



ICGEB

International Centre for Genetic
Engineering and Biotechnology

ICGEB Research Grants CRP – Collaborative Research Programme

General Information & Conditions for Application Call 2026

PURPOSE & SUBJECT AREAS

The ICGEB Research Grant is part of the Collaborative Research Programme (CRP) of ICGEB and is a dedicated source of funding aimed at financing projects that address scientific problems of particular relevance for the host country.

The programme was established in 1988 with the aim of:

- **stimulating collaborative research** between ICGEB Member States and with the ICGEB Component laboratories;
- promoting the **training** of young scientists;
- facilitating the creation of appropriate **research facilities**.

The programme provides support for original research projects in basic life sciences, human healthcare, industrial and agricultural biotechnology, and bioenergy.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants for CRP – ICGEB Research Grant proposals should hold positions at Universities or Research Institutes in any of the [ICGEB Member States](#).

Investigating groups are not eligible to submit applications:

- if previously awarded projects have not been evaluated and satisfactorily concluded;
- if the University or Research Institute of the Principal Investigator is based in Italy.

A special category of **CRP – ICGEB Early Career Return Grants** is intended to fund young researchers not over 40 years old at the time of application with an outstanding track record, who have spent a minimum of 2 consecutive years abroad and have recently returned to an ICGEB Member State - no more than two years prior to the deadline for submission - to establish their own independent laboratories (except in Italy).

Resubmission applies only to endorsed applications that have been rejected by ICGEB during the Triage or peer-review phase and on the basis of the scientific evaluation. Resubmission of these proposals are expected to be **substantially improved** and to address extensively the reviewers' concerns. A pdf file explaining the changes made to the current proposal compared to the old application is mandatory.

A proposal can only be re-submitted once.

SUBMISSION & DEADLINES

Principal Investigators must submit their applications online via the **ICGEB Service Gateway** (<https://isg.icgeb.org/auth/login>).

Their full proposals will be accessed by the Liaison Officer of the relevant country for the internal selection and endorsement procedures.

Each country may endorse a maximum of **three (3)** project proposals for standard research grant applications, plus **two (2)** additional Early Career Return Grant applications. Liaison Officers will inform ICGEB and the applicants which proposals they have endorsed for the present call. Liaison Officers will also inform the unendorsed applicants.

The deadlines for submission of the applications are as follows:

30 April 2026 (23:59 CET): Deadline for submission of the full application via the **ICGEB Service Gateway**. Applications will then be accessed by the ICGEB Liaison Officers for the internal selection and endorsement procedures.

31 May 2026: Deadline for Liaison Officers' endorsement of the applications. Please note that **applicants who do not receive the necessary endorsement from their national Liaison Officers will not be considered for funding.**

ICGEB will only acknowledge receipt of the endorsed applications. These applicants will be provided with a reference number for their proposal within one month of the deadline of 31 May 2026.

The current status of the application (endorsed/not endorsed) will also be displayed on the **ICGEB Service Gateway** (section "My CRP proposals"). Liaison Officers are responsible for providing feedback to not endorsed applicants.

PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

Title and Abstract:	The abstract should be written in a clear, concise manner and explain the overall aims and approaches that will be taken. Principal Investigators should remember that this section is critical for aiding the selection of expert reviewers, and it should therefore accurately reflect the content of the proposal.
Introduction:	The introduction should provide a concise overview of the background to the project and highlight the question(s)/hypotheses that are to be addressed.
Research Project:	This section should be structured in a clear and logical manner, with clearly defined aims and milestones expected during the period of the project. Attention should also be paid to highlighting where collaborations with ICGEB groups or laboratories in ICGEB Member States are likely to help the implementation of the project. Screening projects will be considered only if appropriately structured and defined.
Collaboration:	International collaboration with ICGEB Member States or other countries is an essential feature of all ICGEB grants and must be fully integrated into the project. 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 must reflect a full collaborative commitment to the implementation of the project. 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. Full details have to be provided on the role of each collaborator and his/her contribution in the research project. A letter confirming the collaboration is to be provided.
Training:	Training is one of the major aims of the ICGEB grants programme and full details on the people to be involved and their role, as well as potential benefit to be gained from the training need to be clearly addressed in the proposal.
Additional note:	With the exception of letters confirming the collaboration(s), do not attach additional CVs, papers or other documents unless specified in one of the sections of the online application.

TYPE OF SUPPORT

Grants are awarded to contribute to the implementation of outstanding scientific research projects. An important element of successful applications is the feasibility of the proposed project within the designated timeframe (maximum 36 months). The maximum annual contribution from ICGEB is Euro 25,000.

Funds can only be used to cover expenditures that are directly relevant to the project. This may include purchasing consumable items, scientific literature and basic standard laboratory equipment. Travel and training costs can also be covered.

Salaries of the Principal Investigators and infrastructural support (e.g., normal administrative and overhead expenses of the Institution, maintenance and rental of capital equipment, building, etc.) are not admissible and cannot be funded.

An estimate of the foreseen expenditure must be described and justified.

EVALUATION & AWARD NOTICES

The evaluation is based on a two-tier procedure. In the first phase, all proposals will be reviewed by a Committee of internationally recognized experts, who will triage all the applications and select those for the second phase of review.

The projects passed to the second phase will be sent out for peer-review by independent experts. An ICGEB Committee will select the proposals to be funded for 2026 on the basis of these peer-review evaluations. Please note that the ICGEB Committee's decisions are final and not open to further discussion.

All applicants, successful and unsuccessful, will be notified of the outcome of the review by e-mail (no deadline can be indicated for this communication). The successful projects will start upon finalisation and signature of an agreement, usually at the beginning of the next year.

AGREEMENT

In case of a grant being awarded, a written operational agreement is made between ICGEB and the Principal Investigator's Institute, in which the Institute undertakes to administer the grant according to the agreement and to provide the necessary support for the Principal Investigator during the entire lifespan of the project.

Equipment, material and literature purchased for the project through the CRP-ICGEB Research Grant funding programme should remain the property of the Institute after the project is completed. The ICGEB funding contribution should be acknowledged, as applicable.

The grant is paid in yearly instalments to the bank account of the Institute and the first payment is transferred upon signature of the agreement by both parties. Release of 2nd and 3rd year funds (when applicable) is subject to the satisfactory approval of annual reports submitted in a timely manner, according to the deadline and format specified in the agreement. Additionally, 2nd and 3rd year instalments are paid only if at least 80% of the previous instalment has been spent and accounted for.

Please note that no part of the grant can be transferred to any other Institution or organisation under any form of sub-contracting or out-sourcing arrangement.

BUDGET GUIDELINES

The ICGEB funds can only be used to support research activity in the laboratory of the Principal Investigator. The funds may be used in the following five budget categories:

EQUIPMENT

This budget category **must not exceed 30%** of the total grant requested/awarded. It is to be spent preferably during the first year of the project for the purchase of basic standard laboratory equipment and/or components that are necessary for the implementation of the research project. A justification needs to be provided for each item to be purchased with the ICGEB grant.

Each piece of equipment purchased with the ICGEB grant will be the property of the beneficiary Institution and must remain with the latter.

The following items are **NOT FUNDED** by ICGEB:

- Purchase of major equipment (i.e., equipment costing more than Euro 10,000), office furniture or fittings, computer hardware or software. Please note that for computer hardware/software a waiver may be requested for projects with a strong biocomputational component. A full justification must be provided for each item in the proposal.
- Depreciation, regardless of whether the equipment belongs to the Institute or was purchased with ICGEB funds.
- Small pieces of equipment of the value of Euro 500 or less (e.g., micropipettes). These are to be considered as consumables and charged to that budget line accordingly.

CONSUMABLES

This budget category is intended to cover:

- Purchase of consumable items (e.g., general laboratory supplies, tissue culture reagents, chemicals, etc.) needed to carry out the proposed research. Please note that expenses for sequencing, proteomics, etc. carried out by external laboratories are acceptable only in limited amounts and must not exceed 20% of the total grant awarded.

TRAINING

This budget category is intended to cover:

- Short-term training visits (maximum 3 months per project, subject to prior approval from ICGEB) of scientists directly involved in the project for hands-on training related to the project. This includes: (i) short-term training visits by scientists directly involved in the project in other (national or overseas) laboratories to learn/improve a particular technique necessary for the implementation of the project, and (ii) short-term visits of a collaborator invited to the Principal Investigator's lab to train people involved in the project in a particular technique;
- Stipends for long-term trainees from other ICGEB Member Countries (i.e., not nationals of the country to which the ICGEB grant has been awarded) working on the project.

TRAVEL

This budget category **must not exceed 10%** of the total grant requested/awarded.

It is intended to cover the participation of scientists, directly involved in the project, in major conferences/meetings related to the project objectives. Local travel costs (e.g., for sample collection, field visits, etc.) can also be covered if essential for the implementation of the project. Please note that training expenses cannot be covered by this budget category.

LITERATURE

This budget category **must not exceed 5%** of the total grant requested/awarded. Funds may be used to cover:

- Purchasing costs of scientific literature and reference material (e.g., books, subscription to journals/periodicals);
- Publication costs of scientific manuscripts pertinent to the project in peer-reviewed journals (e.g., page charges and publication fees).

CRP AWARDEES MEETINGS

ICGEB recently launched a new series of regional events aimed at providing valuable opportunities for networking, learning, and collaboration between PIs. The first ICGEB CRP Awardees Meeting took place in South Africa in November 2024 and brought together 80 delegates from 19 countries, involving both scientific and governmental institutions, including 38 African recipients of ICGEB grants.

The first initiative of its kind, ICGEB anticipates similar events in the coming years in other regions too. To help support participation to this event, ICGEB expects Awardees to be able to contribute (approx. Euro 1,000) from their CRP grant. Please note that these should be considered as special expenses, and more info about budget allocation and events details will be shared in due course.

COSTS NOT FUNDED BY ICGEB

- Cost of maintenance, repair, running or insurance of existing equipment and machinery belonging to the Institution;
- 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;
- Secretarial expenses;
- Salary support of Principal Investigator;
- Any other expenses not covered in the five budget categories mentioned above.