MGM PROGRAMME

Frequently Asked Questions

139 questions and answers for applicants and host institutions

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01 ELIGIBILITY

1.1 Who is eligible to apply to the MGM Programme?

The MGM Programme is open to outstanding researchers holding a PhD degree and meeting all eligibility requirements established in the call. Applicants are expected to demonstrate an excellent scientific track record, significant research achievements, and the capacity to lead independent research activities.

1.2 Is there a minimum postdoctoral experience requirement?

Yes. Applicants must have at least ten years of postdoctoral experience by the application deadline.

1.3 How is postdoctoral experience calculated?

Postdoctoral experience is calculated from the date on which the applicant was awarded the PhD degree up to the application deadline. Supporting documentation may be requested during the eligibility verification process.

1.4 Is there an age limit for applicants?

No. The MGM Programme does not impose any age restrictions.

1.5 Can researchers close to retirement age apply?

Yes. Applications are welcome from researchers who meet the eligibility requirements of the call, regardless of age. However, applicants should consider that the programme is designed as a long-term career pathway and that employment conditions are subject to applicable Spanish labour legislation, including provisions concerning retirement.

1.6 Are applicants of any nationality eligible?

Yes. The programme welcomes applications from researchers of all nationalities, that are not subject to any legal or regulatory restrictions.

1.7 Can researchers currently working outside Spain apply?

Yes. The programme is specifically designed to attract international talent and welcomes applications from researchers currently working abroad.

1.8 Can researchers currently working in Spain apply?

Yes. Researchers currently employed in Spain may apply, provided that they fulfil all eligibility requirements established in the call.

1.9 Can researchers currently working in the Community of Madrid apply?

No. Researchers who, at the time of application, hold any contractual relationship (whether permanent or temporary), or any statutory or civil-servant relationship, with any of the eligible host institutions in the Community of Madrid are not eligible, since the aim of the call is to strengthen the regional R&D&I system by attracting, recovering and consolidating researchers from around the world.

1.10 Can researchers from industry apply?

Yes. Researchers currently working in industry are eligible to apply if they meet the scientific and eligibility requirements established in the call.

1.11 Can applicants who have previously worked in Madrid apply?

Yes. Previous employment in Madrid does not by itself affect eligibility.

02 HOST INSTITUTIONS

2.1 Can an applicant submit applications under different host institutions?

Yes. Applicants may obtain Expressions of Interest from more than one eligible institution where permitted by the call. However, only one application may be submitted.

2.2 What types of institutions are eligible to host MGM researchers?

Eligible host institutions are those specified in the call and located in the Community of Madrid. They include universities, public research organisations, biomedical research foundations, research institutes, and other non-profit entities that perform research activities.

2.3 Can private universities act as host institutions?

Yes, provided that they satisfy the eligibility conditions established in the call.

2.4 Can private companies host MGM researchers?

No. For-profit companies are not eligible host institutions under the programme.

2.5 Must applicants identify a host institution before applying?

Yes. Applicants must obtain at least one formal Expression of Interest from an eligible host institution before submitting their application.

2.6 What is an Expression of Interest (EOI)?

An Expression of Interest is a formal statement issued by an eligible host institution expressing its interest in hosting the applicant if selected for funding under the MGM Programme.

2.7 Why is an Expression of Interest required?

The EOI demonstrates the institution's willingness to host the researcher and confirms that the proposed research programme can be appropriately integrated within the institution.

2.8 How many Expressions of Interest may be submitted?

Applicants may submit up to three Expressions of Interest from different eligible host institutions.

2.9 Is it mandatory to submit more than one EOI?

No. Only one EOI is required to satisfy the eligibility requirement.

2.10 Does obtaining an EOI guarantee selection?

No. An EOI is an eligibility requirement and does not influence the scientific evaluation of the candidate beyond demonstrating institutional commitment.

2.11 Who must sign the Expression of Interest?

The EOI must be signed by the legal representative of the institution or by a person formally authorised to act on behalf of the institution.

2.12 What information should be included in the EOI?

The EOI shall use a specific form provided by the call.

2.13 Can a host institution support more than one candidate?

Yes. Institutions may issue EOIs to multiple candidates.

2.14 Can a candidate obtain EOIs from institutions in different scientific fields?

Yes, provided all institutions are eligible and the proposed research programme remains scientifically coherent.

2.15 Does the host institution commit to employing the researcher by issuing an EOI?

No. The EOI demonstrates a genuine intention to host the researcher if selected, but the contract will be ascribed to Madrimasd Foundation.

2.16 Does the host institution need to commit additional resources?

Host institutions are encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to the researcher through the provision of infrastructure, facilities, personnel support, or other resources that facilitate the success of the proposed research programme.

2.17 How should applicants choose a host institution?

Applicants are encouraged to identify institutions that provide an excellent scientific environment, strong strategic alignment with their research activities, and adequate support for the implementation of their future research programme.

2.18 May applicants contact host institutions before the call deadline?

Yes. It is mandatory to present at least an EOI. Therefore, early contact between applicants and potential host institutions is strongly encouraged in order to facilitate the preparation of a competitive application and a well-developed Expression of Interest.

2.19 How does a host institution commit to supporting a successful candidate?

For successful candidates, the hosting arrangements are formalised through an agreement between the Madrimasd Foundation and the host institution. This agreement defines the institution's commitments regarding the research environment, infrastructure, integration of the researcher and other conditions necessary for the successful implementation of the project.

2.20 Who provides insurance coverage for researchers?

Employment-related social security coverage is provided through the employment contract with the Madrimasd Foundation. Professional liability and workplace accident insurance associated with the researcher's activities within the host institution are provided by the host institution in accordance with its policies and applicable regulations.

03 APPLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

3.1 What documents must be submitted as part of the application?

Applicants must submit all documents required by the call through the online application platform. These include the application form, curriculum vitae, scientific achievements summary, recommendation letters, and one or more Expressions of Interest from eligible host institutions.

3.2 In which language must the application be submitted?

All documents subject to scientific evaluation must be submitted in English.

3.3 Is there a specific format for the Curriculum Vitae?

No. Applicants must only comply with the maximum length specified in the call. Any pages exceeding the established limit may not be considered during evaluation.

3.4 What information should be included in the CV?

The CV should provide a comprehensive overview of the applicant's academic and professional career, according to the questions that will assess the evaluators that are provided in the evaluation guide.

3.5 Is a research proposal required?

No. Applicants should follow the specific requirements established in the call. Where requested, the description of future research plans should be concise and focused on strategic objectives and scientific vision.

3.6 How many recommendation letters are required?

Applicants must submit three recommendation letters.

3.7 Must recommendation letters be written in English?

Yes. Recommendation letters should be submitted in English.

3.8 Is there a specific format for recommendation letters?

No.

3.9 What is the purpose of the motivation statement?

The motivation statement allows applicants to explain why they are interested in joining the Madrid research ecosystem, how they expect to contribute to the host institution, and what impact they aim to achieve through the programme.

3.10 What should the motivation statement include?

Applicants should explain: Their scientific vision; their reasons for applying; their interest in the selected host institution; their expected contribution to the Madrid research ecosystem and their long-term career objectives.

3.11 Can applicants submit additional supporting documents?

No. Only documents specifically requested in the call should be submitted. Additional materials may not be considered during evaluation.

3.12 What file format should be used for uploaded documents?

Documents must be uploaded in the format specified in the application guidelines as PDF.

3.13 Is there a maximum file size for uploaded documents?

Yes. Applicants must comply with the size limits specified in the application platform and call documentation.

3.14 What happens if a file exceeds the maximum size allowed?

The application platform may reject the upload. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all documents meet the required technical specifications before submission.

3.15 Can applications be submitted by email?

No. Applications must be submitted through the official online application system.

3.16 Can an application be modified after submission?

No. Applicants may modify their application only until the call deadline, provided that the submission platform remains open.

3.17 Can additional documents be uploaded after the deadline?

No. Once the deadline has passed, no additional documentation may be submitted unless specifically requested by the programme administration.

3.18 Is there a confirmation that the application has been successfully submitted?

Yes. Applicants will receive a confirmation by email once their application has been successfully submitted. In addition, applicants are advised to check the online application platform from time to time to verify the status of their application.

3.19 What happens if an applicant experiences technical problems during submission?

Applicants should immediately contact the technical support service using the contact information provided by the programme. However, applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the final hours before the deadline.

3.20 Is there a grace period after the deadline?

No. Applications received after the deadline cannot be accepted.

3.21 Is there an administrative admissibility check?

Yes. Applications are reviewed to verify compliance with the eligibility and documentation requirements before entering the scientific evaluation phase.

3.22 What happens if mandatory documentation is missing?

Applications lacking mandatory documentation may be declared ineligible and may not proceed to scientific evaluation.

04 EVALUATION PROCESS

4.1 How are applications evaluated?

Applications are evaluated through an international peer-review process designed to ensure a fair, independent, and merit-based assessment. The evaluation focuses on the scientific excellence and leadership of the applicant.

4.2 Who evaluates the applications?

Applications are assessed by independent experts with recognised expertise in the relevant scientific fields. Reviewers are selected on the basis of their scientific competence and absence of conflicts of interest.

4.3 How many reviewers evaluate each application?

Each application is evaluated by at least two independent external reviewers. Their assessments are subsequently considered by the Evaluation Committee, which establishes the final ranking.

4.4 What is the role of the Evaluation Committee?

The Evaluation Committee reviews the external assessments, discusses the merits of the applications, and determines the final scores and ranking of candidates according to the evaluation criteria established in the call.

4.5 What are the main evaluation criteria?

The programme evaluates applicants on the basis of scientific excellence and leadership.

4.6 What is meant by scientific excellence?

Scientific excellence refers to the quality, originality, significance, and international impact of the applicant's research achievements throughout their career.

4.7 What is meant by scientific leadership?

Scientific leadership refers to the applicant's ability to define research directions, build teams, attract resources, supervise researchers, establish collaborations, and influence the development of their scientific field.

4.8 Are applicants evaluated on their past achievements or future plans?

The primary focus of the programme is the applicant's demonstrated track record and leadership achievements. Future scientific plans may also be considered insofar as they support the institutional commitment provided through the Expression of Interest.

4.9 Does the programme evaluate a research project?

No. Unlike many project-based funding schemes, the MGM Programme primarily evaluates people rather than projects. The central objective is the recruitment of outstanding scientific talent.

4.10 How important are publications in the evaluation?

Publications are an important indicator of scientific achievement. However, evaluators assess not only publications, but many other merits.

4.11 Are bibliometric indicators used?

The evaluation is not based on metrics and follows a broader qualitative assessment approach.

4.12 Are patents, technology transfer, spin-off companies and societal impact activities considered in the evaluation?

Yes. Patents and other forms of intellectual property, as well as technology transfer activities such as industrial collaborations, licensing agreements, innovation activities and entrepreneurship, may provide evidence of innovation, impact and knowledge transfer, and may strengthen an applicant's profile. Likewise, the creation of spin-offs or start-ups, and contributions that demonstrate benefits to society, healthcare, education, public policy, the environment, culture or economic development, may be considered evidence of scientific leadership, innovation and impact where relevant to the applicant's career.

4.13 Are teaching and supervision experience considered in the evaluation?

Teaching activities may be considered as part of the applicant's broader academic profile, although the primary focus remains scientific excellence and leadership. Experience supervising doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers and research teams may be regarded as evidence of leadership and mentoring capacity.

4.14 Is international experience valued?

Yes. International mobility, international collaborations, and international scientific recognition are important indicators of research excellence and leadership.

4.15 Is experience managing research teams relevant?

Yes. Successful team leadership is an important component of scientific leadership and may contribute positively to the evaluation.

4.16 Is the ability to attract funding considered?

Yes. Success in obtaining competitive research funding is often regarded as evidence of scientific independence, credibility, and leadership.

4.17 Are applicants expected to have held prestigious grants?

Not necessarily. Evaluators consider the applicant's overall career trajectory and achievements rather than requiring any specific funding programme.

4.18 How are interdisciplinary applicants assessed?

Where appropriate, reviewers with complementary expertise may be involved to ensure a balanced evaluation of interdisciplinary profiles.

4.19 How are conflicts of interest managed?

Reviewers and committee members must declare any conflict of interest. Individuals with a conflict are excluded from the evaluation of the affected application.

4.20 Do reviewers know the identity of other reviewers?

No. External reviewers assess applications independently.

4.21 Can applicants contact reviewers?

No. Any attempt to contact reviewers regarding an ongoing evaluation process would be considered inappropriate.

4.22 Is there a minimum score required to be considered for funding?

Yes. Applicants must reach the minimum quality threshold established in the call in order to be eligible for funding.

4.23 Does exceeding the threshold guarantee funding?

No. Funding is awarded according to the final ranking and the budget available under the programme.

4.24 How are final rankings established?

Applications are ranked according to their final evaluation scores after consideration of the external reviews and committee assessment.

4.25 Will applicants receive reviewers' comments?

Yes. Applicants will receive the evaluation reports prepared during the review process.

4.26 Will applicants have the opportunity to respond to reviewers' comments?

Yes. Applicants will be invited to submit a rebuttal letter addressing factual inaccuracies, misunderstandings or comments contained in the reviews.

4.27 Will applicants receive their numerical scores?

Yes. Final evaluation scores will be communicated according to the procedures established by the programme.

4.28 How long does the evaluation process take?

The expected timeline is described in the call documentation. Applicants should consult the programme website for updates throughout the evaluation process.

4.29 Is a reserve list established?

Yes. Subject to the provisions of the call, a reserve list may be established and used if selected candidates decline an offer or become ineligible before recruitment.

4.30 What happens if a selected candidate withdraws?

The programme may invite the next eligible candidate on the reserve list, according to the ranking established by the Evaluation Committee.

05 EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND RELOCATION

5.1 What type of contract will selected researchers receive?

Researchers selected under the MGM Programme will be recruited by the Madridmasd Foundation under the contractual framework established in the call and in accordance with applicable Spanish legislation.

5.2 Under which legal framework will researchers be hired?

Researchers will be employed under the provisions applicable to distinguished researchers and other relevant regulations governing research personnel in Spain.

5.3 Who will be the employer?

The Madrimasd Foundation will be the employer and will be responsible for the contractual relationship with the researcher.

5.4 Is the MGM position a permanent appointment?

Yes. Researchers are employed under an indefinite contract with the Madrimasd Foundation. The position is designed to provide long-term career stability and may extend until retirement age. Continued employment is subject to the programme's evaluation framework and applicable Spanish labour law.

5.5 When are selected researchers expected to start their appointment?

Successful candidates will be informed of the recruitment timeline following the completion of the evaluation process. The starting date will be agreed between the researcher, Madrimasd Foundation and the host institution.

5.6 Is physical presence at the host institution required?

Yes. MGM researchers are expected to be fully integrated into the scientific life of the host institution and contribute actively to its research environment.

5.7 Can researchers work remotely?

Yes. Occasional remote work may be possible in accordance with institutional policies, but the position is not intended to be a fully remote appointment.

5.8 What salary will selected researchers receive?

The annual gross salary will be determined according to the programme provisions and the evaluation outcome. The salary range established by the programme reflects the objective of attracting internationally competitive scientific talent.

5.9 Is salary progression possible during the appointment?

Yes. Salary progression is linked to the programme evaluation system. Following each evaluation, salary levels may increase, remain unchanged, or be affected according to the evaluation outcome and programme rules

5.10 Are salary increases automatic?

No. Any salary progression is subject to the evaluation and monitoring procedures established by the programme.

5.11 Will researchers be covered by the Spanish Social Security system?

Yes. Researchers employed by Spanish institutions benefit from the corresponding social security coverage established under Spanish law.

5.12 Does the employment package include pension contributions?

Yes. Contributions are managed according to Spanish labour and social security regulations.

5.13 Does the programme provide health insurance?

Yes. Researchers employed in Spain are covered through the national social security framework. Specific institutional arrangements may vary.

5.14 Are family members covered by the programme?

The programme itself does not directly provide family benefits, although selected researchers may access the social protections associated with their employment status.

5.15 Can researchers maintain another employment contract simultaneously?

No. MGM appointments are intended to support the full professional dedication of the selected researcher and are generally incompatible with additional employment contracts.

5.16 Can researchers hold a part-time position elsewhere?

No. Simultaneous employment relationships are not permitted.

5.17 Can researchers serve as consultants?

Researchers may undertake external professional activities only when compatible with programme rules, institutional regulations, and applicable legislation.

5.18 Can researchers sit on scientific advisory boards?

Yes. Participation in scientific advisory boards is generally compatible with the objectives of the programme, subject to institutional approval where required.

5.19 Can researchers engage in entrepreneurship activities?

Yes. Entrepreneurship, innovation activities, and knowledge-transfer initiatives may be carried out in accordance with the regulations of the host institution.

5.20 Can researchers create spin-off companies?

Yes. Researchers may participate in the creation of spin-offs, start-ups, and innovation initiatives subject to applicable institutional and legal frameworks.

5.21 Are teaching activities permitted?

Yes. Researchers may undertake teaching activities in accordance with the regulations of the host institution and applicable legislation. Teaching duties are expected to remain limited and may not exceed 100 hours per academic year, allowing researchers to maintain their primary focus on research activities.

5.22 Is the MGM salary the only remuneration researchers may receive?

No. Researchers may receive additional remuneration, supplements or incentives from the host institution or from other sources where permitted by institutional policies and applicable regulations. Subject to applicable regulations and institutional policies, researchers may receive additional income arising from projects, patents, technology transfer activities, prizes, consulting activities, or other authorised and compatible professional activities.

5.23 Can MGM researchers undertake other professional activities in addition to their position?

Yes. MGM researchers may carry out activities that are compatible with their employment and with the regulations applicable to personnel working in the public research sector. These may include teaching, participation in scientific advisory boards, research collaborations, technology transfer activities, patent-related income, authorised consulting activities, scientific evaluation activities and other professional activities permitted under applicable legislation and institutional policies. Any activity requiring prior authorisation must comply with the corresponding procedures.

06 RELOCATION SUPPORT

6.1 Does the MGM Programme provide relocation support?

Yes. The programme includes €5,000 financial support to facilitate the relocation of researchers recruited from outside Spain.

6.2 Are selected researchers responsible for obtaining visas?

Yes. Researchers are responsible for complying with immigration requirements, although host institutions are expected to provide guidance and support.

6.3 Will the host institution assist with immigration procedures?

Yes. Institutions typically provide administrative support to facilitate visa and residence permit procedures.

07 START-UP PACKAGE

7.1 What is the start-up package?

The start-up package is a dedicated research budget provided to selected researchers during the first year of their appointment.

7.2 What is the value of the start-up package?

The programme provides a start-up budget of €50,000 to support the establishment of the research activities of the selected researcher.

7.3 What is the purpose of the start-up package?

The objective of the start-up package is to enable researchers to rapidly establish their scientific programme and maximise the impact of their recruitment. The start-up package be used to purchase research equipment, laboratory consumables, fieldwork expenses, scientific travel, conference attendance, networking activities, publication expenses, access to research infrastructures, software, recruit technical personnel, among others.

7.4 Who manages the start-up funds?

The budget is administered through the host institution according to institutional financial procedures and programme regulations.

7.5 Can unused start-up funds be transferred to subsequent years?

The management of unspent funds will depend on programme rules and the financial procedures of the host institution.

7.6 Is the start-up package considered part of the salary?

No. The start-up package is entirely separate from the researcher's salary and is dedicated exclusively to research activities.

7.7 Must researchers justify how the start-up package is spent?

Yes. All expenditure must comply with programme requirements and institutional financial procedures.

7.8 Are researchers expected to acknowledge the MGM Programme in publications and presentations?

Yes. Publications, conference presentations, and other scientific outputs arising from the appointment should acknowledge support from the MGM Programme according to the applicable communication guidelines.

08 MONITORING, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SCIENCE

8.1 Will researchers be evaluated during their appointment?

Yes. Researchers recruited through the MGM Programme are subject to periodic performance evaluations designed to assess their scientific achievements, institutional integration, leadership, and overall contribution to the objectives of the programme.

8.2 When are evaluations carried out?

Researchers are evaluated after the first three years of their appointment, again after five years, and subsequently every five years thereafter, in accordance with programme rules.

8.3 Who performs the evaluations?

Evaluations are conducted through procedures established by the programme and may involve external experts, institutional representatives, and evaluation committees.

8.4 What happens if a researcher receives a positive evaluation?

Positive evaluations may result in salary progression in accordance with the salary scale established by the programme.

8.5 Can a negative evaluation affect contract renewal or continuation?

Yes. Evaluation outcomes may lead to salary progression, maintenance of the current salary level, or, in cases of unsatisfactory performance, termination of the employment contract, according to the procedures established by the programme and applicable legislation.

09 RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRATION

9.1 What is expected from MGM researchers besides conducting research?

Researchers are expected to contribute to the scientific development of their host institution through leadership, mentoring, collaboration, training activities, and participation in institutional initiatives.

9.2 Are researchers expected to establish independent groups and research lines?

Yes. MGM researchers are expected to develop ambitious and internationally competitive research programmes.

9.3 Can researchers participate in institutional governance?

Yes. Subject to institutional regulations, researchers may contribute to committees, advisory boards, and other governance structures.

9.4 Are researchers expected to contribute to strategic institutional objectives?

Yes. Selected researchers are expected to strengthen the international standing and scientific competitiveness of their host institutions.

9.5 Can researchers represent their institution internationally?

Yes. Participation in international networks and representation of the institution in scientific forums are encouraged.

10 RESEARCH FUNDING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Can researchers apply for funding during the programme?

Yes. Researchers are encouraged to actively seek competitive funding from national, European, and international sources.

10.2 Can researchers coordinate large collaborative projects?

Yes. Leadership of major collaborative initiatives is fully compatible with the objectives of the programme.

10.3 Can researchers participate in multiple funded projects simultaneously?

Yes, provided that institutional and funding regulations are observed.

10.4 Can MGM researchers move to another institution during the programme?

Any change in institutional affiliation would require approval according to programme and contractual regulations.

10.5 Can researchers retain affiliations with other institutions?

Secondary affiliations may be possible where compatible with programme rules and institutional policies.

11 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

11.1 Who owns the intellectual property generated by MGM researchers?

Intellectual property rights are shared by the Madrimasd Foundation and the host institution and governed by applicable national legislation.

11.2 Can researchers file patents arising from their research?

Yes. Researchers are encouraged to protect valuable intellectual property where appropriate.

11.3 Who manages patent applications and licenses?

Patent management is conducted through Madrimasd Foundation and the host institution's innovation or technology-transfer office.

11.4 Can researchers establish spin-off companies?

Yes. The programme supports innovation and entrepreneurship activities consistent with institutional policies.

11.5 Can researchers collaborate with industry in technology-transfer activities?

Yes. Industry collaborations are encouraged where scientifically and strategically appropriate.

11.6 How are revenues from intellectual property managed?

Revenue-sharing arrangements are determined by Madrimasd Foundation and the host institution using applicable regulations.

11.7 Can researchers receive income from patents and intellectual property?

Yes. Researchers may be entitled to receive income derived from patents, licensing agreements and other intellectual property rights generated through their research activities, in accordance with the policies of the host institution and applicable regulations.