





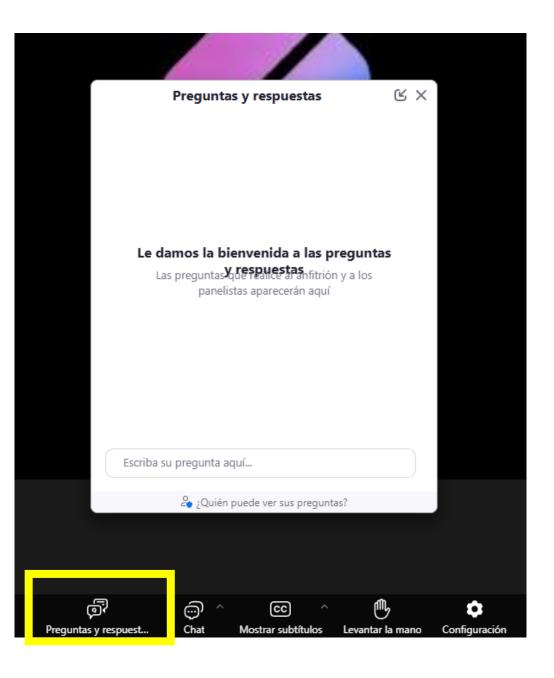


# ComFuturo Fourth Edition – ComFuturo iAGE – Info Day for Applicants

Celia Martín Vicente FGCSIC Project Manager



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- •Use the **Q&A button** ("Preguntas y respuestas") on Zoom to send your questions.
- We'll answer some in writing during the session.
- •Others will be addressed verbally at the end of the presentation.
- If any remain unanswered, please email us at comfuturo@fgcsic.es









#### Agenda

- 1. Introduction & Programme Overview
- 2. Objectives and Focus of ComFuturo iAGE
- 3. Fellowship Structure and Research Topics
- 4. Fellowship description and allowances
- 5. Eligibility Criteria
- 6. Application Procedure
- 7. Evaluation and Selection
- 8. Mentoring, Training and Career Development for selected fellows
- 9. Some obligations of selected fellows
- 10. Timeline



11. Q&A









#### 1- Introduction and Programme Overview

- ComFuturo is an FGCSIC\* initiative with CSIC\*\* and private partners.
- Public-private collaboration fostering top research talent in Spain, for the development by postdoctoral researchers of innovative research projects in CSIC research institutes.
- Fourth edition (ComFuturo iAGE) co-funded by the EU under Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (COFUND).
- Focus: Ageing and Digitalisation.

<sup>\*</sup> Fundación General CSIC is a private, non-profit organization created in 2008 as a result of a joint institutional initiative by the Spanish National Research Council and its founding patrons. Its mission is to promote public-private collaboration in the field of scientific research, innovation, and the advancement of knowledge

<sup>\*\*</sup> The Spanish National Research Council (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas – CSIC) is Spain's largest public research institution and one of the most prestigious in Europe. It conducts cutting-edge research across all scientific and technological fields and counts with more than 120 institutes throughout Spain.









## (ComFuturo iAGE) is possible thanks to the support of:

























#### 2- Objectives and Focus of ComFuturo iAGE

## Programme Objectives

 Attract and support young postdoctoral researchers (worldwide).  Address global ageing challenge through research and innovation.

 Encourage integration of digitalisation in research.  Support highimpact, interdisciplinary, and solution-driven projects.









#### 3- Fellowship Structure and Research Topics



• 10 postdoctoral fellowships within 10 eligible research topics (but 2 fellowships for the same topic)

## Fellowship Overview



• Duration: 36 months (full-time contract at CSIC).



• Fellows design and lead their own research projects as PI



• Open to all nationalities and scientific disciplines (19 areas) but to address AGEING mostly with DIGITALISATION (for all eligible topics except one)



• More than 120 eligible CSIC Research institutes (for some topics: institute predefined)









 Integration of digital technologies, data-driven methods, or computational tools that contribute to the project's objectives and its potential impact on healthy ageing.

## Digitalisation concept

- AI, machine learning, big data analytics, sensors, digital platforms, simulation or modelling technologies (such as digital twins), etc.
- Only topic A ("impact of cellular hypoxia on ageingrelated diseases") does not necessarily need to incorporate digitalisation.







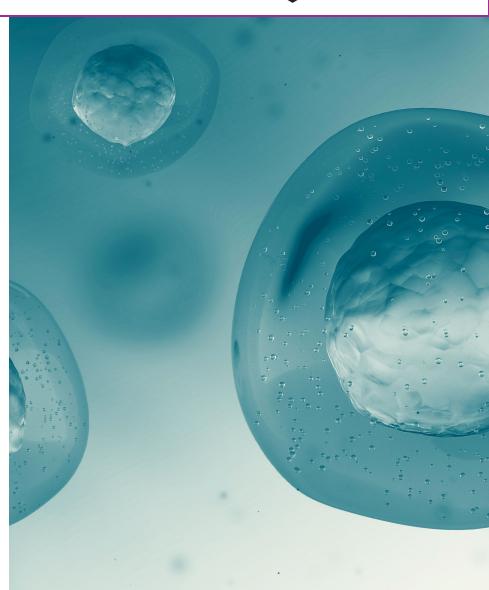


## Fellowship 1 and Fellowship 2

TOPIC A: Impact of Cellular Hypoxia on Ageing-Related Diseases

Any CSIC Institute (feasible to conduct the project)

Digitalisation not a requirement











#### Fellowship 3

TOPIC B: Natural Language
Technologies for Accessible,
Cognitive-Aware and
Personalized Communication
in Older Adults

Any CSIC Institute (feasible to conduct the project)











#### Fellowship 4

TOPIC C: Smart Homes for Older Adults: Sensors and Technologies for Invisible and Personalised Care

Any CSIC Institute (feasible to conduct the project)











#### Fellowship 5

TOPIC D: Digital Solutions and Platforms for Healthy, Safe and Socially Active Ageing in Older Adults

Any CSIC Institute (feasible to conduct the project)







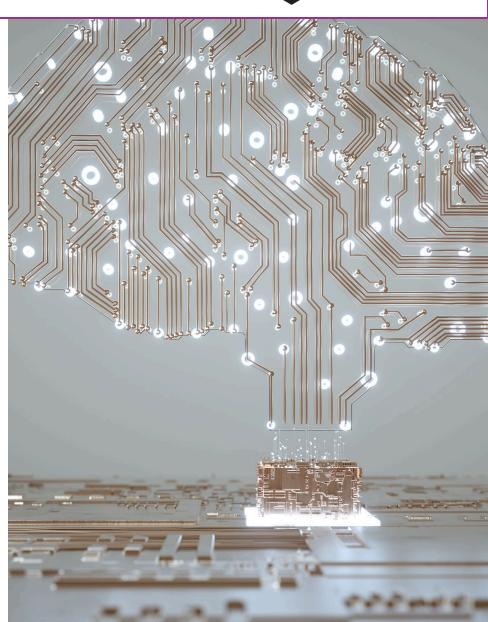




5 fellowships, 6 eligible topics (E-J)

TOPIC E: AI-Powered
Prediction of Early Ageing
and Strategies for
Rejuvenation

Institute for Neuroscience (IN) Alicante, Spain









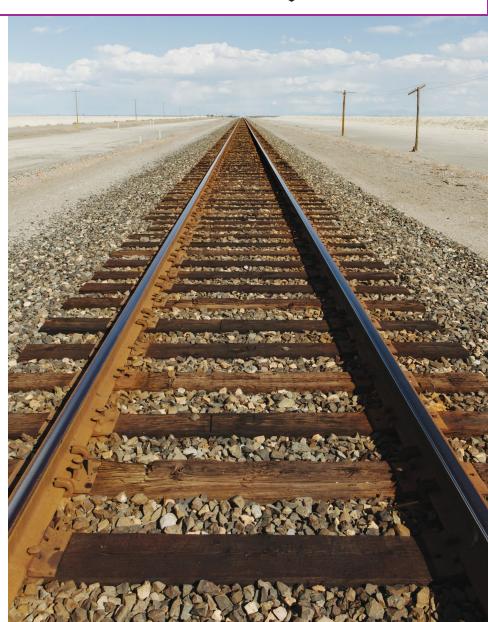


5 fellowships, 6 eligible topics (E-J)

TOPIC F: Digital
Environmental Sensing and
Climate-Aware Urban
Ecosystems for Healthy
Ageing

**Desertification Research Centre (CIDE)** 

Valencia, Spain











5 fellowships, 6 eligible topics (E-J)

**TOPIC G:** Digital Twins for Anticipatory Geriatric Care

Centre for Molecular Biology "Severo Ochoa" (CBM) Madrid, Spain











5 fellowships, 6 eligible topics (E-J)

TOPIC H: Mechanical Markers of Tissue Dysfunction Due to Ageing: Digital Twins and Machine Learning

Institute for Integrative Systems Biology (I<sup>2</sup>SysBio) Valencia, Spain











5 fellowships, 6 eligible topics (E-J)

TOPIC I: Big Data and AI to Unravel the Role of Complex Structural Variants in Ageing

Botanical Institute of Barcelona (IBB)

Barcelona, Spain









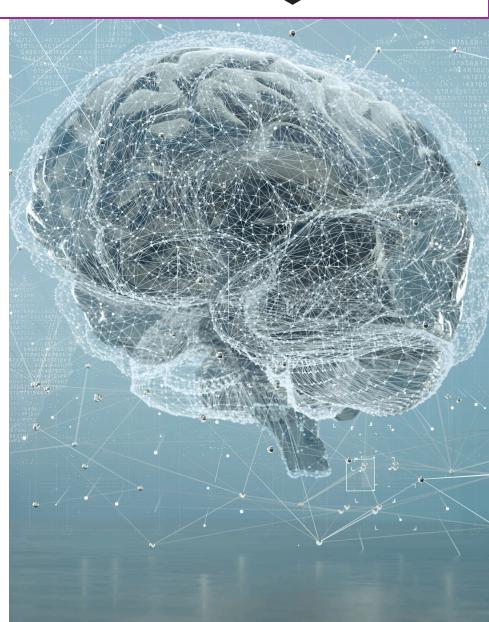


5 fellowships, 6 eligible topics (E-J)

Topic J: Personalised AI for Healthy Ageing: Social Robots as Adaptive Support Systems

Artificial Intelligence Research Institute (IIIA)

Barcelona, Spain











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	Any	Not necessarily
FELLOWSHIP 2	Diseases	Any	Not necessarily
FELLOWSHIP 3	TOPIC B: Natural Language Technologies for Accessible,		VEO
	Cognitive-Aware and Personalized Communication in Older Adults	Any	YES
FELLOWSHIP 4	TOPIC C: Smart Homes for Older Adults: Sensors and	Any	YES
	Technologies for Invisible and Personalised Care		
FELLOWSHIP 5	TOPIC D: Digital Solutions and Platforms for Healthy, Safe and Socially Active Ageing in Older Adults	Any	YES
FELLOWSHIP 6, FELLOWSHIP 7,	TOPIC E: Al-Powered Prediction of Early Ageing and Strategies		
FELLOWSHIP 8, FELLOWSHIP 9,	for Rejuvenation	Institute for Neuroscience (IN)	YES
FELLOWSHIP 10	TOPIC F: Digital Environmental Sensing and Climate-Aware	<b>Desertification Research Centre</b>	YES
	Urban Ecosystems for Healthy Ageing	(CIDE)	IES
Note: these five fellowships will be awarded to the best ranked	TOPIC G: Digital Twins for Anticipatory Geriatric Care	Centre for Molecular Biology	YES
		"Severo Ochoa" (CBM)	
	TOPIC H: Mechanical Markers of Tissue Dysfunction Due to	Institute for Integrative Systems Biology (I <sup>2</sup> SysBio)	YES
projects, covering five of the six	Ageing: Digital Twins and Machine Learning TOPIC I: Big Data and AI to Unravel the Role of Complex	Botanical Institute of Barcelona	
eligible topics shown in the right	Structural Variants in Ageing	(IBB)	YES
(a maximum of 1 fellowship will	ottasta. at variatio iii / Boilig	(135)	
be awarded to the same topic)	TOPIC J: Personalised AI for Healthy Ageing: Social Robots as	Artificial Intelligence Research	YES
	Adaptive Support Systems	<u>Institute</u> (IIIA)	
10 FELLOWSHIPS IN TOTAL	10 ELIGIBLE DIFFERENT TOPICS	OVER 120 ELIGIBLE CSIC RESEARCH INSTITUTES	ELEGIBLE PROPOSALS WITH AND WITHOUT
			DIGITALISATION









#### 4- Fellowship description and allowances

36 month full-time employment contract with CSIC

A) Salary in the payroll for the fellow (including different allowances)

The indicated amounts include the employer's social security contributions and taxes.

Gross salary (after deduction of employer's contributions from the figures below) is estimated that will be around 43,500 €/year (with FA) and 45,500 €/year (with FA).

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:

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

The family status determined at the deadline of the call and will be reviewed during the duration of the fellowship. Upload evidence in application (marriage certificate, civil partnership certificate, family register...) or if it applies once the fellowship has started, notify later to FGCSIC and CSIC









B) 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

This allowance shall be used exclusively for the following concepts:

- •Acquisition and maintenance of scientific equipment, consumables and reagents.
- •Provision of services that are necessary for the execution of the research project.
- •Expenses associated with the participation of the ComFuturo fellow in scientific meetings that are useful for the proper conduct of the research project.
- •Expenses associated with publications and protection (through patents, etc.) of the results of the research project.
- •Expenses related with possible secondments (academic or non-academic), in or outside Spain.
- •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- Eligibility and Mobility rules

PhD awarded within 8 years before call deadline

Compliance with Mobility rule based on MSCA standards (Standard or Career Break).









#### PhD Eligibility and Extensions

- First PhD must have been publicly defended within 8 years before the call deadline (9 January 2026, so on or after 9 January 2018). Defence date counts, not date of issuance of diploma.
- 8-year rule calculated from first PhD if multiple degrees.
- Extensions allowed in justified cases occurred after the thesis defence: illness leading to sick leaves of ≥3 months (extension of equivalent duration) / maternity/paternity (+1 year per child).
- Proof: upload official document showing PhD defence date + any extension evidence (medical certificate, family record, etc.).











### **Mobility Rules Overview**

#### Applicants must comply with MSCA mobility rule:

- <u>Standard mobility rule</u>: 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 Jan 2023–9 Jan 2026).
- 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 call deadline (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 (9 Jan 2021-9 Jan 2026).
- 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.
- \* 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.









#### Required Evidence & Compliance (Mobility Rule)



Submit a Declaration of Compliance (template provided).



Include continuous timeline: 36 months (Standard) or 60 months (Career Break).



Each period must list country, activity type (employment, unemployment, studies, leave...), employer/institution (if applicable), and evidence type\*.



Combine all documents into one PDF. Missing proof or gaps = risk of ineligibility.

\* Employment contracts or certificates; Work permits; Residence certificates or rental contracts; Academic enrolment certificates; Unemployment certificates; Evidence of parental or sick leave; Any other official documentation supporting each declared period









- Ensure PhD and mobility criteria are met before applying.
- Prepare accurate, gapfree evidence documentation to prove the mobility rule
- Exclusions: short stays, national service, refugee procedures
- The call deadline (9 January 2026) is inclusive.













 Align with one eligible research topic.





• Be original, innovative, max duration for 3 years and feasible at chosen CSIC institute.



• Declaration of Interest letter signed by CSIC institute director.



• Only one application per candidate.









#### 6- Application Procedure

- Check the eligibility criteria to ensure you meet all requirements of the call.
- Identify a CSIC institute whose research aligns with your field and one of the eligible topics (for some topics, institute predefined). The full list of CSIC institutes can be consulted on CSIC's official website (<a href="https://www.csic.es/en/investigation/institutes-centres-units">https://www.csic.es/en/investigation/institutes-centres-units</a>) where they can be filtered by scientific area and geographical location. Additionally, the document "CSIC Research Institutes" is available in the online application platform, with basic info & contact details (email and telephones).
- Contact the chosen institute to present your proposal and express your interest.
- **Dotain a Letter of Interest** signed by the Director of the CSIC institute if they agree to support your application (required document).
- **Trepare and submit your full application** via the official online platform before the deadline.









Applications submitted exclusively through the online form at FGCSIC website.

Prepare all required documents before starting. The form must be completed in one sitting, as progress cannot be saved. We strongly recommend setting aside <u>uninterrupted time</u> to complete it in full.

Templates for mandatory documents are available within the online form, as well as Call Guidelines and detailed FAQ.

Only one application per researcher may be submitted.

Deadline: 9 January 2026, 10:00 a.m. (CET, Spain).









#### Structure of the Online Application Form

Applicant Data: personal details, affiliation, PhD date, ORCID, current position.

Project Data: title, acronym, knowledge area, topic, keywords, summary, proposed CSIC host institute.

Curriculum Vitae + Research Proposal (merged single PDF, ≤7 MB, signed).

Ethics documentation (Self-Assessment & Declaration, each ≤1 MB, signed).

Declaration of Interest from host institute (≤1 MB, signed by Director).

Copy of valid ID/Passport (≤1 MB).

PhD title page or academic certificate (+ evidence of leave if applicable, ≤1 MB). Declaration of
Compliance with
Mobility Rule +
supporting documents
(≤4 MB, signed).

Evidence for family allowance (if applicable, ≤4 MB).

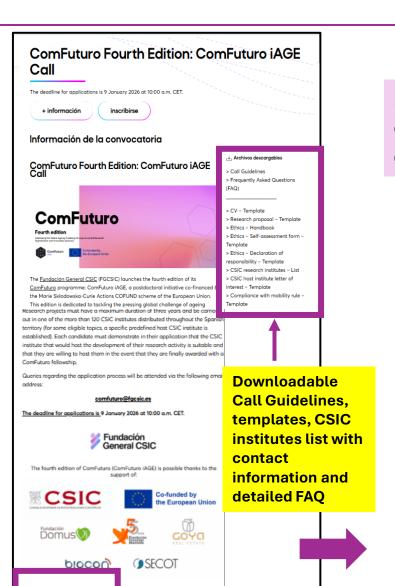


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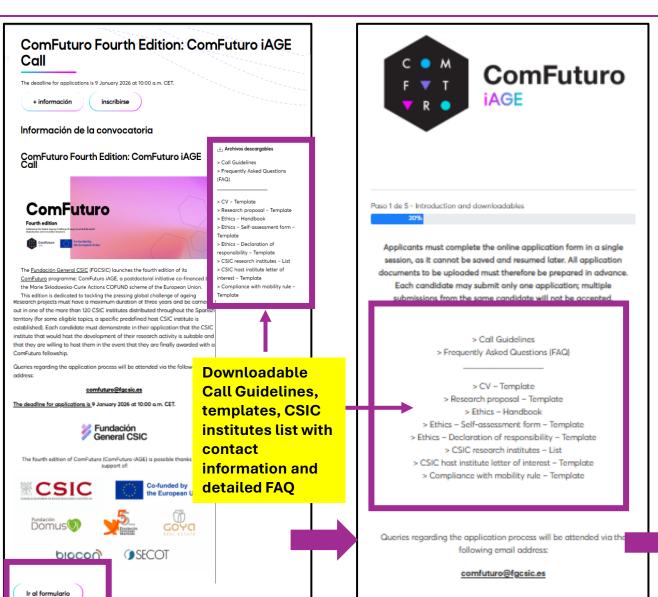
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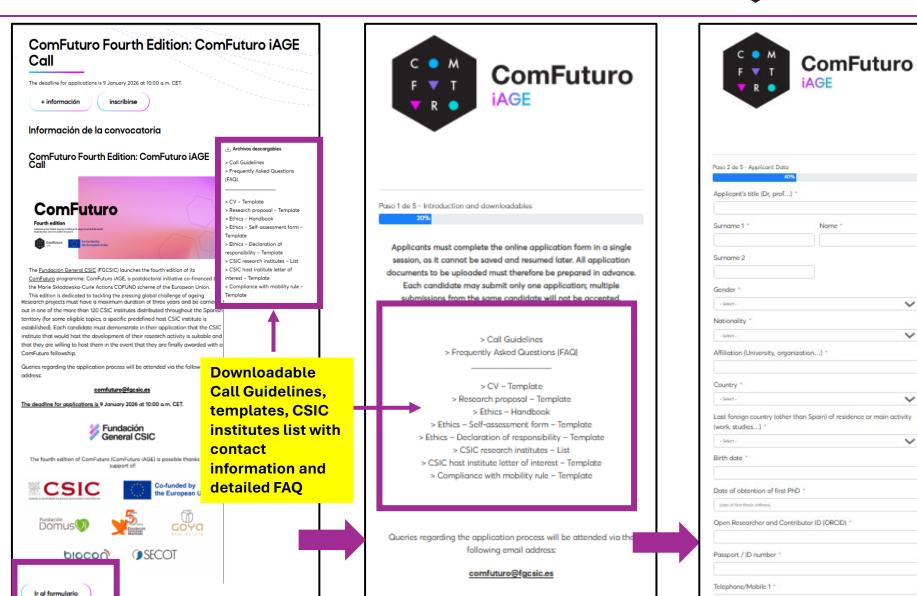




















Curriculum vitae (English, following specific template which includes instructions) merged with Research proposal (CV appearing first) in a single PDF (max 7 MB). With researcher's digital signature.

- → Personal information
- Ø Current position
- Ø Previous positions (research activity including interruptions)
- Ø Education
- → CV summary
- → Relevant merits
- Ø Publications
- Ø Congresses
- Ø Research projects
- Ø Technology / Knowledge transfer and exploitation of results
- Ø Other merits / Additional achievements

Research proposal (English, following specific template which includes instructions) merged with CV (CV appearing first) in a single PDF (max 7 MB). With researcher's digital signature.

- → General information of the project
- → Excellence
- 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











Once submitted, applicants receive an automatic email confirmation certificate.



FGCSIC may request additional documentation at any time.



Ensure each PDF follows the correct template, includes required digital signatures, and respects file size limits



Principle documents in English. If evidence documentation to prove requirements is uploaded in language different to Spanish/English, a translation in one of this languages must be provided also (but the original also)



Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.



For questions: contact comfuturo@fgcsic.es









#### 7- Evaluation and Selection



#### **Fair and Transparent Selection**

The selection procedure is open, meritbased, impartial, and equitable to ensure fairness and trustworthiness.

#### **Commitment to Gender Balance**

Gender balance is actively promoted in evaluation panels and expert committees to foster diversity and equal opportunity.

#### Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

Experts sign declarations to confirm no conflicts of interest and maintain confidentiality throughout the selection process.





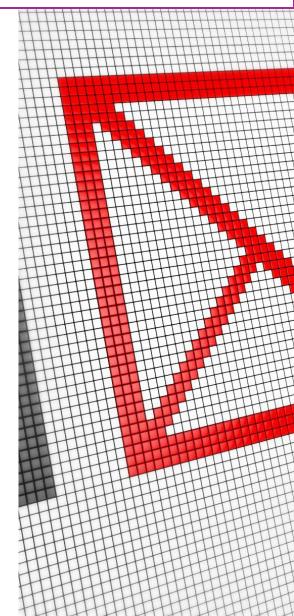




#### A) Eligibility verification

FGCSIC ensures all proposals meet requirements by verifying all submitted documents.

Applicants are notified whether the application is eligible, rejected, or rectifiable, and granted 10 days to correct errors that can be rectified. Final eligibility decision is informed via email.











# B) External Evaluation by the European Science Foundation (ESF)

#### Rigorous External Evaluation based on international peer review

Each proposal is reviewed by two independent experts focusing on scientific quality, applicant merits, and research impact. **Candidates receive 2 assessment reports.** 

#### **Applicant Rebuttal Opportunity (managed by ESF)**

Applicants can submit rebuttals within five working days to address factual errors or misunderstandings in assessment reports.

#### **Consensus Report and Ranking**

An international review panel (ESF) prepares a consensus report based on the individual assessments and the results from the rebuttal process and ranks proposals accordingly (and sends results to FGCSIC)

#### **Final Outcome and Redress**

**Applicants receive the consensus report** and are informed by FGCSIC whether they pass to the interview phase.





EVALUATION CRITERIA







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	

### ESF external evaluation criteria









#### C) Personal Interviews

#### **Interview Process**

Top-rated applicants from external evaluations are invited for interviews to be held via videoconference.

#### Conducted by ComFuturo's Interview & Selection Committee

Committee with representatives of CSIC, FGCSIC and external experts.

#### Interview evaluation Criteria

Candidates are assessed on alignment with programe philosophy + motivation, leadership, knowledge transfer+industry collaboration and communication skills.



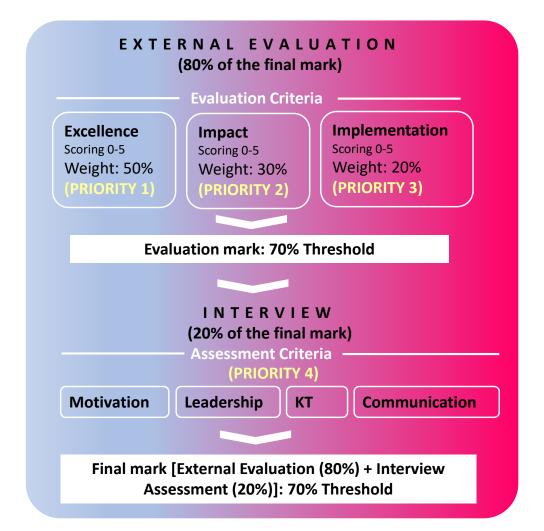








#### D) Proposed selection for funding











#### **Redress Procedure**

#### **Request Submission Guidelines**

Candidates must submit redress requests via email within 10 calendar days after result communication specifying the evaluation stage (eligibility check, external evaluation consensus report, or final report with evaluation + interview scores) and complaint details.

#### **Scope and Limitations**

The procedure addresses procedural errors but does not reconsider scientific or technical judgments by experts.

#### **Confidentiality and Finality**

All redress requests are confidential, with final evaluation scores considered binding even if lowered.











#### Outcome of the call

#### **Announcement and Publication**

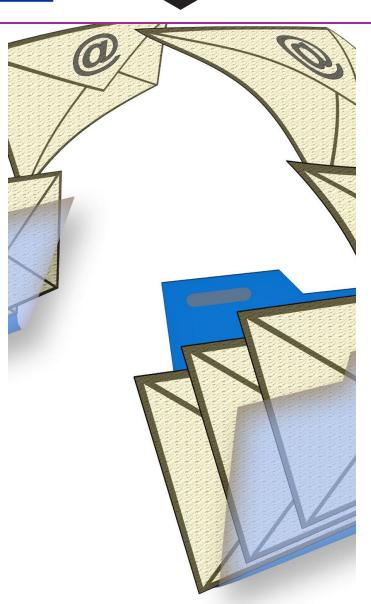
Results are expected for July 2026 on official websites and via email notifications to selected candidates.

#### **Acceptance and Reserve List**

Candidates must confirm acceptance within 10 days; offers may extend to reserve candidates if declined.

#### **Fellow Incorporation Timeline**

Fellows will join host institutes in October 2026; delays or forfeiture consequences will be communicated as needed.











## 8- Mentoring, Training and Career Development for selected fellows

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

- Supervisor 1 CSIC Institute Director A Declaration of Interest letter signed by this supervisor
  must be uploaded by the candidate as part of the application.
- <u>Supervisor 2 CSIC Academic Supervisor:</u> A CSIC researcher from the host research group or department, typically the group leader. The name must be proposed in the Declaration of Interest letter. Must be contractually bound to CSIC for the entire 36-month duration of the ComFuturo iAGE fellowship.
- 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.











Fellows prepare, together with their supervisors, a Personalised Career Development Plan (PCDP), which they will have to update and send to FGCSIC during the fellowshsip.



Access to CSIC's institutional training catalogue. Training on transferrable skills provided by other entities including associated partners (ethics, entrepeneurship, technology transfer, etc.)



Secondments (academic and non-academic) encouraged (up to 12 months total, in same institution up to 6 months). IF FORSEEN, INCLUDE THEM IN PROPOSAL!









#### 9- Some obligations of selected fellows

#### Legal and Management Framework

- ComFuturo is co-funded by MSCA-COFUND (EU); selected researchers hold the status of Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellows.
- Employment is formalised through a contract with **CSIC**, responsible for employment issues (vacations, permits, leaves, etc.) while **FGCSIC** is the manager of the programme and must be kept informed of all aspects.

#### Key Conditions

- Fellows are expected to work **exclusively** on their ComFuturo project (no other paid work or fellowship that provides a salary).
- Up to **80 hours per year of teaching** may be permitted, subject to prior approval.
- Any project changes must be discussed with FGCSIC.











#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Fellows must submit PCDPs, Data management plans and annual scientific and financial reports (instructions and templates will be provided).
- Possible participation in activities and meetings organised by associated partners.

#### Dissemination and Good Practices

- Fellows should refer themselves as "ComFuturo fellows", disseminate research results, considering innovation, gender equality, and sustainability.
- Principles of Open Science and Responsible Research and Innovation must be applied.











ComFuturo fellows must acknowledge ComFuturo, FGCSIC and the cofunding of the European Commission in any related publication or public event.



The exact reference(s) will be duly confirmed to the researchers once the fellowships start.



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









#### **Ethical Requirements**

• Complete Ethics Self-Assessment Form (and Declaration if needed). Approval from CSIC Ethics
 Committee required if any ethics issue is identified before the research associated with those issues can start

 NO Research involving human reproductive cloning, heritable genetic modifications, or creation of embryos solely for research or stem cell extraction (except gonadal cancer treatment research).









## Intellectual Property Rights

The intellectual and industrial property will belong to CSIC (institutional ownership).

This is without prejudice to proper recognition of authorship and the rights that regulations grant to inventors or authors.

Fellows must notify FGCSIC and CSIC of results susceptible of protection.

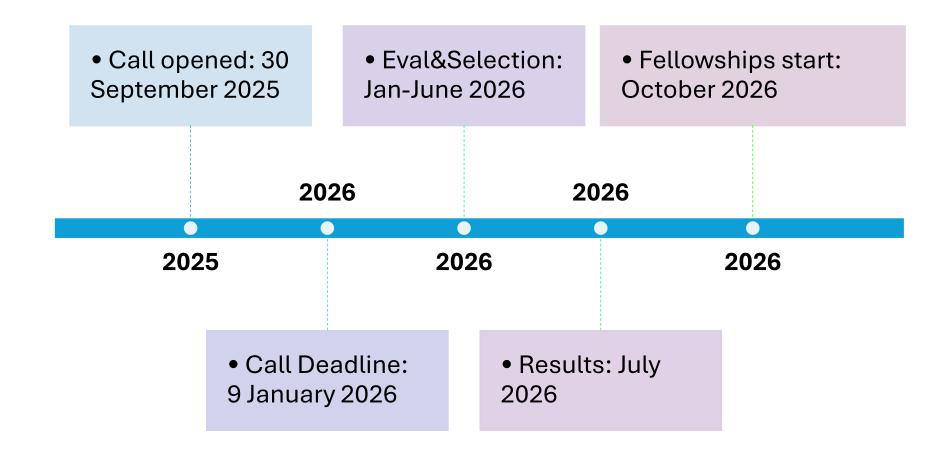








#### 10- Timeline











#### Helpdesk & Institutional links



FGCSIC Contact for queries:

comfuturo@fgcsic.es



#### Official websites:

www.fgcsic.es

www.comfuturo.es

https://fgcsic.es/?ff\_landing=30&f orm=comfuturo\_call

www.csic.es









# Thank You & Q&A

# We look forward to your innovative proposals for ComFuturo iAGE!

Note: This presentation is for informational purposes only. The official and binding details are those published in the ComFuturo iAGE Call Guidelines.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement Nº 101217423. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency, granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.