

CALL GUIDELINES

COMFUTURO FOURTH EDITION

COMFUTURO iAGE

0. Introduction

Fundación General CSIC ([FGCSIC](#)) is a private, non-profit organization created in 2008 as a result of a joint institutional initiative by the Spanish National Research Council ([CSIC](#)) and its founding patrons. Its mission is to promote public-private collaboration in the field of scientific research, innovation, and the advancement of knowledge.

The renewal of scientific talent is essential for building a resilient, innovative, and forward-looking society. However, traditional career pathways often fall short in meeting the needs of emerging researchers and in aligning scientific capabilities with societal and industrial challenges.

To address this gap, FGCSIC launched the ComFuturo programme in 2014—short for “Una colaboración público-privada comprometida con la ciencia y el futuro” (A public-private collaboration committed to science and the future). In partnership with CSIC and leading private organisations, ComFuturo seeks to attract highly talented, young researchers to the Spanish science and innovation system.

Following the success of previous editions, the third edition of ComFuturo (ongoing until 2026) was strengthened through its inclusion in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions COFUND scheme, enabling an expansion in scope and impact by incorporating international mobility and training standards in line with the European Research Area.

Now, the fourth edition of ComFuturo—ComFuturo iAGE (*“Addressing the Global Ageing Challenge through Excellent Research, Digitalisation and Innovative Solutions”*) builds upon this foundation as a COFUND postdoctoral programme once again co-financed by the European Union. This new edition focuses on tackling ageing, a critical and complex societal issue that requires multidisciplinary research and innovative perspectives. In this context, particular attention will be given to proposals that explore how digitalisation can contribute to addressing the ageing challenge.

ComFuturo iAGE will offer 10 highly competitive 36-month fellowships to outstanding experienced researchers from around the world. Fellows will propose and develop their own research projects (given that they are aligned with the eligible research topics that seek to address the challenge of ageing, in some cases through digitalisation approaches) within one of the more than 120 research institutes of CSIC, Spain’s largest public research organisation, distributed throughout the country.

The programme aims to foster a new generation of scientific leaders—capable of generating high-impact research while being adaptable, interdisciplinary, and aligned with societal needs. Through advanced training, mobility, and a rich collaborative ecosystem, ComFuturo iAGE enhances researchers’ career prospects across both academic and non-academic sectors.



1. Objective and articulation

ComFuturo iAGE is a competitive, public-private collaboration programme designed to attract top-tier research talent and support the development of high-impact scientific projects within the research institutes of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC).

In its fourth edition, ComFuturo takes a decisive step forward by focusing on one of today's most transformative and pressing global challenges: ageing. The programme seeks to engage experienced researchers capable of delivering outstanding scientific advances that help address its broad societal implications, ensuring openness to a broad diversity of proposals. ComFuturo iAGE actively encourages proposals to incorporate digital technologies or approaches as part of their strategy to tackle this complex issue. This is expected for all projects, except for one eligible topic outlined in Section 3, where it is not required.

The call is open to creative and highly qualified researchers with the capacity to design and lead original, excellent, and solution-driven research projects. Proposals should aim to generate new scientific knowledge and real-world impact in areas relevant to ageing, longevity, and quality of life in older populations. Broad domains of interest include artificial intelligence and digital technologies for health and social care, personalized and anticipatory approaches to ageing and rejuvenation, environmental and urban innovations for healthy ageing, molecular and cellular mechanisms of age-related conditions and human-technology interaction, including robotics and language technologies. These thematic areas reflect a multidisciplinary approach to addressing the complex challenges and opportunities of an ageing society (see Section 3).

With the support of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND scheme, ComFuturo iAGE offers a framework that meets the highest European standards in research training, career development, and mobility. Fellows will benefit from a multidisciplinary, intersectoral, and international research environment that enhances their professional growth and long-term employability.

Selection will be conducted through a rigorous, open, and merit-based evaluation process, including external peer review by international experts in relevant scientific and technological fields (see Section 10).

In addition, a network of Associated Partners committed to research and innovation supports the programme, offering fellows opportunities for non-academic secondments, advanced training, and professional mentoring.

ComFuturo iAGE offers not only a prestigious research opportunity but also a platform to contribute to shaping the future of our ageing societies, leveraging, where relevant, the transformative potential of digitalisation.

2. Requirements for the candidates

Candidates must comply with the following eligibility criteria:

- Present complete applications including all requested compulsory information and documentation.



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- Be in possession of a PhD degree at the time of the call deadline, having been awarded their first PhD in the 8 years prior to the time of the call deadline (9 January 2026). For the purposes of this eligibility criterion, the PhD will be considered obtained on the date of the public defence and approval of the doctoral thesis, not the date of diploma issuance. Accordingly, candidates will be eligible if their defence and approval took place on or after 9 January 2018 (inclusive). If a candidate holds more than one PhD, the 8-year period will be counted from the date of the first doctoral degree.

In the cases of interruption of the research activity between the date of obtaining the doctoral degree and the call deadline, the candidate may request an extension of the period in which the doctoral degree must have been obtained. To these effects, the following causes are considered as interruption of the research activity:

- i. Illness or accident that has led to sick leave for three months or more. An extension may be applied for the number of justified months.
- ii. Maternity/Paternity. An extension of 1 year can be applied for each child born after the PhD award date.

Through the online application form, candidates must upload a single PDF file containing an official document certifying the date of the public defence of the doctoral thesis (this may be the thesis title page, academic certificate, or another official document), together with any supporting documentation as evidence for parental or sick leave, if applicable.

- Comply with the MSCA mobility rule (either standard mobility rule or the rule applicable to candidates who have had career breaks):

Standard mobility rule: The researcher cannot have resided or carried out his/her main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Spain for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before the call deadline (9 January 2026).

Exemptions: Time spent in Spain for short stays, compulsory national service, or as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention will not be counted.

Definition of short stays: Short stays are periods during which the researcher's main residence and main activity remained in another country. Examples include holidays, short visits for conferences, or other brief periods where the researcher did not live or work in Spain.

Note: Extended periods of residence or work in Spain are not considered short stays and will be counted towards the 12-month limit.

Career break mobility rule: Applicable to candidates that have had a career break in research, i.e. they were not active in research for a continuous period of at least 12 months within the eighteen months immediately prior to the deadline for submission of proposals (9 January 2026). In this case, the researcher cannot have resided or carried out the main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Spain for more than three years in the five years immediately before the call deadline.

Definition of active research: Being employed in research or holding a research fellowship counts as active engagement. Periods of parental leave or unpaid leave do not count as active research, even if the applicant had a formal employment contract or fellowship during that time. Activities such as publishing papers or being affiliated with a university without a paid contract or fellowship also do not count as active research.

Exemptions: Time spent in Spain for short stays (e.g., holidays or conferences), compulsory national service, or as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention will not be counted.

Candidates must upload in the online application form a compliance declaration using the provided template titled "Declaration of Compliance with the Mobility Rule." In this document, applicants must clearly indicate whether the standard mobility rule or the career break mobility rule applies to their case. The template includes a detailed table, where candidates must provide a continuous timeline (i.e., without gaps) covering the last 36 months (or 60 months if the career break mobility rule applies) prior to the call deadline, specifying for each period (month/year):

- The country of residence and/or country where the main activity (work, studies, etc.) was carried out,
- The type of activity (employment, unemployment, studies, leave, etc.),
- The name of employer or institution (if applicable),
- The type of evidence provided for each entry (supporting documentation).

Applicants must ensure there are no gaps in this timeline and that each period is supported by appropriate documentation. The declaration must be submitted as a single PDF file, including both the completed table and all corresponding supporting documents (e.g. employment contracts, work permits, residence certificates, rental agreements, proof of unemployment, parental/sick leave, refugee status, etc.).

Failure to provide a complete and coherent declaration with supporting evidence for the full 36-month (or 60-month period if career break mobility applies) may result in the ineligibility of the application. Additionally, FGCSIC will be able to request from the researchers at any time any additional documentation that fully proves the requirement.

The mobility rule will be calculated including the date of the call deadline (9 January 2026).

3. Requirements for the projects

In their application, candidates must select one of the available research topics under which their proposed project will be framed.

Projects may be freely defined by the applicants, as long as they are relevant and aligned with the chosen research topic.

Each candidate may submit only one application to one of the eligible research topics. Multiple applications from the same candidate will not be accepted.

A total of 10 fellowships will be awarded in this call. Fellowships will be allocated to the highest-ranked proposals in the following way:

- Fellowships 1–5 will be awarded to the top-ranked proposals submitted in four predefined different research topics (Topics A-D). For one of these topics (Topic A), two fellowships will be awarded (Fellowships 1 and 2), based on the two highest-ranked proposals. For the remaining three topics, one fellowship will be awarded per topic. Applicants for these fellowships (1-5) may choose any CSIC institute as their host, including those associated with the predefined topics for Fellowships 6-10.
- Fellowships 6–10 will be awarded to the five highest-ranked proposals submitted across the remaining six eligible topics (Topics E-J). A maximum of one fellowship will be awarded per topic in this group. These fellowships must be hosted at the specific CSIC institutes predefined for each corresponding topic.

Depending on the research topic selected, therefore, the research project will be carried out either at a specific CSIC institute already designated for that topic (Fellowships 6-10: Topics E-J), or at any CSIC institute (out of the over 120 CSIC institutes, see at the end of this Section) freely chosen by the applicant (Fellowships 1-5; Topics A-D).

A single CSIC institute may host multiple ComFuturo fellows from either category, depending on the outcome of the independent external evaluation process. However, only one fellowship per topic may be hosted at a given institute.

Applicants must ensure that their proposed project can be effectively developed and hosted by the corresponding CSIC centre. In all cases, a Declaration of Interest letter digitally signed by the Director of the proposed CSIC institute (see below and Section 6) must be attached, indicating the predisposition to accept the fellow. In the online application form, a template is provided.

The following table reflects the fellowships to be awarded in the different eligible research topics and the CSIC host institute (if predefined). Also, it is indicated whether it is mandatory for the project to include digitalisation or not.

Fellowships to be awarded	Fellowships (left column) to be awarded to the best ranked proposal(s) in the following topic(s):	CSIC host centre/institute	Proposal must incorporate DIGITALISATION
FELLOWSHIP 1	TOPIC A: Impact of Cellular Hypoxia on Ageing-Related Diseases	Any	Not necessarily
FELLOWSHIP 2		Any	Not necessarily
FELLOWSHIP 3	TOPIC B: Natural Language Technologies for Accessible, Cognitive-Aware and Personalized Communication in Older Adults	Any	YES
FELLOWSHIP 4	TOPIC C: Smart Homes for Older Adults: Sensors and Technologies for Invisible and Personalised Care	Any	YES
FELLOWSHIP 5	TOPIC D: Digital Solutions and Platforms for Healthy, Safe and Socially Active Ageing in Older Adults	Any	YES
FELLOWSHIP 6, FELLOWSHIP 7, FELLOWSHIP 8, FELLOWSHIP 9, FELLOWSHIP 10 Note: these five fellowships will be awarded to the best ranked projects, covering five of the six eligible topics shown in the right (a maximum of 1 fellowship will be awarded to the same topic)	TOPIC E: AI-Powered Prediction of Early Ageing and Strategies for Rejuvenation	Institute for Neuroscience (IN)	YES
	TOPIC F: Digital Environmental Sensing and Climate-Aware Urban Ecosystems for Healthy Ageing	Desertification Research Centre (CIDE)	YES
	TOPIC G: Digital Twins for Anticipatory Geriatric Care	Centre for Molecular Biology "Severo Ochoa" (CBM)	YES
	TOPIC H: Mechanical Markers of Tissue Dysfunction Due to Ageing: Digital Twins and Machine Learning	Institute for Integrative Systems Biology (I ² SysBio)	YES
	TOPIC I: Big Data and AI to Unravel the Role of Complex Structural Variants in Ageing	Botanical Institute of Barcelona (IBB)	YES
	TOPIC J: Personalised AI for Healthy Ageing: Social Robots as Adaptive Support Systems	Artificial Intelligence Research Institute (IIIA)	YES
10 FELLOWSHIPS IN TOTAL	10 ELIGIBLE DIFFERENT TOPICS	OVER 120 ELIGIBLE CSIC RESEARCH INSTITUTES	ELEGIBLE PROPOSALS WITH AND WITHOUT DIGITALISATION

Candidates, as well as indicating the research topic to which they opt, must also indicate, in the online application form, to which knowledge area does their Research proposal correspond, among the following 19 eligible ones:

Group 1: Social sciences and humanities

- Area 1. CSO / Social Sciences
- Area 2. DER / Law
- Area 3. ECO / Economy
- Area 4. MLP / Mind, language and thought
- Area 5. FLA / Culture: Philology, literature and art
- Area 6. PHA / Studies of the Past: History and Archaeology
- Area 7. EDU / Educational sciences
- Area 8. PSI / Psychology

Group 2: Mathematical, physical, chemical and engineering sciences

- Area 9. MTM / Mathematical sciences
- Area 10. FIS / Physical sciences
- Area 11. PIN / Industrial production, civil engineering and engineering for society
- Area 12. TIC / Information and communication technologies
- Area 13. EYT / Energy and transportation
- Area 14. CTQ / Chemical Sciences and Technologies
- Area 15. MAT / Materials science and technology

Group 3: Life sciences

- Area 16. CTM / Environmental Sciences and Technologies
- Area 17. CAA / Agricultural and agri-food sciences
- Area 18. BIO / Biosciences and biotechnology
- Area 19. BME / Biomedicine

ComFuturo projects must comply with the following characteristics:

- Be original and aim to resolve current problems and challenges through innovative techniques and methodologies.
- Have an innovative approach and a high potential of transferring the expected results to the productive fabric.
- Have a maximum duration of 3 years.
- Comply with the eligible research topics (included in the table above).
- Be carried out at a CSIC institute (open choice or predefined, as explained earlier).

Applicants must ensure that their Research proposal fits the scientific-technical scope and capabilities of the designated CSIC institute. In the Research proposal, candidates must argue why the institute would be adequate for their proposal in terms of infrastructure and scientific-technical capacities.

A Declaration of Interest letter must be included in the application (see also Section 6), using the official template provided in the online application form. This letter must be digitally signed by the Director of the proposed CSIC institute or center.

While the Director will act as the official Supervisor 1 and institutional representative, the application must also indicate the name of a proposed Supervisor 2, who may be a senior researcher or group leader within the host research team. The proposed Supervisor 2 must be clearly identified in the Declaration of Interest letter although he/she is not required to sign the letter at this stage.



Please note that the final composition of the supervision structure, including the role and assignment of Supervisor 2, will be reviewed and may be adjusted by FGCSIC, in agreement with the host institute and always ensuring that the fellow is fully supported and satisfied with the supervision arrangement.

The full list of CSIC institutes can be consulted on [CSIC's official website](#), where they can be filtered by scientific area and geographical location. Additionally, the document "CSIC Research Institutes" is available in the online application platform.

All CSIC institutes are in principle, therefore, eligible as hosts for ComFuturo fellows, provided that the topic selected allows open choice, i.e. fellowships 1-5 (Topics A-D). For fellowships 6-10 (Topics E-J), the host institute is predefined.

4. Fellowship description, duration and allowances

The ComFuturo fellowship will have a duration of 36 months. It will include a full-time employment contract with CSIC and will consist of the following items:

- **Salary in the payroll for the fellow (including different allowances)**

Each fellowship will include a salary, which will be composed of the items listed below. The indicated amounts include the employer's social security contributions and taxes.

- Living allowance of 56,400 €/year (4,700 €/month)
- Mobility allowance for moving and housing expenses of 2,400 €/year (200 €/month)
- Possible family allowance of 2,400 €/year (200 €/month) only to researchers with family obligations.

The gross remuneration that the fellow will perceive will be calculated on the basis of the abovementioned living, mobility and, where applicable, family allowance, after deduction of the employer's social security contributions, payable by the employer, and will remain the same for the three years of the fellowship. Due to possible variations in social security contributions, the gross salary is estimated to be between 43,500 € and 45,500 €/year. The final gross salary will be confirmed at the time of signing the contract.

COST CATEGORY (includes employer's social security contributions)	FELLOWSHIP FUNDING (EUR/month)	FELLOWSHIP FUNDING (EUR/year)
Living allowance	4,700	56,400
Mobility allowance	200	2,400
Total Living + Mobility (fellows without family allowance)	4,900	58,800
Possible Family Allowance	200	2,400
Total Living + Mobility + Family (fellows with family allowance)	5,100	61,200

Family allowance will be provided to researchers with family obligations defined as persons linked to the researcher:

- i. By marriage.
- ii. By a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country or region where this relationship was formalized.
- iii. As dependent children who are being maintained by the researcher.

The family status will be determined at the deadline of the call and will be reviewed during the duration of the fellowship. For new family allowances (after the start of the fellowship), the payment will become effective in the payment enrollment of the following month to the month in which the fellow has made the official communication of his/her new family obligations to FGCSIC and CSIC.

Family allowance will be paid only to fellows who provide evidence of the mentioned family obligations (in documentation to be attached as part of the candidate's application or to be attached later on if new family obligations arise once the fellowship has started, together with the official written communication to FGCSIC and CSIC, which will be examined and must be approved).

- **Complementary allowance of 15,000 €/year to cover research, travel and secondment costs that may be necessary for the correct execution of the ComFuturo research project**

COST CATEGORY	FELLOWSHIP FUNDING (EUR/month)	FELLOWSHIP FUNDING (EUR/year)
Research + Travel + Secondment allowance	1,250	15,000

This allowance shall be used exclusively for the following concepts:

- i. Acquisition and maintenance of scientific equipment, consumables and reagents.
- ii. Provision of services that are necessary for the execution of the research project.
- iii. Expenses associated with the participation of the ComFuturo fellow in scientific meetings that are useful for the proper conduct of the research project.
- iv. Expenses associated with publications and protection (through patents, etc.) of the results of the research project.
- v. Expenses related with possible secondments (academic or non-academic), in or outside Spain.
- vi. Other possible expenses directly related to the implementation of the ComFuturo research project, subject to the prior written approval of the FGCSIC.

This allowance will be managed by the CSIC host institute for the benefit of the fellow and will be justified in the follow-up reports.

5. Secondments

Academic or non-academic secondments are strongly encouraged within the ComFuturo programme, as they provide fellows with valuable opportunities to develop

new skills, broaden their professional networks, enhance their career prospects, and apply their research in different environments. Secondments can take place in both non-academic and academic institutions, with particular emphasis on the added value of non-academic secondments (e.g., in companies, public administrations, NGOs, etc.), which are especially encouraged. International secondments are also recommended. Both contribute to the MSCA “triple i” dimension (interdisciplinarity, intersectorality and international mobility) and help strengthen the global impact and relevance of the fellowship.

Although secondments are not mandatory, fellows will be encouraged to include them in their research and career development plans. Any planned secondments must be coordinated with and approved by the fellow’s supervisors, CSIC and FGCSIC, who will provide full support to ensure their feasibility and alignment with the fellowship objectives.

If an applicant already foresees one or more secondments, it is recommended to describe these in the Research proposal that will be attached in the online application form. Including planned secondments can highlight the intersectoral dimension of the project, demonstrating the candidate’s engagement with different research environments, potential collaborations, and broader societal impact.

Conditions for secondments:

- Secondments may take place in academic or non-academic institutions (they may consider secondments in facilities of the programme’s associated partners, or of other entities), in Spain or abroad.
- Each secondment in the same institution may not exceed the total duration of 6 months.
- Each secondment can be carried out in one single period or split into several shorter stays.
- The total duration of all secondments (whether academic or non-academic) must not exceed one third of the total fellowship duration (i.e., a maximum of 12 months over the three-year fellowship).
- Secondments should be aligned with the objectives of the research project and must ensure quality, relevance, and impact for the fellow’s development.

6. Supervision and career development

ComFuturo iAGE aims to empower fellows to become independent researchers and future scientific leaders. To this end, fellows will act as Principal Investigators (PIs) of their own research projects, while receiving structured supervision and tailored career guidance throughout the programme. Supervision will follow the principles of the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and the [MSCA Guidelines on Supervision](#).

Each fellow may be supported by up to three supervisors offering complementary perspectives:

Supervisor 1 – Institute Director: The Director of the CSIC host institute, who will provide institutional support and oversight. A Declaration of Interest letter signed by this supervisor must be uploaded by the candidate as part of the application, as indicated in Section 3 of the present guidelines.



Supervisor 2 – Academic Supervisor: A CSIC researcher from the host research group or department, typically the group leader, who will provide scientific guidance throughout the project. The name must be proposed in the Declaration of Interest letter signed by the Director of the CSIC host institute.

The proposed Supervisor 2 must be contractually bound to CSIC for the entire 36-month duration of the ComFuturo iAGE fellowship. This commitment may be required by FGCSIC to be formally confirmed, with supporting documentation, once the fellowships are awarded.

The suitability and final appointment of Supervisor 2 will be assessed and validated by the ComFuturo Scientific-Technical Board before the start of the fellowship.

If the same Supervisor 2 is proposed for more than one fellow, the Scientific-Technical Board will evaluate whether appropriate supervision and career development can be ensured in all cases before confirming the appointments.

Supervisor 3 – Non-Academic Supervisor: If the fellow undertakes a non-academic secondment, a supervisor or mentor from the host non-academic entity may be involved to provide intersectoral perspective and to maximise the impact of the secondment.

The final supervisory team will be confirmed once the fellowships have been awarded. Supervisors proposed during the application phase, therefore, are not automatically confirmed; the final assignments will be based on a review by the Scientific-Technical Board, which may contact the proposed supervisors to ensure proper alignment with programme goals.

All supervisors must meet the following criteria:

- Proven excellence in research.
- Demonstrated experience in mentoring and supervising researchers.
- Broad professional networks to support the fellow's development
- Clear potential to add value to the fellow's scientific and career trajectory.

As part of their training and development, fellows, together with their supervisors, will prepare a Personalised Career Development Plan (PCDP) within the first months of the fellowship. This plan will outline research objectives, training needs, transferable skills, dissemination and networking activities, and long-term career goals. The PCDP will be reviewed during the course of the fellowship, following instructions provided by FGCSIC.

7. Training

ComFuturo iAGE will offer fellows access to a broad range of training opportunities to support both their scientific progression and career development. Fellows will be able to benefit from research-oriented training provided by their CSIC host institute, including seminars, workshops, and other activities open to research staff.

In addition, fellows will have access to CSIC's institutional training catalogue, which includes advanced courses across scientific disciplines and transversal areas.



Some Associated Partners may offer specialised training activities aligned with their fields of expertise, particularly when fellows undertake projects closely related to their sectors. In such cases, interactions with representatives of these organisations may also be encouraged, to facilitate knowledge exchange and potential collaborations.

The programme will also provide selected workshops in transferable skills, addressing topics such as research ethics, knowledge and technology transfer, entrepreneurship, or research valorisation, among others. These activities will complement the fellows' scientific training and contribute to their professional development both within and beyond academia.

8. Ethical issues

All proposals should respect ethics principles, specifically those included in the [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union](#) and the [European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols](#).

ComFuturo iAGE candidates must proactively demonstrate in their proposal that they are aware of, and will comply with, ethical principles and applicable international, European and national law. In order to do this, they will have to point out those ethical issues that will be involved in the development of their proposal. Specifically, applicants must complete an Ethics Self-Assessment Form (template available in the online application form), which is an integral part of their application. It is the candidate's responsibility to identify any potential ethical issues in order to address the ethical aspects of the proposal. General guidance on how to make the proposal ethically compliant can be found at https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/how-to-complete-your-ethics-self-assessment_en.pdf. This guide can help identify ethical issues that may arise, but it is not necessary to provide additional information/documentation at this stage.

→ The research activities must have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

→ Research areas excluded from funding:

- (a) those aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes;
- (b) those intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed), or
- (c) those intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

In the event that the proposal contains sensitive ethical issues (as indicated by ticking one of the boxes in the Ethics Self-Assessment Form), candidates must also sign a Declaration of Responsibility (template available in the online application form), by which they undertake that, if they are selected as ComFuturo Fellows, they will submit a formal request to the CSIC Ethics Committee for an ethical evaluation of their proposed project within 10 calendar days of receiving the notification. Additionally, an Ethics handbook is provided (available in the online application form), which includes all the steps to be followed in more detail and supplementary useful information.

No research involving any ethics issue will be initiated before having obtained the corresponding approval from the CSIC Ethics Committee and any additional authorisations that might be applicable to the particular case considered.

Any questions or requests that candidates may have can be sent to the e-mail address comitedeetica@csic.es. Likewise, in this link, <https://www.csic.es/en/csic/scientific-integrity-and-ethics-csic/csic-ethics-committee> the contact persons of the CSIC Research Ethics Department are identified, which is the technical and legal support unit of the Committee, together with their contact telephone numbers.

9. Application procedure and deadlines

Before starting to fill in the online application form, the applicant must have prepared all the necessary documents to be uploaded (for documents that must follow specific templates, these are available through the online application form). The application must be filled in one single session, as data cannot be saved.

The application must be made by filling in the form accessible at <https://fgcsic.es/convocatoria-evento/comfuturo-iage-iv-edicion-comfuturo>, structured in the following sections:

Applicant data
Personal and contact information; affiliation; country; last country other than Spain of residence/main activity; date of obtaining first PhD (date of first thesis defense); ORCID; current employment organisation; current employment position
Project data
Title; acronym; knowledge area; research topic; keywords; summary; name of the proposed CSIC host institute
Curriculum vitae (English, following specific template which includes instructions) merged with Research proposal (CV appearing first) in a single PDF (max 7 MB). With researcher's digital signature.
<p>→ Personal information</p> <p>Ø Current position</p> <p>Ø Previous positions (research activity including interruptions)</p> <p>Ø Education</p> <p>→ CV summary</p> <p>→ Relevant merits</p> <p>Ø Publications</p> <p>Ø Congresses</p> <p>Ø Research projects</p> <p>Ø Technology / Knowledge transfer and exploitation of results</p> <p>Ø Other merits / Additional achievements</p>
Research proposal (English, following specific template) merged with CV in a single PDF (max 7 MB). With researcher's digital signature.
<p>→ General information of the project</p> <p>→ Excellence</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ø Relevance Ø Scientific rationale Ø Originality and novelty Ø Interdisciplinary, international and intersectoral dimension Ø Gender dimension Ø Open science Ø Data management → Impact Ø Expected impact and applicability Ø Dissemination and Exploitation Plan (DEP) → Implementation Ø Work plan Ø CSIC integration
<p>Ethics Issues (both documents must include researcher's digital signature, in PDF, max 1 MB each).</p> <p>→ <i>Ethics Self-Assessment Form (following specific template)</i></p> <p>→ <i>Ethics Declaration of Responsibility (if applicable; following specific template)</i></p>
<p>Declaration of Interest letter from proposed CSIC host institute (following specific template). PDF max 1 MB. With the digital signature of the Director of the proposed CSIC institute.</p>
<p>Copy of ID card / Passport currently in force (PDF max 1 MB).</p>
<p>Copy of thesis title / Academic certificate with attached documentation proving evidence (if applicable) of parental or sick leave. PDF max 1 MB.</p>
<p>Declaration of Compliance with the Mobility Rule with attached supporting documentation (employment contracts, work permits, rental contracts, residence certificates, evidence of unemployment, periods of employment outside research, parental or sick leave, refugee status, etc.). Following specific template. PDF max 4 MB. With researcher's digital signature.</p>
<p>Evidence documentation to claim for family allowance (if applicable). PDF max 4 MB.</p>

All documentation must be uploaded in PDF. In the event that supporting documentation to evidence different requirements is provided in a language different to Spanish or English, a translation to one of these languages must be uploaded too. Regarding the different evidence documentation to prove PhD experience, mobility rule, or family obligations, different documents may be merged and uploaded as a single PDF file for each category, as long as each file does not exceed the allowed size (in MB) indicated in the table above and in the online application form.

The same researcher may submit only one application, following the established online form.

The Curriculum vitae and Research proposal must be merged into a single PDF document (CV appearing first) which must be in English and follow the corresponding templates and the corresponding instructions included in each template. The resulting combined document must include the digital signature of the researcher.

The Declaration of Compliance with the Mobility Rule (following specific template) must also include the researcher's digital signature.

The Declaration of Interest letter from the proposed CSIC host institute (following specific template) must include the digital signature of the Director of the proposed CSIC institute.

Queries regarding the application process will be attended via the following email address: comfuturo@fgcsic.es.

The deadline for the submission of applications is 9 January 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted.

The deadlines and times included in these rules are in the local time of Peninsular Spain (Central European Time, CET / UTC+1).

Once the application has been submitted via the online application form, the applicant will receive an email with a certificate confirming that the application has been sent.

FGCSIC may, at any time, request from candidates additional documentation to that included in the application form.

10. Evaluation and selection

The principles of the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and the [Code of Conduct for the recruitment of researchers](#) will be applied throughout the evaluation and selection stage, and consequently throughout the recruitment and project implementation phases. ComFuturo fellows will be selected following an open, transparent, merit-based, impartial and equitable selection procedure, based on international peer review and interviews.

Gender balance criteria will be taken into account in the composition of the evaluation panels and of all committees or boards of experts intervening in the evaluation and selection process.

All external experts participating in the process will be required to sign a declaration of absence of conflict of interest and a non-disclosure agreement.

Eligibility check

Once the call for applications is closed, FGCSIC will check compliance of the proposals with the eligibility requirements and the validity of the digital signatures included in the documentation attached to the application. The absence of the Research proposal or the Curriculum vitae in the online application form, or their inclusion in a different format or language to the requested, will be considered not rectifiable and the proposal will be directly rejected.

FGCSIC will contact those candidates whose application contains rectifiable errors. The correction must be made by email within 10 calendar days. After this period, applications that still do not meet the eligibility criteria will be rejected and will not proceed to the evaluation phase.



All definitive ineligible applicants will be informed of the decision and reasons by email. After receiving feedback on the ineligibility, the applicants may initiate a request for redress (see Section 11). Eligible applicants who proceeding to the evaluation phase will also be informed by email.

If it becomes clear later on, after eligibility check, during or after the evaluation and the selection phases, that one or more of the eligibility criteria has not been met (for example, due to incorrect or misleading information), the proposal will be declared ineligible and not considered.

Applicants will be kept informed about the status of their application.

External evaluation process

All proposals deemed eligible will undergo a thorough external evaluation process managed by the [European Science Foundation \(ESF\)](#), which will be based on international peer review, in accordance with the highest standards of excellence, transparency, independence, and fairness. This process ensures that each proposal is assessed objectively and consistently by independent experts with recognised experience in the relevant scientific fields.

Each application will be evaluated by two external reviewers, who will produce individual assessment reports based on the programme evaluation criteria focused on the scientific quality of the proposal, the applicant's merits, and the potential impact of the research.

Applicants will receive two assessment reports and will have the opportunity to submit a rebuttal via the ESF online platform in response to those reports, in case they consider there are factual errors or misunderstandings. A timeframe of five working days will be provided for submitting the rebuttal. Applicants will be informed well in advance of the expected timing and process.

Following the rebuttal phase, all materials, including the external assessment reports and the applicant's rebuttal, if provided, will be considered by the international Review Panel convened and coordinated by ESF. The panel will produce one consensus report for each application that will be delivered to FGCSIC, together with the ranking of all proposals under evaluation.

FGCSIC will provide applicants with the consensus report, which will represent the final outcome of the external evaluation stage, and will be informed on whether they have been selected for the next phase of the process (personal interview), organized by FGCSIC.

There will be a redress opportunity for applicants after the consensus report is delivered, which will be managed by FGCSIC as the other redress opportunities (see Section 11).

Personal interviews

The researchers responsible for the highest rated proposals will be interviewed by ComFuturo's Interview & Selection Committee (composed of representatives of CSIC, FGCSIC and external experts) by videoconference, in English or Spanish if the



candidate is fluent in the latter. In principle, for each eligible research topic, the two highest ranked candidates will be interviewed.

Final selection proposal

The proposed selection of the projects to be funded will be made by ComFuturo's Interview & Selection Committee based on the results of the external evaluation process and interviews. The final mark will be based on the marks obtained in the external evaluation phase of the submitted proposal (80%) and interview assessment (20%). FGCSIC will provide all interviewed candidates a final evaluation report with the corresponding final scores in the two phases of the evaluation process (external evaluation and personal interviews).

→ External Evaluation criteria (relative weight: 80%)

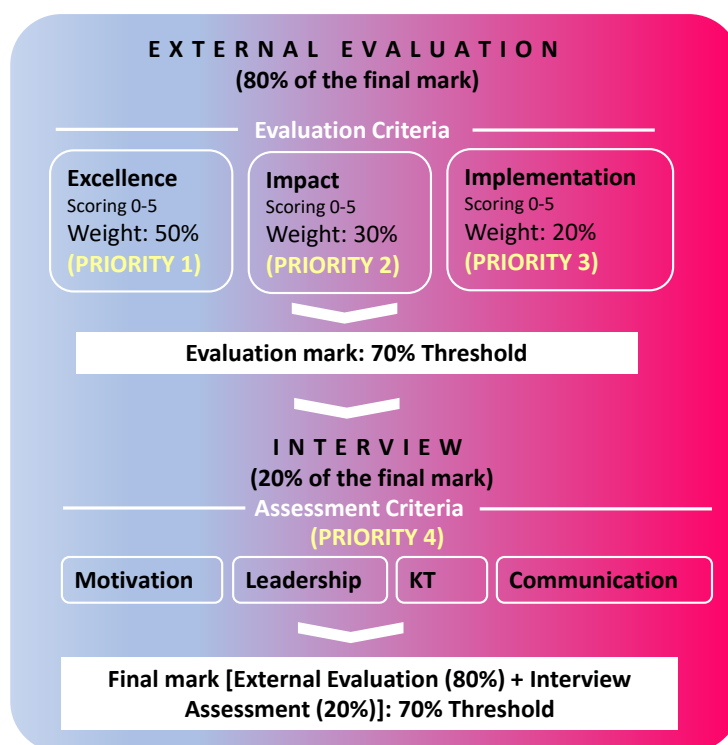
EVALUATION CRITERIA	RELATIVE WEIGHT
EXCELLENCE	50%
Relevance of the proposed project	
Scientific quality and feasibility	
Originality and progress beyond the state of the art	
Interdisciplinarity, internationalisation and intersectoriality	
Appropriate integration of the gender dimension in the proposed research	
Appropriateness and feasibility of planned open science practices	
Quality and comprehensiveness of the data management strategy	
Assessment of the researcher: scientific excellence and outputs, potential to emerge as a leader within his/her field, interdisciplinary and international experience, contributions to industry or societal impact	
IMPACT	30%
Expected impact and applicability	
Comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the proposed Dissemination and Exploitation Plan (DEP)	
IMPLEMENTATION	20%
Coherence and feasibility of the work plan	
Appropriateness of the proposed CSIC host institute	

→ Personal interview criteria (relative weight: 20%)

- Understanding and adherence to the programme's philosophy. Personal motivation to be part of ComFuturo.
- Independence and experience in leading research projects, activities or teams
- Knowledge transfer and industry collaboration
- Applicant presentation and communication skills

Threshold and priority rules throughout the process

The scoring system will be on a 5-point scale; from 0 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) and will be expressed to one decimal place. In cases of *ex aequo* proposals, they will be ordered on the ranked lists following the priority weightings indicated in the figure below. A threshold of 70% in the external evaluation score will be necessary to pass to the interview phase. An overall threshold of 70% in the final mark will be necessary to be preselected for funding.



11. Redress

All candidates will have the right to a redress procedure after each step of the evaluation process.

All redress requests must be addressed to comfuturo@fgcsic.es and they will be examined.

The redress procedure will look at procedural shortcomings and into possible errors, not against decisions made by evaluation experts, panels, committees or boards, neither against ratings or comments established by external experts. FGCSIC will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts.

Requests for redress must:

- Be submitted within 10 calendar days of the relevant communication: the eligibility check result, the external evaluation (after the review panel consensus report is delivered by FGCSIC), or the interview stage (after the final report with scores is delivered by FGCSIC).
- Clearly relate to the stage concerned: eligibility check, external evaluation consensus report, or final report (evaluation + interview scores).
- Include a clear description of the grounds for the complaint.

The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.

Only one request for redress per proposal and phase will be considered.

The redress procedure will ensure a coherent interpretation of such requests, and equal treatment of all applicants. All requests for redress will be handled in strict confidentiality.

12. Outcome of the call and appointment of candidates

The outcome of results, expected for July 2026, with the proposed candidates and projects to be funded will be published after the decision from the ComFuturo's Interview & Selection Committee in the FGCSIC (www.fgcsic.es) and ComFuturo (www.comfuturo.es) websites.

Selected candidates will also be informed by email and will have to confirm within 10 calendar days whether they accept or decline the fellowship. Any declined fellowships will be offered to the candidates on the reserve list resulting from the evaluation and selection process, according to the ranking order.

This call for fellowship applications may be declared void for one, some, or all of the research topics, if so proposed by ComFuturo's Interview & Selection Committee.

The start of the fellowships with the recruitment and incorporation of the ComFuturo grant beneficiaries (ComFuturo fellows) to the corresponding CSIC host institutes will be in October 2026. The exact date of incorporation, which in principle will be the same for all ComFuturo fellows, will be duly notified to selected fellows soon after the outcome of the call. Once the starting date has passed, if the researcher has not incorporated to the corresponding institute, the fellowship may no longer be activated.

If, due to the volume of applications received or other unforeseen circumstances in the evaluation and selection procedure, the outcome of the call cannot be notified by the estimated date (July 2026), all applicants will be informed of the delay and of any subsequent adjustments to the timeline, including a possible postponement of the fellowship starting date.

The outcome of the call, after all redress phases, shall be final.

13. ComFuturo fellows' commitments

ComFuturo iAGE is co-funded under the MSCA-COFUND scheme of the European Union. Therefore, selected fellows will be considered Marie Skłodowska-Curie researchers and must comply with the European standards and obligations established for MSCA fellows.

The conditions of the ComFuturo fellowship, as well as the commitments it entails, will be set out in the specific clauses of the contract that the CSIC will sign with the ComFuturo fellow. Fellows must also take into careful consideration the MSCA Information Package which FGCSIC will provide them with, which includes a series of commitments to which all ComFuturo researchers, as MSCA fellows, must comply with.

Fellows are encouraged to join the Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA) for continued engagement and professional development.

Obligations will include:



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- To assume, for all purposes, that the ComFuturo programme is managed by the FGCSIC, to which the fellow will respond if any aspect or conflict may arise during the development of the ComFuturo research project.
- To accept that the CSIC, as their employer, will be responsible for managing their holidays, possible sick or paternity leaves, and any other aspect related to their obligations and rights. CSIC will employ fellows under conditions aligned with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment.
- To work exclusively for the project, being exclusively dedicated to their ComFuturo research project in accordance with the project proposal approved within the framework of the ComFuturo call, and, under no circumstances, to be able to carry out any activity or task, direct or indirect, principal or accessory, unrelated to those that are the object of their employment contract. However, they may undertake teaching activities (as long as they arise from their own request), for which they will need CSIC's approval as well as FGCSIC's. On a general basis, the maximum teaching hours allowed will be 80 hours per year.
- To meet the requirements made by FGCSIC for their availability or intervention, in person or remotely, to be consulted on the development of their ComFuturo research project or for actions to disseminate the ComFuturo programme.
- To accept the use of their image for all dissemination actions of the ComFuturo programme that may be required of them, during the entire time of the fellowship. Dissemination actions may include acts, events and dissemination and communication activities organised by FGCSIC.
- To consult FGCSIC about any variation in their ComFuturo research project that they may consider necessary for the appropriate development and achievement of its objectives, so that FGCSIC can examine and eventually approve the convenience and necessity of such a modification.
- To refer to themselves as "ComFuturo fellows" in all communications and publications.
- To ensure communication and dissemination of project results, and consider their potential for exploitation and innovation.
- To consider gender as a cross-cutting dimension in their research, assessing its potential impact on equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion. Even if not directly addressed, integrating gender aspects is recommended to enhance the quality and societal relevance of the outcomes.
- To follow Open Science principles: open access to publications and data (fellows must ensure free of charge online access for any user to all peer reviewed scientific publications and data relating to their scientific results), FAIR data management, and responsible research practices. Fellows will have to develop a Data Management Plan. Instructions will be given by FGCSIC on this regard.
- To respect the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) and integrate gender, ethics, and societal engagement where applicable.
- To implement environmentally sustainable research practices in line with the [MSCA Green Charter](#).
- To draw up and submit to FGCSIC, within the deadlines and in the formats communicated to them, follow-up reports on the activities carried out and the progress of their work within the framework of their research project, including

their PCDP (first version early upon recruitment). At least one annual follow-up report will be requested from the ComFuturo fellows. Likewise, to prepare and submit a final report on the results of their ComFuturo project. Reports will include a financial section justifying the costs of the activities carried out by the fellows, as provided by their CSIC host institutes (which will manage the allowance for research, transport and secondment costs allocated for each fellowship).

- To accept that the Associated Partners supporting the programme may request their participation in events of interest to them, such as internal training days, discussion sessions, etc. FGCSIC must be kept informed of any communication with any Associated Partner participating in the programme or any other company or organisation for matters related to their ComFuturo research project.
- To complete a MSCA final evaluation questionnaire upon the end of their fellowship and a follow-up questionnaire two years after the end of their fellowship, following the instructions that will be given by FGCSIC, in accordance with this MSCA rule.
- To inform FGCSIC, as a matter of urgency, of any possible conflict that may be restricting the fulfilment of their obligations under their employment contract, in sufficient time for the FGCSIC to take the necessary measures.
- To comply with all other commitments included in the different Sections of the present Guidelines.
- To comply, in general, with any legal obligations that may be applicable as a consequence of signing the corresponding employment contract with CSIC.

14. Acknowledgment of the EU funding and to the ComFuturo programme

ComFuturo fellows must acknowledge ComFuturo, FGCSIC and the cofunding of the European Commission under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement N° 101217423 in any related publication or public event. The exact reference will be duly confirmed to the researchers once the fellowships start, but in principle it will be the following:

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Fellows will also acknowledge the support and affiliation with CSIC and, when possible, the support of ComFuturo's Associated Partners.

15. Intellectual property rights

By agreement established between FGCSIC and CSIC, the intellectual and industrial property arising from the research projects during the duration of the ComFuturo fellowships will belong to CSIC, without prejudice to the recognition, where



appropriate, of the corresponding authorship and the rights that the regulations grant to the inventors or authors. In this respect, ComFuturo fellows undertake to notify CSIC and FGCSIC, immediately and in writing, of any result of the research project that may be subject to protection by means of a patent, copyright, or any other intellectual or industrial property instrument.

16. Incompatibilities

The ComFuturo fellowships will be incompatible with any other paid work, fellowship or grant that implies another salary. The fellowship will not be compatible with an employment contract from another institution other than CSIC.

The ComFuturo fellow must inform FGCSIC of any possible cause of incompatibility, such as obtaining grants, subsidies, income or resources for activities unrelated to the ComFuturo project.

17. Acceptance of the call's rules

Participation in this call for proposals implies acceptance by the researcher of the terms and conditions of the call.

Detection of any non-compliance with these terms, at any stage, will also result in the cancellation of the application or the fellowship, if already awarded. FGCSIC, in coordination with the European Commission, reserves the right to take the measures it may consider appropriate.

In addition, participation in this call also implies the commitment of the candidates that the information provided through the online application form or any other communication channel with FGCSIC is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge, and that they understand that any incorrect information provided to FGCSIC can result in discipline, including suspension or revocation of their eligibility or ComFuturo fellowship.

FGCSIC reserves the right to interpret and resolve any doubts, controversies and exceptions in all matters foreseen or not foreseen in these rules.

18. Privacy and data protection policy

FGCSIC guarantees that all personal data provided by applicants will be collected, processed, and stored in strict compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR), the Spanish Organic Law 3/2018 on the Protection of Personal Data and Guarantee of Digital Rights (LOPDGDD), and any other applicable regulations.

The information included in the applications will be processed exclusively for the purposes of managing, evaluating, and monitoring the call, as well as for fulfilling any legal obligations that may arise. Access to personal data will be restricted to duly authorised FGCSIC staff, evaluators, and partner organisations directly involved in the process, all of whom will be bound by confidentiality and security obligations.



No data will be disclosed to third parties without the applicant's consent, except in cases of legal or judicial requirement. No international transfers of personal data will be carried out, unless required by law and subject to the appropriate safeguards.

All data will be kept only for the time necessary to achieve the purposes for which they were collected, and subsequently blocked, anonymised, or securely deleted, in accordance with the applicable retention policies.

By submitting their application, candidates confirm under their sole responsibility that the information provided is truthful, that they meet the eligibility requirements of the call, and that they have read and accept FGCSIC's [Legal Advice](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

Applicants may also voluntarily consent to receive communications from FGCSIC regarding activities, events, and new calls, which will always be subject to their express consent and may be revoked at any time.

Applicants are entitled to exercise their data protection rights of access, rectification, erasure, restriction of processing, objection, and portability, as well as to withdraw their consent at any time. These rights may be exercised by contacting FGCSIC at info@fgcsic.es, or by post to C/ Joaquín Costa, 12 – 28002 Madrid, including the reference "Exercise of rights". For any other questions related to data protection, applicants may contact FGCSIC also at info@fgcsic.es. In addition, they may file a complaint with the Spanish Data Protection Agency (www.aepd.es) if they consider that their rights have not been properly safeguarded.

Madrid, 30 September 2025

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