

STARS - How to apply



Applications for the STARS programme are accepted exclusively online through our online application system.

UPDATE information: The 2020 call for applications was closed on the **14th of July 2020 at 11PM CET**.

See all the research groups open to applications listed here <https://www.bsc.es/join-us/excellence-career-opportunities/stars>

Only **complete applications**, with all fields duly filled in and requested documents attached will be considered admissible to evaluation.

Eligibility criteria - Phase 1

In order to be eligible a candidate shall comply with the following eligibility criteria:

- **Mobility rule:** Candidates may not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Spain for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the call deadline. Time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention, compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.
- Candidates must at the date of the call deadline be in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience. Full-Time Equivalent Research Experience is measured from the date when a researcher obtained the degree entitling him or her to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the

researcher is recruited, even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged.

- Candidates must not have been awarded a PhD degree for more than 6 years prior to the call deadline or may not have more than 10 years of research experience prior to the call deadline. Exceptions are made for documented periods of parental leave and sick leave. Women may claim up to 12 months for child, for a maximum of 3 years.

Admissibility requirements

Candidates must present a full application that consists of :

1. Filling in the application form, with Resume (CV) (Valid applications are the ones with the online application form completely filled in),
2. 2 References Letters with the contact information of your referees (Your referees may be contacted in a more advance phase of the process to confirm the reference.
3. A Cover Letter to detail:
 1. Your motivation to become a BSC postdoc through the STARS programme. Specifically explain the interest that you have in the research group(s) that you have chosen, and indicate the match between the group with your research experience (maximum 4000 characters with spaces)
 2. A brief potential Research Proposal as BSC postdoc (maximum 4000 characters with spaces)

The Application form will contain the following information:

- Personal and contact details
- Contact details of the referees
- Contact detail of the PhD Supervisor
- Date and institution of the PhD award
- Prior research experience (4000 characters max)
- Education (max 4000 characters)
- Detailed list of publications
- Text (4000 characters max) with motivation to become a BSC STARS Fellow
- Definition of Main research area of interest at BSC and Selection of the 3 BSC groups, in order of interest, that the fellow would join at BSC, to be selected among those listed here

<https://www.bsc.es/join-us/excellence-career-opportunities/stars>

During the week following the closing of the call, eligibility of the proposals will be checked by staff members of BSC Human Resources. All eligible proposals will proceed to the second phase, the Evaluation by external international experts. Non-eligible candidates will be informed of the rejection of their candidatures.

Evaluation criteria - Phase 2: Evaluation by External Experts

For this phase of the selection of candidates, BSC will dispose of a large roster of experts in all disciplines, provided by the Catalan Agency for Research, AGAUR, and to be completed with all collaborators and partners of the numerous projects in which the center is involved.

The selection of these experts is based on their recent scientific career coming from different scientific areas and sectors, university and industry, with experience and high level in their area of expertise, well-known as international experts in their subject matter. Currently the data-base includes 4.789 evaluators, from which BSC can select the most adequate for the evaluation of STARS postdoctoral fellows. Five panels will be created, four covering the 4 main areas of activity of BSC, Computer Science, Life Science, Earth Science and Computer Applications in Science and Engineers, and if necessary a fifth interdisciplinary panel, for those applications that are between topics. Each panel will be composed by 3 experts, and one of them will be nominated Chair. Therefore each application will be evaluated by 3 experts.

The requirements for being External Expert will be the following:

- To be a R2-recognised researcher or a R3- established researcher
- To have at least 5 years of postdoctoral research activity, either in academia or in industry
- One every 3 experts at least will be resident outside Spain, and maximum effort will be done to have at least one female expert in each panel.

Information and details of evaluators are in a database, in an electronic file maintained by AGAUR, which is updating with new members or those no longer involved. The database includes at least a full CV of each evaluator as well as information about his or her area of expertise and key words.

The External Experts will be chosen in accordance with indications provided by the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”: they will bring together diverse expertise, competences and disciplines with the necessary expertise for properly evaluating the candidates. Before the start of the selection process all members of Selection Committee will be briefed on the evaluation procedures to be followed: they will be provided with clear instructions about the criteria of the evaluation and their responsibilities in the process. They will also receive a copy of the Guide for Evaluators, a copy of the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of conduct of the Recruitment of Researchers”, as well as a template for establishing the evaluation reports of applications.

Special advice will be given to all Experts about the principles of the COFUND programme, eg international and inter- sectorial mobility, interdisciplinarity, and encouraging the returns to science after a career break.

Applications will be allocated to different panels, based on the main area of the proposal indicated by the candidate or to the interdisciplinary panel. The experts will have 1 month to evaluate the different information contained in the application forms and the reference letters and to provide the outcome of their evaluation to BSC Human Resources office.

In this phase, the different parts of the application form and the reference letters will be graded as following:

Criteria for phase2: evaluation by external experts	Points	Weight	Priority in case of ex aequo
Research Experience (including transnational mobility): evaluators will be requested to consider: the PhD thesis and related work, prior postdoctoral experience, other research or technology development experience: higher scores will be given to prior research postdoctoral experience, taking into consideration the number of years of experience, the laboratory or enterprise where they carried out their work, the general outcomes of their research	1-10	25%	1
Publications: peer-reviewed articles or conference presentations and proceedings, registered patents, books chapters: usual indicators will be used for evaluating this part: number of citations for articles, impact of the Journal or of the publication, position of the candidates in the authors order, relevance of the publication for the field, etc	1-10	20%	2

Impact/benefit of the STARS fellowship in the fellow career, taking into account the relevance of the research line indicated by the fellow with the prior experience of the fellow itself and the feasibility of a research project: scores will correspond to relevance and feasibility levels.	1-10	20%	4
Reference Letters: based on the evaluation expressed by the referees	1-10	15%	5
Other qualifications (management skills, software development, participation in research projects, awards, inter sectorial mobility, monitoring of younger students): for any of these points, additional scores will be given	1-10	20%	3
TOTAL		100%	

The score definitions will be outlined in the evaluation report according a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is very insufficient and is 10 outstanding. The criteria have different weights, as indicated in the table. In case of ex-aequo, priority will be first given to female candidates, in order to reinforce the presence of women in the engineering applied research, and then it will be given according to the highest score following the percentage weight of each criteria (ie a candidate with an 8 in Research Experience will be given priority against a candidate with a 6, even if their final score would be the same).

Applications below the threshold of 70/100 will be rejected. Fellows that will not reach the threshold and will not pass this phase of the evaluation will receive the evaluation summary report.

The applications will be evaluated by the experts of each panel. Experts will be requested to reach a consensus among them, and if necessary virtual or Face-to-Face meeting of panel members will be organised by BSC, in order to reach consensus on each candidature.

The first 5 applicants in the ranking of each panel will be chosen to pass to the next step.

Phase 3: Interview with Selection Committee

The candidates that will pass the phase 2 will proceed to the interview with the STARS Selection Committee. This will be formed by 10 members:

- 4 international experts, external to BSC: they will either be members of the Scientific Advisory Board of BSC, or they will be some of their deputies, or other researchers equivalent for experience and reputation. (the SAB of BSC is composed by researchers of international reputation, external to BSC.
- One representative of each of the BSC department (Department Director or one senior group leader of recognised experience).
- The head of Education and Training Unit
- The head of Human Resources unit.

At least 3 members of the Selection Committee will be female.

All interviews will be held on the same date (on 1 or 2 days, depending on the number of successful applicants).

A 20-min long structured interview will take place. It will consist of a power point presentation of a short research project, with an explanation by the applicant on how the project would fit into the research agenda of the rBSC research group of their choice, describing the motivation of the candidate to work at BSC and how the research project fits into the applicants career plans. The presentation will take 10 minutes, followed by another 10 minutes of questions by the panel of evaluators. The following scoring scheme for Phase 3 will apply:

Criteria for phase 3: Interview with Selection Comitee	Score ranges	weight
PhD Work, Prior research experience, publication and any other scientific and technical output of the candidate	1-10	25%

Quality of the presentation of the project (communication skills)	1-10	10%
Defence of the project, feasibility of the Research Plan (Questions and Answers)	1-10	25%
Relevance of the candidate proposal into the requested research line	1-10	25%
Impact of the STARS fellowships into the candidate's future career	1-10	15%

The score definitions will be outlined in the evaluation report according a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is very insufficient and is 10 outstanding. The criteria have different weights, as indicated in the table.

Before the interview, the members of the Selection Committee will be briefed on the evaluation criteria and on the goals of the COFUND STARS program and they will be provided with a copy Guide for evaluators for the STARS program, which describes the whole process, explain the score methods and contains also copy of the Human Resources Strategy 4 Research plan for BSC as well as of of the “European Charter for Researchers” and the document describing the “Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers – OTM-R”.

Final Decision- Recruitment process -Redress procedure

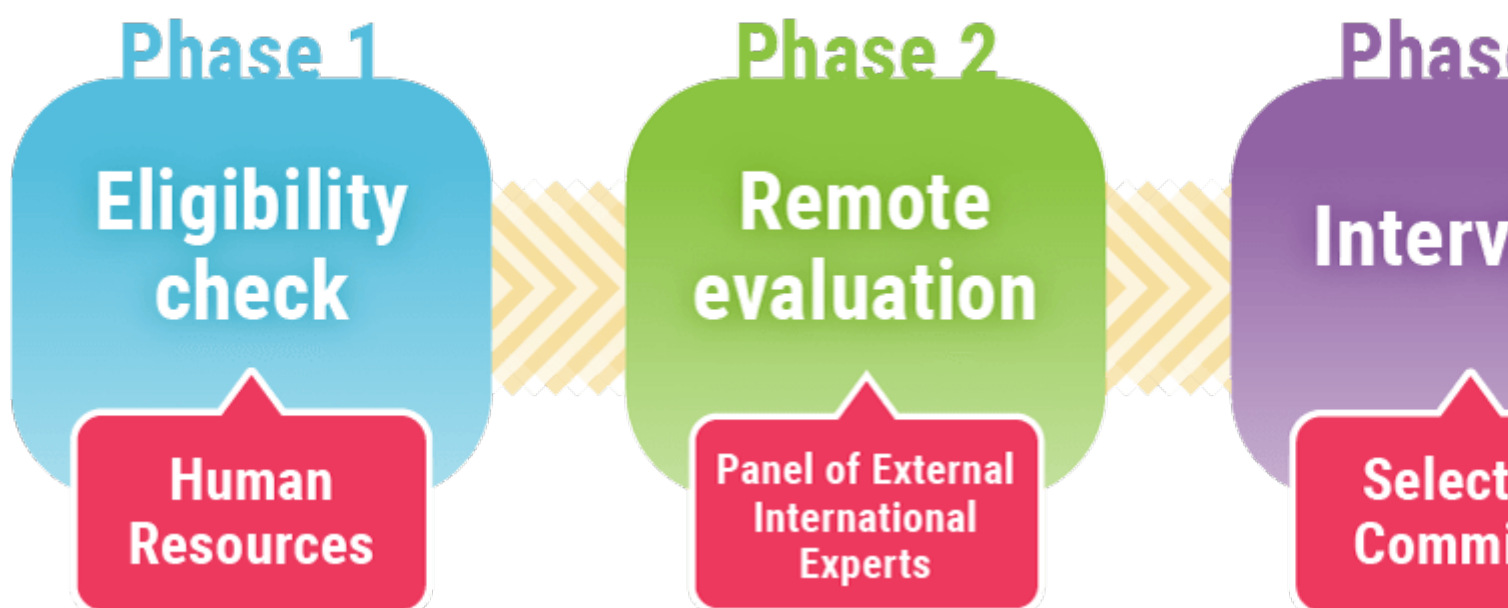
A final ranking list will be established by the STARS Selection Committee and up to the first best 12 candidates will receive the recruitment proposal by BSC. They will be given 2 weeks for accepting or rejecting the offer. In case of rejection, the following candidates on the reserve list will be contacted.

The whole recruitment process will last not more than 3 months, including the time for relocation of the candidates living outside Spain. After 3 months the recruitment period will start.

At the end of each stage of the selection procedures, all participants will be informed about the final outcome of their candidature by e-mail. Candidates may ask for clarifications and further information on the outcomes.

A redress procedure can be requested by candidates within 10 days from the communication of the results . The procedure will look at procedural shortcomings and into possible errors, not against evaluation panel decisions or experts ratings. The outcome of the redress procedure will be a report with motivation of rejection or a letter informing about the reincorporation to the selection process.

The whole selection process and the committees taking part to are resumed in the figure hereunder:



Selection Process Calendar

The recruitment will have 24 months of duration, with a possible secondment period of 1-3 months, depending on the needs of the fellow and of the project. The calls will stay open for at least 3 months, and another 3 months in total will be spent for the whole selection process. Depending on the origin of the candidates (if visa are needed or not, if they come with family etc.) the recruitment process may take from 1 to 3 months.

For this call fellows are expected to start their recruitments in January 2021. Ideally at the end of their first year of activities they could spend some time at the premises of a partner organization (1-3 months); however the dates of secondment period are indicative and will be defined on case-by-case, based on the needs of the fellow and on their research and training project.

Data Protection Policy

In compliance with the Data Protection Law, we advise that applications personal details will be added to our database and will be passed to external evaluators in order create an evaluation report. In accordance with the law on protection of personal data in force, personal data are included in an electronic data file owned by BSC-CNS, for the purpose of managing the recruitment process. If a candidate wish to exercise his right to access, rectify, terminate and/or oppose the processing of personal data may contact BSC-CNS at any moment at our registered address at C/Jordi Girona 29, 08034 Barcelona. For convenience, however, and notwithstanding the fact that certain formal requirements set out in the law in force must be met, BSC-CNS offers you the opportunity to exercise the above rights by sending an email to the address rrhh [at] bsc [dot] es.

Barcelona Supercomputing Center - Centro Nacional de Supercomputación

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