

1. Call Opening

1.1. Introduction

The Institute for Biomedical Research of Lleida Foundation - Dr. Pifarré (IRBLleida) opens the third call for fellowships for Predoctoral Researchers. This call is financed with funds from the Lleida Provincial Council and IRBLleida. The call will be announced through the IRBLleida website, social media channels and corporate dissemination list, as well as on other web portals intended for this purpose. The framework regulations for this call are as follows:

- Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March, approving the Statute of Predoctoral Research Staff in Training.
- Article 21 and first and eighteenth additional provisions of Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation.
- Royal Decree 2720/1998, of 18 December, which implements article 15 of the Workers' Statute on fixed-term contracts.
- Article 15 of Royal Legislative Decree 2/2015, of 23 October, approving the revised text of the Workers' Statute Law.

1.2. Summary

The fellowships will consist of the formalization of an employment contract, under the modality of a predoctoral contract. The purpose of the contract will be to carry out research tasks, within the scope of a specific new project, with full-time dedication. The contract will be for a fixed term and may not exceed four years, except in the cases described in Annex I.

2. Call Description

2.1. Scope

The purpose of this call is to promote the retention and attraction of research talent at the predoctoral stage (R1), through the award of 4 fellowships, allocated under principles of transparency, objectivity, and competitive merit, aimed at completing a doctoral thesis within one of IRBLleida's research groups.

Applications submitted under this call must be linked to the candidate's doctoral thesis in the field of biomedicine, carried out within one of IRBLleida's research groups, and under the supervision of a single researcher (for the purposes of this application) who meets the requirements specified in Section 3.1.

2.2. Funding & Payment

An employment contract will be formalized with the beneficiaries of the fellowship, which will have the following characteristics:

- The contract will be formalized between the predoctoral research staff in training, as the employee, and IRBLleida, as the employer.
- The contract must be accompanied by a letter of admission to the doctoral program issued by the unit responsible for the program or by the doctoral school, along with proof of payment of the enrollment fee. This documentation must be updated annually.
- The contracted individual's gross annual remuneration will be determined by the current and publicly available IRBLleida salary tables for the corresponding category.
- If the contract is interrupted due to any of the situations described in Annex I, it will be extended for a period equal to the interruption.
- The fellowship beneficiary will be directly awarded an International Mobility Grant for Predoctoral Research Staff of IRBLleida under the IREP program, which may be used during the final two years of the predoctoral contract.
- The grant beneficiary must adhere to the regulations of the International Mobility Grants for Predoctoral Research Staff of IRBLleida without needing to undergo the selection process.

2.3. Duration & Important Dates

The contract will have a maximum duration of 48 months, except for the cases described in Annex I, with full-time dedication (37.5 hours per week).

The duration of the contract is conditional upon the beneficiary's continued enrollment in the doctoral program. In any case, the contract will be terminated either upon the candidate's attainment of the doctoral degree or after 48 months have elapsed since the contract was signed.

The start date of the contracts will be January 1st, 2027.

Opening date of the call: 29 July 2026

Deadline for applications: 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, engineering degree, 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 fellowship.
- Not be in possession of a doctoral degree.
- Be enrolled or in possession of a letter of admission, at the time of acceptance of the fellowship, in one of the doctoral programs in the field of biomedicine, eligible for this fellowship.
- Not have enjoyed, prior to the application, any predoctoral contract.

The requirements for the thesis 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 entire duration of the thesis project.
- Belong to an IRBLleida research group at the time of applying for the fellowship.
- 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

The contracts will be incompatible with the existence of any other employment contract held by the predoctoral researcher.

Each thesis supervisor can only appear in one application in this call. The submission of more than one application with the same thesis supervisor will be excluded from all such applications.

PIs who obtained a contract in the 2025 (second edition) or 2024 (first edition) call cannot participate in the Four-year PhD Fellowships 2026 call.

Predocctoral contracts are compatible with teaching activities, provided that these activities do not interfere with the researcher's training. In accordance with Article 4.2 of Royal Decree 103/2019 of 1 March, teaching duties may not exceed 180 hours throughout the entire predocctoral contract or 60 hours in any academic year.

4. Application & Award Decision

4.1. Proposal Submission

All applications for this call must be submitted through the link provided for this purpose on the IRBLleida website in the section on intramural calls, and must contain:

- A completed standardized application form, including the scientific-technical proposal, with the corresponding declaration of responsibility duly signed by the candidate and the Principal Investigator (PI) who will act as thesis supervisor.
- 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 fellowship, 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 thesis supervisor 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.
- Supporting documentation of pre-admission or enrollment in a Doctoral Program in the field of biomedicine, within the Health Doctoral Program. If the candidate does not have this document at the closing date of the call, it must be submitted upon acceptance of the fellowship, if the candidate is selected.

- Acceptance letter from the thesis supervisor.
- Supporting documentation for the candidate's and thesis supervisor merits listed in their CVA for evaluation (excluding project participation and publications)
- If the thesis supervisor or the candidate has been affected by any of the circumstances described in Annex I, supporting documentation must be provided in order to extend the evaluation period of their scientific merits by a duration equivalent to the documented period of leave.

4.2. Evaluation Criteria

The IRBLleida Projects Unit will verify that candidates meet the eligibility criteria for the call and will send the list of eligible candidates to external evaluators. Subsequently, the external evaluation process will be endorsed by the Internal Scientific Evaluation Committee (CIAC).

IRBLleida has adhered to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), with the conviction that we are at an optimal moment to advance toward a new research evaluation culture that embraces diversity. These principles will be applied during the evaluation of the CVAs.

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	3
	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
	Other research stays	Extracurricular internships of ≥ 300h accredited	5
	Extra merits (1 point per item)	Participation in dissemination activities.	2

		congresses, scientific talks, specialized health training, end-of-degree awards, end-of-master's degree awards, training activity or similar	
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B) Evaluation of the thesis supervisor, and adequacy to the supervision of the implementation of the proposal (35%)

Evaluation of the publications and scientific production of the thesis supervisor in the last 7 years*, will consider as main authors those listed first and last on the manuscript, as well as corresponding authors. The supervisor's ability to secure funding through competitive public projects and the alignment of active projects with this proposal will also be assessed.

An additional 20 points will be awarded if the thesis supervisor is the PI of a "Generación de Conocimiento 2024" (AEI 2024) or a "Proyecto de I+D+i en salud" (AES 2024), provided that, at the closing date of the call, the supervisor has not been granted (either provisionally or definitively) a FI-AGAUR Joan Oró 2025 or 2026 fellowship, a "Personal Predoctoral en Formació 2026", a PFIS 2025 fellowship, or a fellowship associated with this project. This 20-point bonus is tied to the project and may only be awarded to one of the co-PIs, if more than one exists. Finally, the thesis supervisor training capacity and knowledge transfer activities will also be considered.

*For the calculation of the 7-year period that will be considered for the evaluation of the merits of the thesis supervisor, the situations in Annex I will be considered.

Evaluation of the Thesis supervisor (35 points out of 100 for the overall evaluation)

Description			Maximum Score
Scientific production in the last 7 years	Publications	DORA Criteria	5
Competitive projects of more than €10,000 active in the last 7 years	Only as PI (HR, SGR groups or network grants will not be considered)	IREP: 1 Autonomic: 1.5 National: 2.5 International: 5	5
National projects	The thesis supervisor is a PI of a PI24 or AEI24 grant without FI-AGAUR 25 or 26, pFIS25, FPI24 or UdL 26 fellowships associated with the project.		20

Supervision of Predoctoral Personnel	Theses supervised in the last 7 years	Defended thesis: 2 Ongoing enrolled theses: 1	2.5
Transfer Capacity	Licensed or registered patents, active in the last 7 years	Licensed: 2.5 Registered/Active: 1.25	2.5

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 in 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 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

After the external evaluation process and its validation by the CIAC, a list will be presented to the director of IRBLleida (or delegate) that will include the selected candidates and the candidates in reserve. The director (or delegate) will issue a provisional award resolution detailing the selected candidates and the prioritized reserves. After the provisional resolution, applicants will have 5 working days to submit possible allegations to the provisional resolution by sending an email to projects@irblleida.cat. The allegations will be studied by the evaluation panel. 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 must sign a document accepting the fellowship. Failure to accept the position within this period will be considered a resignation. Exceptions to the start date beyond 1st January 2027 may be granted by the IRBLleida management, by written request addressed to the projects department (projects@irblleida.cat), potentially subject to evaluation by the CIAC.

If the UdL Grants 2026 Predoctoral Fellowships are granted for the same project, the thesis supervisor must resign to the IRBLleida fellowship

Any post-acceptance waiver must be notified in writing to IRBLleida (postaward@irblleida.cat). If the resignation occurs within the first six months of the contract, the next unfunded candidate on the initial priority list with a score ≥ 75 points, will be able to take up the scholarship for the remaining duration.

5. Beneficiaries' obligations

5.1. Project Follow-up

The doctoral student must submit documentary evidence of any training received or research stay carried out during the development of the thesis by email to postaward@irblleida.cat.

The thesis supervisors must promptly report temporary or permanent absences of the doctoral student or any other eventuality that occurs related to the worker. Likewise, they must notify the completion of the doctoral thesis to the IRBLleida Projects Department (postaward@irblleida.cat).

- Annual reports: the beneficiary of the grant must submit an annual report (every June), following the standard model for this purpose, summarizing the main scientific milestones achieved during the period to which the report refers (maximum length of 1 page). In addition, you will have to submit a list of those activities you have carried out within the framework of the grant (attendance at

conferences, presentations, training, etc.). In the case of beneficiaries enrolled in doctoral studies at the UdL, they may submit the annual evaluation report that is presented at doctoral schools to replace the monitoring report detailed above. Failure to submit the annual monitoring reports or the negative result of the evaluation reports of the doctoral programme may result in the termination of the contract.

- The beneficiary doctoral student is required to present two seminars of the scientific program "Friday Seminars". The first before the end of the second year of the contract and the second, before the last semester of the fourth year. In addition, you must participate in other mentoring activities approved by IRBLleida.

5.2. Change of Thesis Supervisor

The possibility of requesting a change of the thesis supervisor is only contemplated if extraordinary situations occur that affect the proper development of the beneficiary's doctoral thesis. These situations include the loss of the supervisor's assignment/contract with the IRBLleida or conflicts between the candidate and the thesis supervisor.

The IRBLleida management reserves the right to assess the relevance of the request for the change of the thesis supervisor. If the request is considered to be in the best interests of the candidate, this application will be submitted to the CCI and, if recommended, may be approved by IRBLleida management.

5.3. Results, Publications and Content

The material that is made public within the framework of the project linked to the aid of this call, as well as any dissemination action in which the beneficiary of the grant participates, must include a mention of the internal funding of the *Diputació de Lleida* ("This work has received funding from the *Diputació de Lleida* – La força dels municipis") and IRBLleida ("This work has received funding from the IRBLleida Intramural Research Program"). The thesis supervisors responsible for each predoctoral researcher must communicate, prior to dissemination, to the IRBLleida Innovation Office: innovacio@irblleida.cat the material to be disseminated in order to assess its potential protection.

5.4. Final Reporting

Final report: the doctoral student beneficiary of the grant must submit a final report (the last month of the year in which the grant ends), following the standard model for this purpose, which includes a summary of the achievement of the initial objectives of the project through the scientific development carried out (maximum length of 3

pages). In addition, a list of attendance/presentations to congresses and scientific publications carried out within the framework of the grant will be delivered.

Submit a PDF copy of the final doctoral thesis document once it has been defended, and report the grade obtained.

All this documentation must be sent to postaward@irbllleida.cat.

5.5. Working Group and Technical Team HR Excellence in Research

The beneficiaries of the 4-year Predoctoral Fellowships at IRBLleida must join the Working Group and the Technical Team of the HR Excellence in Research, as well as attend the corresponding meetings.

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 people 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.irblleida.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 pregnancy, pregnancy-related risk 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 periods of leave must be duly documented at the time of submission.