



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



MARTÍ FRANQUÈS COFUND PROGRAMME (MFP-COFUND)

Call for candidates for predoctoral fellowships

(PIPF – Personal Investigador Predoctoral en Formació)

CONDITIONS OF THE COMPETITION

1. Background

The [Martí Franquès Programme](#) was born in 2012 as a natural evolution of the doctoral fellowships programme offered for the last decade by the Departments of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV). It was designed to attract the most talented doctoral candidates to work on excellent research projects, in any of the 5 knowledge disciplines (Arts and Humanities, Legal and Social Sciences, Engineering and Architecture, Sciences, Health Sciences). The Martí Franquès Programme has also unified administrative procedures, enhanced working conditions and concentrated several financial funds. In 2015, the URV goes a step forward, and proposes a revamped fellowships programme (MFP-COFUND) for up to 50 fellowships that aligns the existing fellowship programme to the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for Recruitment (C&C), and provide enhanced employment and working conditions to the best doctoral candidates from all over the world.

In the 2021 MFP-COFUND call, up to 20 fellowships are offered.

The MFP-COFUND will reinforce a selection process that is transparent, open, merit-based, impartial, equitable, gender-balanced and internationally advertised for all its positions, and commits to provide equal opportunities for all candidates, including candidates with disabilities and refugees. The fellows will be enrolled in one of the URV's official doctoral programmes, and will be hosted by our best research groups, who will provide state-of-the-art facilities, and the most innovative training programme, which mandates a secondment to an international institution, to complement their research and transferrable skills training. The MFP-COFUND is formally supported by 59 partner organizations (38 academic and 21 non-academic partners), 2 of which co-finance the programme.

2. Regulations

- Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, regarding universities, modified by Organic Law 4/2007, 12 April (BOE 13/04/2007 - Official Spanish State Gazette).
- Law 1/2003, of 19 February, regarding the Universities of Catalonia.
- Decree 202/2003, of 26 August, which approved the Statute of the Rovira i Virgili University, modified by Government agreement GOV/23/2012.
- Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation.
- Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, which regulates official doctoral courses

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UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



- Academic and Matriculation Regulations of the Doctoral Programme for the corresponding academic year 2021/2022
- Royal Decree 103/2019, of 1 March, which approved the Statute of Trainee Predoctoral Research Staff.
- Trainee Predoctoral Research Staff Programme, approved by the Governing Council on 10 July 2012.

The Rovira i Virgili University regulates, through the aforementioned regulations, the contracts of predoctoral research staff in training (PIPF).

3. Scope

To attract the most talented doctoral candidates to work on groundbreaking research projects. Thanks to funding from the EC's COFUND action, the URV will reinforce the development and broadening of the research competencies of early-stage researchers, with training following the [EU Principles on Innovative Doctoral Training](#), with special emphasis on personal development through training in a wide set of transferrable skills, along with specific training in research skills.

4. Objective

The objective of the MFP COFUND programme is to foster excellence in researchers' training, mobility and career development, and spreading the best practices of Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, culminating with the obtention of a PhD award from the Universitat Rovira i Virgili.

5. Conditions

5.1. List of contracts

The competition is open for up to **20** predoctoral contracts, related to the annex attached to these conditions as part of the MFP-COFUND. Moreover, 1 predoctoral contract is reserved for candidates with disability.

5.2. Characteristics of the contracts

The candidates will be offered a trainee predoctoral researcher full-time contract. Trainee predoctoral researchers will have full-time research and teaching duties. Their main obligation will be to complete a doctoral thesis at the URV within one of its doctoral programmes. As part of the training programme, the corresponding Departmental Council may assign, upon request of the trainee predoctoral researchers, a collaboration in teaching activities up to a maximum of 180 hours during the total extension of the pre-doctoral contract, without exceeding, under any circumstances, 60 hours per year. Moreover, as part of his/her training programme, a minimum 3-months stay in an International Centre is mandatory.

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UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



5.3. Requisites

5.3.1. General requisites

Candidates must:

- Be aged between 18 and the retirement age
- Not have any illness that prevents them from carrying out their corresponding functions in a normal manner
- Not have left the service of any of the public administrations for disciplinary reasons, or be forbidden from carrying out public functions
- Not be disqualified in any of the ways listed in Law 53/1984, of December 26th, regarding the disqualification of personnel from the public administration

5.3.2. Specific requisites

- **Be early stage researchers (ESR):** at the date of the deadline of the call (September 6, 2021), be in the first 4 years (full time equivalent research experience¹) of their research careers and have not been awarded a doctoral degree.
- **Comply with the mobility rule:** Researchers may not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Spain for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the call deadline (September 6, 2021).
- Be eligible to enroll in a doctoral programme at URV.

The specific access conditions to a doctoral programme at URV are found at the following link: http://www.doctor.urv.cat/futurs-estudiants/acces/en_titulacio_acces/

Please note that these conditions can be changed at any time. To ensure you are aware of the most updated conditions, please visit the above mentioned page.

As such, the candidates must:

Be in possession of official Spanish Bachelor degrees, or equivalent, and/or a university master's degree, or equivalent, as long as they have passed at least 300 ECTS credits considering the two degrees combined.

The candidates can be in one of the following cases:

- Be in possession of an official Spanish university degree, or from another country that is part of the European Higher Education Area, which qualifies for access to a master's degree in accordance with the provisions of article 16 of the Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October, and having passed a minimum of 300 ECTS credits in the set of official university studies, of which at least 60 must be at the master's level.

¹ 'Full-time equivalent research experience' is measured from the date when the researcher obtained the degree entitling him/her to embark on a doctorate (either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the researcher is recruited or seconded) – even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



- Be in possession of an official Spanish bachelor's degree, the duration of which, in accordance with the rules of Community law, is at least 300 ECTS credits. These candidates must complete the research training supplements, unless the curriculum for the corresponding degree includes research training credits, equivalent in training value to the credits from master's studies.
- Are University graduates who, previously to obtaining a position in training in the corresponding admissions exam for specialized sanitary training, have passed the assessment of at least two years of training of a program for the obtaining of the official title of one of the specialties in health sciences.
- Be in possession of a degree obtained in accordance with foreign educational systems, without the need for approval, with the prior verification of the university that it accredits a level of training equivalent to that of the official Spanish university master's degree and which authorizes, in the country issuing the degree, the access to doctoral studies.
- Have an undergraduate degree, be architects or engineers who are in possession of a diploma in advanced studies obtained in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 778/1998, of 30 April, or who have achieved the research proficiency that regulates Royal Decree 185/1985, of 23 January.
- Be in possession of an official university degree that has obtained correspondence at level 3 of the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES), in accordance with the procedure established in RD 967/2014, of 21 November, establishing the requirements and procedure for the approval and declaration of equivalence to a degree and to an official university academic level and for the validation of foreign studies in Higher Education, and the procedure for determining correspondence at the MECES levels of the official titles of Architect, Engineer, Undergraduate, Technical Architect, Technical Engineer and Diplomats.
- Be enrolled in an official university master's course that allows them access to the doctorate in the 2021/2022 academic year.

Admission to the doctoral programme² must be accredited when formalizing the contract with the URV.

The selected candidates must start the enrollment process within three months from the date on which the selection process is concluded, and must complete their enrolment onto a doctoral programme and present the corresponding document to the Human Resources Service during the first trimester of the grant.

If the candidate does not register, s/he will be stripped of the contract and will have to return any of the money that s/he may have received. Should this happen, the next candidate on the corresponding candidates' list will be proposed for the contract.

If, during the selection process, the selection committee believes there is sufficient reason, it may request any of the candidates to prove that they fulfil all or some of the requirements for participation in the selection process.

² In accordance with the Academic and Matriculation Regulations of the Doctoral Programme, candidates must first complete the pre-registration process in order to be admitted into the doctoral programme within the periods established by the University for this purpose



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



5.4. Duration

The contracts will have an initial duration of 12 months and may be extended twice for another 12 months, up to a total period of 36 months, provided that the candidate has received a favorable activity report (DAD + PlaInv), based on the evaluation of the academic committee of the respective doctoral programme. **The contract cannot be renewed over the 36 months maximum period.**

The contracts may be rescinded at any time on agreement by the Departmental Council and by Resolution of the Rector once they have received the necessary report from the department recommending such a course of action.

If, during the period of the contract, the candidate obtains the PhD degree, s/he may not continue the contract and it will be terminated on the day in which the predoctoral researchers defends their thesis. It is considered that the PhD degree is obtained on the date of the act of defense and approval of the doctoral thesis.

5.5. Amounts

The funding provided by the programme will be used to pay:

1. **Gross salary:** the gross monthly payment of the contracts is 2.258,60 € in 12 pay slips.
2. **All the registration and thesis supervision fees**
3. **Up to 7.500 €** per year for research costs associated with the research project, managed by the thesis supervisor in charge of the project. **This is not part of the salary.**

The funding of the contracts will be borne by the entity that finances them.

5.6. Documentation to be provided by the candidate

Individuals who meet the necessary requirements to apply for one of these contracts must submit an online application, which will include the following:

1. Application form completed online
2. Scanned copy of identity card, resident's card or passport currently in force
3. Curriculum Vitae
4. Scanned copy of the certificate of the official academic qualification or proof of payment of the fees for the issuance of the certificate that allows the holder to access the doctoral studies. Students who are registered on an official university master's course that allows them to access the doctoral programme during the 2021/2022 academic year must present a scanned copy of their master's course registration form.
5. Scanned copy of academic transcript of the qualification equivalent to a bachelor's degree
6. Scanned copy of academic transcript of the master's degree. Candidates who have not completed their master's degrees must send their provisional academic transcript
7. Description of the master's degree project
8. Two scanned reference letters
9. A motivation letter, explaining how the candidate is suited for the position s/he applies for



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



10. **Optional document:** Statement of Equivalence of Average Grade by students who studied abroad. Apply for/download the document from the [website of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training of Spain](#). [Guide to generate the Statement](#) (not official)
11. For the contract reserved for researchers with disabilities: an official disability certificate issued by a competent authority from the country of origin.

All documentation must be presented in English.

Moreover, all documentation must be presented within the application webpage in the manner indicated above and within the period established in the following subsection.

Under no circumstances will any qualification or merit that has not been accredited in the manner stipulated in these conditions be taken into account.

5.7. Presentation of applications

Individuals who wish to participate in this competition and meet the requirements must present the corresponding application form found on the MFP-COFUND webpage. All submissions will be done online. Please note that all the original documentation indicated above will have to be presented in person at the time of enrollment in the PhD programme and at the signing of the contract.

5.8. Deadline for applications: September 6, 2021 23:59 (CET)

5.9. Evaluation stage (external to URV)

All evaluations of the submitted applications will be done by external evaluation committees (EECs). These EECs will be formed by 3 evaluators per submitted application, and will rate the applications based on the following criteria:

1. Academic profile – 40 %

The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:

- Do the courses taken during the Bachelor and/or Master* studies make the candidate a better match for the project?
- How would you evaluate the quality of the courses received during the Bachelor and/or Master* training?
- How would you evaluate the candidate's academic grades from Bachelor and/or Master* studies?

* if applicable

2. Other merits (including professional experience) – 30 %

- The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:
- How would you evaluate, apart from the academic record, the candidate's previous research/professional experience? Has the candidate been involved in any research/professional activities that would make him/her a better match for the project?
- Has the candidate demonstrated interdisciplinary experience?
- Has the candidate performed internships, either in the non-academic or in the academic world?

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UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



- Did the candidates publish their research results in journals, book chapters, conference proceedings, etc.?
- 3. **Reference letters – 10 %**
 - The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:
 - Based on the information provided by the referees has the candidate demonstrated the ability to adapt to new environments, the potential to acquire new skills effectively, a creative and an innovative mindset?
 - Are the reference letters written specifically for this position?
- 4. **Motivation letter – 20 %**
 - The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:
 - Did the candidate demonstrate how their academic and professional background and their previous acquired skills, relate to the requirements of the research project?
 - Is the motivation letter written specifically for this position?

The evaluation committees will generate an ordered list of candidates, and an evaluation summary report for each application. The list will be used by the Selection Committees (see next point), to make the final decision. It is important to remark that the evaluation committees have an advisement role, not a decision role.

5.10. Final selection

The Departmental Councils will form the Selection Committees (SCs) that have to evaluate the best candidates with applications submitted for each contract. These committees will have three full members and three substitute members belonging to the department's permanent teaching and research staff and who meet the URV's requirements to supervise doctoral theses. Apart from the three members, an independent external expert, non-contractually related to URV will take part in the committee. In addition, a member of the Human Resources Department and the project manager will be present to ensure the correct implementation of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R).

The SC for positions generated by contracts funded by R&D& I projects and those assigned to certain Recognized Research Groups of the URV will be chaired by the principal investigator to whom each contract is linked.

Applications for contracts that are governed by agreements between the URV and other institutions will be evaluated by the committees stipulated in the respective agreements.

For the top candidates for each position, the SCs will interview them in person, either on-site, or remotely, and evaluate them based on the following criteria:

1. Academic profile – 30%
2. Professional profile – 30%
3. Personal profile – 30%
4. Knowledge about the PhD position and the university/group environment – 10%

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UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



Following the interviews, each committee will assign the contract in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Evaluation report from the external experts – 50 %
2. Scoring at personal interviews – 50 %

After examining the proposal assignment of contracts, the Rector of the URV will pass a resolution in which she will name a candidate for each contract in the order proposed by the Departmental Council or Selection Committees until all the contracts in the competition have been awarded. The PhD position may remain unoccupied.

Any appeal against the awarding of the contracts must be addressed to the rector of the URV and presented to the General Registry or other official locations within one month of the publication of the award.

5.11. Contracting

From the day after the selection committee publishes its list of proposed candidates, these candidates have 10 working days to present the relevant documentation to the Human Resources Service within the established period so that they can sign the corresponding contract. Candidates who fail to present this document within the established period will be regarded as having renounced the offer of a contract.

If a candidate renounces his/her appointment or if the contract is unsigned, the rector will appoint the next candidate on the list.

The type of contract will be a fixed term, full time Predoctoral Contract (Trainee Predoctoral Research Staff). Successful candidates will be registered with the general regime of the social security system.

5.12. Renunciations and substitutions

If the beneficiary wishes to renounce the contract, he/she must communicate this in writing to the Human Resources Service, giving at least 15 days' notice. This communication must state that the student has voluntarily renounced the contract and give the date from which he/she wishes to withdraw from it.

In case of renunciation of the grant within the first 3 months of the contract, the researcher will have to refund the total amount of the registration fee.

A trainee predoctoral researcher may be substituted if this is requested by the researcher's department in cases where the department finances the research position with its own funds, by the evaluation committee for positions generated by contracts funded by R+D+I contracts, or by monitoring committees for positions created by agreements between the URV and other entities. A request to substitute a trainee predoctoral researcher may be made in the following cases:

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No.945413



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



- renunciation
- non-renewal
- early cessation

If an applicant relinquishes or resigns from a contract before time, and if there is a waiting list, the rector will appoint the next candidate on the waiting list as the applicant's replacement.

5.13. Incompatibility

These contracts are incompatible with any other grant or contract, with payments that imply a contractual link of a similar nature, or with activities that may prevent the individual from dedicating him/herself exclusively to the work that is the object of the contract in the opinion of the Human Resources Committee delegated by the Governing Council of the URV.

5.14. Others

The awarding of a doctoral contract does not imply any type of commitment on the part of the awarding department regarding the subsequent employment of the trainee predoctoral researcher.

In accordance with the Regulations regarding the Industrial and Intellectual Property of the URV that were approved by the Governing Council on April 30, 2009, modified by the Governing Council on February 22, 2018 and May 7, 2020, the intellectual ownership of a literary, artistic or scientific work belongs to the author for having created it, although the exploitation rights will have first been transferred to the university unless there is an agreement to the contrary.

Any publication or other results that result from the contract must cite the funding entity or entities in the appropriate section and the reference number assigned to the funding. The support of the European Commission under the Marie Skłodowska Curie grant agreement No. 945413 must be cited.

The predoctoral researchers must ensure open access (free of charge online access for any user) to all peer reviewed scientific publications and data relating to their scientific results, according to the grant agreement No. 945413.

The predoctoral researchers will adhere to the recognised ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles appropriate to their research. The research carried out must comply with the EU's ethical principles, Spanish and international legislation applicable, as well as the [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU](#).

The URV has developed the ["Code of good practices in research, research training, development and innovation of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili"](#), which should be used as guidelines to ensure the best practices for excellence in research.

5.15. Complaints

Any interested party may lodge an administrative appeal against this competition and its conditions at the Administrative Court in Tarragona within two months, counting from the day after notification is received. An

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UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



appeal for reversal can also be made to the Rector of the URV prior to the administrative appeal and within one month of the day after notification is received.

Likewise, interested parties can appeal to the rector of the URV against the actions of the committee within one month of having been informed of this decision. This appeal will be understood to have been rejected if the university administration publishes no resolution regarding the appeal within three months after it has been lodged. The opportunity to lodge an administrative appeal at the Administrative Court of Tarragona will expire six months from the day after the appeal lodged with the Rector has been rejected. If a resolution is published regarding the appeal lodged with the Rector, the interested party will have two months starting from the day after they have been notified of this to lodge an administrative appeal.

Likewise, interested parties may lodge any other appeal they deem necessary to defend their interests.

Tarragona, July 1, 2021