

# CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

## SEVERO OCHOA “ICM Post-doctoral Fellowships”

Within the Framework of the ‘Severo Ochoa Centre of Excellence’ accreditation, **six fellowships for two-year post-doctoral contracts** are available at the Institute of Marine Research (ICM) of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC). The call will be open from **May 7<sup>th</sup> to June 20<sup>th</sup> 2021 at 23:59h CET.**

The objective of the ICM Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF SO) is to attract outstanding international early career researchers working on highly interdisciplinary topics related with ICM’s Research Challenges<sup>1</sup>, ICM’s Emerging Research Areas<sup>2</sup>, or ICM’s Transversal Methodologies<sup>3</sup>, in order to complement the current ICM research portfolio.

This call is open to PhD holders from various scientific backgrounds with scientific complementarities with any of the ICM [research lines](#). Successful candidates should have the profile to get permanent or tenure track positions at ICM and, as such, their potential to apply for long-term competitive positions in Spain such as [ERC-StG](#), [ERC-CoG](#), [Ramon y Cajal](#), [ICREA Senior call](#) during the duration of the contract will be positively valued.

The Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF-SO) will be granted as a two-year “Doctor FC3” contract<sup>4</sup> and a research fund of 12,000 € for the two years. Incorporation is foreseen for 01/01/2022, latest.

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<sup>1</sup> ICM Research Challenges (more information [here](#)):

- Understanding Ocean and Climate Interactions
- Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Life and Ecosystems
- Comprehension and Mitigation of Anthropogenic and Natural Hazards

<sup>2</sup> ICM Emerging Research Areas:

- Ocean-Atmosphere Interactions,
- Oceans & Human Health,
- Plastic and Contaminants in the Ocean.

<sup>3</sup> ICM Transversal Methodologies:

- Remote sensing,
- -omics,
- Modelling,
- Long-term monitoring,
- Operational oceanography

<sup>4</sup> Gross annual salary of roughly 38,000 €, including benefits offered by the Public Spanish Social Security system.



## 1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Researchers who plan to apply to the PF-SO must fulfil the following requirements:

1. Submit a complete application package including all requested information and documentation described in section 2. The application documents cannot exceed the page limit and must be submitted along with all the application documents before the deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstance.
2. Hold a valid PhD certificate granted after 01/01/2014\*.
3. Candidates cannot have worked in a Spanish institution more than 12 months in the last three years at the time of the call deadline\*.
4. The research topics proposed must be highly interdisciplinary and be aligned with –at least– one research challenge, one emerging research area or one transversal methodology of the ICM. This must be clearly stated in the application document.
5. Selected candidates will have to fulfil the following administrative requirements at the time of formalizing the contract (latest 01/01/2022):
  - Hold the equivalence of foreign degrees of higher education to the academic level of Doctor (to officially recognize the PhD in Spain). This can be issued by any Spanish University; as an example, you can check the instructions for the administrative procedure at [UAB \(Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona\)](#) or [UIMP \(International University Menéndez y Pelayo\)](#).

The selected candidates will be assisted by the ICM's Research Support Office to complete all the administrative procedures. Yet it will be the candidate's sole responsibility to fulfil the administrative compliance at the time of formalizing the contract. These administrative requirements are needed to be employed by CSIC, non-complying with them will preclude any contract with CSIC and will revoke the fellowship.



(\*) Exceptions will be made for documented periods of parental leave or serious illness. Other equivalent exceptions may be considered if properly documented and motivated by the applicant (i.e. in case of candidates from underdeveloped countries, minorities, and for applicants that pursued their studies under comparatively unfavourable conditions). The relevant documents to justify exceptions to the general rule must be included in the application form.

**Interested candidates who don't fulfilling these criteria, are encouraged to contact [severo-choa@icm.csic.es](mailto:severo-choa@icm.csic.es).**

## 2. APPLICATION PROCESS

Researchers applying to one of these fellowships should submit a complete application package through the on-line application platform before **June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 23.59h**, including:

1. A **one-page** motivation letter (Arial, 10.5 p) in English, stating his scientific record and personal prospects of the candidate at ICM.
2. A **three-page** scientific project proposal (Arial, 10.5 p) in English. This project needs to have the endorsement of one principal investigator of the Institute of Marine Sciences (ICM), to demonstrate the scientific complementarity with the ICM research lines. The project proposal needs to include state-of-the-art, preliminary data and ethics considerations (if any), hypothesis, objectives, work plan and contingency plan.
3. **Scientific track record** (template available [here](#)).
4. Fill in the **on-line application form**, that can be accessed [here](#).

## 3. EVALUATION

There will be a multiple-stage evaluation process, as stated in the "FRAMEWORK REGULATION – Severo Ochoa Actions" (full text [here](#)).

**Stage 1:** Eligibility check (section 1).

If there are not enough candidacies meeting a minimum threshold of scientific excellence, fellowships can be declared null and void at any stage of the selection process.

**Stage 2:** Quantitative evaluation and ranking.

At Stage 2, proposals will be evaluated and ranked by a specific Expert Panel based on the following criteria:

- **Excellence (30 points):** Scientific achievements of the candidates as stated in the template. Special attention will be paid to the independence and maturity of the candidate and the merits described in the 5 scientific highlights. Candidates that have obtained a competitive fellowship, leading competitive funded projects and supervising students will be positively evaluated. Likewise, the authorship of one publication as main author (either accepted or published) without the PhD director(s) as co-author(s) in a Science Citation Index (SCI) journal at the time of the call deadline will be positively valued.
- **Novelty of the project idea (20 points):** The novelty of the research idea in regards to the current state-of-the-art and its potential to become a new or a complementary research line at the ICM.
- **Potential impact of the project (20 points):** The potential impact of the project in terms of high-impact publications, possibility to file patents or to develop it into another competitive fellowship (i.e. ERC StG/CoG, Ramon y Cajal, etc.) will be considered.
- **Work plan (10 points):** The work plan and its feasibility will be assessed. Expected outputs during the fellowship will be valued. Evaluation of feasibility to achieve the expected outputs within two years.
- **Alignment with ICM challenges (10 points):** Alignment of the research project with ICM research challenges.
- **Internationalization (10 points):** Points will be given for:
  - Candidates that have obtained the PhD in an organization other than ICM.
  - Candidates that have obtained the PhD in a non-Spanish institution.
  - Candidates with an international track record of positions and collaborations.



All applications will be scored and ranked by an Expert Panel nominated by the Scientific Strategy Committee once the list of submitted proposals is known. The Expert Panel will be constituted by two ICM researchers and three external evaluators with recognized international expertise in Marine Science and will be gender balanced. The Expert Panel members will be checked to ensure that no conflict of interest exists with any of the candidates.

The first 12 candidates ranked by the Expert Panel will be shortlisted and sent to the ICM Selection Committee (stage 3).

### **Stage 3:** Personal interview

An ICM Selection Panel will be appointed by the ICM Scientific Strategy Committee. Applicants shortlisted by the Expert Panel will be invited for an online interview to present their research project to the Internal Selection Panel. Prior to the interview, candidates will be asked to present two reference letters. This is a mandatory requirement to conduct the interview.

The evaluation criteria for the online interviews are the following:

- **Candidate potential (50 points):** The candidate's potential and career plans, paying attention to the candidate's soft skills, such as expression of ideas, communication, ability to present complex ideas, teamwork, originality, entrepreneurship, and leadership will be evaluated. Reference letters will be considered at this point regarding the details of the contents, as well as the profile of the people signing them.
- **Research proposal impact (15 points):** Impact of the proposal at a scientific, social and institutional level
- **Strategic value (30 points):** Interdisciplinarity and complementarity with ICM current and future research challenges. The added value of the project to the institutional strategy will be taken in consideration.

During the interview, personal skills as well as scientific excellence will be assessed. Following the online interviews, the Internal Selection Panel can re-order the shortlisted candidates.

### **Stage 4:** Strategic considerations and award decision

At Stage 4, the six first ranked candidates will be proposed for funding to the ICM Scientific Strategy Committee. If the Scientific Strategy Committee considers that the proposed projects



contribute in a balanced way to ICM's scientific strategy, the final decision will be made. If unbalances are detected and duly justified, the Scientific Strategy Committee might decide to grant the fellowship to the next ranked candidate. At this stage gender balance amongst the awardees will be observed.

In the situation of equivalent applicants, the least represented gender will be prioritized in the line of research / research group where they must be integrated, as long as at the end of the selection procedure it can be guaranteed that the selected candidates have an equal gender distribution (60%-40%).

### 3. OBLIGATIONS OF THE GRANTEES

The Postdoctoral Fellows will need to prepare a final report after the end of their fellowship. A continuous monitoring scheme will be in place. If significant deviations are detected, the fellowship can be revoked at any time, with no further financial obligations by ICM.

The fellows are expected to apply for a Ramón y Cajal, ERC StG or CoG Grant during the duration of the fellowship. The fellow will receive support from the Research Support Office to prepare the project proposal.

The fellows will participate in the generation of the scientific and review reports for the Severo Ochoa wherever this is necessary. Both can be necessary during and after the fellowship.

### 4. WHAT DO WE OFFER?

- The Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF-SO) will be granted as a two-year "Doctor FC3" contract, with a gross annual salary of roughly 38.000 €, and coverage by the Spanish Social Security System.
- A research fund of 12.000 € for the two years.
- A yearly family allowance of 4.500 € in case of having a child at the time of the call deadline.
- Desk space and access to the required lab and scientific facilities.



- A tailor-made career development plan, support to apply for further fellowships (ERC StG, ERC CoG, RyC, etc.) and a training package in gender dimension in research and transferable skills.
- An individual landing support to all fellows provided by the Talent and Work Environment Unit regarding administrative procedures, life in Barcelona, family relocation and related topics.