



MARTÍ i FRANQUÈS COFUND  
DOCTORAL PROGRAMME  
Universitat Rovira i Virgili



## **Guide for applicants**

### **MFP COFUND CALL 2021**

Valid only for the **COFUND EDITION** of the  
Martí i Franquès Programme

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Universitat Rovira i Virgili



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



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## 1. PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The Martí Franquès Programme was born in 2012 as a natural evolution of the doctoral fellowships programme offered for the last decade by the Departments of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV). It was designed to attract the most talented doctoral candidates to work on excellent research projects, in any of the 5 knowledge disciplines (Arts and Humanities, Legal and Social Sciences, Engineering and Architecture, Sciences, Health Sciences). The Martí Franquès Programme has also unified administrative procedures, enhanced working conditions and concentrated several financial funds. In 2015, the URV proposes a revamped fellowships programme (MFP-COFUND), including up to 50 PhD positions, that aligns the existing programme to the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for Recruitment (C&C), and provide enhanced employment and working conditions to the best doctoral candidates from all over the world. In the 2021 call we offer up to **20 fellowships**. The MFP-COFUND is reinforcing a selection process that is transparent, open, merit-based, impartial, equitable, gender-balanced and internationally advertised for all its positions, and commits to provide equal opportunities for all candidates, including candidates with disabilities and refugees. The fellows will be enrolled in one of the URV's official doctoral programmes, and will be hosted by our best research groups, who will provide state-of-the-art facilities, and the most innovative training programme, which mandates a secondment to an international institution, to complement their research and transferrable skills training. The MFP-COFUND is formally supported by 59 [partner organizations](#) (38 academic and 21 non-academic partners).

### OBJECTIVE

Thanks to funding from the European Commission's Marie Skłodowska-Curie, COFUND action, URV is in a unique position to offer the best conditions for doctoral training, based on the principles of the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and the [Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#) (guaranteed by the HR award that URV has received in 2014), as well as the EU Principles for Innovative Doctorate Training.

Through MFP, the URV will reinforce the development and broadening of the research competencies of early-stage researchers, with training following the EU Principles on Innovative Doctoral Training, with special emphasis on personal and career development through training in a wide set of transferrable skills, along with specific training in research skills.

The objective of this programme is to foster excellence in researchers' training, mobility and career development, and spreading the best practices of Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, culminating with the obtention of a PhD award from the Universitat Rovira i Virgili.



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THE 2021 CALL WILL OFFER UP TO 20 PHD POSITIONS

The candidates can choose and apply to **ONLY one** of the projects listed on the [MFP COFUND website](#) belonging to any of the 5 knowledge disciplines: Arts and Humanities, Legal and Social Sciences, Engineering and Architecture, Sciences, Health Sciences.

Each project will include the following information: the thesis supervisors' experience, PhD programme of the research project, description of the research project, gross annual salary, dedication, working hours, expected earliest starting date. Also, each project will contain information on ethical aspects and work location.

As part of the PhD training, the fellows must develop a minimum 3 months secondment at a Higher Education Institution or research center in a country other than Spain (consecutive or nonconsecutive; in one or in different centers). This mandatory secondment will provide the fellow with the [International Doctor Distinction](#).

The fellow can choose a [partner organization](#) that support the programme, for their secondment or they can suggest a different entity for it.

## 2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- The MFP COFUND fellows are Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellows.
- The full-time employment contracts will have an initial duration of 12 months and may be extended twice for another 12 months, up to a total period of 36 months, provided that the candidate has received a favorable activity report ([DAD + Plalnv](#)), based on the evaluation of the academic committee of the respective doctoral programme. The contract cannot be renewed over the 36 months maximum period.
  - The contracts may be rescinded at any time on agreement by the Departmental Council and by Resolution of the Rector once they have received the necessary report from the department recommending such a course of action.
  - If, during the period of the contract, the candidate defends his/her thesis, s/he may not continue the contract and it will be terminated on the day in which the fellow defends the thesis.
- Through their contracts, the fellows will be affiliated to the Spanish Social Security General Regime that guarantees them and their immediate family members, or assimilated persons, social security under the circumstances and situations defined by law, namely: public health care coverage and medical assistance, temporary/permanent disability, maternity/paternity, permanent non-incapacitating injuries, retirement, unemployment benefits, family benefits, such as financial allocation per dependent child or fostered minor.



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- As a working mother you are entitled to 1.200€ /year Personal Income Tax reduction if the mother has a child under the age of 3 and an additional reduction of 1.000 €/year euros to cover expenses if the child goes to an authorised nursery or child education center (the amounts are subjected to change).
- The gross monthly salary of the fellows is 2.258,60 €. The total remuneration is received in twelve monthly payments, which is subjected to social security fees and tax deductions, as applicable by Spanish labour and tax laws.
- URV will provide up to 7.500 € per year for research, training and networking costs related to the execution of these activities by the fellows. Common costs may include: consumables and small equipment, open access fees for scientific journals publication and travel during secondments, training, conference participation, etc.
- The contribution to the research costs is **NOT part of the salary**. This amount will be managed by the URV thesis supervisor, in charge of the project, for the benefit of the fellow and it must be duly justified.
- Fellows will accomplish their research project in full-time dedication. These contracts are incompatible with any other grant or contract, with payments that imply a contractual link of a similar nature, or with activities that may prevent the individual from dedicating him/herself exclusively to the work that is the object of the contract in the opinion of the Human Resources Committee delegated by the Governing Council of the URV.
- Fellows will have full-time research and teaching duties. Their main obligation will be to complete a doctoral thesis at the URV within one of its doctoral programmes. As part of the training programme, the corresponding Departmental Council may assign, upon request of the fellows, a collaboration in teaching activities for up to 60 hours a year.
- Fellows are entitled to temporary interrupt their fellowship in the following situations: illness, temporary disability, risk during pregnancy, maternity, paternity and adoption or foster care.
- The MFP-COFUND programme includes a mandatory secondment (from 3 to 6 months) at a Higher Education Institution or research center in a country other than Spain (consecutive or nonconsecutive; in one or different centers, academic and/or non-academic). This mandatory secondment will provide the fellow with the International Doctor Distinction. The fellow can choose a partner organization that supports the programme, for their secondment or they can suggest a different entity for it. The partner organisations are interested receiving secondees and committed to provide the necessary training. As a general rule, the secondment is expected to create additional benefits for the fellow, in terms of knowledge transfer and to enhance her/his research skills and professional expertise.
- Additionally, being part of the MFP-COFUND community will allow fellows to have a personalised Career Development Plan (at URV known as [Plalnv](#)) and have access to a personalized Training Programme based on scientific research training and transferable skills training.



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- Moreover, the MFP-COFUND programme includes opportunities for gaining international, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral experiences and for dissemination and communication of the results participating at conferences and targeted outreach activities.

### 3. ELEGIBILITY CRITERIA

MFP-COFUND is addressed to Early Stage Researchers (ESR) of any nationality that fulfil the following eligibility criteria at the time of the call deadline (September 6, 2021). If it becomes clear before, during or after the evaluation phase that one or more of the eligibility criteria have not been fulfilled, the proposal is declared ineligible and is withdrawn for any further examination.

CANDIDATES MUST COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AT THE CALL DEADLINE:

**Criteria 1. Be early stage researchers (ESR):** at the date of the deadline of the call (September 6, 2021), be in the first 4 years (full time equivalent research experience<sup>1</sup>) of their research careers and **have not been awarded a doctoral degree.** (For example, if you hold 2 Master (or equivalent) degrees **the first one** counts for complying with the ESR rules)

**Criteria 2. Comply with the mobility rule:** Researchers 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 (September 6, 2021).

#### IMPORTANT

**The successful candidates must provide proof of residence in the last 3 years (supported by official documents) and prove the compliance with the ESR rule. Candidates have to provide hard evidence, in the form of copies of previous employments, utility bills, lease agreements, entry/exit stamps in passport, residence permit, ID card, etc.**

- Be aged between 18 and the retirement age.
- Not have any illness that prevents them from carrying out their corresponding functions in a normal manner.
- Not have left the service of any of the public administrations for disciplinary reasons, or be forbidden from carrying out public functions.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Full-time equivalent research experience' is measured from the date when the researcher obtained the degree entitling him/her to embark on a doctorate (either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the researcher is recruited or seconded) – even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged



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- Not be disqualified in any of the ways listed in Law 53/1984, of December 26th, regarding the disqualification of personnel from the public administration.

### **Criteria 3. Specific requisites (URV PhD enrollment)**

**All candidates must be eligible to enroll in a doctoral programme at URV.** The specific access conditions are found at the following link: [http://www.doctor.urv.cat/futurs-estudiants/acces/en\\_titulacio\\_acces/](http://www.doctor.urv.cat/futurs-estudiants/acces/en_titulacio_acces/)

Please note that these conditions can be changed at any time. To ensure you are aware of the most updated conditions, please visit the above mentioned page.

As such, the candidates must:

**Be in possession of official Spanish Bachelor degrees, or equivalent, and/or a university master's degree, or equivalent, as long as they have passed at least 300 ECTS credits considering the two degrees combined.**

The candidates can be in one of the following cases:

- Be in possession of an official Spanish university degree, or from another country that is part of the European Higher Education Area, which qualifies for access to a master's degree in accordance with the provisions of article 16 of the Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October, and having passed a minimum of 300 ECTS credits in the set of official university studies, of which at least 60 must be at the master's level.
- Be in possession of an official Spanish bachelor's degree, the duration of which, in accordance with the rules of Community law, is at least 300 ECTS credits. These candidates must complete the research training supplements, unless the curriculum for the corresponding degree includes research-training credits, equivalent in training value to the credits from master's studies.
- Are University graduates who, previously to obtaining a position in training in the corresponding admissions exam for specialized sanitary training, have passed the assessment of at least two years of training of a program for the obtaining of the official title of one of the specialties in health sciences.
- Be in possession of a degree obtained in accordance with foreign educational systems, without the need for approval, with the prior verification of the university that it accredits a level of training equivalent to that of the official Spanish university master's degree and which authorizes, in the country issuing the degree, the access to doctoral studies.
- Have an undergraduate degree, be architects or engineers who are in possession of a diploma in advanced studies obtained in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 778/1998, of 30 April, or who have achieved the research proficiency that regulates Royal Decree 185/1985, of 23 January.



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- Be in possession of an official university degree that has obtained correspondence at level 3 of the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES), in accordance with the procedure established in RD 967/2014, of 21 November, establishing the requirements and procedure for the approval and declaration of equivalence to a degree and to an official university academic level and for the validation of foreign studies in Higher Education, and the procedure for determining correspondence at the MECES levels of the official titles of Architect, Engineer, Undergraduate, Technical Architect, Technical Engineer and Diplomats.
- Be enrolled in an official university master's course that allows them access to the doctorate in the 2021/2022 academic year (maximum date for enrolment June 15, 2022)

Admission to the doctoral programme<sup>2</sup> must be accredited when formalizing the contract with the URV.

The selected candidates must start the enrollment process within three months from the date on which the selection process is concluded, and must complete their enrolment onto a doctoral programme and present the corresponding document to the Human Resources Service during the first trimester of the grant.

If the candidate does not register, s/he will be stripped of the contract and will have to return any of the money that s/he may have received. Should this happen, the next candidate on the corresponding candidates' reserve list will be proposed for the contract.

If, during the selection process, the selection committee believes there is sufficient reason, it may request any of the candidates to prove that they fulfil all or some of the requirements for participation in the selection process.

**In case of doubts about the eligibility criteria, the MFP-COFUND Project Manager should be contacted at [mfp.cofund@urv.cat](mailto:mfp.cofund@urv.cat) prior to submission.**

## 4. APPLICATION PROCESS

The call for applications opens on the date it is published (July 1, 2021) and closes on **September 6, 2021 at 23:59** (Central European Time - CET).

Check the application process also [here](#).

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU CAN ONLY APPLY TO 1 RESEARCH PROJECT**

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<sup>2</sup> In accordance with the Academic and Matriculation Regulations of the Doctoral Programme, candidates must first complete the pre-registration process in order to be admitted into the doctoral programme within the periods established by the University for this purpose





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Before applying check the desired **candidate's profile** included in the description of the project and the [criteria for the external evaluation phase](#).

Candidates who meet the necessary requirements **to apply for one** of these contracts must submit an online application, which will include the following:

1. **Application form completed online.**
2. **Scanned copy of identity card, resident's card or passport currently in force.**
3. **Curriculum Vitae** (Any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths should be clearly explained so that this can be fairly assessed by the evaluators; if you are a forcibly displaced researcher, please explain your situation in the CV;  
**if you have been residing in Spain in the last 3 years please provide the exact duration and motives of your stay** and be prepared to provide the documentation proving it during the redress phase if required by the Project Manager)  
We strongly recommend you to use the [Europass CV template](#).
4. **Scanned copy of the certificate of the official academic qualification or proof of payment of the fees for the issuance of the certificate that allows the holder to access the doctoral studies.** Students who hold Master degrees should present the scanned copies of their master's degrees. Students who are registered in an official university master's course that allows them to access the doctoral programme during the 2021/2022 academic year must present a scanned copy of their master's course registration form.
5. **Scanned copy of academic transcript of the qualification equivalent to a bachelor's degree.**
6. **Scanned copy of academic transcript of the master's degree. Candidates who have not completed their Master's degrees must send their provisional academic transcript\*.**
7. **Description of the Master degree (or similar) project.**
8. **Two signed and scanned reference letters** (We will not contact the referees on your behalf)
9. **A motivation letter, explaining how the candidate is suited for the position s/he applies for.**
10. **Optional document:** Statement of Equivalence of Average Grade by students who studied abroad. Apply for/download the document from the [website of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training of Spain](#). [Guide to generate the Statement](#) (not official).
11. **For the contract reserved for researchers with disabilities: an official disability certificate issued by a competent authority from the country of origin.**



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\* For those candidates that do not require a master degree in their university in order to access doctoral studies, number 6 is not needed. Instead we will require **an official letter from your university stating that a master degree is not required for access to PhD studies.**

**NOTE:** if you do not possess a master degree at the time of the end of this call, but you are enrolled in a master course and set to obtain the master degree before the time of enrolment at URV (15<sup>th</sup> of June 2022), a provisional academic transcript of the master course is sufficient.

**Please consider that, even if in the application portal, number 6 and 7 are optional documents (due to technical reasons) these documents will be evaluated, so please upload them if there is no proved reason for which you are unable to provide them.**

#### ALL DOCUMENTATION MUST BE PRESENTED IN ENGLISH

All documentation must be presented within the application webpage in the manner indicated above and within the period established in the following subsection.

Under no circumstances will any qualification or merit that has not been accredited in the manner stipulated in these conditions be taken into account.

Candidates who wish to participate in this call and meet the requirements must present the corresponding application form found on the MFP-COFUND webpage. All submissions will be done online. Please note that all the original documentation indicated above will have to be presented in person at the time of enrollment in the PhD programme and at the signing of the contract.

**Only one application per candidate may be submitted.**

Candidates must ensure that all information is included before the deadline.

There will be no possibility to modify the application or to add missing documentation after the call deadline.

Once the application documents are submitted, all candidates will receive an automatic acknowledgement of receipt from the online application system.

## 5. SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process designed for the MFP-COFUND programme is based on the OTMR (open, transparent and merit-based recruitment) defined by the European Union. URV adheres to the principles of the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and the [Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#). Therefore, fellows will be selected on the basis of academic and research excellence of the candidates and their match with the chosen research project.



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The selection process is comprised of three stages:

### STAGE 1: PRE-ELIGIBILITY CHECK

**All the applications will be checked for eligibility and those not fulfilling all the criteria will be rejected. Incomplete and/or ineligible applications will be also discarded at this stage.**

**Please do not leave the application for the last day as you will not have the time to overcome the technical issues that you might encounter.**

### STAGE 2: EVALUATION STAGE (EXTERNAL TO URV)

All evaluations of the submitted applications will be done by external evaluation committees (EECs). These EECs will be formed by 3 evaluators per submitted application, and will rate the applications based on the following criteria:

#### 1. Academic profile – 40 %

The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:

- Do the courses taken during the Bachelor and/or Master\* studies make the candidate a better match for the project?
  - How would you evaluate the quality of the courses received during the Bachelor and/or Master\* training?
  - How would you evaluate the candidate's academic grades from Bachelor and/or Master\* studies?
- \* if applicable

#### 2. Other merits (including professional experience) – 30 %

The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:

- How would you evaluate, apart from the academic record, the candidate's previous research/professional experience? Has the candidate been involved in any research/professional activities that would make him/her a better match for the project?
- Has the candidate demonstrated interdisciplinary experience?
- Has the candidate performed internships, either in the non-academic or in the academic world?
- Did the candidates publish their research results in journals, book chapters, conference proceedings, etc.?

#### 3. Reference letters – 10 %

The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:



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- Based on the information provided by the referees has the candidate demonstrated the ability to adapt to new environments, the potential to acquire new skills effectively, a creative and an innovative mindset?
- Are the reference letters written specifically for this position?

#### 4. **Motivation letter – 20 %**

The following aspects will be considered when assigning an overall score for this criterion:

- Did the candidate demonstrate how their academic and professional background and their previous acquired skills, relate to the requirements of the research project?
- Is the motivation letter written specifically for this position?

The scoring in the interview will be given on a scale from 1 to 5, with 0.1 increments and the minimum threshold is 3.

The evaluation committees will generate an ordered list of candidates, and an evaluation summary report for each application. The list will be used by the Selection Committees (see next point), to make the final decision. It is important to remark that the evaluation committees have an advisement role, not a decision role.

### STAGE 3: FINAL SELECTION

The Departmental Councils will form the Selection Committees (SCs) that have to evaluate the best candidates with applications submitted for each contract. These committees will have three full members and three substitute members belonging to the department's permanent teaching and research staff and who meet the URV's requirements to supervise doctoral theses. Apart from the three members, an independent external expert, non-contractually related to URV will take part in the committee. In addition, a member of the **Human Resources** Department and the project manager will be present to ensure the correct implementation of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R).

Applications for contracts that are governed by agreements between the URV and other institutions will be evaluated by the committees stipulated in the respective agreements.

For the top candidates for each position (at least 3), the SCs will interview them in person, either on-site, or remotely, and evaluate them based on the following criteria:

1. Academic profile – 30%
2. Professional profile – 30%
3. Personal profile – 30%
4. Knowledge about the PhD position and the university/group environment – 10%

The scoring in the interview will be given on a scale from 1 to 5, with 0.1 increments and the minimum threshold is 3.



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Following the interviews, each committee will assign the contract in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Evaluation report from the external experts – 50 %
2. Scoring at personal interviews – 50 %

### POSITION RESERVED FOR RESEARCHERS WITH DISABILITIES

The candidates for projects 2021MFP-COFUND-11 through 2021MFP-COFUND-15 (reserved for researchers with disabilities) will go through the same selection process as all other candidates.

After the evaluation process, the first highest ranked candidates from each different research project will be identified.

An appointed Final Selection Committee will select the highest ranked one, among all of them, as the winner of the PhD position and the project that the candidate chose will be financed.

In case of a tie (for different research projects, the candidates have the same evaluation score), the Final Selection Committee will be in charge of resolving the tie. In this case, if appropriately considered, the Final Selection Committee can invite the candidate to an additional interview.

After examining the proposal assignment of contracts, the Rector of the URV will pass a resolution in which he will name a candidate for each contract in the order proposed by the Departmental Council or Selection Committees until all the contracts in the competition have been awarded.

Any appeal against the awarding of the contracts must be addressed to the rector of the URV and presented to the General Registry or other official locations within one month of the publication of the award.

## 6. COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

Any interested party may lodge an administrative appeal against this competition and its conditions at the Administrative Court in Tarragona within two months, counting from the day after notification is received. An appeal for reversal can also be made to the Rector of the URV prior to the administrative appeal and within one month of the day after notification is received. Likewise, interested parties can appeal to the rector of the URV against the actions of the committee within one month of having been informed of this decision. This appeal will be understood to have been rejected if the university administration publishes no resolution regarding the appeal within three months after it has been lodged. The opportunity to lodge an administrative appeal at the Administrative Court of Tarragona will expire six months from the day after the appeal lodged with the Rector has been rejected. If a resolution is published



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regarding the appeal lodged with the Rector, the interested party will have two months starting from the day after they have been notified of this to lodge an administrative appeal. Likewise, interested parties may lodge any other appeal they deem necessary to defend their interests.

## 7. APPOINTMENT OF SELECTED CANDIDATES

From the day after the selection committee publishes its list of proposed candidates, these candidates have 10 working days to present the relevant documentation to the Human Resources Service (informing whether they accept or decline the offer) within the established period so that they can sign the corresponding contract. Candidates who fail to present this document within the established period will be regarded as having renounced the offer of a contract.

If a candidate renounces his/her appointment or if the contract is unsigned, the rector will appoint the next candidate on the list.

The type of contract will be a fixed term, full time Predoctoral Contract (Trainee Predoctoral Research Staff). Successful candidates will be registered with the general regime of the social security system.

### RENUNCIATIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

If the beneficiary wishes to renounce the contract, he/she must communicate this in writing to the Human Resources Service, giving at least 15 days' notice. This communication must state that the student has voluntarily renounced the contract and give the date from which he/she wishes to withdraw from it.

A fellow may be substituted if this is requested by the researcher's department in cases where the department finances the research position with its own funds, by the evaluation committee for positions generated by contracts funded by R+D+I contracts, or by monitoring committees for positions created by agreements between the URV and other entities. A request to substitute a fellow may be made in the following cases:

- Renunciation
- Non-renewal
- Early cessation

If an applicant relinquishes or resigns from a contract before time, and if there is a waiting list, the rector will appoint the next candidate on the waiting list as the applicant's replacement.

### OTHERS

The awarding of a doctoral contract does not imply any type of commitment on the part of the awarding department regarding the subsequent employment of the fellow.



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In accordance with the Regulations regarding the Industrial and Intellectual Property of the URV that were approved by the Governing Council on 30 April 2009, the intellectual ownership of a literary, artistic or scientific work belongs to the author for having created it, although the exploitation rights will have first been transferred to the university unless there is an agreement to the contrary.

## 8. FELLOWS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Selected fellows will be required to comply with the requirements of the Grant Agreement No. 945413 and URV regulations, in particular:

- Any publication or other data that result from the contract must cite the funding entity or entities in the appropriate section and the reference number assigned to the funding. The support of the European Commission under the Marie Skłodowska Curie grant agreement No. 945413 must be cited.
- The fellows must ensure open access (free of charge online access for any user) to all peer reviewed scientific publications and data relating to their scientific results, according to the grant agreement No. 945413.
- The fellows will adhere to the recognised ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles appropriate to their research. The research carried out must comply with the EU's ethical principles, Spanish and international legislation applicable, as well as the [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU](#). The URV has developed the [“Code of good practices in research, research training, development and innovation of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili”](#), which should be used as guidelines to ensure the best practices for excellence in research.
- When going on a secondment the fellows will be requested to fill-in a “Secondment agreement” form.
- During the whole duration of their contract, the fellows must participate in at least one outreach activity and take part in Transversal Skills Training courses summing up at least 30 hours altogether.



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Tarragona, July 1, 2021



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Membre d' **AURORA** ALLIANCE



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With the support of:

