

FAQ' s ABOUT CONEX-Plus FOR APPLICANTS

1. WHAT IS CONEX-Plus?

CONEX-Plus is a training and mobility program funded by UC3M, the European Commission within Marie-Sklodowska Curie COFUND (Grant Agreement N° 801538) and Banco Santander.

It will offer 30 Fellowships, 20 in the first call in July 2019, and 10 in the second call, in December 2019.

The awardees will develop a research project during 3 years, hosted by one of the 27 departments of UC3M, with support of a supervisor and completed with a mandatory secondment in a prestigious non-academic organisation.

2. WHICH ARE THE BASIC STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED TO APPLY?

1. Read the call text and verify if you meet the eligibility criteria and your research field is covered within the RIS3 areas (see question 4).
2. Read carefully the guide for applicants and the templates.
3. Consult the list of potential UC3M Supervisors and get in contact with the one with whom you share research areas.
4. Prepare your project with support of your supervisor after discussing the suitability of your topic. "Part B" template requires specify the proposal, a justify impact, match, shared interest, etc.

5. Also, agree with your supervisor the compulsory secondment plan. Detail, at least, the general lines of the activity, as much specific as possible (for further information, see question 5).

5. Register on the CONEX-Plus online application system and start filling in the application form and uploading the documents. Edit and save as many times as you need.

6. Get and enclose to your proposal the signed letter of commitment from your UC3M supervisor.

7. Double-check that your application forms and attachments are properly filled in, and complete your application submitting it.

IMPORTANT: The application and all the documentation must be completed in **English**. Only one application will be admitted, otherwise, the candidate will be excluded from the process.

Supervisors are allowed to endorse up to 2 candidates for the CONEX-Plus First Call.

3. AM I ELIGIBLE?

It is essential that you personally verify whether you meet the eligibility criteria, otherwise all the effort to prepare the application would be in vain.

These are the summarized basic criteria. However, read thoroughly the specific details in the Call text and the Guidelines for Applicants.

IMPORTANT: The date of reference for all these criteria is the application deadline: **30 September 2019**.

- Must be in possession of a doctoral degree.
- 0-6 years of research experience at the date of the call deadline, measured from the date of the first doctorate was obtained.



- Periods of inactivity in research (unemployment, non-academic job positions, parental leave, sick leave, etc) do not count towards the time of research experience.
- Depending on the chosen modality of fellowship, there are specific requirements for nationality:

Type*	NATIONALITY Requirements	MOBILITY** Requirements	OTHER Requirements
Standard	Any	Not have resided or carried out the main activity in Spain for more than 12 months in the last 3 years.	
Career Restart	Any	Not have resided or carried out the main activity in Spain for more than 3 years in the last 5 years.	Not active in research, career in at least, the last 12 months.
Reintegration	National or long-term resident of an EU member state or Associated Country (MS/AC)***	Not have resided or carried out the main activity in Spain for more than 3 years in the last 5 years.	Must move or have moved directly from a third country no MS/AC to Spain

*You must choose only one type. All the applications will be evaluated jointly.

**Is does not apply if this was a part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention.

***The list of countries is available at the Guide for Applicants.

In addition to all the above criteria, the application must comply some formal requirements (see Call text) <https://www.uc3m.es/investigacion/conex>

4. WHICH RESEARCH TOPICS CAN BE PROPOSED?

The candidates can propose a freely chosen research Project within the strategic research areas identified in the [Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation \(RIS3\) of the Madrid Autonomous Region](#). The application system requires to select one of them, as well as the Department where they intend to develop the project, and the AEI Area (Agencia Estatal de Investigación - Spanish State Research Agency).

Areas RIS3:

- Advanced Materials, Manufacturing Technologies and Space
- Energy, Environment and Transport (including Aeronautics)
- Health and Biotechnology
- Information Technologies and Communications

Social Sciences and Humanities projects can be proposed as long as they are applied to the mentioned RIS3 areas.

5. WHAT DO THE SECONDMENTS MEAN?

They have to be understood as internships, with the aim of complementing and enrich the training from the perspective of a non-academic entity. The secondments, along with the whole CONEX-Plus program, are intended to strengthen the triple "I" dimension of intersectoral, interdisciplinarity and internationalization and training experience of a researcher.

The chosen supervisor will support the applicant in identifying a suitable secondment host organization that fits with the career development of the fellow and the needs of the research project. In any case, the chosen type of activity, entity, etc must be very aligned with the research proposal.

6. SECONDMENTS: WHAT IS MEANT BY ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ORGANISATION?

ACADEMIC ORGANISATION: It is considered any entity that complies with any of the following requirement:

- Public or private higher education establishments awarding academic degrees,
- Public or private non-profit research organisations for whom one of the main objectives is to pursue research.
- International European interest organisation, meaning an international organisation, whose majority of members are Member States or Associated Countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe; as they are defined in Article 2.1 (12) of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation¹. (By way of example, JRCs)

NON-ACADEMIC ORGANISATIONS: include any socio-economic actor not included in the academic sector. A possible non-academic organisation could be a profit institution involved in research or innovation activities such as businesses, SMEs, multi-national companies, as well as NGOs, public sector entities, governmental bodies, etc.

7. WHICH SECONDMENTS ARE ELIGIBLE IN CONEX-PLUS?

It is mandatory to carry out a first *secondment* during 2 months minimum in a non-academic organization.

Apart from the compulsory one, additional and optional *secondments* can be done, of 2 months minimum each, and in this case, they could be in academic organizations.

Other conditions are:

- The total of all the *secondments* cannot exceed 12 months.
- They have to be carried out after the first year of fellowship, from September 2021.
- They must be in EU Member States or Associated States, including Spain (List of eligible countries in ANNEX 2 Applicant's Guide).
- They should not be in the country of origin or where the researcher has resided/worked (in the 3 previous years to the call deadline) It is not advisable and would have to be strongly justified in the proposal "Part B". However, it is possible to do them in Spain.

When applying, you can choose one of these 3 options:

1) Choose one of the 14 partner organisations, from the non-academic ones (the list is available on the CONEX-Plus website). Upload the letter of commitment of the entity. The template is available on the CONEX-Plus website.

2) Propose a non-academic entity of renowned prestige that the supervisor or candidate considers

¹ (Regulation No 1290/2013 [Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation No 1290/2013](#))

appropriate in regard to its potential added value to the project.

3) Do not decide on the specific entity at this moment. If your candidacy is finally selected, the institution, with the help of the entrepreneurship service will help to choose one.

In any case, it is mandatory to specify in detail the type, non-academic or academic sector, purpose and objectives to be achieved and its alignment with the research proposal, planned activities, duration (minimum 2 months), when it is planned, etc. They are an integral part of the proposal, there is a specific section in the online application and in the template of part B for its justification, and therefore, will be evaluated by the panel of experts.

The fellow will have a co-supervisor in the secondment's organization.

8. SECONDMENTS: WHO COVERS THE COSTS?

The fellowship salary continues during the secondment period.

When secondments involve mobility, additional financial support will be given subject to the location where it will be undertaken and the CONEX-Plus programme regulations, specifically set for the management of the secondment fund.

9. AFTER MY APPLICATION, HOW IS THE EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS DONE?

Fase 1- Eligibility check, based on the criteria (see question 3). Applications considered eligible will continue to the following stage. Ineligible applicants will have 10 working days to correct the conditions

Fase 2- Evaluation:

Step 1- Scientific and technical peer-review of the proposals, by the Spanish State Research Agency (AEI).

Maximum 70 points, quality threshold of 50 points

A ranked list will be prepared, and a maximum of 60 candidates will be invited to the second evaluation step.

Step 2- Evaluation of Impact, and Motivation and Match, through a videoconference interview in English, conducted by an interview panel.

Maximum 30 points.

A final ranked list will be prepared, and the top 20 candidacies will be proposed for funding, plus 10 additional on waiting list.

Fase 3- Ethics review, done by the UC3M ethical Committee. No scoring.

Fase 4- Publication of the list of awardees. Based on the final scores and the availability of places in the Departments (see question 8).

Given the limit of vacancies per Department, some candidates with high scores or within the first 20 ranking positions could not finally get a fellowship.

These limits apply to the 30 total CONEX-Plus places. That is to say, if the limit of a Department is covered in the first call (20 places), it could not have the chance to incorporate fellows in the second call (10 places).

10. HOW MANY CONEX-Plus FELLOWS CAN HOST EACH UC3M DEPARTMENT?

- **4 maximum:** Business Administration, Economics, Computer Science and

Engineering, and Journalism and Audiovisual Communication.

- **3 maximum:** Mechanical Engineering, Social Sciences, Electronic Technology, Bioengineering and Aerospace Engineering, Mathematics, Materials Science and Engineering and Chemical Engineering, Signal Theory and Communications, Thermal and Fluids Engineering, Statistics, Telematic Engineering, Public State Law, and Private Law.
- **2 maximum:** Physics, Systems Engineering and Automation, International Law, Ecclesiastical Law and Philosophy of Law, Humanities: Philosophy, Language and Literature Theory, Library and Information Science, Continuum Mechanics and Structural Analysis, Humanities: History, Geography and Art, Criminal Law, Procedural Law and History Law, and Electrical Engineering.
- **1 maximum:** Private Social and International Law, and Social Analysis.

11. WHEN WILL THE SELECTION AND INCORPORATION OF THE FELLOWS TAKE PLACE?

The tentative date for the publication of the list of awardees is April 2020.

Previously, the lists of the score's rankings will be published, and it will be possible to check whether a candidate is passing or not the respective phases of evaluation.

The incorporation of the fellows must be during September 2020.

12. WHICH COMMITMENTS UNDERTAKES THE ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR DURING THE 3 YEARS OF FELLOWSHIP?

- Supervisors must support the professional development of the fellow: the supervisors will monitor the progress the fellow makes towards achieving the scientific objectives as well as the training objectives of his/her project.
- They will ensure that each fellow has access to the infrastructure and facilities needed and that the training program is adapted to the fellow's needs.
- They will support the fellow in the integration in the research groups/research departments, UC3M/organization and the wider research community.
- Supervisors will integrate the fellows in knowledge transfer activities in their research groups.
- All fellows will prepare, together with their supervisor, a CDP-Career Development Plan which will contain a scientific part (scientific objectives and how to reach these objectives) and a career development part (career and training objectives).
- All fellows will meet regularly with their academic supervisor, in principle twice a month, to ensure permanent progress of the fellows. During these meetings, progress towards the scientific and the training objectives as outlined in the CDP will be discussed.
- The co-supervisor will join the supervision meetings just prior, during and just after the secondments to ensure that all parties work towards the same objectives.
- All supervisors will dedicate ~ 5% of their time to supervision of each fellow.

13. WHICH COMMITMENTS ACQUIRES THE FELLOW?



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The incorporation will be full time, with a contract of 3 years of duration, 36 months.

Fellows will have to engage in dissemination and public engagement activities. All fellows are expected to make at least:

- 3 scientific publications in a high-impact, peer-reviewed scientific journal (or books and book chapters edited by high-level international editors for the law and humanities areas).
- one poster presentation and at least one oral presentation during an international conference.
- one presentation to a non-academic audience.
- a poster and present it at the final CONEX-Plus poster session

**Write your questions to: conex@uc3m.es or
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