CHAIRS OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME

2011 Edition

Call for proposals closing date
March 23rd, 2011 at 13h00 (1 p.m.) Paris local time

Call for proposals publication address
http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/CHEX-2011

The call is implemented by Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ) and Paris-Sud 11 (UPS) universities, which are mandated by the ANR to take care of the implementation of the evaluation and the management of the funding files.
IMPORTANT DATES

CLOSING OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Research proposals must be submitted on the ANR submission web site – see address in link on page 1 – before the call for proposals closing deadline:

ON MARCH 23rd, 2011 AT 13H00 (1 P.M.) (PARIS TIME)

SIGNED AND SCANNED FORM
The administrative and financial document (the "submission document") is generated from the ANR submission site after closure of the call for proposals. It must be signed by the project applicant, the head of the host laboratory as well as by an authorized representative from the host research organisation. Once scanned in PDF format, the applicant must upload it to the submission web site no later than:

March 31st, 2011 at 13h00 (1 p.m.) (Paris time)
(see § 5 “Submission conditions”)

CONTACTS

CONTACTS IN THE ANR SUPPORT UNIT
Technical and scientific questions
Prof Brigitte DEBUIRE
Tel: +33 1 45 59 36 90
E-mail: brigitte.debuire@pbr.aphp.fr

Administrative and financial questions
Ms Monique COHEN
Tel: +33 1 39 25 79 70
E-mail: exc2011@uvsq.fr

ANR PROGRAMME DIRECTOR
Prof Joseph JEANFILS
Tel: +33 1 73 54 81 48
E-mail: joseph.jeanfils@agencerecherche.fr

It is important to read carefully the present document in its entirety, and the regulations concerning the conditions of allocation of ANR funding (http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/documents/uploaded/2007/reglement-modalites-attribution-aide.pdf) before submitting a research project proposal.
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1. CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

1.1. CONTEXT
The hosting of high-level foreign researchers and professors in French research laboratories plays a crucial role in enhancing the attractiveness of France in the international context. The top candidates make their choices according to key factors such as living and working conditions as well as the ready availability of project management resources.

Besides the favorable image resulting from the temporary or permanent hosting of the best international scientists, we can reinforce our potential for innovative research and restructuring in new research directions while taking advantage of the contribution of highly-skilled and experienced experts.

1.2. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES
The Chairs of Excellence Programme aims to attract the best researchers and professors, either French or foreign, in France by providing with the support of the host organisations, substantial means to set up a team and undertake an ambitious research project with a visible impact. The programme operates through a call for proposals open to all research disciplines. The 2011 edition of the programme proposes three types of chairs.

1.3. CALL OBJECTIVES
The 2011 edition of the programme proposes three types of chairs.

Long-term Junior Chairs of Excellence
This type of Chair concerns internationally recognized researchers who defended their PhD thesis 5 to 12 years ago, when this call for proposals closes. The applicants are hired on temporary or permanent appointments during the project lifetime (36 to 48 months) by a research organisation (EPST, EPIC, University, etc.). A part of the financial support allocated by this programme can be used to provide equipment and laboratory facilities to the successful candidates.

Long-term Senior Chairs of Excellence
This type of Chair concerns internationally recognized researchers who defended their thesis at least 10 years ago. The applicants are hired on temporary or permanent appointments during the project lifetime (36 to 48 months) by a research organisation (EPST, EPIC, University, etc.). A part of the financial support allocated by this programme can be used to provide equipment and laboratory facilities to the successful candidates.

Short-term Senior Chairs of Excellence

1 See definitions relative to structures (§ 5.4)
2 See definitions relative to structures (§ 5.4)
The Short-term Senior Chairs aim to attract very high-level researchers – either foreigners or French expatriates – to join French teams striving towards excellence in order to enable the latter to acquire as quickly as possible an international stature in new and highly competitive scientific fields, to the mutual benefit of both parties. The applicants are hired on a fixed-term contract basis between 18 and 24 months in French host organisations. The financial support allocated for the short-term Senior Chairs include the applicants’ salary.

Projects can be elaborated in partnership with an enterprise.

The means provided by the Chairs of Excellence programme may add to those provided by the host organisation in France to the applicants for the implementation of their project, or by other sources of support including the support of private enterprises.

The hosting of candidates is allowed in a French research organisation only, which excludes the associated international laboratories of French research organisations and higher education and research institutions, and French institutions established abroad.

Candidates can be foreign or French, and must have spent at least four years of their research time abroad. Nevertheless, the candidates must have the intention of temporarily or permanently settling in France, by March 31, 2012 at the latest.

Concerning the long-term Junior and Senior Chairs of Excellence, the host organisation must commit to receiving the candidate and must specify the type of statutory appointment\(^3\) that it provides to the candidate for this purpose. In the case of a temporary appointment, it must at least cover the project duration.

For the short-term Senior Chairs of excellence, the host organisation must commit to hiring the successful candidate on a contract basis for a period at least equal to the project duration.

In case a candidate is not settled in France by March 31, 2012 at the latest, the ANR reserves the right to withdraw the allocated funding from the candidate.

### 1.4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FUNDING

Chairs will be awarded according to the quality of the applications.

- **Junior Chairs of Excellence:** for the 2011 edition, the maximum grant per chair will amount to 500,000 €, half of which will be available the first year. These funds may be used over the

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\(^3\) Beneficiaries of the junior or senior Chairs of Excellence are expected to be recruited, temporarily or permanently, according to the following statutory positions: Scientist, Associate Professor, Senior Scientist or Professor. (French equivalences: chargé de recherche, maître de conférences, directeur de recherche ou professeur).
project lifetime (36 or 48 months) for equipment purchases, operating costs and costs related to personnel hired on a fix-termed contract basis.

- Long-term Senior Chairs of Excellence: for the 2011 edition, the maximum grant per chair will amount to 1,000,000 €, half of which will be available the first year. These funds may be used over the project lifetime (36 or 48 months) for equipment purchases, operating costs and costs related to personnel hired on a fix-termed contract basis.

- Short-term Senior Chairs of Excellence: for 2011 edition, the maximum grant per chair will amount to 1,000,000 € (candidate’s salary included), 70% of which will be available the first year. These funds may be used over the project lifetime (18 or 24 months) for equipment purchases, operating costs and costs related to personnel hired on a fix-termed contract basis.

If during the funding period of the project, a short-term senior chair of Excellence successful applicant gets a permanent position in a public research organisation or in a higher education institution, the funding allocated to the project will be stopped. However, up to 30% of the total budget, the already spent funds can be used for the recruitment of temporary personnel.

If, during the funding period of the project, a successful applicant gets a permanent position in an enterprise or in R&D centre, the totality of funds allocated to the project will be lost.

A moderate part of the funding may be allocated to accompanying measures for the successful applicant (settlement and stay in France). Funded projects may benefit from additional funding provided by research organisations and/or by local authorities or enterprises.
2. EXAMINATION OF PROPOSALS

The selection procedure involves the following steps:

- Examination of the acceptability of the proposals by the ANR and its support unit in accordance with the criteria stipulated in § 3.1.
- Examination of the eligibility of the project proposals by the evaluation panel in accordance with the criteria stipulated in § 3.2.
- Peer reviewers (external experts) are appointed by the evaluation panel.
- Peer reviewers issue their assessments based on the evaluation criteria specified in § 3.3.
- The evaluation panel reviews and ranks research proposals upon reception of the peer reviewers’ assessments, and drafts a scientific evaluation report.
- Examination of the project proposals by the steering committee, which proposes a list of projects to be proposed for funding by the ANR.
- Publication of the list of projects selected by the ANR (main list and possibly reserve list) on the ANR web site dedicated to the call for proposals.
- Sending the coordinators of non-selected projects a consolidated panel evaluation report.
- Finalising of the scientific, financial and administrative files for the selected projects.
- Publication of the list of projects selected for funding on the ANR web site dedicated to the call for proposals.
First payments to the beneficiaries in accordance with the rules set in the regulations pertaining to the conditions of allocation of ANR funding (see link on ANR web site given on page 2) and with the specific provisions of this programme.

The respective roles of the principal actors of the selection procedure are as follows:

- The peer reviewers (external experts) designated by the evaluation panel issue a written assessment for all proposed projects. Each project is reviewed by at least two experts. The experts are kept anonymous by the ANR.
- The evaluation panel comprising members of the research communities concerned, whether French or foreign, whose fields of expertise correspond to the requirements of the call and from the public or private sectors. The evaluation panel is mandated to evaluate the projects on the basis of the external experts’ assessments, and to rank them into three categories: A (priority), B (non-priority), and C (rejected).
- The role of the steering committee, which comprises qualified prominent figures and institutional representatives, is to propose a list of projects to be funded by the ANR in accordance with the work of the evaluation panel.

The persons involved in project selection undertake to comply with the provisions of the ANR’s code of ethics, and in particular the rules pertaining to the confidentiality and conflict of interest. The ANR code of ethics is available on the ANR web site\(^4\).

The operational and organisational procedures that apply to evaluation panels and steering committees are stated in documents available on the ANR web site\(^5\).

Once the list of selected projects has been published, the compositions of the evaluation panels are available on the ANR web site\(^5\).

### 2.1. Acceptability criteria

**IMPORTANT**

Project proposals that do not meet the acceptability criteria will not be submitted to the evaluation panel and will not be granted ANR funding under any circumstances.

The electronic and scanned submission file (see content in § 5.1) must be submitted **duly completed within the deadline**, and produced **in the format requested** (submission document and additional administrative form).

The scientific document produced in the format provided **must not exceed 40 pages**, appendices excluded.

The project applicant must not be a member of the evaluation panel or the programme steering committee.

The duration of the project must be between 18 and 24 months for the short term senior chairs, and between 36 and 48 months for the long term junior and senior chairs.


\(^5\) [http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/Comites](http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/Comites)
The host organisation must be located in France. The place where research is undertaken (cf. Submission Document) must also be located in France.

Only one partner is allowed in the framework of this programme, i.e. the project applicant.

The project applicant must not be seconded by a French research organisation. (See French specific status as follows: détachement, de mise en disponibilité ou de mise à disposition).

The project applicant must not work in France for more than one year, starting March 23, 2011.

The project applicant must spend 100% of his/her research time to the project. Part of his/her time can be spent on student training and on disseminating knowledge related to the project.

The applicant for a junior chair must not apply for the 2011 edition of the Post-doctoral Return programme. The successful applicants of a junior chair cannot combine the ANR funding within the Chairs of Excellence Programme and a ERC Starting grant, or the same type of grant ((ATIP (CNRS), Avenir (INSERM), etc.).

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### 2.2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

#### IMPORTANT

Project proposals that do not meet the eligibility criteria after examination by the evaluation panel will not be granted ANR funding under any circumstances.

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The project must fit the scope of the call, as described in §1.

**Type of research:** this call for proposals is open to:

- Fundamental research projects,
- Industrial research projects,
- Experimental development projects.

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### 2.3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### IMPORTANT

The submission files, appendices excluded, must contain all the information necessary for the evaluation. Only project proposals that satisfy the acceptability and eligibility criteria will be evaluated according to the criteria specified below.

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1) **Scientific and technical quality**

- scientific excellence in terms of progress of knowledge with respect to the state of the art,
- innovative character in terms of technological innovation or prospects of innovation with respect to the existing situation,

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6 See definition of categories of research projects annexed to this document
- overcoming technological barriers,
- integration of the different disciplinary fields.

2) **Methodology, quality of project construction and coordination**
- positioning with respect to the state of the art or technological innovation,
- scientific and technical feasibility of the project, choice of methods,
- structuring of the project, rigour in presenting the final results (deliverables), identification of milestones,
- quality of the management plan (experience, project financial and legal management), involvement of the coordinator,
- Strategy for the exploitation of the potential project results.

3) **Overall impact of the project**
- Potential for utilization or integration of the project results by the scientific or industrial community or society, and impact of the project in terms of knowledge acquisition,
- If relevant, industrial or technological application prospects and economic and commercial potential, business plan, integration in the industrial activity.
- If relevant, benefit for society, public health, etc.
- When appropriate, the response to questions of environmental impact.

4) **Quality of the consortium, for projects involving a company**
- level of scientific excellence or expertise of the teams,
- appropriateness of the partnership for the scientific and technical objectives,
- complementarity of the partnership,
- openness to new players,
- active role of the private partners in the project.

5) ** Appropriateness of project resources / Project feasibility**
- schedule feasibility,
- appropriateness of the project management means implemented,
- appropriateness and justification of the requested funding,
- appropriateness of the coordination costs,
- justification of the personnel resources,
- justification of the temporary personnel resources (trainees, PhD students, post-doctoral students),
- proper estimate of the sum for investments and equipment purchases,
- proper estimate of the other financial items (missions, sub-contracting, consumables, etc.).

**2.4. IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Any divergence from these recommendations is not necessary penalizing but must be clearly explained.
The evaluation panel will judge the appropriateness of the divergence from the recommendations.

**RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING PERSONNEL INVOLVEMENT**
• The project proposals shall ensure a balance between permanent personnel and temporary personnel, as indicated in §4.

RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE PROJECT DURATION
• The project duration must be between 36 and 48 months for the Long-term Junior and Senior Chairs of Excellence and between 18 and 24 months for the Short-term Senior Chairs.

RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE HOSTING OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES
• The host organisation is responsible for providing a personalized reception. A part of the funding allocated may be used for this purpose.
3. **GENERAL FUNDING PROVISIONS**

### 3.1. **ANR FUNDING**

**TYPE OF FUNDING**

The funds allocated by the ANR to each successful applicant will be provided to the host organisation as a non-refundable grant in accordance with the provisions of the "Regulations relative to conditions of allocating ANR funds", which can be consulted on the ANR web site.

ANR funding is limited to host organisations residing in France, which excludes the associated international laboratories of French research organisations and higher education and research institutions, and French institutions established abroad.

**RECRUITING PhD SCHOLARSHIPS**

The ANR can finance doctoral research students for this programme. The financing of a doctoral research student by the ANR does not mean that the Doctoral School has approved the work. Doctoral research students are counted as temporary personnel and hence the below mentioned "conditions for financing temporary personnel" apply. Furthermore the ANR will only finance them for the project duration.

**CONDITIONS FOR FINANCING TEMPORARY PERSONNEL**

Temporary personnel (trainees, fixed-term contract employees, temporary employees, etc.) may be assigned to projects in this programme.

The ANR financing of temporary personnel cannot exceed the project duration.

**SALARY OF SHORT TERM SENIOR CHAIRS**

For this type of chair, the salary of the candidate is included in the ANR funding.

### 3.2. **OTHER PROVISIONS**

The funding of a project by the ANR does not relieve the project partners of their obligations concerning the regulations and code of ethics applicable to their area of activity.

The project applicant undertakes to keep the ANR and its support unit informed of any change likely to modify the content and the schedule of project performance between the time of project submission and publication of the list of selected projects.

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4. Submission Conditions

4.1. Content of the Submission File

The submission file, appendices excluded, must include all the elements necessary for the scientific and technical evaluation of the project. It must be completed before the submission deadline, the date and time of which are indicated on p. 2 of this call for proposals.

**IMPORTANT**

No additional elements will be accepted after the submission deadline, the date and time of which are indicated on p. 2 of this call for proposals.

The submission file comprises two documents that must be entirely filled out:

a) The project “administrative and financial document” (called submission document). It is generated by the submission site after entering the required information on line.

b) The “scientific document” is the scientific and technical description of the project. The document template is available in Word format on the ANR web site on the page dedicated to the call for proposals. Once completed, this document is to be uploaded to the submission site in the "Scientific document" tab. This document must not exceed 40 pages in the proposed format, appendices excluded.

It is recommended to produce the scientific and technical description of the project proposal in English, except in cases where the use of the French language is necessary. For instance: project proposals in social sciences and humanities where the French language may be used in the framework of an international evaluation; project proposals with a strong potential of exploitation (industrial research) which, for specific economic reasons, should not be reviewed by a researcher residing abroad. In the case that the scientific and technical description is drawn up in French, a translation in English may be requested within a deadline compatible with the evaluation process.
4.2. SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

1) SUBMISSION SHALL BE MADE ON LINE ON THE DEDICATED SITE ACCESSIBLE FROM THE ANR WEB SITE AT THE ADDRESS INDICATED ON PAGE 1:
   • before the date indicated on page 1,
   • link available starting from xx/xx/2011 on the call for proposals publication page of the ANR web site.

The project can be modified right up until the call for proposals is closed.

Only the information present on the submission web site at the time of the closure of the call for proposals will be taken into account.

ANY FILE CONTAINING A SCIENTIFIC DOCUMENT AND A POSITIVE FUNDING REQUEST WHEN THE CALL CLOSES WILL BE CONSIDERED SUBMITTED, AND IN THIS CASE AN ELECTRONIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT WILL BE SENT TO THE COORDINATOR.

2) TRANSMISSION OF A SCAN (in PDF format) of the administrative and financial document (called submission document).
   This document is generated by the submission site after entering the required information on line.
   This document is to be downloaded from the submission site, printed, signed by all the partners, then scanned (in PDF format) and uploaded to the ANR submission site by the project coordinator no later than the date indicated on page 2.

4.3. SUBMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

It is strongly recommended:
   • Not to wait until the submission deadline to submit the project;
   • To start on-line entry of the administrative and financial data at the latest one week before the closing date of the call for proposals;
   • To register the information entered on the submission site before leaving each page;
   • To download the full project summary in Excel format from the "Summary tables" tab to verify the information entered on line;
   • To regularly consult the website dedicated to the programme at the address indicated on p. 2, which contains updated information concerning the applicable procedures (submission site user’s guide, budget preparation guide, glossary, FAQs, etc.);
   • To contact the contact persons by electronic mail at the address(es) indicated on p. 2 of this call for proposals.
5. **GENERAL PROVISIONS AND DEFINITIONS**

**5.1. ANR FUNDING**

**TYPE OF FUNDING**

The funds allocated by the ANR will be provided as a non-refundable grant in accordance with the provisions of the "Regulations relative to conditions of allocating ANR funds", which can be consulted on the ANR web site[^8].

**MORAL RESPONSIBILITY**

The funding of a project by the ANR does not relieve the project partners of their obligations concerning the regulations and code of ethics applicable to their area of activity.

The project applicant undertakes to keep the ANR and its support unit informed of any change likely to modify the content and the schedule of project performance between the time of project submission and publication of the list of selected projects.

**5.2. DEFINITIONS CONCERNING THE DIFFERENT RESEARCH CATEGORIES**

These definitions figure in the EC Framework for state aids for research and development and innovation[^9]. The following meanings apply:

**Fundamental research**: "experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena or observable facts, without any direct practical application or use in view".

**Industrial research**: "the planned research or critical investigation aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for developing new products, processes or services or for bringing about a significant improvement in existing products, processes or services. It comprises the creation of components of complex systems, which is necessary for the industrial research, notably for generic technology validation, to the exclusion of prototypes covered [in the definition of experimental development] […]".

**Experimental development**: “the acquiring, combining, shaping and using of existing scientific, technological, business and other relevant knowledge and skills for the purpose of producing plans and arrangements or designs for new, altered or improved products, processes or services. These may also include, for example, other activities aiming at the conceptual definition, planning and documentation of new products, processes and services. The activities may comprise producing drafts, drawings, plans and other documentation, provided that they are not intended for commercial use.

The development of commercially usable prototypes and pilot projects is also included where the prototype is necessarily the final commercial product and where it is too expensive to produce for it to be used only for demonstration and validation purposes. In case of a subsequent commercial use of demonstration or pilot projects, any revenue generated from such use must be deducted from the eligible costs. The experimental production and testing of products, processes and services are also eligible, provided that these cannot be used or transformed to be used in industrial applications or commercially. Experimental development does not include the routine or periodic changes made to products, production lines, manufacturing processes, existing services and other operations in progress, even if such changes may represent improvements.”

5.3. DEFINITIONS CONCERNING PROJECT ORGANISATION

Project applicant: the person responsible for the scientific and technical coordination of the project, the setting up and formalizing of the collaboration between the partners, production of the project deliverables, holding of the progress meetings and communication of the results. The project applicant is the chief contact for the ANR and its support unit. The organisation to which the applicant belongs is called the coordinating partner.

Host organisation: Unit of a research organisation or of an enterprise.

5.4. DEFINITIONS CONCERNING THE STRUCTURES

Research organisation: "an entity, such as a university or research institute, irrespective of its legal status (organized under public or private law) or way of financing, whose primary goal is to conduct fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development and to disseminate their results by way of teaching, publication or technology transfer; all profits are reinvested in these activities, the dissemination of their results or teaching; undertakings that can exert influence upon such an entity in the quality of for example, shareholders or members, shall enjoy no preferential access to the research capacities of such an entity or to the research results generated by it". Technical centres, save duly justified exceptions, are considered to be research organisations.

Enterprise: An enterprise is considered to be any entity engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of its legal form. This includes, in particular, self-employed persons and family

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businesses engaged in craft or other activities, and partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity\textsuperscript{11}.

**Small and medium-sized enterprise (SME):** an enterprise that meets the European Commission’s definition of an SME\textsuperscript{12}. More particularly, an SME is an independent company which employs fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.

**Microenterprise:** Within the SME category, a Microenterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million.

**Competitiveness cluster:** A competitiveness cluster is an association of enterprises, research centres and training organisations, situated in a given geographical area and deploying a common development strategy with the aim of creating synergies around innovative projects conducted jointly and targeting one market or more\textsuperscript{13}.

**5.5. Other definitions**

**Working time of researchers employed by a university:** the percentage of working time of researchers employed by a university is based on the research time (considered at 100%). Thus a researcher employed by a university who devotes his/her entire research time to a project for one year will be considered to represent 12 person months. For the calculation of the full cost, however, the person’s salary shall be counted at 50%.


\textsuperscript{13} See http://competitivite.gouv.fr/