



UT System – CONACYT Call for 2018-2019 Proposals
Postdoctoral Research Fellowships
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: March 16, 2018

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. In November 2016, ConTex launched its first call for proposals for Postdoctoral Fellows, and in July 2017, ConTex announced the first cohort of ConTex Postdoctoral Fellows.

Objective and Scope

We are pleased to announce a call for proposals for postdoctoral fellows at UT System or at Mexican institutions of higher education or research for the 2018-2019 academic year. The objective of the Postdoctoral Fellowship Program is to increase scholarly exchange and collaboration by supporting Mexican postdoctoral scholars at UT System institutions and UT System postdoctoral scholars at Mexican institutions. This call is open to first-time and continuing ConTex Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants.

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 – automation and robotics, biotechnology, genetics, advanced materials, nanomaterials and nanotechnology, information technology, value added engineering, 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; preventive medicine and health care; bioengineering; chronic diseases and conditions

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

Eligibility and Requirements

- Candidates must have graduated from a Ph.D. program between March 16, 2013 and March 16, 2018 (no more than 5 years' experience).
- Applicants who have received previous CONACYT funding must have fulfilled all obligations regarding their previous fellowships.
- Candidates must have a letter of commitment from the host institution faculty member who will receive the scholar, acknowledging all conditions of the award.
- Full-time, in-person commitment at host institution.
- Postdoctoral fellows may begin their residencies no later than January 1, 2019, though most postdoctoral stays will begin on or around September 1, 2018.
- 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 up to \$55,000 USD (salary of \$47,475 and institutional allowance of \$7,525 to cover the cost of health insurance and help support other costs related to the appointment). Fellows are responsible for paying all taxes in accordance with state and federal guidelines. Fellows must make host institution aware that the host faculty member or department will be responsible for fringe benefits other than health insurance as well as any other campus based required fees.
- 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 timeframe and final narrative report of activities and publications 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://context.utsystem.edu> by March 16, 2018.

The following items are required as part of the proposal packet submitted through the ConTex online platform:

1. Basic Information page – form to be filled online:

Name of applicant (as it appears on his/her official ID)
Email address
Current physical address
Date of graduation from doctoral program

Institution of graduate degree

Host institution for postdoctoral fellowship application

Host department, center or institute for postdoctoral application

Host faculty member for postdoctoral fellowship application

Email address of host faculty member

Title of proposed project

For Mexican applicants: status with regard to CONACYT fellowships and obligations:

Liberado/no Liberado

Connection with ConTex Collaborative Research Project? Yes/No

2. The following documents must be included in one, single proposal document (PDF), in the order indicated below. Applications that exceed the limits given below will not be evaluated beyond that limit.

a) Title of Proposed Project

b) Abstract in English (not to exceed 400 words)

c) 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.

d) 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)**.

e) 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)**.

f) Project plan (not to exceed three pages, font size 11 Times New Roman or equivalent font, single space).* Provide a summary in English, describing the proposed research and specific goals and objectives for 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

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

- Methodology, relevant literature and any disciplinary, interdisciplinary and international collaborative approaches
 - Explanation of intended impact for Mexico and Texas
- g) **Timeline (not to exceed one page)** detail research and work to be undertaken during the course of the one-year postdoctoral stay. The timeline should clearly specify where and when academic and research-related activities will take place.
- h) **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. It must acknowledge the understanding that the department, laboratory, research center, or institute is responsible for fringe benefits other than health insurance as well as any applicable campus-based international processing fees.
- i) **Certification of completion of Ph.D. degree.** Applicant must have earned his/her Ph.D. at the time of submission. Final dissertation certificate must be submitted.
- j) **For Mexican applicants: certification of good standing with CONACYT** (carta de liberación, if applicable)

3. Supporting letters that must be submitted separately:

Two letters of reference in English or Spanish addressing the applicant's research accomplishments and ability to undertake a postdoctoral research program. One letter must 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 March 16, 2018. Applicants must provide this information to those individuals who will be issuing the letters.

Review and Evaluation Process

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

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

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

2. Evaluation Committee Assessment - Applications that pass the administrative review are then evaluated based on scientific merit, relevance, level of impact that participating in research project or training program will have in advancing applicant's academic/professional development, including:
- Qualifications of the applicant
 - Clarity, quality, and feasibility of the proposed work during the fellowship period
 - Potential that proposed work solidifies future bilateral research ties and networks and leads to development of research programs and resources in UT System or Mexican institution
 - 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

Allocation of resources

ConTex will provide resources to the UT System and Mexican institutions so that they can administer the salary payments and health insurance coverage in accordance with the policies of each campus. Insurance enrollment is the responsibility of the beneficiary.

General Considerations

- Incomplete applications that do not meet the requirements or that have been sent to ConTex outside of the online application system, will not be taken into consideration for the evaluation process.
- The support granted under this call will not under any circumstances signify an 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 legal requirements derived from the Ley de Ciencia y Tecnología and other applicable statutes or regulations. Awards will be administered by ConTex in accordance with UT System policies and procedures and in observance of CONACYT's institutional requirements.

The presentation of applications under the terms of this call implies the acceptance of the established conditions and regulations issued by CONACYT, which may be applicable to this program.

Deadline for receipt of applications

To be considered, proposals must be submitted through the ConTex online platform no later than **March 16, 2018**.

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

Timeline

Opening of call for proposals	Monday, October 16, 2017
Deadline for proposal submission	Friday, March 16, 2018
Administrative review	Last 2 weeks of March 2018
Academic evaluation assessment	Between April – May 2018
Communication of results	After 1, June 2018
Project formalization	After 15, June 2018
Funds available for disbursement	Wednesday, August 1, 2018

For additional information contact:

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