ICGEB International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology

ICGEB Research Grants

Frequently Asked Questions

Eligible Countries

Any Institute/University/Research Centre (no private company, unless allowed under specific calls) in a Member State (with the exception of Italy) is eligible to apply providing that the application is endorsed by the relevant Liaison Officer. Signatory Country are not eligible to apply.

NOTE: Other Countries, not ICGEB Member States, may be eligible for special programmes.

Principal investigator

Which requirements should have the Principal Investigator?
The Principal Investigator is the lead scientist for a particular well-defined research project. He/she is usually the person who has conceived the investigation and the person who takes direct responsibility for completion of a funded project, directing the research and reporting directly to the funding agency. He must be an employee of the Institute requesting the funding (PhD or post-doc students are not allowed to apply).
Exceptions may apply under special programmes. Please check carefully the requirements for each call in the dedicated guidelines.

Is there an age limit for the Principal Investigator?
No age limit is set for the Principal Investigator for standard Research Grant applications. Applicants for Early Career Return Grants should be no more than 40 years of age at the time of the application.
Exceptions may apply under special programmes. Please check carefully the requirements for each call in the dedicated guidelines.

What is the Early Career Return Grant?
This is a special category of grants intended to fund young researchers with an outstanding track record, who have spent a minimum of 2 consecutive years abroad and have recently returned to an ICGEB Member State to establish their own independent laboratories. Applicants for Early Career Return Grants should have taken up, or be about to take up, a position as an Independent Investigator in an ICGEB Member State (except Italy) and must have returned to an ICGEB Member State (except Italy) no more than 2 years before the application.

Is there a special application form for the Early Career Return Grant proposals?
No, the submission procedure and guidelines for the standard research grants apply. However, Principal Investigators applying for an Early Career Return Grant must indicate ‘Early Career Return Grant’ from the drop-down menu ‘Type of grant’ under Section 2 ‘Type’ of the online form.

How many Principal Investigators can be indicated in the application? Is it possible to indicate a co-Principal Investigator?
Only one Principal Investigator must be indicated: he/she will be the scientist responsible for the coordination of the research project and submission of the required documents. In case of award, funds will be awarded to his/her Institution. A co-Principal Investigator can be indicated in the section “Feasibility”.
Applications from two (or more) research groups can be sent with the proviso that each group submit an individual application requesting funds for his/her lab only. Each application, endorsed by the relevant Liaison Officer, will be evaluated and considered for an award separately.

Application process

How should I submit my application?
The first essential step is to create an account in the ICGEB Service Gateway (ISG) (https://isg.icgeb.org/auth/login). The Principal Investigators must then submit their applications online via ISG as indicated in the dedicated CRP webpage (https://www.icgeb.org/grants).

The platform for submission is structured so that you can save your application anytime you wish before sending the full proposal. You can therefore prepare your application during several days, you do not need to connect to the portal and complete the submission all in one go.

The application process is divided in 9 steps, each step requires you to enter some mandatory data. Once you filled all the required data press the **Next/Save** button to proceed. You can return to the previous step by clicking the **Back** button.

The relevant guidelines can be downloaded from the website.

Do I need to provide a copy of my papers together with my application?
No, only a list of the peer reviewed research papers, books and patents, highlighting those directly relevant to the application is to be provided. Please refer to the Publication field under the PI Section of the form.

Which are the attachments requested for the application?
The attachments requested are the following:

- Confirmation by the Institute
- Ethical approval (if applicable)
- Resubmission (if applicable)
- Letter of collaboration (if applicable)

Who is the Legal Representative?
He/she is an official of the Institution requesting funds and fully empowered to enter into contracting arrangements on behalf of the Institution. Please verify with your Administration who this person is as you will need to provide his/her contact details.

Do I need to have obtained the ethical approval (if one is foreseen for my research project) before applying?
We only need you to indicate whether your research will require ethical approval (this will depend on your national rules). You do not need to have a prior approval by the Ethical Committee in order to apply, it is sufficient to indicate whether this authorization would be

needed and provide some details (time to obtain this document, etc.). Documentation not in English is accepted.

When my proposal is to be considered a resubmission?
Resubmission refers to applications submitted in the past to ICGEB, duly endorsed by the Liaison Officer, admitted to selection but not successful. A pdf file explaining the changes to the original proposal will need to be uploaded in the online form. Please note that a proposal can only be re-submitted once.

Is there a template/format for the letters of collaboration?
All proposals must have international collaboration where the role of the collaborating laboratory is clearly defined and well-integrated into the whole project. This should not be a simple exchange of reagents or expertise but reflect a full collaborative commitment to the implementation of the project. The letters of collaboration must be sent on official headed paper and signed by the collaborators. There is not a specific format to be used, but full details have to be provided on the role of each collaborator and his/her contribution in the research project. The letters do not require the signatures/approval of the collaborators' home institutions.

Where should I upload the attachments?
The attachments must be uploaded at the end of the online application. This operation will be possible only after completing all the fields/sections. You will have to confirm your submission by clicking the green button 'Data completed' and you will be automatically directed to the 'Attachment' section to upload all the necessary documents. Please note that the system does not foresee the possibility of attaching other documents other than those mandatory.

Are there word/character limits for the application?
The maximum number of words to be used for the different sections of the CRP online proposals are the following: Summary: 150 words; Abstract: 500 words; Introduction: 1000 words + 3 images; Research Project: 4,000 words; Time schedule: 250 words; Potential for training of young scientists & collaborations: 300 words; Facilities available in the Investigating Team's laboratory: 400 words; Feasibility: 700 words.

Where should I add the references to my proposal?
References/citations can be listed in the relevant field under section 5 – Project 'Bibliographic references' with no character limits.

What should I do if a make a mistake in the application or upload the wrong attachments?
If you have already submitted your application and/or attached all the documents, you need to contact our IT Unit at: support@icgeb.org.
If you have not submitted your application, you can revise your proposal anytime.

I would like to add a comment regarding my proposal, but I have already submitted my application. Would this be possible?
An extra section "Comments" for the applicant's additional comments to the original proposal is available after the submission. Please refer to the section "My CRP Proposals". You can add any valuable information (max. 300 words) not already indicated in the application.

I have submitted an application. When may I expect to have feedback from ICGEB?
Each selection is unique so a precise date for the results cannot be indicated. As a general reference only, results are usually available towards the end of the year. All applicants

(successful and unsuccessful) are notified by e-mail about the Committee decision, in time for the funded projects to start at the beginning of the following year.

Please note that you can verify at any time the status of your application directly in the ICGEB Service Gateway (section “My CRP proposals”).

When is the next deadline for grant applications?
The deadline for online submission of applications that will be received both by ICGEB and Liaison Officers is set at 30 April of each year (23:59 CET).

When am I expected to receive confirmation from ICGEB that my application has been received?
As soon as you complete your online application and confirm the submission, you will receive an automatic notification confirming that your proposal has been received. This automatic message confirms only that your submission has been successful, not that your application has been endorsed and/or admitted to the selection. ICGEB will contact the endorsed applicants, providing them with a reference number for their proposal, within one month of the deadline of 31 May. The current status of your application (endorsed/ not endorsed) will also be displayed on the portal (section My CRP proposals).

Endorsement and Liaison Officer

Principal Investigators must **submit** their full applications **online** via the ICGEB Service Gateway. The proposals will be visible to all Liaison Officers for them to evaluate the applications and select those to be endorsed for the annual call. There is no need to forward your proposal to the Liaison Officer. Once you complete and submit your application, he/she will receive an automatic message with a link to access your proposal for assessment and endorsement.

Only the ICGEB Liaison Officers appointed for the Principal Investigator’s country are responsible for the national selection of applications and for the subsequent endorsement of the proposals to be considered by ICGEB for the current call. All full proposals will be accessed by the Liaison Officer of the applicant’s country for the internal selection and endorsement procedures. Liaison Officers will communicate his/her endorsements to ICGEB and to the applicant by the deadline (31 May).

Financial support

Which costs can be funded by the grant?
Eligible costs are divided in five major budget categories: Equipment, Consumables, Training, Travel and Literature. For specific information and restrictions on each category please refer to the instructions contained in the document CRP guidelines available for download on the website.
Please note that the duration of the project and, consequently, the yearly financial contribution are outlined in the requirements of each specific call.

Which costs are not covered by the grant?
In general, the following costs are not funded by the ICGEB grant:

- cost of maintenance, repair, running or insurance of existing equipment and machinery belonging to the Institution;
- depreciation of property, plant or equipment regardless if belonging to the Institution or purchased with the ICGEB funds;
- cost of construction of new buildings or alterations and modifications of existing buildings and premises;
- normal administrative and overhead expenses of the Institution;
- bank charges;

- purchase of major equipment (i.e., equipment costing more than Euro 10,000), office furniture or fittings, computer hardware and software. Kindly note that for computer hardware/software a waiver may be requested for projects with a strong computational component. A full justification must be provided for each item;
- secretarial expenses;
- salary support of Principal Investigator;
- any other expenses not covered in the five budget categories: Equipment, Consumables, Training, Travel and Literature.

Please also refer to the instructions contained in the document CRP guidelines available for download on the website (www.icgeb.org/grants).

Programme priorities

Which projects are funded by ICGEB? Which are the priorities of the CRP-ICGEB Research Grants Programme? Which areas of research are funded? Which new collaborations have been established? Are ICGEB PIs directly involved?

Proposals submitted to ICGEB should meet the following criteria:

- address specific questions within Life Sciences
- be concise
- present a clear hypothesis
- be realistic
- proposing goals that can be achieved within the proposed time/propose original, novel studies.

Applications addressing original scientific problems of particular relevance for the host country or focusing on one or more research areas of particular interest/relevance for their country are positively considered during the evaluation process. Particular value is also given to the promotion of training of young scientists (at any level). Particular attention will be given to projects addressing issues of interest for specific geographic regions and presented by groups collaborating across more than one country. Support is available for research projects in many fields of basic life sciences, human and animal healthcare, industrial biotechnology, agricultural biotechnology, bioenergy.

Please note that priorities and areas of research may vary according to specific requirements of special programmes. Please check carefully the requirements for each call in the dedicated guidelines.

Collaborations

Do I need to collaborate with any of the ICGEB group?
Collaboration with any of the ICGEB groups (in Trieste, New Delhi or Cape Town) is not a mandatory requirement for the grants but is considered an additional asset.

Is collaboration with other research groups an essential requirement for the application?
International collaboration is an essential feature of all ICGEB grants and must be fully integrated into the project.
All proposal must have international collaboration where the role of the collaborating laboratory is clearly defined and well-integrated into the whole project. This should not be a simple exchange of reagents or expertise but reflect a full collaborative commitment to the implementation of the project.

Full details have to be provided on the role of each collaborator and his/her contribution in the research project, detailing why this collaboration is relevant for the success of the project.

A letter confirming the collaboration is to be provided.

Is it possible to submit an application from two research groups in different countries? Who should endorse the application?
Applications from two (or more) research groups can be sent with the proviso that each group submit an individual application requesting funds for his/her lab only. Each application, endorsed by the relevant Liaison Officer, will be evaluated and considered for an award separately.

Where do I provide details on the foreseen collaborations? Is there a specific section?
Details on the collaboration have to be indicated under the section 5 “Project” in the online application form and in the sections “Potential for training of young scientists & collaborations” and “Feasibility”.
A letter confirming the collaboration is to be uploaded in the “CRP attachments” section at the end of the online form.

Do I have to send a CV for the collaborators?
No, this information is requested for the Principal Investigator only (please refer to section 1 “Principal Investigator” in the online application form). A letter confirming the collaboration is to be uploaded in the “CRP attachments” section at the end of the online application.

Continuation of previous grants/re-submission of failed proposals

I have an on-going ICGEB grant, can I apply for a new grant?
Principal Investigators are not eligible to apply for a new grant (either as a new project or as a continuation of a former awarded project) until the grant previously awarded has been evaluated (i.e., the Final Report) and satisfactorily concluded.
My ICGEB grant is concluded. May I re-apply for a continuation or for a new project?
Yes, you can submit a new application once your project is concluded. However, please note that it has to be endorsed again by the Liaison Officer and be successful at the final review to be funded.

My application was not selected for funding by ICGEB, can I re-apply under future calls?
Yes, the unsuccessful result obtained under one call does not prejudice the eventual re-submission of the same project (or a different one) under future calls of the programme. Please note that the same proposal can only be resubmitted **once,** and the re-submission will also need to be endorsed by the Liaison Officer.
Resubmitted proposals need to be indicated on section 5 of the online application form. Please note that you will be requested to attach a pdf file explaining the changes to the original proposal. This document must be uploaded in the attachment section at the end of the online application form. This will be possible only after completing all the previous sections. You need to confirm your submission by clicking the green button ‘Data completed’ and you will be automatically directed to the ‘Attachment’ section to upload all the necessary documents.