

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Ramón y Cajal Grants, Call 2026

IMPORTANT

The research proposal **must not exceed 20 pages**. The application system will not accept a longer document.

General considerations:

1. **It is important that you check that you have submitted the correct document;** please note that, if a correction, rectification or clarification is requested, **it will not subsequently be possible to update the information** or to improve or expand the content of the document originally submitted.
2. The research proposal **must not exceed 20 pages. The application system will not accept a longer document.**
3. The template for the research proposal has been prepared so that it may be completed in the format recommended in the call (Article 15.2.b): Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial font, with a minimum font size of 11 points; side margins of 2.5 cm; top and bottom margins of 1.5 cm; and single line spacing as a minimum.
4. The document must be completed in English.
5. It is recommended that the document be completed using a computer with a Windows operating system and MS Word (MS Office) as the word processor.
6. Once the Word document has been completed, the file must be converted to PDF format (not exceeding 4 MB) and uploaded to the application system under Add documents / Research proposal. It is important that you check that you have submitted the correct document and that its length has not been modified.
7. Annex IV to the call contains the description of the content of the research proposal.

The research proposal must contain the information required for the evaluation, taking into account the evaluation criteria set out in Annex I to the call.

1. RESEARCH PROPOSAL DATA

The name of the candidate listed as Principal Investigator (PI), together with the research-proposal title and acronym in Spanish and English, must be included and must be consistent with the information entered in the application system.

2. JUSTIFICATION AND NOVELTY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

2.1. Motivation of the research proposal

The **motivation for the research proposal** must be explained in the context of the scientific and technical knowledge of the specific subject area or line of research to which it relates. The description must identify the scientific and technical problem, need or challenge addressed, justify its relevance, originality and scientific, technological or innovative quality, and clearly explain the novelty of the expected contribution in relation to the current state of knowledge. Where appropriate, the interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary nature of the proposal must also be indicated.

2.2. Starting hypothesis and novelty

The **starting hypothesis** must be stated, its scientific and technical basis explained, and the extent to which it is novel, original and relevant in relation to the state of the art in the subject area addressed must be described.

If the research proposal is a continuation of previous research, the objectives and results already achieved must be clearly indicated, so that the actual progress proposed can be assessed.

3. OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY AND WORK PLAN

3.1. General and specific objectives

The general and specific objectives must be described and listed briefly, clearly, precisely and realistically, in accordance with the expected duration of the project. The specific objectives must be linked to the starting hypothesis, the proposed methodology, the work plan, the expected results and the expected contribution to the generation of scientific and technical knowledge.

3.2. Description of the methodology

A detailed description of the proposed **methodology** must be included in relation to the objectives and the state of the art, highlighting its novelty, suitability, appropriateness and feasibility. The description must explain the main techniques, approaches or procedures envisaged, their correspondence with each specific objective, the tasks to which they will be applied and the **critical stages** whose outcome may affect the feasibility of the work plan or require its adjustment.

3.3. Work plan and schedule

A clear and precise **schedule** of the planned phases, tasks, milestones and deliverables must be included, indicating their relationship with the specific objectives set out in the proposal and, where appropriate, with the responsibilities of the research team. The schedule must make it possible to assess whether the work plan is adequate for achieving the proposed objectives.

3.4. Identification of critical points and contingency plan

The critical stages in the implementation of the proposal whose outcome may affect the feasibility of the planned work plan, jeopardise the achievement of any of the specific objectives or require an adjustment to that plan must be identified. A contingency plan must be included, identifying, for each relevant risk or difficulty, its possible impact on the objectives, tasks and expected results, as well as the measures envisaged to mitigate, correct or resolve it, justifying their suitability for ensuring the feasible implementation of the research proposal.

3.5. Previous results related to the topic of the research proposal supporting its feasibility

Briefly describe the candidate's background and previous contributions in the subject area of the research proposal, including their scientific and technical quality, impact and direct relationship with the objectives, in order to justify both the novelty of the proposal and the candidate's ability to carry it out, as well as its scientific and technical feasibility.

3.6. Description of the material resources, infrastructure and/or unique equipment required to implement the proposed methodology

A description must be provided of the material resources, infrastructure and/or unique equipment required to implement the proposed methodology, indicating the role they will play in carrying out the planned tasks and achieving the objectives.

4. EXPECTED IMPACT OF THE RESULTS

A description of the expected impact of the results, of no more than 3,500 characters, must be entered in the application system. This content may be published for dissemination purposes if the research proposal is funded under this call.

4.1. Expected impact on the generation of scientific and technological knowledge

A description must be included of the expected scientific and technical impact of the project results, both nationally and internationally, identifying the specific advances in knowledge expected, their possible interdisciplinary relevance and the evidence enabling that impact to be assessed.

4.2. Social and economic impact of the expected results

The expected social and economic impact and the benefits that may derive from the results of the proposal and their applications must be described, distinguishing, where appropriate, between tangible and intangible value for society, the economy, culture or public policy. The possible impact on job creation, beyond the recruitment of staff to carry out the project itself, must also be indicated, as must the expected contribution to environmental sustainability, where relevant.

Include a description of the impact of the results on the gender dimension, in the field of disability and in other areas of social inclusion, as well as any other aspect that makes it possible to assess the benefit of the proposed activities for society.

Some of the questions that may be answered in this section are, for example: to what extent will the expected results contribute to the wellbeing of the population? To what extent will they strengthen the competitiveness, technological development and productivity of companies? To what extent will they contribute to knowledge transfer? To what extent will they increase societal security, for example in relation to food safety, extreme environmental events or cybersecurity? To what extent will they contribute to the improvement or protection of the environment and/or to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals? To what extent will they contribute to a better understanding of the environment and to addressing the societal challenges defined by the EU and/or the objectives of the Spanish Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation? To what extent will they contribute to job creation, capacity-building or the improvement of training within the population?

4.3. Plan for scientific communication and internationalisation of the results

A scientific communication plan for the results must be included, specifying the planned channels and the expected open-access publications. It must also identify any particularly relevant actions that go beyond the usual activities of publication or attendance at conferences, especially in leading national and international forums.

An internationalisation plan for the results must be included, in which future collaborations with international academic or industrial R&D&I groups, participation in international projects or contracts, mobility, scientific networks, publications, conference presentations and other actions that may arise from the results may be described.

4.4. Plan for dissemination of results to the groups most relevant to the topic of the research proposal and to society in general

A dissemination plan for the results aimed at the groups most relevant to the topic of the research proposal and at society in general must be included, indicating the possible target audiences, the planned channels and the approximate schedule of the actions.

4.5. Brief description of the research data management plan

A summary of the research data management plan must be included, indicating which data will be collected or generated and specifying their types and formats; how access will be provided, indicating who may access the data, how and when; what measures will be adopted to ensure their preservation, reuse and security; and in which repository they are expected to be deposited. In the case of data subject to personal data protection regulations or ethical requirements, how they will be managed must be indicated.

For research proposals that are funded, a full formal data management plan may be requested during project implementation or together with the final report. Please remember that the data management plan must be deposited in institutional or thematic open-access repositories.

4.6. Description of the integration of sex and/or gender analysis in the research content

Please remember that, where aspects with a possible sex or gender dimension are envisaged in the content of the proposed research, by reason of its subject matter, methodology, results or applications, these must be developed in the relevant sections of the scientific and technical report.

You must describe how, where appropriate, sex and/or gender analysis is integrated into all stages of the research cycle, including hypothesis formulation, methodological design, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, interpretation of results and their possible applications.

You must describe the impact, if any, of the results on the sex and/or gender dimension. It must also be explained how the results or applications may be directly or indirectly affected according to sex and/or gender.

4.7. Plan for the transfer and valorisation of results (where applicable)

If you consider that knowledge and/or results suitable for transfer may be achieved, such knowledge or results must be identified, their possible application described, the planned transfer or valorisation plan detailed, and the potentially interested entities indicated.

5. JUSTIFICATION OF THE REQUESTED BUDGET

Provide a qualitative justification of the requested budget for the implementation of the research proposal, linking the main budget items to the planned objectives, tasks and methodology.

If essential equipment is requested for the implementation of the proposed tasks, justify why it is needed, its link to the project methodology and objectives and, where applicable, the technical and/or methodological novelty it would provide.

6. SPECIFIC CONDITIONS FOR THE EXECUTION OF CERTAIN RESEARCH PROPOSALS (This section should only be completed where any of the conditions set out in Annex IV apply.)

This section should only be completed if, in the electronic application system, an affirmative answer is given to any of the aspects relating to the conditions or implications set out in Annex IV, such as ethics, biosafety, animal experimentation, clinical trials, use of human cells or tissues, embryonic stem cells, quantitative surveys in the field of the social sciences, archaeological activities, Spanish or foreign genetic resources, direct participation of individuals, use of social research techniques or other circumstances affecting the activities planned in the proposal and not sufficiently developed in the application form.

In the application system, if the answer to any of these implications is “Yes”, a justification of no more than 1,000 characters must be included and, where appropriate, the list of authorisations required for the implementation of the project, with a justification of no more than 500 characters for each of them. If it is considered necessary to expand on this information, this may be done in this section of the research proposal.

The information recommended to be provided relates to:

- a) A description of the specific aspects relating to the proposed research.
- b) An explanation of the considerations, procedures or protocols that are expected to be applied in the project in compliance with the applicable regulations, in each case.
- c) An indication of the facilities required for the implementation of the research proposal.
- d) The list of mandatory authorisations that must be held or processed for the activities planned in the project.

The authorisations and other documentation relating to these matters may be requested during the implementation of the project, together with the interim or final scientific and technical monitoring report.