



PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE CHILE

COMPETITION GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH AND CREATION: AVANZA UC 2025
OFFICE OF RESEARCH
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

As part of its initial initiatives, the UC 2026–2030 Strategy of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (UC), through the Office of Research (DINV) of the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies (VRIP), invites its academic staff to submit applications to the Research and Creation Competition “Avanza UC 2025”, intended to promote bold, frontier, high-risk and high-impact projects in the arts, humanities, sciences and technology, including work ranging from fundamental research and creation to its most applied forms, which seek to address Chile's strategic challenges and have the potential to transcend on a global scale.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this competition is to finance research projects that generate basic and/or applied knowledge in the arts, humanities, sciences and technologies, around challenges that are priorities for Chile and simultaneously of high global interest; that explore frontier, unknown territories with high risk and high potential impact; that articulate original and innovative international and interdisciplinary collaborations; and that operate as seed funds to attract new economic resources and the talent of national and foreign researchers and students from prestigious universities and centers.

The project focus must be connected to a challenge relevant to Chile, be frontier and academically high-risk, the latter of which must be well justified in terms of its high potential impact. The competition seeks that our researchers, together with new and outstanding national and foreign counterparts, explore new areas of high potential and high risk in knowledge. Consequently, the use of funds as seed capital to attract other economic resources, new talent and new international networks will also be recognized. Given the complexity of the challenges faced by our society, proposals with an interdisciplinary approach and a clear global projection—supported by the interest of the participating international research team as co-investigators—will be valued.

The project must comply with the university's current regulations, ethical and safety regulations in force at the time of application, and researchers must make a declaration of potential conflicts of interest. All intellectual property resulting from the project will be governed by the UC regulations in force at the time of its completion, as the University Senior Leadership intends to soon propose a new policy on this matter — one that is simple and strongly encourages the generation of intellectual property within the University. Submitted projects must be original ideas and may not have previously received funding from any other source.

RESEARCH TEAM

The research team must be led by an academic with a 44-hour weekly contract and be part of the Regular or Special academic staff. There may be more than one Principal Investigator (PI),



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but only one will be responsible for interacting with the Office of Research (DINV) and will submit the research proposal in the application system that will be provided. If there are changes in the contractual conditions of any of the PIs during the project development, they must inform DINV so that it may determine the continuity and the modality to follow in each case. **An academic may serve as PI in a maximum of two projects.**

Two categories are defined for Principal Investigators:

Category A: Emerging UC Investigators: in the Assistant Professor category who have obtained, at the time of application, their PhD or medical subspecialty no more than 7 years prior (until 2018).

Category B: Established UC Investigators: in the Assistant or Full Professor categories who have obtained, at the time of application, their PhD or medical subspecialty more than 7 years prior (before 2018), and under the Associate category, without any time restriction for obtaining the doctoral degree or medical subspecialty.

The maximum number of academic participants in the research team is four, among whom there may be up to two Principal Investigators (UC). If a project is submitted with two Principal Investigators and one of them belongs to Category B, the project will be evaluated in this category. In any case, this does not represent any advantage or disadvantage for the evaluation of the project.

DURATION

Projects will have a duration of 12 months, starting on March 12, 2026, and ending on March 11, 2027.

REQUIREMENTS AND INCOMPATIBILITIES

- The problem to be studied must have a clear association with a concern relevant to Chile, and the knowledge generated must be frontier and of high potential impact.
- The application and team must have the support of the Dean of the academic unit, evidenced by the Mandatory Investigator Declaration (DOI) from each of the Principal Investigators.
- It is not permitted to submit research ideas that currently have full or partial funding from other internal or external sources.
- Interdisciplinarity will be positively valued, whether within or between academic units—for example, by choosing a multi-faculty research team and a frontier topic that requires the convergence of different disciplinary perspectives.
- Seeking national and international partnerships that provide (pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary) funding to the project to cover the expenses of external co-investigators is positively valued. The funds may NOT be used to cover costs of research personnel external to UC.
- Each academic may act as Principal Investigator in a maximum of two projects. The application must clearly identify the role, contribution and expected dedication of each researcher in the project.



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- The project must commit to academic results not necessarily within the project's time horizon, but no later than one year after its completion (publications, patents, new proposals, books, works, postgraduate student training, seminars, etc.) and these must have high originality and impact.
- The project must have ethics and safety approvals under the UC Regulation on Scientific Ethics Committees. The project cannot begin until such approval is obtained, acknowledging that efforts are underway to simplify this process.
- Principal Investigators must have up-to-date final reports for projects funded by the Office of Research (DINV) at the closing of the application. They must also not have overdue final reports with ANID.
- Funding graduate students is not permitted, as there will be a separate competition for that purpose.
- The focus of the resources is frontier research and creation, but an incentive may be provided to the research team of up to a maximum of 10% if there is only one principal investigator, or 15% if there are more than one PI, of the UC project cost (excluding external counterparts), contingent on meeting the committed results. The percentages are not additive and, if an academic wins more than one project, there will be a maximum incentive per investigator of CLP \$4,000,000.

AMOUNTS AND ELIGIBLE USES

The maximum amount awardable per project is CLP \$35,000,000.

All amounts must be duly justified in the budget at the time of application and be accounted for to the university as in any other research project. Financial reports must be uploaded to a digital platform and physically backed up according to the instructions that will be sent in November of this year.

Eligible uses of resources:

Research Team: Limit of 10% of the UC project budget for single-principal investigator teams and 15% for teams with more than one PI. No investigator may receive more than CLP \$4,000,000 in this competition if participating in more than one project.

Support staff: Fees for research assistants (non-thesis) not exceeding 10% of the UC project budget.

National and international mobility and cooperation (from Chile abroad):

- For national tickets and per diems: tickets only in economy class and per diems according to university-established rates.
- For international tickets and per diems: tickets only in economy class and per diems according to university-established rates for research activities. A maximum of one trip per project is considered to present results at congresses or exhibitions relevant to the project.

The Avanza UC 2025 project funds may NOT be used to pay travel or per diems for professionals or researchers external to UC.



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Operational Costs: according to project requirements, which may include research supplies, laboratory consumables, fieldwork supplies, prototypes, processes, services and other products, licenses and cloud services, open access and data management.

General Expenses: General and administrative expenses not attributable to direct research/creation costs (office supplies, publications). Maximum amount CLP \$7,000,000.

Capital Equipment: Acquisition of minor equipment (maximum two computers) may be financed, as well as instruments directly required for project execution, with a limit of 20% of the UC project budget.

Interdisciplinary collaboration within UC and securing participation from other national and international researchers who provide co-financing as part of the proposal will be highly valued. This must be stipulated in a formal commitment letter from external teams, endorsed by the corresponding academic authority of their institution and intended to cover their own participation costs in the joint initiative (each counterpart covers its costs).

APPLICATION

Applications will be submitted online, presenting the following for the proposal:

- a. Executive Summary (maximum 1 page)
- b. Hypothesis (maximum 1/2 page)
- c. Methodology (maximum 5 pages)
- d. Relevance and national impact (maximum 2 pages)
- e. Global transferability and international collaboration (maximum 1.5 pages)
- f. Committed results (maximum 1 page)
- g. Annual Work Plan, including Mid-Year Evaluation (no page limit)
- h. Bibliographic References (no page limit)
- i. Budget (Excel)
- j. Narrative CV of the research team. The CV must include the last 5 publications of the Principal Investigator, or of the Principal Investigators if more than one.
- k. Formal commitment letters (roles, contributions and timeline) and declared pecuniary and non-pecuniary co-financing from external co-investigators (use of laboratories, for example)
- l. DOI with the Dean's signature of the Academic Unit for each Principal Investigator
- m. (Optional) Letters of support from national and/or international institutions expressing their willingness to collaborate with the proposal through the commitment of either monetary or in-kind resources.

ADMISSIBILITY AND EVALUATION

Only applications that submit the online application with the totality of the required information will be valid. The information entered in the application, as well as the content of the attached documents, will be the sole responsibility of each applicant.



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Applications received will be reviewed initially to determine their compliance with the competition rules. Those projects that pass the admissibility stage will be evaluated by peer reviewers.

The evaluation criteria are as follows:

Criteria	Weighting
Originality and research risk • Conceptual/methodological novelty and frontier character. • Explicit academic risk (assumptions, alternatives, success thresholds). • Clarity of hypotheses/questions; advancement of the state of the art.	20%
National relevance and potential impact • Priority problem for Chile and defined beneficiaries (public policy, productive/cultural sector, communities). • Mechanism of impact (science/creation, transfer, policy, education).	20%
Global scalability of the project idea • Generalizable problem and solution; replication potential in other contexts. • Internationalization route (WoS/Scopus publication/creative work of international reach, standards/open data).	15%
Level of international collaboration and mobilization of additional funds • Relevance and specific role of counterparts (interdisciplinarity). • Formal commitment letters (roles, contributions and timeline) and declared co-financing (each counterpart covers its costs). • Roadmap to apply for external funds (call/date/responsible).	20%
Technical feasibility of the proposal, planning • Work plan by milestones. • Budget consistent with eligible uses; traceability to objectives. • Ethics/safety and declared conflicts of interest.	10%
Quality of the results • Frontier knowledge/creation product; application to external funds; collaborative continuity plan; training of personnel; deposit in UC repositories.	15%



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AWARDING

Once the evaluation process is completed, a decision committee will be formed comprised of the UC President, the Provost, the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, the Vice President for International Affairs, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will review the proposed decision and determine the selection according to the score obtained in the evaluation and the available budget. The competition results will be communicated to all applying academics and to faculty authorities via email.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR

Products submission at project completion:

- a. Some research or creation product (e.g., WoS/Scopus publication, work, text or book, public policy).
- b. Application to a national or international fund to give continuity to the activity.
- c. Plan for continuity of collaborative work with national and international counterparts.
- d. Personnel training.
- e. Deposit of researched material in UC open-access repositories.

In addition, they must fully comply with expense reporting, according to the format to be established by DINV and duly signed by the Administrative Unit managing funds of their academic unit.

Other pertinent commitments required by the VRIP's Office of Research.

PROCESS DATES

- a. Opening of the application period: September 8, 2025
- b. Closing of the application period: November 3, 2025
- c. Evaluation period: Until December 18, 2025
- d. Announcement of competition results: Friday, January 9, 2026
- e. Project start: March 12, 2026 with Ethics and/or Safety Approval Act.
- f. Ethics and Safety Coordination Certification: Projects must undergo the ethics approval process to obtain the Ethics and/or Safety Approval Act, if applicable, which must be submitted to DINV no later than March 12, 2026.
- g. Project end date: March 11, 2027
- h. Final report submission date: April 12, 2027

INQUIRIES AND INFORMATION

Inquiries should be directed to the Competition Coordination of the Office of Research at the email address: avanza.uc@uc.cl