



UT System – CONACYT Call for FY18 (2017-2018) Proposals
Postdoctoral Research Fellowships
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: March 24, 2017

Background

On June 21, 2016 the University of Texas System and Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) signed a Cooperation Agreement to establish the ConTex Program to administer cooperative bi-national academic and research activities for the mutual benefit of the United States and Mexico as neighbors and partners.

Objective and Scope

UT System and CONACYT are pleased to announce a call for proposals for postdoctoral fellows at UT System or at Mexican institutions of higher education or research.

The objective of the Postdoctoral Fellowship Program is to financially support Mexican postdoctoral scholars in UT System departments and institutions to pursue research and study, as well as UT System postdoctoral scholars at Mexican institutions.

Fellowships are open to the following areas of study:

Environmental sciences – water management, exploitation of the oceans, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience related to natural and man-made disasters, exploitation and protection of ecosystems and biodiversity

Science – astronomy, physics, mathematics, chemistry (applied), geosciences (applied)

Sustainable development – food production, consolidation of institutions, cities and urban development, public policy

Technology development – automatization and robotics, biotechnology, genetics, advanced materials, nanomaterials and nanotechnology, information technology, engineering to increase added value to industries, manufacturing

Energy – sustainable energy consumption; development of renewable and clean energies; oil exploration, extraction and use

Health – human behavior and addiction prevention; emerging diseases and impact; preventative medicine and health care; bioengineering

Social science – poverty reduction and food security; public communication about science; economics; social and digital/virtual economics; humanities; migration and communities; risk prevention; security

Priority will be given to projects related to Science, Technology, Environmental Studies, Energy, and Health.

Eligibility and Requirements

- Applicants may submit proposals during their final year of Ph.D. education. Potential award is contingent on graduation before the beginning of FY18 (September 2017).
- Applicants who have received previous CONACYT funding should contact CONACYT directly to determine eligibility.
- Less than five (5) years of previous postdoctoral research experience.
- Candidate must have a letter of commitment from the host institution faculty member who will receive the scholar.
- Full-time, in-person commitment at host institution.
- Postdoctoral fellows may begin their residencies within 90 days of proposed start time in project timeline.
- The project may be connected to the ConTex Collaborative Research Program. However, the postdoctoral proposal must be unique, i.e., it may not be a copy of the proposal submitted to the research grant program.

Amount and Conditions of Support

- Up to ten (10) postdoctoral fellows will be awarded for a period of up to 12 (twelve) months, with possibility for an additional year depending on availability of funds and host faculty recommendation.
- Selected fellows will receive an annual award of \$47,476 USD and support for health insurance, including for dependents. Fellows are responsible for paying all taxes in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
- Fellows must be affiliated with the host institution during the entire tenure of the fellowship.
- Expectation of support is completion of proposed project within established time frame and final narrative report of activities submitted jointly by fellow and host faculty member.

Application Guidelines

Eligible Mexican or UT System postdoctoral candidates applying for the UT System-CONACYT postdoctoral research fellowship must submit their applications electronically at <http://contex.utsystem.edu> by 6:00 p.m. (CST) 24 March 2017.

The following items are required as part of the proposal packet submitted through the ConTex online platform <http://contex.utsystem.edu>:

Documentation that must be included in proposal packet

- **Online application cover sheet** with an abstract in English (not to exceed 400 words)
- **Curriculum vitae of applicant** (not to exceed three pages), including educational achievements, academic positions and/or awards, a list of relevant publications and current works in progress.
- **Abbreviated curriculum vitae of faculty host** (and co-host if applicable) including publications and research interests in the last five years and indication of ability to direct postdoctoral research (not to exceed five pages).

- **Letter of intent from the faculty host** (and co-host if applicable) indicating research responsibility and support. The letter of intent should provide evidence of the host's familiarity with the applicant's project plan, indicate host support for the proposed activities, and discuss the potential benefit of the stay to the scholar and host institution (not to exceed 2 pages).
- **Project plan** for work to be undertaken (not to exceed three pages).^{*} Provide a summary in English, describing the proposed research and the specific goals and objectives of the work to be undertaken. The following should be addressed:
 - Significance of the proposed research within the discipline
 - Explanation of how project is cutting-edge research within the discipline.
 - Specifics and locale of the work to be performed, plans for continuation of the research, as well as the potential impact of the proposed research on the professional and academic development of the applicant.
 - Methodology, relevant literature and any disciplinary, interdisciplinary and international collaborative approaches.
 - Explanation of intended impact for Mexico and Texas
- **Timeline** (not to exceed one page) detailing research and work to be undertaken during the course of the postdoctoral stay. The timeline should clearly specify where and when academic and research-related activities will take place.
- **Official letter of invitation** from a UT System department, laboratory, research center, or institute or from a Mexican institution of higher education and/or research registered in the National Register of Institutions and Scientific and Technological Institutes (RENIECYT). This letter serves as an official authorization from the department or research institute where the postdoctoral candidate will be conducting his or her stay. It must be written by the department chair or by the director of the research institute hosting the candidate's residency.
- **Certification of completion of Ph.D. degree.** Applicant must have earned Ph.D. at the time of submission. Final dissertation certificate must be submitted. If the candidate has not completed the doctoral degree, he or she must submit a letter from their dissertation advisor indicating that the Ph.D. will be completed by August, 2017.

Supporting letters that must be submitted separately include:

- Two **letters of reference** in English or Spanish addressing the applicant's research accomplishments and ability to undertake a postdoctoral research program. One letter preferably should be from the applicant's dissertation adviser. Letters must be on official letterhead and sent in PDF format to contex@utsa.edu. The subject line should include applicant's name and ConTex Postdoc Fellowship. Letters of reference must be submitted electronically by 6:00 p.m. (CST) 24 March 2017. Applicants must provide this information to those individuals who will be providing letter.

^{*} Reviewers are instructed not to read beyond 3 pages of the project plan.

Review and Evaluation Process

Each proposal will be reviewed, evaluated, and rated by a committee of faculty members and/or researchers from Mexican and UT System institutions representing expertise in relevant topics. Proposals should be written for a committee of broadly based expertise and interests. Appropriate bibliographies and supporting documents should be provided.

The Committee will recommend funding applicants based on the objectives, requirements, and capacity of the grant.

1. Administrative Review includes:
 - Every candidate is reviewed to ensure:
 - Eligibility criteria are met
 - All required documents listed in the Call are included

2. Evaluation Committee Assessment includes:
 - Applications that pass the initial review are then evaluated based on scientific merit, relevance, level of impact participating in research project or training program will advance applicant’s academic/professional development.
 - Clarity, quality, and feasibility of the proposed work during the fellowship period
 - Qualifications of the applicant
 - Potential that proposed work solidifies future bilateral research ties and networks
 - Reviewers will look for project design that leads to development of research programs and resources in UT System or Mexican institutions.
 - Scientific and academic development activities that demonstrate support for providing unique expertise for the applicant, increasing knowledge and access to new techniques and methodologies for the applicant’s future home institution
 - Indication of a strong rationale for conducting a full-time stay at the proposed host institution

Deadline for receipt of applications

To be considered, proposals must be submitted through the ConTex online platform no later than **6:00 p.m. (CST), March 24, 2017**.

ConTex will not provide pre-review of proposals, and reviewer comments on individual proposals are not provided following the competition and final decisions.

Timeline

Call opening for proposals	Monday, 28 November 2016
Deadline for proposal submission	Friday, 24 March 2017
Administrative review	Last week of March 2017
Academic evaluation assessment	Between April – June 2017
Communication of results	After 15 June 2017
Project formalization	After 30 June 2017
Funds available for disbursement	Immediately after communication of results



For additional information contact:

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or

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Formalization

Allocation of resources

In case of approval for postdoctoral fellowship ConTex will administer the allocation of resources on a monthly basis for the duration of the stay, through the procedure to be established by ConTex for this purpose.

Items to be financed

ConTex will provide the resources corresponding to the maintenance for a year and a single payment as support for medical, dental and optical insurance. Insurance enrollment is the responsibility of the beneficiary.

Items not to be financed

The acquisition of motor vehicles, tax payment, civil works and installations, as well as all equipment and machinery whose purpose is conducting production activities, management or marketing will not be financed.

Support and Accountability Monitoring

ConTex will coordinate the technical and administrative monitoring of projects in each of its stages based on the guidelines established in the current regulations.

Interpretation and Unforeseen Issues

The interpretation of the present Call for Proposals and unforeseen issues within will be jointly resolved by CONACYT and UT System and their resolutions will be binding.

Intellectual Property Protection

The postdoctoral fellowship award funding is provided to the host institution, and the postdoctoral fellow is an employee of the host institution. Intellectual property rules of the host institution apply.

The private appropriation of knowledge plays an essential role as a trigger for economic development of the country, which is an essential motivator of private investment in research and economic development.

The beneficiary in the project implementation must respect the intellectual property rights of developers who are entitled to them.

The rights violation mentioned are determined by a final decision of the competent authority, it shall be reason for support cancellation prior corresponding analysis.

General Considerations

- Incomplete applications that do not meet the requirements or have been sent to ConTex outside the online application system, will not be taken into consideration for the evaluation process and appropriate selection.
- The support granted under this call under any circumstances will not generate employment relationship with CONACYT, UT System institutions, or ConTex.
- The number of scholarships to be awarded under this call will be subject to the provisions of the Agreement of Cooperation between CONACYT and UT System, the positive evaluation of the application and the sufficiency of FONCICYT's budget.

The terms of the present call for proposals are in accordance with the juridical dispositions derived from the Ley de Ciencia y Tecnología and other applicable related findings. The results derived can only be questioned within what is indicated in the present Call.

The presentation of applications under the terms of this call implies the acceptance of the established conditions and other regulations issued by CONACYT or applicable to the case.