

## VHIR PhD CALL 2022-2023

### Institutional call for the incorporation of early-stage researchers at Vall d'Hebron Research Institute

Internal Scientific Committee agreement on November 14<sup>th</sup> 2022

The Vall d'Hebron University Hospital Foundation – Research Institute (“VHIR” or “the Foundation”) is a leading biomedical research centre in Barcelona that promotes, develops and transfers research of the Vall d'Hebron University Hospital. Through international leadership and excellence in our research, we improve people's health and quality of life by means of the more than 1,000 investigators who carry out their research, and which are also supported by scientific services.

#### 1. OBJECTIVE

The Vall d'Hebron University Hospital Foundation – Research Institute (“VHIR” or “the Foundation”) makes its own and open call for a doctoral fellowship programme devoted to attracting early-stage researchers with a special interest in biomedical research who wish to carry out doctoral studies at VHIR.

The aim of these grants is to train research staff in the research groups within the environment of the Vall d'Hebron Barcelona Hospital Campus.

The conditions of the call are established in compliance with the European Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R), which establishes the implementation of open, gender equality, transparent and merit-based recruitment measures, to contribute to the promotion of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI).

#### 2. CANDIDATE PROFILE AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The requirements are:

- a. Candidates should not have a PhD.
- b. Candidates **must be in possession of a university degree and a master's degree** (in the fields of biomedical research, clinical research, epidemiology, management and evaluation of health services and technologies) with a minimum of 300 ECTS of official university studies **at the time of applying to the grant** (or must hold an official university qualification from a country of the European Higher Education Area with a minimum of **300 ECTS of official university studies**, of which, at least 60, at master's level, which allow them to access doctoral studies).

- c. Candidates acceding to a PhD programme through the “Formació Sanitària Especialitzada” (FSE) will not be eligible.
- d. Candidates must have finished the Master’s degree between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and the closing date of application submission. Exceptionally, this term will be extended if applicants can provide proof of having been in one of the following situations:
  - a. *Maternity*: 18 months extension for each child born before or after the date of the successful defence of their Master degree. If the applicant can document a longer total maternity leave, the eligibility period will be extended by the documented amount of actual leave(s) for all children taken before the call deadline. - *Paternity*: extension by the documented time of paternity leave taken before the call deadline for each child.
  - b. They have been taking care of children under six years of age or people with physical, mental or sensory disabilities who depend on the beneficiary and require special dedication (1 year).
  - c. They have suffered an illness or accident with a medical leave equal to or longer than six months (1 year).
- e. Candidates must have obtained a minimum average grade of the academic record of the studies of degree **equal to or higher than 7** (calculated in accordance with the criteria specified in the Royal Decree 1125/2013, of 5<sup>th</sup> September). In the event that the qualification of the academic record of studies studied in Spain uses the scale of 0 to 4, the average grade must be converted using [this link](#).
- f. In the case of international studies, the grade of the academic record must be calculated by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA). It is the applicant’s responsibility to ask ANECA for the aforementioned equivalence. More information can be found [here](#).
- g. Candidates must be enrolled on a doctoral studies programme at the time of starting the grant.
- h. Candidates must not have held a PhD contract exceeding twelve months in any research institution previous to this application.

### **3. HOST PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR’S (PI) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

The following requirements apply to the host PI:

- a. PIs should have a PhD.
- b. PI should have an active competitive project at the time of application.
- c. PIs will not be able to present a candidature if they are hosting a PhD student from a previous or current AGAUR or VHIR fellowship (unless being in the last year).

PIs will be able to submit their candidature to host one candidate based on a standard template that will be provided by the Grants Office at VHIR.

#### 4. APPLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION TO SUBMIT

Applications must be formalised by the applicant in his/her own name and interest and must be submitted by email to [phdfellow@vhir.org](mailto:phdfellow@vhir.org), within the period established in Clause 5 of the present call.

The candidate's application must be accompanied by the following documentation:

1. Excel Template that will be provided by the Grants Office at VHIR.
2. Detailed curriculum vitae of the candidate in normalised format (i.e CVN). Candidates may use the [VHIR application](#) or the [FECYT application](#) for creating the document.
3. Bachelor's degree diploma or proof of payment fee.
4. Academic certificate with the average grade of the bachelor's degree and the termination date. In the case of studies carried out abroad, ANECA certification as specified in Clause 2.f.
5. Master's degree diploma or proof of payment fee.
6. Academic certificate/record of master's degree studies, including average grade and termination date.
7. First page of the publications (and/or page(s) where the authors contribution appears).
8. PDF document that accredits the candidate's internship periods, including start and end dates, and hours. The research institute should be identified, including Letterhead and/or Stamp of the institution and signature of the tutor/supervisor.
9. If applicable, accreditation for the exceptional extension of the evaluable period for one of the reasons mentioned in Clause 2.d. of the Eligibility Criteria.

For the evaluation of the candidacies and for the resolution of the claims against the provisional and final lists of candidates, **it will be considered solely and exclusively those documents provided by the candidates together with their application.** Amendment of errors and/or omissions in the presentation of documentation will not be admissible.

Each candidate will only be able to submit one application. The submission of more than one application will mean the rejection of all of them.

The submission of the application implies full acceptance of these terms and conditions.

#### 5. DEADLINE TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS

Those candidates and PIs that would like to host a candidate may submit their applications until February 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 via email to [phdfellow@vhir.org](mailto:phdfellow@vhir.org) with the following subject: "VHIR PhD Call 2022-23 – Name of candidate".

Once received, an email will be sent to candidates confirming reception, as well as suitability of the documents provided for the application.

## 6. EVALUATION PROCESS

VHIR is committed to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

In April 2015, VHIR was recognised with the accreditation “HR Excellence in Research” of the European Commission (also known as “HRS4R”).

This accreditation is based on the “European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Charter & Code)” and obtaining the seal of HR Excellence in Research ensures that VHIR integrates into its management 40 basic principles that relate to HR, applied to the research environment: Research freedom, gender equality or professional attitude.

Our Recruitment and Selection Policy is based on the OTM Strategy (Open, Transparent and Merit-based recruitment) and in line with the principles defined in the OTM-R procedure ([VHIR Recruitment Policy for an Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers](#)).

Once the application period ends, the Grants Office will screen applicants against the requirements of the job opening. The aim of this initial assessment is to identify those applicants who do not meet the requirements of the position and, therefore, are not eligible.

### **Phase 1: Candidate’s assessment:**

Based on an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment the selection criteria will be:

Candidate’s assessment (100 points maximum):

1. Best profile will receive a maximum of 85 points. Average grade of the bachelor’s degree will weigh 80% of the total score for this section, and average grade of the master’s degree will weight 20%.

2. Up to 15 points: Other merits:

**2.1** Up to 3 points for extra-curricular internships outside the academic record:

- 160-480 h (from 1 to 3 months)= 0.5
- 480-960 h (> 3 to 6 months)= 1
- 960-1920 h (>6 to 12 months)= 2
- >1920 h (>12 months)= 3

**2.2** Up to a maximum of 12 points will be appointed for peer-review publications. Only publications indexed in the JCR of 2020 will be accepted. The candidate will select his/her 5 best original articles from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 until the submission of the application (book chapters, letters, opinion articles or consortiums’ articles will not be considered. A maximum of 1 review is accepted).

NOTE: This period could be extended in the same cases and time as expressed under section 2.d. abovementioned if accredited at the time of submitting the application.

The JCR that will be used for these calculations will be from 2020.

Publications will be scored as follows:

	First Author	Second Author	Third or subsequent author
First Decile	8	4	2
First Quartile	6	2	1
Second Quartile	3	1	0.5

The members of the VHIR Internal Evaluation Committee will provide a list of 10 candidates that will be invited for an oral interview (Phase 2). When possible, at least, a minimum of 3 of the selected candidates will be female. A period of 2 calendar days will be opened for allegations. Those candidates who wish to formulate an allegation should send it to [phdfellow@vhir.org](mailto:phdfellow@vhir.org). The Evaluation Committee will resolve the allegations by a simple majority and based on reasoned criteria. Once the allegations have been resolved, this resolution will not be susceptible to any other appeal.

### **Phase 2: Oral Interview**

The Selection Committee will consist of CAI (*Comisió d'Avaluació Interna*) internal members, and VHIR external members. The Selection will bring together diverse expertise and competences and gender balanced.

During the interview, the Evaluation Committee will consider:

- Suitability of the Candidate
- Candidate's potential
- Interpersonal skills

Candidates will be provided by the Grants Office with a guide of the topics that need to be covered during the presentation.

All interviews will be governed by the OMT-R (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment) principles of the Foundation's Recruitment and Selection policy established by the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Charter & Code), following equal opportunities policies.

Once the interview process is finished, the Selection Committee will make a prioritized list of 6 candidates, who will be invited to select the laboratories of their interest, based on the PI list who filled the host template form.

## **7. FORMALISATION AND GRANT DURATION**

The grant will have a duration of 3 years. Acceptance of the grant will be formalised by the signature of the corresponding employment contract (pre-doctoral modality) and will have a maximum duration of three years that cannot be extended within the framework of these grants, starting from the date of signing this contract between the beneficiary and VHIR.

The incorporation of the candidate will be between April 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 and June 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 (except for non EU-people that period could be extended until September 1<sup>st</sup> 2023). The maximum period of acceptance of the grant may not exceed 10 calendar days from the date of publication of the final list.

The resignation from the PhD programme will entail the termination of the contract and the loss of the grant.

If the thesis is defended before the three-year period, the contract will be terminated.

## **8. ECONOMIC AND WORKING CONDITIONS**

The VHIR PhD programme offers 6 fellowships for a 3-year pre-doctoral contract with the following contract expenses: 22.000,99 € for the first two years and 25.186,76 € for the third year, including gross annual salary, employer's cost of Social Security taxes, and termination of contract compensation.

VHIR will finance the 80% of the total cost of the contract, and the Research Group to which the beneficiary of the grant will be affiliated will finance the remaining 20% of the total cost. Any salary increase associated with normative increases of the contract, will be distributed in the same proportion (80% VHIR- 20% Research Group).

Gross salaries provide full social security coverage, pension and unemployment benefits, and working conditions at VHIR also include:

- 23 working days of paid holidays per year plus 9 leave days for personal matters.
- Measures to reconcile work and family life, such as: Maternity and Paternity leave, leave for breastfeeding and flexible schedule working hours.

The beneficiaries of this program will have the right to receive the enrolment amount of the doctorate and of the thesis tutorial for the corresponding course, provided that this enrolment fee is from a public university.

## **9. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

Rights and obligations of the beneficiary of the contract are:

- a. Guarantee the truthfulness of the data provided in their application and accept that any negligent or guilty falseness in them will lead to the exclusion of the candidacy from the selection process.
- b. In the event that the candidate is finally chosen, he or she can accept or reject the grant within the period established in the call.

If the person accepts the given grant and joins VHIR:

- c. Sign the pre-doctoral contract previously indicated and receive the applicable gross annual salary.
- d. To be considered VHIR's employee and researcher for all intents and purposes.

- e. To use the services offered by the VHIR and to participate in all its activities in accordance with its internal regulations, as a result of his/her researcher condition.
- f. The ownership of those patents and utility models and any other industrial and/or intellectual property rights obtained through the research work carried out by the beneficiary will correspond to VHIR. Nevertheless, the researcher may enjoy the copyright and property rights derived from his/her research activity as established by both the VHIR in force regulations and current legislation.
- g. The beneficiary of the contract will specifically agree to comply with VHIR regulations, in particular with those matters regarding data protection, professional ethics, public procurement and, in general, on any other relevant aspect related to the Foundation.
- h. Have formalised his/her enrolment in a PhD programme at the time of signing the contract.
- i. To acknowledge the present PhD fellowship funding in publications and thesis.

VHIR's rights and obligations are:

- a. To comply with the rules of the present call.
- b. To provide an employment contract to the beneficiary of this call, using the contractual form determined by the VHIR HR Management, in accordance with its internal regulations applicable.
- c. To comply with the corresponding legal obligations regarding Social Security and Occupational Risk Prevention.
- d. To offer the researcher those VHIR's own services, according to the Foundation's internal regulations.
- e. To inform the researcher of all applicable regulations.

## **10. GRANT INCOMPATIBILITIES**

These grants will be incompatible with any other employment contract.

## **11. GRANT ASSIGNMENT**

The acceptance of the grant will be formalised by the signature of the corresponding employment contract (pre-doctoral modality) between VHIR and the candidate, according to Clauses 7 and 8 of this document.

## **12. PERSONAL DATA**

By submitting their application, candidates agree to become part of the VHIR's record and files with the aim to manage and process the assessment, granting, awarding, payment and monitoring of the grant, according to the present call.

Applicants may exercise their rights of access, rectification, cancellation or opposition of their data by writing to the VHIR Management (Passeig Vall d'Hebron, 119-129, Edifici Mediterrània, 2a planta, 08035 Barcelona) together with a copy of their ID.

### **13. RESIGNATIONS AND REPLACEMENTS**

In the event that the candidate is a beneficiary of any other type of similar scholarship in the period between the VHIR grant deadline and the six months after the grant is awarded, he/she must resign from the VHIR scholarship, which will be awarded to the first reserve candidate.

The beneficiary of the grant must give written notice to the address [phdfellow@vhir.org](mailto:phdfellow@vhir.org) in order to interrupt the VHIR grant. Same procedure must be followed in case of voluntary resignation for any other matter. Failure to comply with this obligation will result in the loss of the grant and the inherent benefits, and will generate the right of VHIR to require the candidate to refund the inappropriately paid amounts.

If the resignation occurs within 6 months from the start of the pre-doctoral contract, the Evaluation Committee may agree to substitute the candidate in accordance with the order of the final list.

### **14. GRANTS MONITORING**

For the annual and final monitoring of the grants, the beneficiary research staff must submit the following documents to the VHIR Grants Office and Management according to the scheduled calendar:

**Annual report:** a scientific report on the activities carried out by the beneficiary research staff and their results, as well as the work plan for the next year, duly approved by the responsible PI should be presented no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> of November.

Non-presenting or getting an unfavourable evaluation of the annual report will mean the interruption of the grant and may mean the loss of it and its benefits if it is not duly amended at the request of VHIR.

**Final report:** No later than 4 months after the end of the PhD programme, the beneficiary research staff will present a final report which will include all the work carried out and its results, with a special reference to the results of the doctoral thesis and the objectives achieved by means of the training programme. In addition, a copy of all publications, articles and works that may derive from this work and the results obtained will be also given to VHIR.

Failure to comply with this obligation may result in the loss of the rights to obtain any future grant called by the Foundation.