

1. Call Opening

1.1. Introduction

The Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG) and the Biomedical Research Institute of Lleida (IRBLleida) are pleased to announce a collaborative funding opportunity for innovative biomedical research projects. This joint initiative aims to foster synergy between the CRG's expertise in fundamental research and the IRBLleida's focus on basic, translational research and patient-centred investigations.

1.2. Summary

With a shared commitment to advancing biomedical knowledge and translating discoveries into clinical applications, the CRG and IRBLleida seek proposals that capitalize on the complementary strengths of both institutions. The CRG brings to the table its world-class research teams specializing in molecular and cellular biology, genomics, and systems biology. On the other hand, the IRBLleida boasts a wealth of translational and clinical research, including research groups deeply engaged in addressing healthcare challenges and developing solutions directly applicable to patient care.

2. Call Description

2.1. Scope

This collaborative effort acknowledges the inherent value in bridging the gap between basic science and clinical practice. By fostering interdisciplinary collaborations, this funding opportunity aims to catalyse transformative research that not only advances our understanding of fundamental biological processes but also accelerates the translation of these findings into tangible benefits for patients.

Proposed projects should embrace this interdisciplinary approach, leveraging the expertise of both institutions to address pressing biomedical questions or develop innovative diagnostic and therapeutic strategies. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear potential for impact on human health and disease.

Collaborative research projects between a minimum of one CRG and one IRBLleida group should eventually lead to new collaborations that are sustained after the completion of the project. Thus, the generation of research outputs should allow the collaborating groups to apply for more ambitious competitive national and international calls.

2.2. Funding & Payment

The CRG & IRBLleida will fund up to two projects of two years, with the aim of exploring new opportunities and building capacity to bring fundamental biological processes discoveries closer to the health sector and/or to the market.

Each project can receive a maximum funding amount of €40,000 (excluding overheads, with flexible usage), €20,000 for each researcher at the relevant institution. A detailed budget corresponding to the project's requirements should be incorporated into the proposal.

2.3. Duration & Important Dates

Call Opening: 26th of July 2024.

Call Deadline: 26th of September, 2024 at 11.59 p.m.

Estimated award decision: November 2024.

Starting date of the project: January 2025

Project duration: Until the end of 2026 (potential extension of 6 months, until June 2027)

3. Candidates profile

3.1. Eligibility candidates

- **Projects:** Should be co-led between Faculty of both institutions
- **Affiliation:** CRG researchers must be employed by CRG, either full-time or part-time (with part-time employment constituting at least 80% of a full-time equivalent). IRBLleida researchers must be employed full-time as members of the institute's groups.
- **Collaboration focus:** The project must clearly demonstrate the need and potential benefits of collaboration between researchers from CRG and IRBLleida, leveraging the unique strengths of both institutions (e.g., access to specific data, expertise, technologies).
- **Feasibility and timeline:** The proposed project should be feasible within the specified timeframe and budget (see below).
- **Ethical considerations:** The project must comply with all relevant ethical guidelines and regulations for research involving human subjects, animal models, data privacy, and intellectual property.

4. Application & Award Decision

4.1. Proposal Submission

To participate in the call, the candidates will submit the following documentation in English using the [ProBiGene2024 application form](#).

- Curriculum vitae of the two co-PIs of the proposal including up to 5 papers from the last 5 years with a short narrative explaining why they are exciting.
- A detailed project proposal not exceeding 8 pages (single line spacing with Calibri 11), including references and figures/images, should be submitted using the ProBiGene2024 application form. The proposal will include the following points:
 - Abstract
 - Background and state of the art with references
 - Goals & Objectives.
 - Impact of the Project:
 - and potential synergies delivered through the collaboration
 - Technology and/or knowledge transfer potential
 - Work plan including methodology.
 - Prospects of extending collaboration beyond the project
 - Requested budget, maximum € 40,000 distributed in:
 - Personnel: Directly involved in the proposal (may not exceed 50% of the total grant requested).
 - Consumables

4.2. Evaluation & Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a panel consisting of members of the CRG and IRB Lleida faculty without a conflict of interest as well as external evaluators with a background in translational research.

The evaluation of each proposal will focus on the scientific excellence, the track record of the two Co-PIs, the feasibility, and the potential impact of the project. Proposals will be scored based on the following detailed criteria:

1. **Scientific-technical aspects of the proposal** (Total: 50 points)
 - **Expertise of the groups on the topic** (20 points): Evaluation of whether the research groups have made significant contributions in the field of the project.
 - **Methodological rigor** (30 points): Assessment of whether the research design is sound, the methodology is well-articulated, and the proposed techniques are appropriate.

2. **Potential impact** (20 points): Consideration of how significant the research's potential contribution is to advancing the field or addressing a critical clinical or biomedical problem.
3. **Synergy** (20 points): Analysis of how the proposal demonstrates the leveraging of the complementary strengths of CRG and IRBLleida researchers to create added value that exceeds what each institution could achieve alone. Showcase active engagement of collaborators in the project beyond merely providing samples or secondary contributions.
4. **Prospects for extended collaboration** (10 points): Assesses the potential for continuing the collaboration beyond the project's duration, including plans for future joint activities, funding opportunities, or further research developments.

4.3 Submission guidelines

All proposals must be submitted through [IRBLleida webpage](#), using the standard form, by the submission deadline. The Strategy and Funding team at CRG (saf@crg.eu) and the Grants and Innovation Office at IRBLleida (projects@irbllleida.cat) are the contact points in charge of the call.

For projects with ethical concerns, the project leader must include all relevant permissions and documentation with the proposal, or provide a status update on pending requests and expected clearance date. Projects that may not obtain necessary permissions by January 2026 risk rejection.

5. Beneficiaries' obligations

5.1. Project Outputs

All projects must properly acknowledge the support of CRG and IRBLleida. In any oral or written communication about the research project or results obtained from the grant, the main researcher (or the presenter of the results) is required to specifically mention the support from both institutions CRG and IRBLleida using the logos whenever possible.

5.2. Project's follow up

One year into the project, the PIs must submit a one-page report outlining progress to the internal Grant Office. Upon project completion, they are required to present the research outcomes, detailing the achievement of the objectives and outputs initially proposed.

6. Other Clauses

Participation in this call for proposals implies knowledge and acceptance of all its terms and conditions, including:

6.1. Proposal Documentation Confidentiality

The documentation associated with the proposals will be treated as confidential information, being obliged to maintain the confidentiality of the information all persons involved in the evaluation and assessment of the proposals, and may be used for informative and dissemination purposes, subject to prior consent of the applicants.

6.2. Terms and Conditions, Industrial and Intellectual Property

The intellectual or industrial property and exploitation rights that may derive from the implementation of the granted project will belong to CRG and IRBLleida, recognizing as authors or inventors the people who have conceived and implemented these ideas and applying the intellectual and industrial property regulations of CRG and IRBLleida.