

BRIDGES: Building bonds towards development

NEW RESEARCH CALL TO FUND COLLABORATIVE WORK BETWEEN RESEARCHERS FROM UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE CHILE AND NATIONAL/ INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH GROUPS

1.1.- Background

One of the goals stated from the **Vice-Chancellor Office for Research and Graduate Studies (VRIP) at Universidad Autónoma de Chile (UA)** is to encourage national and international collaborations for the development of Chilean science, by supporting UA researchers in performing world-class research. To this end, the VRIP looks forward to encouraging collaborative research between world-class national and international recognized groups and researchers from the UA.

1.2.- Call objectives

- a) To strengthen the scientific collaboration between the UA and worldwide-known national and international institutions to attain world-class scientific outcomes.
- b) To promote the publication of research findings done by the UA researchers on high-impact scientific journals.

1.3.- Research topics

Project topics aiming to obtain a grant from this call must be regarding any of the research fields developed at the UA; particularly those focused on areas of interest for Chile in which UA researchers are currently working. That is, basic and biomedical sciences, law, social sciences, history, arts and humanities, education and applied chemical sciences.

1.4.- Applicants

Eligible applicants for this call must be **Chilean research groups or international scientific institutions** officially recognized and worldwide-known for their research experience. It includes universities, institutes, and academic centers focused on scientific or technological research, non-profit foundations, corporations, and public institutes.

Projects must consider a responsible researcher from the applying group to lead the project and a researcher from the UA as a local counterpart, who must work exclusively at the UA. This includes postdoctoral researchers from the UA.

Both, external and internal researcher's applicants must not participate as the responsible researcher in more than one project for this call.

1.5.- Term definitions

a.- **Responsible Researcher:** The responsible researcher refers to the doctoral-level trained researcher or academic from the applying national or international research group. The responsible researcher is the person who leads the project and takes over the scientific duties and obligations derived from its execution. The responsible researcher must belong to a non-profit public or private institution dedicated to the scientific research, with legal status or official recognition in his/her country.

b.- **UA counterpart:** The UA counterpart refers to the doctoral-level trained researcher or academic from the UA. The UA counterpart will be the project's technical and administrative representative before the UA. He/she will oversee sending technical and budget reports on time. The UA counterpart must permanently live in Chile during the project execution.

II.- EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1.- Projects must strengthen the scientific collaboration between the UA and the applying institution in the project's scientific field, through joint scientific publications and dissemination activities.

2.2.- Projects must **establish quality human resources through internships and theses during the project time frame.**

2.3.- Projects must deliver as a result of the UA collaboration, the participation of the UA lead researcher -or members of his/her team if duly justified- **in at least one publication in a high-impact scientific journal aiming to become a highly cited publication, among the 1% of the most cited publications in its corresponding academic field during the publication year (Web of Science, Essential Science Indicators-ESI Top Papers, Scopus).**

III.- BENEFITS

The VRIP from the UA will fund the researchers' activities and expenses of both the national or international applying institution, and the UA counterpart associated with the project.

The UA will fund three (3) research projects for a total of US\$25,000 each, which will last at most one (1) year. The funds will be given in local currency (CLP), and the conversion to the foreign currency will be calculated when the projects are awarded (if needed).

3.1.- Detailed items funded by the UA:

3.1.1.- Personal expenses: They must not exceed the 50% of the project's total budget. Salaries payment can be included only for undergraduate and graduate students, research assistants and technicians hired to develop specific and essential project components. The salary amount must be proportional to the time dedicated and the responsibilities assumed for the project development. Salaries of responsible and associated researchers cannot be funded through this grant.

Hired staff will not be funded beyond the project's time frame.

3.1.2.- Operating expenses: It includes general expenses such as bills, insurance policies, guarantees of resources, eventualities and proper use of funds; specific and particular services, computation, accounting, lab analyses. It also includes software, minor instruments and minor lab implements, bibliographic material, and office supplies purchases; surveys deployment; meetings-derived costs; field works; conveyance and packaging; and consumable material, among others.

Overhead for involved institutions is not included.

3.1.3.- Mobility: Tickets and travel expenses derived from visits to/within Chile for the responsible researcher or a designed member of the team (in case the responsible researcher is unable to travel). Tickets, accommodation and national and international travel expenses for the UA researcher or members of his/her team. These expenses must have been previously approved in the project budget. The maximum amount per day to be spent on National and international travel expenses are to be set according to the statutes of Universidad Autónoma de Chile, which follow the ones from the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT).

Only economic class tickets will be funded for national and international flights.

Visa and passport costs will not be funded.

3.1.4.- Benefits granted by this project do not exclude further application to funding from other UA calls.

IV.- APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

It is necessary to complete the following requirements established for this call to apply, as determined by the VRIP at the UA:

4.1.- The proposal must include a single project of joint research, **which must not exceed ten (10) pages and must be written in English** by the applying external institution and the UA researcher. This project must include a clear description of the collaborative work (task distribution and implementation methods); added value expected from the collaboration, and estimated deadlines for the publication of a scientific manuscript containing the project results according to section 2.3. The research plan must include summarized budget table and a Gantt chart indicating the project planning.

Proposals must be submitted in English by the responsible researcher from the applying external institution at <https://investigacion.uautonoma.cl>. Proposals written in a different language will not be considered.

4.2.- Specific application requirements for researchers at the UA are as follows:

a) To assign a responsible researcher for the research group from both, the applying institution and the UA counterpart.

b) **If the responsible person from the UA is a postdoctoral researcher**, a support letter (PDF format) signed by his/her supervisor must be submitted. The responsible researcher from the applying institution **cannot be** a postdoctoral researcher, he/she must be a principal investigator or a group leader.

c) A CV **(English version)** of the responsible researchers from the applying institution and the UA counterpart. A complete list of the technical team members involved from the applying institution and the UA counterpart must be submitted in PDF format. It can include researchers, students, research assistants, or technicians. Both the Responsible Researcher and the UA Counterpart must have an updated and verified (through their institutional e-mail) profile on Google Scholar.

4.3.- Statement of interests

- a) The responsible researcher must submit a letter of commitment justifying the collaborative work interest between the UA counterpart and the University. He/she must commit to incorporate data generated by the UA counterpart into the project, as well as to include the corresponding UA authorships into a high-impact publication.
- b) The UA counterpart must submit a letter of commitment justifying the joint project along with the responsible researcher and the applying institution. This letter must describe how the project contributes to the line of research of the UA counterpart's research field, to the UA itself, and to Chile.

4.4.- Approval of the Faculty's Dean and the Vice-Chancellor of the Campus for the UA Counterpart. The applicants must provide a letter signed by the Faculty's Dean and the respective Vice-Chancellor of the Campus stating that they have read and understood the guidelines of this call and approve of the UA Counterpart participating.

V.- ELIGIBILITY, ASSESSMENT AND AWARDING

5.1.- Stage I – Eligibility Analysis

This stage, performed by the VRIP Research Direction, entails inspection of the submitted proposals according to the established application requirements of this call. All eligible proposals will go into the assessment stage.

Proposals that do not meet the application requirements established by these guidelines will not be accepted.

5.2.- Stage II – Analysis by experts

Accepted proposals will be insightfully evaluated according to their excellence, relevance, and likelihood to have their results published in a high-impact scientific journal (section 2.3). The assessment will be performed by a group of national and international experts in the field, for each project, specially selected for that purpose by the VRIP at the UA.

Projects assessment criteria are as follows:

- Excellence.
- Knowledge generation in the project's field.

- Publication of results feasibility in a high-impact factor journal (section 2.3) minding the deadlines mentioned above.

Criteria definition:

a) Excellence. The scientific quality of the project will consider the following aspects:

- Scientific quality of the proposal: excellence, scope, and thematic relevance (national and international); objectives; methodology; originality; scientific and technological innovation potential; new products and processes development potential; general objectives and multi- and interdisciplinary perspectives.
- Coherence between objectives, methodology, expected results, and Gantt chart of the research plan.
- Alliances: interaction between research teams from the applying institution and the UA counterpart; institutional bounds, private sector consideration if needed; strategic relevance; benefits and significance of the proposed national or international cooperation.
- Coherence and adequacy of the required budget according to the objectives set for the project and the general budget allocated for this call.
- Scientific and technological impact of the project: This item addresses the expected project contributions to its research field. Some of them are described in the next section:

b) Knowledge generation in the project's field:

- **Joint publications in indexed high-impact scientific journals (section 2.3)**
- Development of students' skills, socioeconomic impact, and other possible mutual benefits derived from the national or international cooperation proposed.
- Development and consolidation of outstanding research lines.

c) Research teams capacity and suitability: This item refers to the researchers' scientific productivity in their respective research team for both institutions, as well as the participants' realistic capacity or potential to reach the project's objectives.

- Research teams scientific merits: competence; scientific and technological co-production (publications, patents, and others); faculty to lead the development of students' abilities; and time availability for the project.
- Coherence and adequacy among the research teams involved in the project expertise/experience and the objectives, activities, and goals defined for the project.
- Compatibility among the infrastructure, the support team, and the project research plan.
- Financial counterpart from the applying institution, as well as other existing grants to support the project activities.

The project assessment factors are as follows:

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	SUBCRITERIA	ITEM VALUE
Scientific productivity by the UA counterpart	Scientific productivity within the last 5 years.	20%
Scientific productivity by the responsible researcher from the applying institution	Scientific productivity within the last 3 years.	30%
Excellence level, quality, and reputation of the applying institution	Research impact, innovation, and social impact. http://www.scimagoir.com/rankings.php	20%
Research project	Research project, working plan, viability, and committed products.	30%

Scientific productivity:

The scientific productivity will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- The number of published or accepted articles in indexed journals. Submitted articles or bibliographic reviews will not be considered.
- The impact factor of the scientific journal where the article has been published.
- The number of citations.
- Applicant authorship.

The scientific productivity score will be calculated as follows:

1- 60% of this item correspond to:

$$\sum(n^{\circ} \text{ citations } \times \text{ AF}) \text{ article } 1 + (n^{\circ} \text{ citations } \times \text{ AF}) \text{ article } 2 + \dots = \text{ Score}$$

Where:

AF: Authorship Factor, with a value of one **(1)** for co-authoring or two **(2)** if applicant is the first or the corresponding author.

2- 40% remaining correspond to:

Percentage of published scientific articles in journals within the 10% of the highest impact in their respective research fields.

5.3.- Stage III – National and international assessment committee

The VRIP at the UA and the Research Director at the UA, through their Scientific Director, will select an assessment committee for this stage composed by national and international scientists with an outstanding reputation and expertise in the field of the proposals submitted in this call to obtain the grants.

This committee will be in charge of:

Assessing and analysing the eligible projects according to this call guidelines. Proposing to the VRIP at the UA a prioritized list of potential projects to be awarded according to an assigned score.

5.4.- Stage IV – VRIP approval at the UA

The Evaluation Committee members will handle to the VRIP at the UA the list of recommended proposals according to the obtained score. The VRIP at the UA will take the final decision.

This call could consider a waiting list. This waiting list will take place through the respective VRIP's administrative deed at the UA in the following cases: resignation of one of the grant beneficiaries or if one of them is unable to continue with the project; if the beneficiary does not sign the grant agreement within the deadlines established by these guidelines; or if there is budget available during this term.

VI.- CALL RESULTS

The list of approved applications to be funded by this call will be published at <https://investigacion.uautonoma.cl>. Respective results will be emailed to all applicants.

Replacement resources

Applicants can file a reconsideration request addressed to the VRIP at the UA within the five (5) business days after the results publication.

VII.- PROJECTS EXECUTION AND MONITORING

7.1.- Agreement signing

Once grants are awarded and accepted by the beneficiaries, the VRIP at the UA will provide a financing agreement to be signed by both parts. It will be signed by the responsible researcher, the UA counterpart, and the VRIP. This document will establish each part's rights and obligations, the project extent, and all the terms to ensure the fulfillment of this grant's purpose, as well as the correct use of the resources transferred by the VRIP at the UA to accomplish the established goals.

7.2.- Once awarded, the researchers will have to submit a report to the UA Institutional Scientific Ethics Committee. The project execution will rely upon the committee's approval.

7.3.- Project validity, execution period and resources transfer

The project will be executed once the VRIP at the UA approves all the administrative aspects regarding funding agreement. It must last **a year** at most.

Resources granted by the VRIP at the UA will be transferred to the researcher from the UA counterpart and will be delivered according to the UA administrative processes.

7.4.- Project follow-up and control: Technical and scientific reports delivery, and accountability

The UA counterpart must, firmly and in due course, submit the technical and/or scientific reports as well as the submission requirements as required by the dates and reporting guidelines.

7.4.1.- Technical reports and accountability reports

The UA counterpart must submit to the VRIP a final technical-scientific report within the 30 days after the project completion.

Accountability reports submitted to the VRIP at the UA must follow the UA administrative directions along with the standards and indications described in the corresponding guidelines for this call application. The responsible UA counterpart must have a bank account to transfer the resources. This bank account will also be the one where third parties or another UA fundings will be transferred.

7.4.2.- Manuscript delivery of the submitted scientific publication.

The UA counterpart must send a copy of the **manuscript submitted to the scientific journal** by the applying institution to the VRIP. This manuscript must include the project results and authorship from the corresponding UA research team members as detailed in section 2.3 and must be sent at the latest **within the following six (6) months after the project completion**. The VRIP will consider this project as accomplished when the UA counterpart informs the manuscript acceptance.

VIII.- RETRIBUTION

This project expects to generate a constructive national or international cooperation, including significant scientific results produced by the UA research team, as well as the corresponding authorship in a high-impact scientific journal publication (section 2.3).

The communication activities implementation such as talks and seminars, among others, are expected to be conducted to present the progress and final results. These activities would be addressed to representatives from the project's target public and/or audience suggested by the VRIP and the Sciences Communication Center at the UA in the context of the science dissemination.

IX.- UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE CHILE AFFILIATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Scientific productivity derived from projects funded by the UA such as publications articles, patents, books, lectures and others; as well as other events communication, and promotion ways, or research projects supported by this grant, must acknowledge and be affiliated to Universidad Autónoma de Chile, Chile. Scientific articles resulting from the supported projects must be published in high-impact scientific journals (section 2.3).

Each beneficiary is liable for obtaining the ethic and/or legal permissions necessary for the project execution.

X.- PROJECT MODIFICATION

During the project execution, the UA counterpart could submit, opportunely and with persuasive arguments, a request to the VRIP to modify the project in aspects including team members, redistribution of the granted benefits, and timeline for the

project execution. Those modifications cannot take place without the VRIP authorization at the UA.

Female responsible researchers from either institution whom, due to pregnancy, are on medical or maternity leave, or if having to deal with an illness of their child (younger than a year old), will be able to nominate an alternative researcher to be responsible for the project during their absence. For this, the responsible researcher will have to submit a request along with the medical leave document or medical certificate. Female researchers who need to use the maternity leave must clearly indicate it on the request. All these requests must be presented along with the respective birth certificate of the child. Once such certificates are submitted along with the suggested alternative researcher, the VRIP will decide their appropriateness and acceptability.

XI.- PROJECT COMPLETION (REGULAR AND ANTICIPATED)

Once the project timeline concludes, it will be considered completed by the VRIP once the objectives and results are fulfilled along with the technical and accounting reports approval.

11.1 Project monitoring

If the applying institution or the UA counterpart neither fulfil the obligations derived from the call guidelines nor meet the signed agreement, the VRIP at the UA may terminate the project anticipatedly requesting the grant refund, which may lead to corresponding legal actions if needed.

The VRIP at the UA will follow each project's set goals and the signed agreement and might demand more information at any stage of the project. Thus, the VRIP can request presentations from the proposal's responsible researcher, which must provide all the fair conditions for the monitoring.

XII.- GUIDELINES FULLFILLNESS AND INTERPRETATION

The VRIP at the UA reserves the right to interpret the sense and scope of these guidelines in case of doubts and/or conflicts derived from the call application. A committee will be established to validate a particular project in light of these guidelines if required by the responsible researcher. This committee will be constituted by the Vice-Chancellor of Research and Graduate Studies at the UA, the Director of Innovation and Transference at the UA, the President of the Institutional Scientific Ethics Committee at the UA and the Research Director UA.

The VRIP at the UA can verify the complete fulfillment of these guidelines' requirements at any time, either before signing or during the execution of the corresponding agreement. Also, the VRIP can verify the accuracy and completeness of the background records attached to the applications for this call as well as the backup documentation required. In case of inconsistencies, omissions and/or incompatibilities, the VRIP at the UA will declare the project inadmissible.

XIII.- RESTRICTIONS

13.1.- Staff members and authorities from the UA are not allowed to apply and participate in any stage of this call application and awarding to guarantee the administrative integrity compliancy considered in the current legal system, as well as the participants' equality principle.

13.2. Proposals must be submitted according to the application requirements.

13.3. Applications received after due date will not be accepted.

XIV.- CALL PUBLICATION AND CALENDAR

The VRIP at the UA will summon applicants to this call through their website <https://investigacion.uautonoma.cl>. Applicants will find in it the specific submission deadlines. Application guidelines will also be available at the website.

XV.- INQUIRIES

The VRIP at the UA will receive inquiries about this grant application at bridges@uautonoma.cl as detailed on the website <https://investigacion.uautonoma.cl> up to 5 days before this call closes.

XVI. DATES.

Opening: July 25th, 2018.

Closing: September 25th, 2018, at 18:00hrs (Chilean continental time)

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These guidelines were elaborated by the Research Direction at the UA, and reviewed by Prof. Dr. Iván Suazo-Galdames, Vice-Chancellor of Research and Graduate Studies at the UA. These guidelines were written using as reference the call applications from the Chilean National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT).