

**STAR 2 CALL FOR GRANTS SUPPORTING THE ATTRACTION OF SCIENTIFIC TALENT  
CALL CO-FUNDED BY SANTANDER BANK**

**Article 1. INTRODUCTION**

The ERC (European Research Council) is the leading research funding organization within the European Union, whose main aim is to promote wholly investigator-driven frontier research in Europe.

The ERC stimulates scientific excellence by giving support to the best of the best in Europe across all fields. For all ERC frontier research grants, scientific excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation. The European Research Council funds the best ideas at the frontiers of knowledge. ERC Calls for proposals are open to all researchers anywhere in the world, provided that their research institutions are based in Europe or in any of the Associated Countries (ACs).

ERC prepares its own Work Programme on an annual basis, which establishes calls for proposals divided into three funding schemes: Starting Grants (StG), Consolidator Grants (CoG) and Advanced Grants (AdG).

The high competitive level of these calls seems to be beneficial for host Universities, serving as a means to attract the most promising researchers in Europe who have obtained such grants, or at least, to those who have passed the first stage of the ERC selection processes.

**Article 2. AIMS OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND COMMITMENT OFFERED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTABRIA**

2.1. The University of Cantabria calls for one individual grant to be awarded on a competitive basis, for the incorporation of a researcher (on condition that he/she will prove the non-existence of a contractual relationship with University of Cantabria, UC) and who have already completed the first stage of evaluation of any of the Calls for Starting Grants or Consolidator Grants of the ERC included in Annex 1 of this Call, with a special focus on young researchers. Therefore, this grant is intended to attract young, excellent researchers by offering an employment contract, thus providing him/her with resources for the development of a project, and support for the creation of their own research team.

2.2. Specifically, this grant encompasses the following funding categories:

- a) Recruitment of the applicant researcher (hereinafter, the **Beneficiary**): Bearing a total amount of € 260,000. The labor contract will be formalized as a temporary work contract in reference to a specific project with a duration of five years.
- b) Funding (allocation of resources) for the development of a project (hereinafter, the **Project**): Up to € 160,000 (the average amount may vary depending on the research field), aimed at covering the expenses directly related with eligible “start-up” costs of the Principal Researcher and the setting up of his/her research activities.

2.3 At the end of the fellowship, the University of Cantabria will be aimed at providing a new vacancy for Permanent Professor in the fields related to the professional profile of the beneficiary by opening a public appointment application process. The potential beneficiary must be certified by ANECA and comply with the specific quality criteria regarding his/her scientific production and scientific-technical activity, as stated in the *Programa de Incentivación de la Incorporación e*

*Intensificación de la Actividad Investigadora* (I3 Programme), which is summarized in the Annex 2 of this Call for Proposals. The vacancy notice will be strictly in accordance with the applicable governing law, internal regulations, and operating rules.

- 2.4 The Research Commission of the University of Cantabria will check the compliance with the aforementioned requirements and may request the corresponding evaluations to the ANEP, if required. It will be also responsible for solving any potential issues or inconveniences.

### **Article 3. FUNDING OF THE CALL**

- 3.1. The present Call for Proposals will be co-funded by the Santander Bank (Banco Santander), through the Cooperation Agreement signed on the 22 December 2014 with the University of Cantabria within the funding scheme of International Talent Attraction, STAR Programme (Santander Talent Attraction for Research).
- 3.2 The global funding of the Call amounts to € 420,000, which will be paid from the budget heading 62.QBSN.649, distributed into the following annual funds: € 120,000 corresponding to financial year 2019; € 120,000 to financial year 2020; € 60,000 to financial year 2021; € 60,000 to financial year 2022 and € 60,000 to financial year 2023. In fulfillment with legal dispositions it is noted that the availability of these funds are conditioned to the existence of an adequate provision of funds within the budget of the University of Cantabria. These amounts will be used for salary and research expenditures as described below in Article 5,
- 3.3 As a general rule, any modification made on the initial grant approval conditions will be formally requested to the Vice-chancellor of Research and Transfer of Knowledge, upon reasoned request from the beneficiary.

### **Article 4. ELEGIBLE APPLICANTS**

- 4.1. Potential beneficiaries of the present Call for Proposals will be PhD researchers of any nationality, having a demonstrable post-doctoral experience of at least 3 years after his/her PhD award.
- 4.2. The beneficiary will not bear any contractual obligations or legal links with the University of Cantabria during the previous five years since the date of publication of this Call for Proposals.
- 4.3. The applicant must demonstrate the positive assessment after Step 1 of the ERC panel evaluation in any of the funding schemes listed in the Annex 1, and that he/she is the Principal Researcher of the received application.
- 4.4. The beneficiary will carry out a research project during the whole duration of the fellowship, in relation to the ERC grant previously submitted, as set in Article 4.3.
- 4.5. The beneficiary will commit to apply for an ERC project during the next two years after the starting date of the employment contract, where the University of Cantabria will be the “host institution”.
- 4.6. The beneficiary will request the acceptance commitment of a Department or Research Institute of the University of Cantabria, in accordance to the established terms in Article 7.2.

#### **Article 5. MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT, ELIGIBLE COSTS AND IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD**

- 5.1 The grant is limited to a maximum of € 420,000.00 and payments will be distributed in five separate instalments according to Article 3.
- 5.2 A first instalment of € 120,000.00 will be transferred to the beneficiary after the award decision. During the first month after the entry into force of the agreement, an application procedure concerning the Ethics Research Authorization in Social Sciences of the UC, and/or Ethics of Clinic Research of the Committee of Cantabria will be mandatory initiated.
- 5.3 The second instalment of € 120,000.00 (concerning the first reporting period) will be transferred after month 10, when the delivery of both the technical and economic reports is expected. The third instalment of € 60,000.00 (second reporting period) will be transferred after month 22, provided that all requested technical and economic deliverables and reports of the corresponding period are received. The fourth instalment of € 60,000.00 (third reporting period) will be transferred after month 34, when the delivery of the technical and economic deliverables of the corresponding period is expected. The fifth and final instalment of € 60,000.00 (fourth reporting period) will be paid after sending the corresponding technical and economic deliverables of the corresponding period in month 46.
- 5.4 The scientific-technical and economic report delivered at month 34 (third reporting period) will be evaluated by the Research Board of the UC. In the event of a negative evaluation, the grant will be immediately terminated.
- 5.5 The grant amount will be distributed as follows:
- a. Salary of the beneficiary: € 260,000.00 (€ 52,000.00 per year), including national taxes and social security, corresponding to an average of **€ 38,400.00** gross per year, under the concept of employment contract. The duration of each work contract will be a total of 60 months in regime of specific project or service.
  - b. Maximum total eligible expenses related with development of research activity are:
    - i. Up to **€ 160,000.00** in case of experimental sciences
    - ii. Up to **€ 120,000.00** in case of non-experimental sciences
- 5.6 If the applicant receives a positive assessment of the ERC in respect to his/her grant application to any of the calls listed in Annex 1 contained herein, the beneficiary will have to return all the grant payments received after the resolution of the ERC call to the Vice Chancellorship of Research and Transfer of Knowledge.
- 5.7 In case of a positive grant resolution from the ERC call, the beneficiaries must designate the University of Cantabria as the host institution of the concerned project.
- 5.8 The following costs will be considered as eligible:
- a. Personnel costs (including salaries and social security taxes). Personnel can be contracted for the total or partial duration of the project. Contracts of PhD, MSc, BSc or technicians are eligible under any of the recruiting regimes of the UC within the existing regulation. Training grants are not eligible.
  - b. Durable equipment: including the acquisition, maintenance and repair costs of scientific-technical equipment, computer systems and technical software. Bibliographical material costs can be claimed under this category. Purchase of equipment during the two last months of the project will not be eligible.

- c. Consumables: including laboratory supplies and similar expendable materials. Office costs are not eligible under this category. Pots deliveries, courier services or reprography costs directly related with project activities can be imputed under this cost category.
- d. Travel expenses and daily allowances: including the attendance to workshops and interviews with evaluators for the preparation of an ERC application, congresses and conferences, short research internships (3 months maximum), including costs of the researcher, his/her team and visiting researchers.
- e. Other costs category: Including training costs related with project implementation; external collaborations; costs of general services and scientific infrastructure of the University of Cantabria; conference fees and publications.

Payments of individual salary supplements will not be eligible.

5.9 Execution/Implementation period: The beneficiary will have five years to finalize the project as for the starting date counting from the first day of labour contract with the University of Cantabria.

## **Article 6. OBLIGATIONS OF BENEFICIARIES**

The beneficiary is committed to:

- 6.1 Join the designated destination center at the UC within a maximum period of six months from the date of notification of the award decision and comply with the full period of research stay except under express permission of Vice-chancellor of Research and Transfer of Knowledge. This period may exceptionally be delayed at the request of the beneficiary provided it is duly justified in a written request.
- 6.2 Deliver two reports (economic and scientific) to the Vice-chancellorship of Research and Transfer of Knowledge at months 10, 22, 34 and 46 (four reporting periods) after the award decision. Deadline for report submission is one month after the end of each reporting period.
- 6.3 After the six first months of project, the UC authorization of the Ethics in Social Science Research Commission, or authorization of Bioethics Commission and/or authorization of Committee of Clinical Research of Cantabria will be mandatory submitted
- 6.4 The submission of an ERC proposal within the first two years of the project is mandatory, being the UC the host institution.
- 6.5 Publicize the funds of the STAR-Santander Universities Programme and the STAR 2 call in all documents and public mentions resulting from this grant, regardless of any of the ERC grant obligations.

## **Article 7. INFORMATION AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 All documents required in the application can be found at the following website:  
<http://campusvirtual.unican.es/WebPublica/Convocatorias/ConvocatoriasFrw.aspx>
- 7.2 Documents required to complete the submission procedure are:
  - a. Application form filled in with the contact data of researcher and the project identification data.
  - b. ID card or passport copy.
  - c. Copy of the PhD accreditation
  - d. A brief curriculum vitae (on standardized format).
  - e. Notification of overcoming the first phase of the call for ERC grants and evaluation summary report.
  - f. Full proposal submitted to the ERC call

- g. A letter of acceptance of the hosting department or research institute of the UC accepting the candidate.
- h. Research proposal (maximum 10 pages) including an abstract of 300 words (spaces included), the budget with costs category distribution referred in article 5.5. The project has to be related with the proposal submitted to the ERC call referred in article 4.3

All the documents can be completed either in English or in Spanish.

7.3 All the documentation will be submitted electronically in PDF format to the following e-mail: [vr.investigacion@unican.es](mailto:vr.investigacion@unican.es). After the submission procedure, the Vice-chancellorship of Research and Transfer of Knowledge will forward the received documentation to the Registry of the UC through internal procedure. In case of grant awarding, the beneficiary must provide the original documentation or an attested copy.

7.4 The period for the submission of applications will remain open from the day after the publication of the call until **September, 26<sup>th</sup> 2019**.

7.5 The body responsible for all the proceedings regarding the present Programme will be the Vice-chancellorship of Research and Transfer of Knowledge of the University of Cantabria that officially agree upon all actions necessary for the determination, knowledge and verification of data under which must rule resolution.

7.6 The rectification period to correctly fulfil all the requested application documents will be limited for each beneficiary to a maximum period of ten days, so as to remedy the lack of data or to provide the mandatory documents. In case of not compliance with that provision, the request will be dismissed.

## **Article 8. EVALUATION, DECISION AND NOTIFICATION**

8.1. The evaluation of the grants will be assisted by an Evaluation Committee designated by the Research Board of the UC. The evaluation committee will be chaired by the Vice Chancellor of Research and Transfer of Knowledge and composed of at least four national and international expert members. An evaluation subcommittee will be appointed, one per each of the five scientific areas from the UC that candidates have submitted their application to.

8.2. The Commission might request a preliminary interview with the candidates. The evaluation will take into account the next criteria:

- a) Curriculum Vitae including the standard academic and research record, up to 50%.
- b) ERC evaluation report, up to 25%.
- c) Feasibility and execution guarantee of the project within the duration requested and with the resources and available areas of the UC, up to 25%.

8.3. The applications will be prioritized by the Research Commission, once evaluated by the Evaluation Commission, ensuring a balanced allocation among the big scientific areas of the UC, in the case there are candidates from more than one area.

8.4. The decision of the call will be carried out by resolution of the Vice Chancellor of Research and Transfer of Knowledge, in view of the proposal made by the Research Commission.

8.5. The provisional results of the call will be published in the University of Cantabria website.

8.6. The beneficiary will have a period of 30 working days from the date of publication of the provisional results to accept the grant and provide the original and copy documents required. If an inaccuracy is found within the documentation able to affect the participation requirements or the issues taking into account for the evaluation, the provisional grant resolution will be subject of withdrawal. The Commission will accept the grant resignation if the beneficiary does not submit the expression of acceptance or the required documentation in the related period.

8.7. The final grant resolution will be published in the University of Cantabria website. The applications not included in the final resolution will be considered as denied or rejected.

#### **Article 9. FINAL DISPOSITION**

9.1. Within the present call, the Law of Cantabria 10/2006, 17th of July, of Grants applies in which concerns grant withdrawal conditions.

9.2. The Vice Chancellor of Research and Transfer of Knowledge of the University of Cantabria will be the authorized person to perform and resolve the questions derived in the application to the call.

9.3. The publication of the different acts and resolutions in the framework of the present call will be posted in the institution website.

9.4. The present call and the administrative acts derived from it may be rejected in the cases and in the way established in the Legal Regime of the Public Administrations and the Common Administrative Procedure.

In particular, the present call may be rejected through formulation of administrative appeal to the Rector of the University of Cantabria, within one month from the day following the publication, as established in articles 114 and 115 of the Law 30/1992, 26<sup>th</sup> of November, of Legal Regime of the Public Administrations and the Common Administrative Procedure.

Furthermore, against the call resolution through which the grant is assigned, an appeal may be lodged to the Chancellor within one month from the day following the publication in the University website, as established in articles 121 and 122 of the Law 39/2015, 1<sup>st</sup> October, of Legal Regime of the Public Administrations and the Common Administrative Procedure. Notwithstanding this provision, the parties may appeal to the UC Governing Body within one month in the same terms as above. In this case, the administrative appeal cannot be brought until the appeal to the UC Governing Body has been expressly decided or allegedly dismissed.

Signed at Santander, June, 17<sup>th</sup> 2019.

D. Javier León Serrano

Vice Chancellor of Research and Transfer of Knowledge

**ANNEX 1: Horizon 2020 ERC calls affected by the present fund (STAR 2)**

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant
Id. Call	ERC-2019-STG	ERC-2019-COG
Opening date	10/09/2018	24/10/2018
Deadline	17/10/2018	07/02/2019

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant
Id. Call	ERC-2018-STG	ERC-2018-COG
Opening date	03/08/2017	24/10/2017
Deadline	17/10/2017	15/02/2018

	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant
Id. Call	ERC-2017-STG	ERC-2017-COG
Opening date	26/07/2016	20/10/2016
Deadline	18/10/2016	09/02/2017

## ANNEX 2: Quality criteria on satisfying STAR2 grants award phase

(Extracted from the assessment criteria set at I3 Programme evaluation, as established in the Annexes 2 and 3 of Resolution of 20th July 2005 of the Secretary of State for Universities and Research, BOE August 26, 2005).

For a proposal to be classified as worth funding, applicants will be requested to:

- a) Present at least 3 scientific articles, publications or book chapters in compliance with the requirements 1-4 described below. Each professor-researcher must be the main author or responsible of at least 2 out of 3 of such publications. Applicants will have to provide a brief report summarizing the impact achieved by their scientific production (in no more than 1 page).
- b) Leadership in research work (eg. leading research groups, research areas and/or grant research in competitive calls funded by Public Administrations or private non-profit organizations), indicating also the main results of the research group.
- c) Ownership of research results: Number of patents in exploitation. To evidence compliance, the Committee will take into account the patent protection period set at the national, European or Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) levels.
- d) Training skills and demonstrable educational experience, especially regarding the supervision of doctoral researchers and doctoral theses.

Compliance with scientific publications requirements as listed in Paragraph A:

1. Scientific production will be positively assessed providing its ground-breaking nature, leading to real progress in knowledge or a significant contribution in the development of technology. Publications with a merely descriptive character will not be considered, neither reiterative outcomes from previous works, nor strictly informative articles or reviews, except for those cases where a clear knowledge consolidation character is demonstrable. Whenever possible, the number of cited publications, impact factors of journals, as well as received prizes and mentions will be taken into consideration for a more positive assessment of scientific contributions.
2. Concerning joint research works and participation in collaborative publications, grant applicants will demonstrate their contributions in similar terms as when they assume the role of individual authors of relevant scientific articles. Either way, any researcher's contribution as being the main author or responsible in-chief of scientific publications will be positively assessed.
3. The following will be considered as positive contributions, in terms of scientific production outputs: articles published by peer-reviewed journals listed by the *Subject Category Listing* from *Journal Citation Reports (Science Citation Index, Institute for Scientific Information –ISI– Philadelphia)* per scientific areas. The same criteria will apply for electronic journal publications, as far as being included in ISI lists of journals.
4. Evaluation of books or chapters of books will be performed taking into consideration the editor's quality based on its prestige at the national or international levels, degree of scientific scrutiny and rigor at the selection of published articles, collections where publications are issued, scientific reviews and mentions, and, eventually, the number of bibliographical mentions, prizes, honours and merits achieved by the cited book or book chapter.
- 5.
6. When such criteria equate editorial degree of excellence to the prestige of one of the scientific journals listed in paragraph C) of Annex 2, both separate chapters of books and complete publications will be considered positive contributions.