

1. Call Opening

1.1. Introduction

The Institute for Biomedical Research of Lleida – Dr. Pifarré Foundation (IRBLleida) opens the 6th call for research initiation grants. The communication of this call will be made through the website, social networks, on the distribution list of the corporate email by subscription of IRBLleida, as well as on other web portals intended for this purpose.

1.2. Summary

The aim of this grant is to attract or retain candidates who want to develop a PhD so that they can apply for competitive grants with the IRBLleida research group for the duration of this grant.

2. Call Description

2.1. Scope

This grant is aimed at researchers who have completed a bachelor's or master's degree that gives access to a doctoral programme in the field of biomedicine at a Spanish university and who want to join an IRBLleida research group.

2.2. Funding & Payment

One grant is offered through open competition. A full-time contract will be financed according to IRBLleida salary tables in the category of researcher in training (*Researcher in training R0*). The employment contract will be formalised between the selected candidate and IRBLleida.

2.3. Duration and Important Dates

The expected start date of the contracts is from November 2026 and no later than April 2027. Since contracts cannot be extended beyond December 2027, any contract signed after 1 January 2027 will have a duration less than the maximum of one year allowed by the call, which will reduce the total amount of aid in proportion to the duration of the contract.

Opening of the call: 29th July 2026

Submission deadline: 15 October 2026

Estimated provisional resolution: November 2026

Estimated final resolution: November 2026

3. Candidates Profile

3.1. Eligibility

The eligibility requirements for candidates are as follows:

- To be in possession of a bachelor's degree, engineer, university graduate with a degree of at least 300 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits, or university master's degree, or equivalent, on the date of acceptance of the grant that gives access to a doctoral program in the field of biomedicine.
- Not be in possession of a doctoral degree.

The eligibility requirements for the scientific supervisor are as follows:

- They must be in possession of the PhD.
- Must be affiliated with IRBLleida, either through a contract with the Institute or by being associated through a specific agreement with its contracting institutions (UdL, ICS or GSS). This affiliation must be at least 6 months old prior to the closing date of the call and must remain valid throughout the researcher's contract.
- Belong to an IRBLleida research group at the time of applying for the grant and for the entire duration of the contract.
- Be PI of an active competitive project in the field of biomedicine, both on the closing date of the call and at the start of the predoctoral contract. Eligible projects must be funded by the Instituto de Salud Carlos III (ISCIII/AES) or by the Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI). Given IRBLleida's field of study, AEI-funded projects must fall within the thematic areas of Biomedicine (BME) or Biosciences and Biotechnology (BIO). In case of doubt regarding the biomedical focus of the project, the advice of the external Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) will be sought.

3.2. Incompatibilities

Each candidate may submit only one application under this call, and each scientific supervisor may support only one candidate. In addition, the predoctoral contract awarded under this call is incompatible with any other employment.

The predoctoral contract awarded under this call is incompatible with any other employment contract held by the predoctoral researcher.

4. Application and Award Decision

4.1. Proposal Submission

The required documentation must be submitted through the link on the IRBLleida website in the section on intramural calls (<https://www.irblleida.org/en/intramural-research-calls/>).

To formalize the application, candidates must submit:

- Completed and signed application form (available on the IRBLleida website, in the research section – intramural calls) including the scientific-technical proposal, with the corresponding declaration of responsibility duly signed by the candidate and the Principal Investigator. A summary of the scientific background of the last seven years (or extensions as described in Annex I) of both the candidate and the responsible PI must be provided in the standardized format available on the IRBLleida website.
- Academic certificate for the Bachelor's and Master's degrees, accrediting the completion of the required training to access a doctoral program, with a minimum of 300 ECTS credits completed at an official university at the time of submitting the application. The certificate must list the subjects taken during the respective degrees and the grades obtained. If the candidate has not completed the Master's degree by the call's closing date, documentation proving its completion and the attainment of 300 ECTS credits must be submitted upon acceptance of the grant, if the candidate is selected. In such cases, the Bachelor's degree will be counted at 100% during the evaluation process.
- Applicants who have completed all or part of their bachelor's, undergraduate, diploma or master's studies outside the Spanish university system must include academic transcripts along with calculated equivalency declarations in accordance with the guidelines from the Ministry of Universities: [Grade equivalency calculation](#).
- Curriculum Vitae (CVA) of the candidate in FECYT format.
- Curriculum Vitae (CVA) of the principal investigator in FECYT format.
- Document accrediting the candidate's stay (or stays) in external research institutions. This document must state the start and end date of the stay, as well as its objective and the tasks carried out by the candidate. This document must be signed by the person in charge of the laboratory or service where it was carried out.
- Letter of support from the principal investigator.
- Supporting documentation for the candidate's and principal investigator merits listed in their CVA and application form for evaluation (excluding project participation and publications)

- If a stay in another centre is planned for the duration of the grant, it must be included (with date, duration and authorization from the recipient centre) and justified in the proposed research work.

4.2. Evaluation Criteria

The IRBLleida Projects Unit will verify that the candidates meet the requirements of the call and will send the list of candidates who meet these requirements to the Internal Scientific Evaluation Commission (CIAC). The candidatures will be evaluated by members of the CIAC without conflict of interest, who will issue a report with the corresponding score for each of the candidates. In the event that a majority of the members of the CIAC present a conflict of interest to evaluate the call, the evaluation will be outsourced through independent experts.

IRBLleida has adhered to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Evaluation (DORA) with the conviction that we are at an optimal time to move towards a new culture of evaluation of research activity in all diversity. These criteria should be applied during the CVA assessment.

A) Candidate evaluation (55%)

Evaluation of the candidate (55 points out of 100 for the overall evaluation)			
Description			Maximum Score
Predoctoral university studies	Average Bachelor's Degree (80%) Average Master's Degree (20%)		35
	*If the 300 ECTS credits have been obtained without taking a Master's degree or a Master's degree is currently being taken without definitive grades, 100% of the average grade of the Bachelor's Degree will be counted.		
Other quantifiable merits	Publications (last 7 years)	DORA Criteria	5
	Academic stays (outside the country of completion of the Bachelor's/Master's Degree)	Between 3 and 6 months: 5 More than 6 months: 10	10
	Non-academic research stays	Extracurricular internships of ≥ 300h accredited	3

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	Extra merits (1 point per item)	Participation in dissemination activities, congresses, scientific talks, specialised health training, end-of-degree awards, end-of-master's degree awards, training activity or similar	2
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B) Principal Investigator evaluation (35%)

Evaluation of the Principal Investigator (35 points out of 100 for the overall evaluation)			
Description			Maximum Score
Scientific production in the last 7 years	Publications	DORA Criteria	10
Competitive projects of more than €10,000 active in the last 7 years	Only PI (HR, SGR groups or network grants will not be considered)	IREP: 2 Autonomic: 3 National: 5 International: 10	10
Supervision of Predoctoral Personnel	Theses supervised in the last 7 years	Defended thesis: 5 Ongoing enrolled theses: 2.5	7,5
Transfer Capacity	Licensed or registered patents, active in the last 7 years	Licensed: 7.5 Registered/Active: 5	7,5

C) Science policy (10%)

Extra points will be awarded to those projects in which the PI meets one or more of the following conditions:

Scientific policy (10 points out of 100 for the overall evaluation)			
Description			Maximum Score
Young Researchers or Emerging Group at IRBLleida	The PI belongs to an emerging group or is 45 years old or younger in the year of the call (including any extensions described in Annex I).	Yes/No	5
Projects requested by the PI as coordinator or WP Leader in the framework of HORIZON EUROPE (or H2020)	HE/H2020 projects requested in the last 7 years with a minimum budget of €50,000 assigned to IRBLleida.	WP Leader: 1 Coordinator: 3	3
Participation in Institute Life and/or Scientific Outreach Activities	Participation in the last 7 years in IRBLleida commissions/committees, Big Friday seminars, Area activities, etc. Institutional outreach activity: nit de la recerca, institutional visits, schools...	0.25 pt per activity	1
IRBLleida affiliation in publications	All publications submitted by the Principal Investigator (PI) must cite IRBLleida as the affiliation—only if the PI was employed by or affiliated with IRBLleida at the time of publication.	Yes/No	1

4.3. Award Decision

Once the candidate evaluation process has been completed, the CIAC will send the prioritization of the candidatures and the evaluation reports of each of the candidates to the director of IRBLleida (or delegate). The prioritization list will indicate the candidate or candidates who have been selected and those who remain on the reserve list. The director of IRBLleida (or delegate) will issue a provisional resolution of the candidate(s) selected in this call and a prioritised list of candidates in reserve. After the provisional resolution, candidates will have 5 working days to submit possible allegations to the resolution by sending an email to projects@irblleida.org. Once the allegations have been resolved, the final resolution will be made public.

Within one month of the publication of the final resolution, the selected candidates proposed as beneficiaries must sign a document accepting the grant. This document will contain the start date. If the proposed person does not sign the acceptance document within this period, it will be understood that the candidate declines the contract. In special cases, the IRBLleida Management may authorise variations to the date of incorporation, provided that the beneficiary has requested it in writing and the reasons have been positively assessed by the CIAC.

Any post-acceptance waiver must be notified in writing to IRBLleida (postaward@irblleida.cat).

5. Beneficiaries' obligations

5.1. Project Follow-up

During the duration of the grant, the beneficiaries of this call must meet the same requirements for attending the IRBLleida research seminars as the students of the UdL's Doctoral Programme in Health.

Throughout the duration of the grant, beneficiaries must send applications (together with the group in which they are studying the grant), to a minimum of 3 calls for predoctoral grants and, at least, one of these applications must be a competitive public call. The submission of these applications will be communicated to the IRBLleida Projects Department, by email to the address postaward@irblleida.cat, at the same time as they are made.

5.2. Results, Publications and Content

The candidate's Scientific Supervisor must notify the Innovation Department of IRBLleida, by email to the address: innovacio@irblleida.cat, of any communication and/or dissemination of the results of the research projects subject to this call, whether

oral or written, in the form of an article, poster, clinical practice guide, etc., national or international, before it occurs, so that adequate protection of intellectual property can be guaranteed. • Intellectual and/or industrial.

The Scientific Supervisor must follow the recommendations for the correct identification of the scientific production of the IRBLleida.

In any communication and/or publication resulting from the research work carried out during the contract, it must be stated that "it has received funding from the IRBLleida Intramural Research Programme (IREP) through a research initiation grant". The Scientific Supervisor must express the commitment to these requirements by signing the application for the grant.

5.3. Final Reporting

During the last two months of the grant, the beneficiary must give a seminar within the "Friday Seminars" series organized by IRBLleida. The call and the tests of this seminar must be attached to the final report.

Within a maximum period of one month after the end of the grant, the scientific supervisor must send to the IRBLleida Projects Unit by email (postaward@irblleida.cat), a final report with the scientific objectives achieved as a result of the research work of the beneficiaries during the period in which they have benefited from the grant. as well as the list of publications and communications to which these results have given rise, including those that are in the process of publication and those pending publication. The template of the final report can be found in [the section of intramural calls of the IRBLleida](#), within the call itself.

6. Other Clauses

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

6.1. Confidentiality of Documentation

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

6.2. Terms and Conditions, Industrial and Intellectual Property

The intellectual or industrial property rights and exploitation rights that may arise from the implementation of the granted idea will belong to IRBLleida, recognizing as authors or inventors the people who have conceived and put into practice these ideas and applying the intellectual and industrial property regulations of IRBLleida.

6.3. Personal Data Collection Purpose and Processing Information

Responsible party: Institut de Recerca Biomèdica de Lleida Fundació Dr. Pifarré (IRBLleida).

Purpose: Management of calls and, where appropriate, the awarding and delivery of the prize.

Legitimation: The legal basis of the processing is the carrying out a selection process to provide financial support for research projects.

Addressees: The data will not be transferred to third parties, except in the legal obligations established by law.

Rights: Access, rectification, and deletion of data, as well as other rights, as explained in the additional information.

Additional information: You can consult additional and detailed information on Data Protection on our website <http://www.irbllleida.org/en/legal-notice/>.

The data provided by applicants will be incorporated into the processing system owned by IRBLleida in order to manage and resolve the selection process, and will be processed in a lawful, fair, transparent, adequate, relevant, limited, accurate, and up-to-date manner, in compliance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and Organic Law 3/2018, of 5 December (LOPDGDD). The legal basis for the data processing is the fulfilment of a legal obligation on the part of the controller reinforced with the consent of the data subject.

This data must be kept for the period strictly necessary to fulfil the aforementioned purpose, respecting in all cases the period determined by these rules and regulations governing the call for applications and the applicable archiving regulations. Specific data may be communicated to third parties in the public or private sphere, either because the intervention of these entities during the aid management process may be necessary because it is correctly resolved, or because it is provided for in a regulation with the status of law. As long as the interested party does not communicate otherwise, it will be understood that their details have not been modified and that they undertake to notify the IRBLleida of any variation. Applicants may exercise their rights of access, rectification, limitation of processing, suppression, opposition to the processing of their data or exercise their right to portability by writing to IRBLleida (Avda. Rovira Roure, 80, 25198 Lleida), to the e-mail address

protecciodedades@irblleida.cat or to the IRBLleida's Data Protection Delegate, dpd@ticsalutsocial.cat. You must attach a photocopy of your ID card or sign the e-mail with a recognized electronic signature. In the event of disagreement with the processing, you also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Catalan Data Protection Authority.

7. Annexes

7.1. Annex I

In cases where the evaluation of any type of merit is subject to a defined assessment period, the time frame will be adjusted to exclude the proportional duration of interruptions due to the reasons listed below, calculated according to the following criteria:

- A) Periods of leave related to maternity or paternity, adoption, or foster care, taken in accordance with the protected situations recognized under the General Social Security Regime. An extension in weeks will be applied, calculated as 4 times the number of weeks of leave taken per child.
- B) Temporary incapacity due to serious illness or accident of the applicant, with a medical leave of three months or more. A one-year extension will be applied.
- C) Temporary incapacity during pregnancy due to pregnancy-related causes. An extension in weeks will be applied, calculated as 4 times the number of weeks of leave. This extension may be added, where applicable, to the one indicated in section A.
- D) Care for dependent persons, as established in Law 39/2006 of December 14, on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for People in a Situation of Dependency. An extension in weeks will be applied, calculated as 4 times the number of weeks of activity as a non-professional caregiver.

Temporary incapacity situations and periods of time dedicated to full-time leave due to gestation, pregnancy, risk during gestation, pregnancy or breastfeeding, birth, maternity, paternity, adoption for the purpose of adoption or foster care, or accumulated breastfeeding leave taken as full working days, or analogous situations related to the above, as well as the use of full-time leave for reasons of work-life balance or care of minors, family members, or dependent persons, and the time dedicated to leave of absence for the care of a child, a family member, or due to gender-based violence during the duration of the contract, shall interrupt the calculation of the maximum duration of the contract.

All the leaves must be correctly credited at the time of submission.