



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No.101034371



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Title of the programme: University of Salamanca Programme to Foster Research Excellence — USAL4EXCELLENCE

Coordinator of the action: University of Salamanca

Areas of research: All areas of research

Candidates: Experienced researchers

Offer: 30-month contracts

Webpage: <https://usal4excellence.usal.es/>

Contact: usal4excellence@usal.es

Brief description

The "University of Salamanca Programme to Foster Research Excellence" (USAL4EXCELLENCE) is an initiative of the University of Salamanca (USAL), which aims to attract 40 Experienced Researchers (ERs) positions for 30 months in two calls of 20 positions per each. The main goal of the programme is to build a critical mass of scientific leaders that will advance regional competitiveness and European sustainable socio-economic development.

USAL4EXCELLENCE aims to achieve this purpose by fostering research collaboration internationally and enhancing knowledge and technology transfer between academia and industry.

Main features and benefits

- **Duration:** Each fellowship will last 30 months (significantly longer than usual postdoc period of 24 months), assuring proper project implementation
- **Bottom-up approach:** Applicants can choose their research topic freely within all academic areas and may involve (but not limited to) to USAL's Interdisciplinary Research Centres.
- **Host institution:** Fellows will be hosted at USAL and they will have the opportunity and freedom to choose a destination for two secondments. Thus, fellows will have a mandatory period at USAL during the first 24 months, except for the voluntary outgoing phase, and a mandatory secondment during the last 6 months of the fellowship.
- **Voluntary outgoing phase (secondment 1):** Fellows will be encouraged to undertake a stay in a partner institution for a period of up-to 6 months, which could be split into two shorter periods depending on individual project schedule. This first secondment should be scheduled between the first 24 months of the research project and the institution will be freely selected by the candidate (either within the USAL partnership or not).
- **Mandatory secondment (secondment 2) in industry/organizations of interest (secondment 2):** Fellows will spend up-to 20% of their fellowship in a large company/SME for a more market-oriented period, lasting for a minimum of 3 months



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and a maximum of 6 months. This secondment will be scheduled during the last 6 months of the fellowship and may involve (but not limited to) USAL Science Park. Alternatively, fellows may also spend this secondment in non-profit or charitable organizations, cultural institutions, museums and hospitals.

- **Supervisors & mentors:** Applicants will be assigned a suitable supervisor and mentor if they are successfully admitted to USAL4EXCELLENCE. Both supervisor and mentor will guide the ER in creating a Career Development Plan (CDP) and meet the ER to assess his/her progress according to that plan.
- **Training:** USAL4EXCELLENCE will offer tailored support that will help ERs understand and adopt best practice in research. All ERs will be expected to attend relevant courses (on-line training, face-to-face training or events) as part of their overall CDP. Many of these courses will be delivered at a local level by departments, faculties and institutes, both as part of the USAL teaching programme and as standalone courses.
- **Salary:** Each fellowship includes funds for travel, reasonable research expenses as well as competitive salary in comparison to regional/national salaries to attract the best brains. The total cost of a fellowship is 4.855€.

Project timeline

IMPORTANT DATES (*SECOND CALL*)

- Publication of the second call: 14th October 2022
- Opening of the Application Process: 14th October 2022
- Deadline for applications: 16th December 2022
- Evaluation period: December 2022 – May 2023
- Evaluation results: May 2023
- Start of the Fellowships: from June-July 2023

Job requirements

Candidates for the fellowships must meet the following requirements:

- **Experienced Researchers (ERs):** It is mandatory to hold a Doctoral degree or at least four years' full-time research experience by the time of the call deadline (16th December 2022).
- **Comply with the mobility rule:** USAL4EXCELLENCE welcomes applicants from any nationalities but they may not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Spain for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the call deadline (16th December 2022).