

Call for Applications 2020

Research in pediatric oncology: post-doctoral fellowships and international mobility grants



The National Cancer Institute has set up a new portal for submitting projects: only the coordinator of a project can submit a file, and only after creating or activating a user account.

It is recommended that you register and consult the portal and the sections to be completed well in advance of the application deadline.

Proposal submission deadline: 7 April 2020 - 11 a.m.

Online submission of electronic application:

<https://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Appels-a-projets-en-cours/Mobilite-pediatrie-2020>

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1- Context and objectives of the call for applications

Every year, approximately 2,500 children and adolescents are affected by cancer, accounting for around 1% of all the cancers diagnosed annually. Today, thanks to the results of fundamental research and the resulting medical advances, 8 in 10 children are cured, 20% more than 15 years ago. However, cancer remains the leading cause of death in children aged over 1 year.

As a declared priority of the French government, the fight against cancers affecting children has been developed in particular through the third national Cancer Plan. Since 2014, new initiatives have emerged aimed at mobilising fundamental research into paediatric cancers and improving access to therapeutic innovation for children, adolescents and young adults. In 2019, an extra €5 million was set aside for research into paediatric cancers. This new funding, repeated in 2020, reinforces the efforts of the French government, which has made research in paediatric oncology a priority.

The French National Cancer Institute is in charge of the governance and coordination of the action plan intended to ensure optimum distribution of these funds. It works in conjunction with research organisations (AVIESAN), public and private operators in oncology, healthcare professionals, health service users and voluntary bodies, including parents' associations, who play an essential role in the conception and in the choice of the actions to be funded.

This call for applications aiming to support the international mobility of junior researchers in the field of paediatric oncology is part of this process. Its main objectives are:

- To boost the attractiveness of research in paediatric oncology to young talents;
- To facilitate the career progression of junior researchers working in paediatric oncology research.
- To enable statutory personnel (researchers, medical doctors, engineers, etc.) to acquire new expertise for the development of paediatric oncology research projects.

2- Scope of the call for applications

This call for applications covers all the fields of fundamental research (solid tumours, onco-haematology, biology, cancer sciences, human and social sciences, etc.) in paediatric oncology.

The proposal submitted may represent the start of collaboration between two laboratories or fall within the scope of a pre-existing and previously formalised collaboration between a French academic research laboratory and an international research laboratory and concerns projects that may be open to all disciplines (biology, but also physics, mathematics, chemistry, bioinformatics, human and social sciences, etc.).

The application must present the project in which it is integrated.

This call for applications is divided into two sections/areas:

Section 1 - Post-doctoral fellowship in France or abroad are aimed at:

- Junior researchers who have obtained a PhD degree in France and wish to take up a post-doctoral fellowship abroad (duration 12 months).
- Junior researchers who have obtained a PhD degree abroad and wish to take up a post-doctoral fellowship in France (duration 24 months).

The funding awarded will concern post-doctoral grants, with an additional operating grant allocated to the post-doctoral researcher's research work

Section 2 - International mobility grants is aimed at:

- Junior researchers and students (in sciences, in engineering schools, in medicine or pharmacy) who already have funding in France for a Master 2 Research, a PhD or a post-doctoral fellowship, who wish to spend a period of 3, 6 or 12 months abroad as part of their training.
- Statutory or permanent staff (researchers, medical doctors, engineers, etc.) affiliated with an institution listed in section 3.3 (see below) who have funding in France, who wish to spend a period of 3, 6 or 12 months abroad to acquire new expertise for the development of paediatric oncology research projects

The international mobility grant awarded is intended to fund travel and living expenses, in addition to an operating grant allocated to the candidate's research work during the period spent in the host laboratory abroad.

3- Terms of participation

3.1 Host organisation and laboratory

As a general rule:

- The laboratory in France and the laboratory abroad must be clearly identified.
- The collaborative research project in paediatric oncology involving the French laboratory and the laboratory abroad must be described in the application file. This project may be the start of a collaboration between two partners or may be part of a pre-existing collaboration
- The collaborative research project and the candidate's research project must concern paediatric oncology and fall within the scope of fundamental research
- Only one application will be eligible for each laboratory participating in the same collaborative project. On the other hand, several candidates may be affiliated with the same French laboratory for separate collaborative fundamental research projects with laboratories abroad.
- The French laboratory must be designated by the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (University, INSERM, CNRS, CEA, etc.).
- The host laboratory must be able to supervise the candidate during the mobility period.
- To qualify for the mobility funding, the home laboratory in France must continue to supervise the candidate after their return.

3.2 Candidate

For the purposes of assessing the eligibility of their application, candidates must provide a copy of their degree certificate or a certificate from the relevant higher education institute stating that they have passed the degree.

French or foreign junior researchers wishing to take up a scientific post-doctoral fellowship after completing their thesis must have held a PhD degree in science for less than 3 years. Junior researchers wishing to take up a post-doctoral fellowship in France must have obtained their PhD abroad.

Junior researchers wishing to take up a post-doctoral fellowship abroad must have obtained their PhD in France.

To qualify for the mobility funding, candidates must provide a certificate from the employer stating the candidate's remuneration and status during the mobility period.

Candidates for a Master 2 Research course must provide proof of their enrolment or pre-enrolment on a Master 2 Research course at a French university. The theoretical and practical teaching modules and exams of a Master 2 Research course should allow for an internship of up to 6 months abroad. A letter of acceptance from the director of the Master 2 Research course and the head of the laboratory hosting the M2 internship specifying this condition must be included in the application file. A maximum of two return trips will be funded during the mobility period to attend classes or exams.

For doctoral students, the awarding of a double degree by both partner universities may be envisaged within the scope of this call for applications.

3.3 Organisation receiving the grant

The organisation receiving the grant will be:

- a French public scientific and technological research institution,
- a French public scientific, cultural and professional institution,
- a French public administrative institution,
- a French healthcare institution such as a university hospital (CHU) or a French comprehensive cancer centre (CRLCC).

This organisation will be the candidate's employer. It is responsible for the progress of the candidate's project and for submitting all scientific and financial reports to INCa.

3.4 Parents' associations

Associations of parents of children with cancer or of young patients may also be included in the research projects. If applicable, the association's role and involvement in the project should be set out clearly in the application file. In addition, the file should also include a letter from the chairperson of the association regarding the collaboration.

4- Selection conditions and evaluation criteria for applications

4.1 Selection process

In order to conduct its evaluation, the Institute relies on a scientific evaluation committee (SEC) whose members are recognised for their scientific and medical expertise in the research field.

Before they can conduct the evaluation, the reviewers undertake, via the PROJECTS portal (click validation¹), to:

- comply with the requirements of the Institute's code of ethics, which may be consulted at the following address: <http://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Deontologie-et-transparence-DPI/Acteurs-de-l-evaluation-de-projet> ;
- guarantee the confidentiality of documents or information to which they are to have access;
- declare any direct or indirect links that they may have with the proposals under evaluation.

The composition of the SEC will be published following the completion of the call for proposals evaluation process.

The main stages of the procedure for selecting applications are as follows:

- checking of admissibility and eligibility criteria: INCa verifies that the proposals submitted meet the criteria specified in the CFA document;
- review by the SEC:
 - the members of the SEC review the proposals;
 - the SEC collectively discusses the quality of the proposals;
 - the SEC submits a list of the ranked proposals to INCa.
- Results:
 - selection and validation of funding by INCa;
 - publication of results.

4.2 Admissibility

The complete application file must be submitted by the deadline (cf. section 6) and in the required format (cf. section 7). All of the requested documents (including signatures) must be included in the application file.

The application file will be written in English and must meet the conditions set out in section 3 - Terms of participation.

Applications meeting all the administrative criteria for admissibility will be considered by the review committee.

1- Click-validated signature which, in accordance with the general terms of use of the PROJECTS Portal, has the same validity as a handwritten signature and is legally binding for the signatory.

4.3 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria will cover:

Scientific quality of the project:

- Excellence regarding the state of the science/the art;
- Positioning of the project at the national and international level;
- Relevance and originality of the project;
- Clarity of the objectives.

Coordinator/candidate and participating teams/host organisation:

- Qualities and experience of the coordinator/candidate regarding the project objectives.
- Excellence of the associated teams participating in the project and their heads;
- Quality of the partnership: complimentary and/or multidisciplinary of the teams collaborating in the project.

Methodology and feasibility:

- Quality of the methodology and technological relevance;
- Appropriateness and justification of the time schedule proposed regarding the project objectives.

Impact of the project:

- Scientific, technical and medical impact;
- Innovative features;

To qualify for the mobility funding, the benefit of the mobility project for the candidate's research project will represent a supplementary evaluation criterion.

5- General provisions and funding

5.1 Support available

5.1.1 Post-doctoral grants

Candidates for a post-doctoral fellowship in a host laboratory in France

The funding awarded will concern post-doctoral grants (up to a maximum of €120,000 for 24 months, all expenses included), with an additional operating grant (up to a maximum of €50,000 for 24 months) allocated exclusively to the post-doctoral researcher's research work and a single flat-rate travel allowance (see appendix for amount).

The funds will be paid directly to a French INCa grant recipient institution, which will act as the employer and provide the beneficiary candidate with an employment contract, under its own responsibility.

The amount of the salary proposed will be determined in the light of the candidate's individual profile and career and in accordance with the pay policies applicable within the recipient institution up to a limit of €120,000.

The managing institution may not receive any other grants intended to fund the candidate's salary other

than that awarded under this CFA.

Candidates for a post-doctoral fellowship in a host laboratory abroad

The funding awarded will concern post-doctoral grants (up to a maximum of €60,000 for 12 months, all expenses included), with an additional operating grant (up to a maximum of €25,000 for 12 months) allocated exclusively to the post-doctoral researcher's research work and a single flat-rate travel allowance (see appendix for amount).

The funds will be paid directly to a French INCa grant recipient institution, which will act as the employer and provide the beneficiary with an employment contract, under its own responsibility.

The amount of the salary proposed will be determined in the light of the candidate's individual profile and career and in accordance with the pay policies applicable within the recipient institution up to a limit of €60,000.

The managing institution may not receive any other grants intended to fund the candidate's salary other than that awarded under this CFA.

5.1.2 Candidates for an international mobility grant

It will also be possible to allocate mobility grants to students on Master 2 Research courses, PhD students and post-doctoral researcher with the benefit of a salary or training allowance in France wishing to spend 3, 6 or 12 months abroad as part of their training. This grant may also be awarded to statutory staff (researchers, medical doctors, engineers, etc.), who have funding in France and wish to spend a period of 3, 6 or 12 months abroad to acquire new expertise for the development of paediatric oncology research projects

This funding will include a grant for living expenses and a travel allowance to cover return fares, including trips to attend mandatory sessions connected to the training (allocated on the basis of the rates included in the application file, and consisting of a maximum amount of €13,500 for 12 months – see rates appended). In addition to this grant, an operating grant will also be awarded, allocated exclusively to the candidate's research work during the period spent in the host laboratory abroad – see rates appended.

Candidates must give details, where applicable, of any financial contribution of the host institution to the mobility project.

5.2 INCa funding

5.2.1 Grant payment

Funding will be assigned according to the provisions of Regulation no. 2020-01 regarding grants allocated by the French National Cancer Institute: <https://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Reglement-des-subventions>

The participants in the project must agree to comply with this regulation by signing the "Undertakings" section of the application file.

These undertakings concern:

- the candidate registers their commitment directly via the PROJECTS portal in the “commitment” section of the application (click-validated signature²);
- the legal representative of the institution receiving the INCa grant (if the application is selected for funding);
- the director of the home laboratory (if the application is selected for funding).

5.2.2 Eligible expenditure

In accordance with Article 5.4 of Regulation no. 2018-01, the expenditure eligible for the grant constitutes the costs allowable by the Institute.

Accordingly, the INCa grant will cover, in accordance with point 5.1:

- **staff costs:** only the candidate’s salary for the post-doctoral grant section;
- **as an exemption from Regulation No. 2020-01, certain operating costs:** these costs will be limited to:
 - a. grant to cover living expenses and travel - see support available and rates (proof must be provided for all trips at the end of the project);
 - b. operating grant: laboratory consumables and publication costs - see rates;
 - c. office equipment costs are not covered.
- **management costs,** for a sum not in excess of 4% of INCa-eligible expenditure actually paid (staff, operations);

The budget items in the total grant allocated are not fungible. Proof of all expenditure should be provided in the reports.

5.2.3 Activity report

In application of Regulation no. 2020-01, at the end of the funding period, the following will be required:

- A scientific activity report written by the successful candidate and the two laboratories, in line with the requirements set out in the grant allocation decision. These reports must include details of the work accomplished.
- The list of publications and communications arising out of the project.

5.3 Publication and communication

Within the scope of the rollout of the national open-access science plan, the grant recipient institution and the project coordinator shall take care to:

- complete, via the PROJECTS portal, the “General abstract” and “Scientific abstract” sections of the application. The abstracts (scientific and general) of the funded projects will be published on the Institute’s website and, if applicable, those of its partners;
- prioritise publications in native open access journals or publications. Failing that, the beneficiary and the teams involved in the project undertake to submit the scientific publications resulting from the funded research projects to an open-access archive;

2- Click-validated signature which, in accordance with the general terms of use of the PROJECTS Portal, has the same validity as a handwritten signature and is deemed to be a legal undertaking to comply with the regulation.

- in accordance with the Institute's instructions, draft a data management plan based on the template provided. This duly completed plan should be forwarded to the Institute by the Beneficiary or the coordinator.

All publications, irrespective of format (particularly articles, abstract), produced within the scope of the project must mention INCa's financial support. The wording should contain the unique scientific project ID obtained from the PROJECTS portal.

6- Schedule

Date of publication	January 2020	
Deadline for submission of the application file	Online submission of electronic application: https://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Appels-a-projets-en-cours/Mobilite-pediatric-2020	7 April 2020 – 11 a.m.
Scientific evaluation committee	June 2020	
Publication of results	July 2020	

7- Submission procedure

7.1 New submission procedure: PROJECTS portal

The French National Cancer Institute has set up a new portal for the management of calls for proposals. Projects shall now be submitted directly via the PROJECTS portal: <https://projets.e-cancer.fr/>

Recommendations for the coordinator:

Create/activate account: to login, use your reference email as your login on the PROJECTS portal home page.

- If you have not yet registered, create your account and enter your contact details and work profile.
- If you are already registered (**based on data from your previous applications**), a message will be displayed indicating that your email address already exists. In this case, simply click on **"Forgot password?"** and follow the instructions.
- Finally, if you think that you are already registered and your email address is not recognised, contact us at the address "assistanceprojets@institutcancer.fr".

Application file submission: all application files must be submitted solely under the candidate's name and contact details. Applications submitted under another name/email address shall be inadmissible.

7.2 Application file:

The candidate logs onto their account in the PROJECTS portal and:

- enters the data requested online (supplementary sections);
- submits the documents required for submission:
 - project description in the “Project overview” section;
 - projected budget in the “financial appendix – projected budget” section;
 - candidate’s CV.
- optional documents may be submitted:
Supplementary attachments to the application may be added, in the “Project description” section, under “Supplementary attachments”.
- the candidate validates the proposal submitted: the final validation generates an email acknowledging receipt and confirming file submission.

Important:

- Submitted documents must include the application number received on file submission (e.g.: “INCA19-001”).
- once the file has been validated, you will no longer be able to return to the contents of the file submitted.

8- Publication of results

The results will be sent to the project candidates. The list of funded projects will be published on e-cancer.fr, the French National Cancer Institute’s website.

9- Contacts

For further scientific information or any information relating to proposal content:

Biology, Transfer and Innovations Department - INCa Research and Innovation Division:

Hedi SOUSSI hsoussi@institutcancer.fr

For any other information:

- of an administrative nature: pediat-info@institutcancer.fr
- of a technical nature on the submission: assistanceprojets@institutcancer.fr

Appendix - Rates

➤ living and travel expenses grant

➤ flat rate for operating grant

Living expenses grant	Monthly amount
GROUP A COUNTRIES: United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan,	€750
GROUP B COUNTRIES: Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, United Kingdom, Sweden	€750
All countries not listed in groups A and B	€500

Travel allowance (1 return fare)	Distance	Unit amount
Flat rate 1:	Between 100 and 499 km	€350.00
Flat rate 2:	Between 500 and 1,999 km	€500.00
Flat rate 3:	Between 2,000 and 2,999 km	€750.00
Flat rate 4:	Between 3,000 and 3,999 km	€1,000.00
Flat rate 5:	Between 4,000 and 7,999 km	€1,250.00
Flat rate 6:	8,000 km or over	€1,500.00

Distances to be calculated using the European Commission distance calculator:

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/distance-calculator_fr

Operating grant	Amount
Flat rate for 24 months	€50,000
Flat rate for 12 months	€25,000
Flat rate for 6 months	€12,500
Flat rate for 3 months	€6,250