



Associative
Research Program
A CONICYT PROGRAM



Joint Call 2010

Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and CONICYT Research Proposals

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. Associative Research Program

The Associative Research Program (PIA) aims to promote the articulation and partnership between different groups of researchers and other national and/or international groups from the academy and/or the private and public sectors.. This program supports the strengthening of structured groups in research areas of excellence at national level, thus contributing to the economy and competitiveness of the Chilean society.

2. Support for International Cooperation

The Chilean National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT) policy is to bring closer scientific and technological research and economic development, participating more actively in joint international programs and projects, which allow the projection of the research of excellence developed in Chile and at the same time to participate in frontier research that takes place in the world.

Therefore, the Associative Research Program (PIA) in collaboration with the Department of International Relations of CONICYT , work together in order to support research of excellence, the mobility of national researchers and the projection and international linkages of the Chilean research.

II. BACKGROUND OF THIS CALL

CONICYT, through the Associative Research Program (PIA) and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), have agreed to make a call for submission of joint research projects in three (3) basic research areas, in order to promote and strengthen scientific and technological cooperation between Chile and Germany.

CONICYT and DFG signed a Scientific Cooperation Agreement between the Republics of Chile and Germany. This agreement considers a Scientific Cooperation Program whose main objective is to increase scientific relations between both countries.

1. Objective of the call

The purpose of this call is the implementation of joint research projects conducted by researchers and groups of researchers of both countries.

2. Research areas

Joint research projects that apply for this call must fall within the 3 (three) following areas:

- Genetic and Molecular Basis of Human Diseases
- Astronomy/Astrophysics
- Geology/Seismology

3. Applicants

The applicants of this call are groups of national researchers with proven experience in the specific research areas identified in paragraph 2 of these call text. These groups of researchers should be sponsored by Chilean universities and/or research institutions, with legal representation and proven existence of at least three years.

For all legal purposes, the counterpart of CONICYT is the sponsoring institution, which will sign the corresponding agreement, through its legal representative.

4. Submission of proposals

The presentation of joint research projects between Chile and Germany shall consider the following aspects:

- i. The same scientific proposal of the joint research project (the research proposal per se) must be submitted in parallel to DFG and CONICYT. German applicants send their proposal to DFG under the Individual Grants Programme, whereas Chilean applicants to CONICYT.
- ii. The Chilean research group must consist of at least two experienced researchers, national or foreign Chilean residents, belonging to one or more institutions in Chile that fulfill the requirements defined above.
- iii. The joint proposal must have two Principal Researchers, one in Chile and another in Germany. Each of them will be the central contact for the project management towards CONICYT and DFG, respectively.

- iv. The joint proposal consists of the text containing the scientific kernel of the research proposal and a series of accompanying documents required, respectively, for each funding institution, DFG and CONICYT.
- v. Letters of commitment, properly signed, detailing the availability of infrastructure and equipment, counterpart funds, commitment to hire new staff and/or other contributions towards the project by the sponsoring institution and the associated institutions, if applicable.

5. Proposal Format for DFG/CONICYT Research Projects

- i. The scientific kernel of the proposal must be accompanied by the proper forms required by DFG and CONICYT.
- ii. The joint research proposal must:
 - a. Be written in two versions: in English language in order to accomplish with DFG but also in Spanish language in order to accomplish with CONICYT rules.
 - b. Have the same scientific kernel
 - c. The scientific kernel of the joint research proposal should be not longer than 20 pages in length and must contain a clear account of the problem to be researched, the expected original results and contributions to be achieved as well as the impact on the scientific (and non-scientific) community. It must also contain a review of the state of the art for the research topic and related area, a detailed working plan including the methodology applied to the project, an overview of the required funding, description of the qualification of the involved research teams as well as their complementary and collaborative scientific capacities.
 - d. The scientific kernel of the research proposal should clearly describe the collaborative character of the proposal and should contain the following items:
 - i. Title/topic of the research project
 - ii. Research area and field of work. Please include your discipline and your field of specialization. This should be clearly linked to the research areas described in II. 2.
 - iii. Identification of all the applicants and co-applicants and the respective institutions (in Germany and Chile). If there are several applicants, please identify who will act as principal investigator(s), assuming responsibility for the overall management of the project and being accountable for the use of the funds granted, in spite of what is stated in section V of the call text.
 - iv. A summary of the research project with approximately 20 lines in length.
 - v. A statement indicating if this is a new proposal or continuation of a research already funded (Preliminary work or progress report)
 - vi. The review or state of the art in the area or topic
 - vii. Objectives of the proposal
 - viii. Detailed work schedule including the methodology and procedures
 - ix. Results expected from the research project
 - x. Bibliography

- e. Required complementary documents will be listed in the web sites of the funding institutions, but all projects must also present, at least:
 - i. Description of the research team as required in 5.iii.d.
 - ii. Curriculum Vitae of the participants
 - iii. The documents of the proposal submitted to CONICYT must be accompanied by a detailed budget of items to be financed by CONICYT itself, according to the proper CONICYT forms. A summary of the items to be financed by the DFG counterpart must also be attached. The budget of the research proposal should comprise the description of items to be funded by DFG and by CONICYT. Analogously, the budget to be funded by DFG must be submitted in the proper forms of the regular DFG research programs. A summary of the items to be funded by CONICYT should also be submitted to the DFG.

6. Project duration

The joint research proposal is limited to a period up to three years of funding by both DFG and CONICYT, from the date of the total processing of the agreements.

III. FUNDING

1. Types of activities and items to cover

The principal cost categories of this call include personnel, direct project costs, travel and publication expenses.

The project can request funding for the implementation of the activities of the scientific kernel developed by the proposal, considering the items below:

- 1.1 Remuneration of project personnel: for scientific staff, non-academic staff, student research assistants and for young researchers. This remuneration is not intended for the principal researchers of the project.
- 1.2 Scientific instrumentation whose basic requirements are not covered by the institution's core support. The cost of regular upkeep to maintain operation may not be requested.
- 1.3 Consumables needed for each individual item library materials, supplies for the project (e.g. chemicals, glassware, etc.)
- 1.4 Travel costs in the cooperation with partner: invitations for visiting scientists, attending to scientific events (workshops, conferences and meetings), archival work, field work.
- 1.5 Internships in German counterpart institutions (public or private), within the framework of the joint project, for researchers, and young professionals of the project
- 1.6 Organization of seminars, workshops, meetings and other scientific events with the participation of Chilean and German researchers in the framework of the project development.
- 1.7 Dissemination activities and publication expenses towards publishing the scientific results of a project in book format, literary editions, text volumes, illustrated volumes, excavation reports, etc.
- 1.8 Other costs needed for each individual item such as services rendered by third parties, compensation for test persons, laboratory animals, documentation and scientific

literature, project-specific software, general operating and maintenance/running expenses for major scientific instrumentation, etc.

1.9 Financial expenses for issuing guarantees

These costs should be clearly specified and justified in the forms CONICYT has prepared for this

2. Fundings

CONICYT would finance activities and expenditure requested by the Chilean counterpart, and DFG would finance the activities and expenses requested by the German counterpart.

CONICYT and the DFG would jointly fund a number of projects that include a scientific kernel with its specific budget. The financing granted by CONICYT will be between € 50,000 to 150,000 per project, for a maximum period of three years of implementation. This funding will be delivered by CONICYT subject to budget availability for this item, based on resources for the year 2011.

Funding requests spanning more than one year may either be detailed in separate amounts for each year or added together for up to three years. So these amounts should specify the exact time period.

The annual transfer of resources allocated to the Chilean institutions shall be delivered against the issuing guarantees in behalf of CONICYT, which may consist of an insurance policy of immediate execution, or a ballot bank guarantee or a bank promissory note, to ensure the faithful use of resources. The amount of this guarantee is equal to 100% of the resources provided by CONICYT. Regarding the validity of the security instruments, it should be longer in at least 60 working days from the period to be covered or at least 90 working days, in the case of delivery of the last payment of the CONICYT grant.

In the case of the resources allocated by DFG, the German research groups benefited by them, must accomplish the conditions determined by that institution.

IV. PROCESS OF ELIGIBILITY, EVALUATION AND AWARD OF PROJECTS

1. Eligibility

Projects entering the review process will be those that fulfill the requirements listed below. Those projects that do not fulfill these eligibility requirements will not be evaluated. This decision will be formally communicated to the applicant by CONICYT.

The eligibility requirements for this call are the following:

1.1 The project must fall within the following 3 (three) areas: Genetic and Molecular Basis of Human Diseases, Astronomy/Astrophysics and Geology/Seismology

- 1.2 The applicants of this call are groups of national researchers with proven experience in the specific research areas identified and that are sponsored by Chilean universities and/or research institutions, with legal representation and proven existence of at least three years..
- 1.3 The same scientific proposal of the joint research project must be submitted in parallel to DFG and CONICYT. German applicants send their proposal to DFG, whereas Chilean applicants must send it to CONICYT.
- 1.4 The proposal must be submitted on the appropriate forms indicated by CONICYT and be written in English and in Spanish.
- 1.5 The joint proposal consists of the text containing the scientific kernel of the research proposal, a detailed budget of the items to be financed by CONICYT and DFG and a series of accompanying documents required by CONICYT.
- 1.6 Letters of commitment, properly signed, detailing the availability of infrastructure and equipment, counterpart funds, commitment to hire new staff and/or other contributions towards the project by the sponsoring institution and the associated institutions, if applicable.

Additionally, as eligibility criteria of this call, if it is applicable and if it is relevant to the research, specific certifications must be submitted together with the Spanish printed copy of the project, according to the activities involving the project, as part of its work.

If it is not possible to enclose this documentation in the application process, because it is not processed yet, a receipt document of request for this statement would be accepted.

These are the certifications to be considered to enclose to the proposal:

1.1 Approval of the Ethics Committee of the institution for those proposals involving human studies or genetic manipulation. Besides, the project must include a copy of the informed consent document to be delivered to individuals who participate in this research. CONICYT reserves its right to collect directly an independent ethic statement, in cases it considers appropriate.

1.2 Approval of the Bioethics Committee of the sponsoring institution for those projects that involve animal testing.

In both cases above, CONICYT reserves its right to request additional reports from other institutions it considers appropriate.

1.3 Approval of the competent authorities for those projects that consider the introduction to Chile of plants, animals or fungi.

1.4 In those proposals that handle pathogens for humans, animals or plants, recombinant DNA and / or radioisotopes, or other risk factors should consider, at least, the biosecurity measures available at the "Standards for Biosafety Manual" of CONICYT, edited on 2008, which can be requested at PIA's Direction. A certificate issued by the Biosafety Committee of the sponsoring institution must be attached to the project, or else a based letter that indicates the actions to be taken according to the specifications of the Manual.

2. Review process

The funding decisions of this call are based on evaluations made by scientific reviewers working without compensation. They form their judgment on the basis of the information presented in the proposal. Therefore, it is in the interest of the applicants to work out a clearly written proposal. .

The proposals will be submitted to peer-reviewers indicated jointly by DFG and CONICYT. As a rule, each proposal is evaluated by at least two independent reviewers.

The awarded research proposals will be jointly decided by DFG and CONICYT according to the selection processes that both institutions had agreed and taking into consideration their particular internal procedures.

3. Criteria for the Review Process

The review process will consider the following aspects:

3.1. Quality of the Project / Qualification of the Applicant

This criterion will evaluate the soundness of the preliminary work, quality of publications and for renewal proposals also the results obtained so far, the originality, the expected advancement of knowledge (also in relation to the costs), the scientific significance (in its own field and/or across different fields) and the broader impact (in terms of science policy, social policy, economic or technical reasons).

3.2 Working Environment / Scientific Environment

This criterion will evaluate the staff, institutional, room and instrument requirements and resources.

3.3. Objectives and Work Programme

This criterion will evaluate if it is a clear working hypotheses, the reasonable limitation of the topic, the appropriateness of the methods as the ability to complete the project within the proposed or overall expected time frame.

3.4 Added value expected from the Chilean-German cooperation in the project.

This criterion will evaluate the project description of the meaning and importance of Chilean-German cooperation in the investigation.

3.5 Recommendation Concerning the Extent of Funding

This criterion is based on the items of project personnel, according to the needs of the working plan, the scientific instrumentation (acquisition cost no more than € 10.000), consumables, travel expenses, publication costs and other necessary expenses for the individual items.

Regarding the weighting of the evaluation criteria, each of these aspects had the same weight, of 20% each.

The expert reviewers, at the end of their written reports, will deliver a final total score together with their assessment, whether or not they recommend funding the proposal with the highest

priority, or the ones under the higher priority, although it is also possible to analyze some critical points to a greater or lesser extent thereof.

Once occurred the above, the score list of the projects will be reviewed by an Area Committee of the Call, integrated by national experts. This list must be agreed between the Area Committee and DFG, in order to generate a new listing, which jointly by both institutions, allows the selection of proposals to be funded.

4. Award of Funding

Based on the prioritized list of projects between DFG and CONICYT, this Commission should award this joint call by generating a legal resolution that approves the funds. The results of this call would be published on the website of CONICYT (www.conicyt.cl / PIA) and also would be formally reported to all applicants to the address indicated on the application form.

The awarded projects must be adjust within 15 calendar days, to the conditions of award established by CONICYT, which may refer to type of financing, adaptation of the objectives and or others issues.

5. Appealing process

Any appealing regarding the final results of this call can be presented in written form and sent to CONICYT by the national counterpart, within 5 working days from the notification of the decision. CONICYT will give a formal response within a period that not exceeds 20 working days.

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Once the project is awarded, CONICYT will contact the sponsoring institution in order to arrange the signature of the agreement between both, CONICYT and the sponsoring institution, requesting the necessary documentation to these effects. The sponsoring institution is the legal counterpart of CONICYT and its legal representative should sign the agreement. The agreement shall express the rights and obligations of each party, the duration of the project and all those aspects that safeguard clauses, the best way, meeting the targets set by CONICYT and this call text.

The sponsoring institution also shall deliver the respective guarantee as indicated in section III.2 of this call.

CONICYT, through the Associative Research Program will monitor and control the awarded projects. For this purpose, the institutions are required to submit technical- academic and financial, progress and final reports, using the forms delivered by PIA.

For a better assessment of the progress in the organization and implementation of the project, the program may carry out site visits. These monitoring and control, also may consider submissions to panels of experts and monitoring and evaluation committees, meetings or others to be defined by the program.

The technical-academic and financial reports must be submitted with all the relevant supporting documentation at the end of each year of implementation. The delivery of the annual resources to the project is subject to the approval of these two progress reports, along with the renewal of the guarantee.

The original accounting documents shall be kept by the Principal Researcher, and before being presented with the financial report, shall be stamped with the words "Declared by CONICYT / DFG Program," which will disable the documentation submitted at the financial report. In the event that a document is presented and/or declared more than once, this will cause an immediate ending to the project and the beginning of the necessary actions to obtain full refund of the resources provided. In cases of accountability audits, CONICYT may request the original documentation to the sponsoring institution. Once signed the corresponding agreement, the Associative Research Program will deliver the presentation forms of the reports formerly referred.

All publications, products and activities developed by the project, must declare that the resources are provided by CONICYT and DFG.

The sponsoring institution may replace the principal investigator and/or other members of the research team of the project, upon formal application to CONICYT. If case that the request for substitution, was not approved, CONICYT may cause the early ending of the project.

In the event that the beneficiaries fail to fulfill any of the obligations arising out of this call text as also the specific ones described in the agreement signed between the parties; CONICYT may decide the early ending of the project and may request the total or partial refund of the resources transferred, or enforce the issuing guarantees, and also has the right to pursue other legal actions that are competent to perform.

VI. PRESENTATION OF PROJECTS

1. Timetable

The call will be published in a national newspaper and in CONICYT's website: www.conicyt.cl / PIA. Also the text and forms of this call will be posted on CONICYT's website, in which the opening and closing date of this call will be announced.

2. Place

The place of presentation of projects is at PIA's office located in Bernarda Morin N ° 551, third floor, Providencia, Santiago. Each project should be delivered in two printed copies (one in Spanish and one in English) with all the required documentation, including the original signature of the Principal Researcher and the institutions' legal representative at the first pages of the copies of the project. Additionally, the project must be submitted in electronic files in Word, Excel and PDF format on a CD that are exact copies of the printed Spanish and English versions.

3. Questions / Clarifications

The questions may be addressed to the following link: www.conicyt.cl/oirs. These questions would be received up to 7 calendar days before the joint call closing date. Likewise, the clarifications made by CONICYT will be published on the website www.conicyt.cl / PIA. Both the answers to the questions as the clarification of the terms of this text call are an integral part of this joint call.

4. Fulfillment and acceptance of this call text and information character

No projects will be accepted that do not fulfill the specifications of the call text, according to section IV.1 and its clarifications, if any. Projects must be submitted in the pre-established forms without changing its structure or the maximum length specified in each section. In addition, if it is applicable and relevant to the research, projects must be accompanied by all the required certifications detailed in the same section IV.1.

The background information and discussions that served as the basis of the decision, get public character, when they become the legal resolution to approve the award of funding of this call, once issued by CONICYT.

The drafting and presentation of proposals to this call implies the acceptance of all conditions set out in this call text.

5. Application Forms and Call Text

The official documents of this joint call are this call text as the application and instructions forms for projects, which will be available on the website of the Associative Research Program (www.conicyt.cl / PIA).

6. Scope of the Call Text

CONICYT will have the right to interpret the meaning and scope of the call text, in case of doubts and conflicts that may arise on their interpretation and application.

Natural or legal persons may not participate in this call, under any circumstances, if they keep debts or any other contractual obligations pending with CONICYT.