postulación." The form must contain a project administration and outreach plan, in addition to the expected impact.
- **Electronic Form.** An online form with general background information must also be completed upon submission of the application form.
- **Letter of commitment** of the applicant institution. For the hiring of permanent staff, the letter must be from its President or Dean and it must ensure the continuity of the position.
- **Résumés** of the coordinator and the executing team, including publications only from the last 5 years.
- Identification of the participating institutions and their respective letters of commitment.
- Projects that require equipment must include a description of it and the materials required, including quotations and documentation to back them.

Proposals must be presented in English.

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

7. APPLICATION DEADLINES

The deadline for submitting applications online closes automatically on **Friday 2 September 2011 at 12:00.**

8. EVALUATION, SHORTLISTING, AND CONTEST RULING

- 8.1. Applications that do not comply with these contest ground rules, including the submission of all documents that must be attached (attached documents), will automatically be considered in violation of the rules and will not be resubmitted to the evaluation process.
- 8.2. Technical evaluation: external evaluators appointed by the ALMA-CONICYT Mixed Committee will assess the merit and relevance of the projects and the suitability of those proposing them.
- 8.3. The ALMA-CONICYT Mixed Committee will be the professional body in charge of reviewing the proposals' evaluations, modifying - if so determined - the budget allocations requested and the duration of the projects, in addition to proposing a ruling to CONICYT. The Mixed Committee was appointed via Exempt Resolution No. 1686, dated 05 May 2010, notwithstanding the changes that might be made.
- 8.4. The main factors to be considered in the evaluation, both external as well as in the Committee, are:

For Institutional proposals and those from Responsible Researchers

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 a) Of the main applicant institution, if the proposal consists in	20%

support for postgraduate students; b) Of the project's main researcher and that of the executing team if the proposal is presented as that of a Responsible researcher with institutional sponsorship	
4. Results and impact of the proposal	20%

For Multi-institution proposals

Criteria	Weighting
1. Quality and relevance of the proposal.	40%
2. Consistency between objectives and the amounts required in the proposal.	15%
3. Academic quality of the participating team	10%
4. Expected impact and outreach	20%
5. Administrative capacity defined in the project	15%

- 8.5. 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%.
- 8.6. **Decision Resolution:** Following the corresponding administrative procedure, the CONICYT will approve the decision and adjudicate the contest based on the proposal made by the ALMA-CONICYT Fund Mixed Committee.
- 8.7. The ruling can consider a waiting list, should the ALMA-CONICYT Fund Mixed Committee 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 ALMA-CONICYT Fund Committee will have to determine the minimum score to be placed on it.

9. 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.

10. OBLIGATIONS OF THE ADJUDICATED PARTY

10.1. 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 to submit all of the documentation requested by the CONICYT and which is necessary to sign the agreements between the CONICYT and the beneficiaries of the proposals. **The adjudication will be void if the documentation is not received within the aforementioned period.**

10.2. Guarantees

- 10.2.1. The sponsoring 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 ALMA-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 and will be renewed every year.
- 10.2.2. With regard to multi-institution applications, only the institution that the project coordinator belongs to will have to provide the guarantee, as long as it is not part of the state administration.
- 10.2.3. 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 the respective transfer upon signing the agreement with the CONICYT. This guarantee must have a minimum validity of 16 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 fellow 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 on which the academic or postdoctoral fellow was hired.
- 10.2.4. In the case of Responsible researchers with institutional sponsorship the adjudicated researcher must upon signing the agreement provide an IOU with Special Mandate in CONICYT's name to guarantee the proper fulfillment of the obligations established in the respective project financing agreement, which must be renewed every year.

10.3. Contracting

For projects that consider hiring permanent postdoctoral fellows or professors, the adjudicated Institution must publish a call to participate in the contest¹ in a national or international media outlet and inform the CONICYT Astronomy Program of the matter within three months after the signing of the agreement.

10.4. Submission of reports

The Responsible Researcher must provide the CONICYT Astronomy Program with technical-scientific and financial reports for every year of execution in 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 that must be updated regularly. On the other, the CONICYT must be sent a rendering of

¹ The date to be considered can either be the date that the announcement was published, or else that of the publication request made of the international agency.

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** will be submitted, **regardless of the time that the project has been in execution.** **Furthermore, in the case of projects that hire postdoctoral astronomers engaged in science, it is requested that 1 (one) work published in an indexed magazine (ISI indicator) be attached at the end of the project.**

- 10.5. 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 CONICYT requests it to oversee the proper use of the funds. In the event that a document is presented 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.
- 10.6. 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 a condition for the unilateral termination of the project will have been fulfilled when such operations are engaged in.
- 10.7. Acknowledgements
The contribution by the ALMA-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 ALMA-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 ALMA-CONICYT Fund as the source of financing.

11. TRANSFERS

- 11.1. CONICYT will transfer funds subject to compliance with the following conditions:
 - Complete processing of the administrative action approving the agreement.
 - **For non-state Institutions:** Submission of corresponding guarantee(s).
 - **For Responsible Researchers with Institutional Sponsorship:** 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 reports, the deadlines of which will be determined in the agreements.
 - Budget availability on the part of CONICYT.
- 11.2. 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.
- 11.3. The sums adjudicated will be transferred to the main institutional account for institutional and multi-institution projects. 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. For projects under a Responsible researcher with institutional sponsorship, the transfer will be made to the Responsible researcher's account.

12. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS

Only on an exceptional basis at the request of the responsible researcher, and in only duly justified cases that do not entail increased contributions on the part of CONICYT, will the Astronomy Program - in consultation with the ALMA-CONICYT Mixed Committee - be empowered to authorize changes to the project that must be formalized in the respective agreement amendment, especially with regard to the project deadlines originally established.

13. CONCLUSION OF PROJECTS

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.

14. RESTRICTIONS

- 14.1. 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.
- 14.2. People belonging the ALMA-CONICYT Council at the time of application will not be eligible either.
- 14.3. No applications will be accepted outside of the deadline.

15. FULFILLMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF GROUND RULES

- 15.1 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.
- 15.2 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.
- 15.3 The files of the applicants that were not adjudicated in this contest will not be returned.

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

For more information, please contact areyes@conicyt.cl

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