Frequently asked questions for applicants to the Beatriu de Pinós postdoctoral fellowship call (BP 2024).

Attention: The answers given in this document have been written with the aim of being simplified and understandable, and do not replace the rules established in the regulations of the BP 2024 call.

CONTENTS:

1. General information

1.1 What are the Beatriu de Pinós grants?
The BP program grants funding to hire postdoctoral researchers and incorporate them into the Catalan science and technology system.

1.2 Who can apply for these grants?
- Catalan universities
- Research centres
- Hospital foundations
- The three major infrastructures: Alba Synchrotron, Barcelona Supercomputing Center and National Center for Genomic Analysis

1.3 How long do these grants last?
The duration of the grants is 3 years.

1.4 Which research topics are funded by these grants?
All areas of knowledge can be funded. Candidates are free to choose their research project.

1.5 What expenses do these grants cover?
- Salary and Social Security (employer's contribution) of the contracted researcher.
- Amount for compensation at the end of the contract.
- Additional grant (12,000 euros) for training activities, conferences, research material, stays, etc.

2. Responsible researcher

2.1 Who is the responsible researcher for the application?
This is the researcher who will supervise the candidate's research activities during the three years of the grant and who must have an employment relationship with the university or research center.

2.2 What requirements must be met by the responsible researchers?
On the deadline for submitting applications (first stage), they must have a statutory or employment affiliation or membership agreement with the beneficiary entity. This affiliation must guarantee the supervision of the candidate during the three years of the fellowship. Part-time staff, staff on leave of absence, visiting lecturers and emeritus lecturers are considered not to meet this requirement.

2.3 How is this requirement verified?
The host institution must certify compliance with this requirement at the time of validating the applications submitted by the candidates (second stage).

2.4 If the responsible researcher has a fixed-term employment contract of less than three years but the organisation has a firm commitment to extend the contract, does he/she meet the requirements?
The institutions can decide, according to their internal procedures, if they consider valid the applications presented by the responsible researchers in this situation. Therefore, AGAUR will be guided by the information provided by the organisation.

2.5 Is it possible to have more than one responsible researcher at the host institution?
Not. Only one responsible researcher can be included in each application.

2.6 Can the responsible researcher submit more than one application to the BP 2024 call with different candidates?
No, they can only submit one application.

2.7 Is it possible to carry out the BP postdoc in two or more host institutions that focus on different complementary topics?
It is not possible to have two host institutions. Short-term stays in other institutions can be carried out, as long as the total time outside the host entity does not exceed 9 months in the 3 years of the grant.

3. Candidate

3.1 What requirements must candidates meet?
   a) Have obtained the doctoral degree between 1 January 2017 and 31 December 2022. These deadlines are more flexible when candidates meet certain requirements, defined in question 3.2.
   b) Have, by the deadline for submission of applications (first stage), a minimum of two years of postdoctoral experience outside Spain.
   c) Comply with the following mobility rule: not have resided or worked in Spain for more than 12 months during the last 3 years prior to the closing date for submission

of applications (first stage). To calculate these 12 months, holiday periods or short-term stays are not taken into account.

3.2 Which situations entail more flexibility in the dates for obtaining the doctoral degree?
The period for obtaining the doctoral degree can be between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2022 if any of the following cases are proved during this period:
- Have taken a period of maternity or paternity leave.
- Have been in charge of children under 6 years of age.
- Have been in charge of people with a legally recognised physical, mental or sensory disability.
- Having suffered a serious illness or accident that requires major surgery or treatment in a hospital and that causes temporary incapacity for the person's usual occupation for a continuous period of at least 6 months.
- Have recognized refugee status according to the 1951 Geneva Convention.
- Have suffered any of the situations provided for in article 1 of Organic Law 1/2004, of 28 December, on comprehensive protection measures against gender violence.
- Have a recognised degree of disability equal to or greater than 33%.

3.3 What activities are recognised as postdoctoral experience outside Spain in order to meet the requirement of the call?
The following activities carried out outside Spain can be included in the calculation of two years of postdoctoral experience:
- Postdoctoral contracts in research centres or universities.
- Contracts in other entities (companies, NGOs, public administration...) as long as the main activity has been research or innovation.
- Research stays of medium or long duration (at least 30 consecutive days) without an employment relationship between the researcher and the organisation. This stay must have been formalised in accordance with the organisation's own procedures. If the BP grant is awarded, a letter certifying the stay will be required.
- In order to meet the requirements of this call for applications, post-doctoral experience at the same institution where the doctorate was completed will be considered.

3.4 How is the mobility rule verified?
AGAUR staff will review the information provided in the table "Postdoctoral experience and countries of residence" on page 2 of the annex to the application. If any doubt arises regarding compliance with the mobility rule, they will contact the applicant to clarify it. Subsequently, candidates who have obtained a BP grant must submit letters or documents accrediting the postdoctoral stays declared jointly with the acceptance document.

3.5 Is there a nationality requirement?
Candidates of any nationality can apply.

3.6 Is there any age limit?
There is no age limit.

3.7 If the candidate is benefiting or has benefited from a Beatriu de Pinós grant in the past, can they apply for this call?
Candidates who have already benefited (fully or partially) from a Beatriu de Pinós fellowship are not eligible to apply in a new call for applications. They can apply if they were awarded a Beatriu de Pinós grant in a previous call, but they resigned or did not join the host institution.

3.8 Can a candidate submit more than one application in the BP 2024 call?
Only one application per candidate is allowed. If the system detects the entry of two applications with matching data for the candidate, it will automatically archive the first one.

4. Application preparation and submission

4.1 Who must submit the application? Which is the deadline?
Both the candidate and the responsible researcher can submit the application during the first phase of the period for application submissions (first stage).

4.2 What is the format of the application?
The application consists of two elements:
   a) A form that must be completed *online* through the [Procedures portal](). This form asks for personal data of the candidate and the responsible researcher, as well as basic information about the research proposal. In addition, different boxes must also be filled in and ticked to check compliance with call requirements.
   b) An annex document. This is the document that the evaluators will review to score the proposal. It contains information on the CV of the candidate and the host research group, the research plan and training proposal, the impact and the communication activities. The last section asks for information on the possible ethical implications of the project and is not assessed by evaluators. The annex document, once completed, must be saved in PDF format and must be attached to the application form, in the corresponding section.

4.3 What language must be used to draft the application?
The use of English is recommended, although applications written in Catalan and Spanish are also accepted. It is mandatory to use the same language throughout the application.

4.4 How should I choose the section and area of knowledge for my research project?
In the application form, you must choose one of the 7 sections of knowledge at AGAUR according to the subject of the research proposal. This section will allow the application to be assigned to one of the 7 evaluation panels:
   - Arts and humanities
   - Biomedicine
   - Sciences
   - Medical and Health Sciences
   - Natural and agri-food sciences
   - Social Sciences
   - Engineering, technology and architecture

The choice of this section of knowledge will determine the eligible areas of knowledge in the first drop-down menu of the application form. The areas of knowledge associated with each section can be consulted on the [AGAUR website]().
Optionally, candidates can choose a second area of knowledge (second drop-down menu of the form), which does not necessarily have to be within the chosen section (for example, if it is a multidisciplinary project).
The chosen areas of knowledge, together with the keywords of the research proposal, will be used to assign the evaluators who will assess the application.

4.5 What do I have to take into account to draft my proposal?

It is recommended to carefully read the evaluation criteria, available in section 16.1 of the [call regulations](#), and address all the aspects that will be evaluated. To write section A of the document (CV of the candidate), which is the one that has more weight in the final score, you have the guide "[Tips and instructions for writing a narrative CV](#)".

In the preparation of the proposal, it must be taken into account that the BP grants aim to train postdoctoral researchers through a research project. Therefore, this proposal must have defined and realistic objectives both at a scientific level and in terms of professional development (for example, expanding skills and experience, advancing in the research career towards obtaining a permanent position, etc.). In this sense, stays in research entities or other non-academic institutions (for up to 9 months in total during the 3 years of the grant) can be proposed, as well as courses and other training activities.

It is important that the candidate's initiative, leadership and ability to generate new knowledge and ideas are reflected in all sections of the proposal, both in the presentation of the merits achieved in the past (narrative CV) and in the proposed research, training and dissemination activities.

The planned activities must be specific, proportional to the objectives and realistic. It is highly recommended to incorporate a specific calendar and a risk mitigation plan into the work plan. As for the impact, it must be described in a specific and credible way, foreseeing the scope that the proposal will have beyond the duration of the 3 years of the project.

4.6 What should be considered if the project may have ethical implications?

In this case, candidates who have obtained a BP grant will be required to deliver an ethical assessment report with a positive result issued by an accredited ethics committee. This committee can be internal to the host institution or external.

This report will be requested together with the candidate's recruitment documentation (up to two months after incorporation). If at this time it has not yet been obtained, it must be accredited that the ethical assessment of the project has begun to be processed and the approximate date of obtention must be reported.

4.7 Can letters of recommendation be included in the application?

No. Any additional documentation provided will not be taken into account.

4.8 Do I have to submit any type of documentation to prove the merits?

No. The documentation to verify the requirements of the candidates will be requested only from candidates who obtain a grant and must be presented at the time of accepting the grant.

4.9 Does the application have to be printed and submitted on site?

No. The submission of applications is done exclusively online.

4.10 Do I need a digital signature to submit the application?

It is not necessary. The Procedures portal will not ask candidates for a digital certificate at any time during the process.

4.11 How can I know if the application has been submitted successfully?

The Procedures section of the Generalitat de Catalunya website will generate the acknowledgement of receipt that can be downloaded to your computer.

4.12 What should I do if the acknowledgement of receipt is not downloaded or gives an error?

You must follow the instructions on the Procedures portal. If the error persists, try submitting

the application using a different browser, check that the attached document does not exceed the maximum size (10Mb) and that it is correctly saved in PDF format, and save the file with a short name without spaces or symbols.

If you are unable to fix the issue, you can send a screenshot of the error to the call contact officers: marta.renato@gencat.cat or montse.boada@gencat.cat

4.13 I was unable to submit my application due to a technical error with my computer or with the form, and while I was trying to fix it, the deadline passed. Can my application be processed if I can prove that I had tried to send it before?
No. The deadline for submissions is strict and applications that have not been correctly submitted on time won't be accepted. For this reason, it is recommended <u>not to wait until the last day to submit the application</u>.

4.14 Can the candidates' CV be updated after the submission of applications?
As this is a competitive process, any additional information submitted after the end of the deadline for application submission will not be taken into consideration.

4.15 What does the second phase of submitting applications mean?
In this second phase, the entities (universities or research centres) will review the applications submitted and validate or reject them, after checking whether the responsible researcher meet the affiliation requirement. Candidates do not have to take part on this phase.

5. <u>Evaluation and awarding of grants</u>

5.1 How are applications evaluated?
The evaluation of applications is carried out in 2 phases:
In the first phase, applications are assessed individually and online by evaluators who are external to AGAUR and experts in each of the scientific areas. The evaluation criteria are:
- a) Candidate's CV (45% of the score).
- b) Hosting environment (20%).
- c) Planned research and training activities (10%).
- d) Impact (25%), which includes 3 aspects: the scientific impact of the research project, the impact on the development of the candidate's career and the planned communication and dissemination activities.

The detailed description of these criteria can be found in section 16.1 of the call regulations.

In the second phase of evaluation, the panels are constituted for each of the 7 scientific sections. Each panel reviews the scores and assessments obtained in the first phase and establishes a final score for each application.

5.2 How are the grants allocated to each section of knowledge distributed?
There is no pre-established number of grants for each knowledge section, but the budget of the call is distributed proportionally according to the number of applications received from each one, to guarantee equal opportunities for all candidates.

5.3 How are the results reported?
Results are published on the electronic board of the Generalitat de Catalunya. For information purposes, they will also be published on AGAUR website and applicants will be informed by email.
All applicants will receive, a few days after the publication of the resolution, an evaluation

report that justifies the score obtained.
For the Beatriu de Pinós grants, the AGAUR does not provide information on the progress in the status of the application through the Procedures portal.

6. Project implementation

6.1 If the grant has been awarded, when should the candidate join the host institution?
The candidate must join the host institution between the day following the publication of the awarding resolution and, at the latest, 1 March 2026. The date of incorporation should be the 1st or 15th day of the month.
As a rule, extensions on the date of incorporation will not be accepted, except in justified and very exceptional cases (sick leave or maternity/paternity leave on the deadline for incorporation, certified difficulties in obtaining a visa or work permit, etc.).

6.2 What remuneration do research staff hired with a BP grant receive?
The minimum wage established in the call is €36,480.96 gross per year. From this amount, the corresponding income and social security taxes will be subtracted, depending on the personal and family situation of the researcher. The host entity can increase the salary by assuming the additional recruitment costs.

6.3 How is the €12,000 supplementary grant managed?
AGAUR transfers the amount of this grant to the host organization after receiving the documentation accrediting the incorporation. The host organization is responsible for managing these funds according to its internal regulations.
The eligible expenses are described in section 8.1 of the call regulations. If you have any doubts about the specific expenses that can be covered, you can contact AGAUR staff.