

“A FUTURE IN BIOMEDICINE” Programme – 2026 Call

TERMS & CONDITIONS

The articles of association of the *Fundació Institut de Recerca Biomèdica (IRB Barcelona)* (hereafter referred to as IRB Barcelona or Institute) establish that the Institute will promote activities that address collaboration and knowledge transfer and also launch calls for fellowship (herein referred to as grant) applications and subsequently present the awards of the same.

I. Objective

These Terms and Conditions serve to regulate the undergraduate internship grants for the 2026 call of “A Future in Biomedicine”.

II. Grant Call

The “A Future in Biomedicine” (AFIB) Programme is aimed at outstanding and highly motivated students in the last year of their degree. Students should show a strong interest in the fields of biology, biomedicine, chemistry, physics, pharmacy, structural biology, computational sciences, or other related areas. Four grants are offered to cover internships from September 2026 to July 2027.

Students will spend up to 20 h per week in an IRB Barcelona lab during their last year of undergraduate studies (Academic year 2026/2027), upon agreement with the project supervisor at IRB Barcelona.

Awardees will receive a stipend of **€200 gross per month**. The stipends included in this call will be covered by IRB Barcelona structural funds for a maximum of 11 months. Awardees will have medical insurance through the Spanish Social Security System and will be covered by accident insurance.

Awardees will be offered the opportunity to participate in in-house institutional activities. In addition, they will receive complementary training for career development either through the series of courses offered at IRB Barcelona or “ad-hoc” ones organised for undergraduate students.

Upon completion of the programme, awardees will be provided a reference letter from their respective project supervisor at IRB Barcelona.

A grant agreement regulating the internship will be signed between the university in which the student is enrolled, IRB Barcelona, and the student.

Participation in the AFIB Programme will not imply a contractual relationship between the awardee and IRB Barcelona. Only in the exceptional case that the awardee finishes his/her undergraduate studies before the end date of the internship agreed with IRB Barcelona will the Institute contract him/her for the days needed to complete the agreement.

The group leader at IRB Barcelona (or a designated researcher) previously assigned to and agreed with the awardee before the signature of the grant will be the project supervisor. The supervisors will oversee that the duties assigned to the awardees are fulfilled and will notify IRB Barcelona’s Academic Office of issues affecting

the undertaking of the assigned duties or other pertinent circumstances so that corrective measures can be taken and/or proceedings to withdraw the grant can be started.

III. Requirements and Selection Criteria

1. The AFIB Programme is addressed to students who fulfil the following requirements:

- Completion of at least 180 ECTS credits of a BSc degree in Biology, Pharmacy, Mathematics, Structural Biology, Physics, Biomedicine, Medicine, Chemistry or related fields by September 2026. Students awarded these grants are expected to complete their undergraduate studies by July 2027.
- Enrolment in a local university. Exceptions for non-local students can be made if their study plan and university guidelines allow them to do an internship under the conditions of this call. These cases will be treated individually.
- Minimum BSc average mark of 7/10
- Good knowledge of English

2. Candidates will be selected exclusively on merit, on the basis of academic records, motivation letter, as well as other criteria, such as internationalisation, previous research experience, and letter of reference. No selection criteria for positive or negative discrimination will be applied.

IV. Application Procedure

Applicants should send the documents mentioned below to academicoffice@irbbarcelona.org before the deadline, indicating "A Future in Biomedicine candidacy" in the subject box.

1. CV
2. A scanned copy of the applicant's certified academic record. The document must show the grades attained
3. Motivation letter
4. Additional certificates, prizes, and recognitions
5. A letter of reference from university lecturers or scientists with whom the applicant has studied or worked*

Applicants should indicate in the e-mail their preferred research group or, if interested in both, list them in order of preference. Moreover, they should refer to any research group of particular interest in the motivation letter. More information on the research activities of each group can be found on IRB Barcelona's webpage.

*Referees must send their letters directly to IRB Barcelona to the address: academicoffice@irbbarcelona.org Only letters with an official letterhead and signature will be accepted. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their referees send the letter. Applications not accompanied by this letter will not be processed.

Applicants should submit information wherever possible in English (CV, motivation letter, summary of work experience). If the certified academic record is not in Catalan, Spanish or English, applicants should also attach a translation into one of these languages.

V. Selection

1. A Review Board comprising IRB Barcelona group leaders and members of the IRB Barcelona Academic Advisory Committee will be charged with drawing up a preliminary list of candidates
2. Group leaders and members of the Academic Advisory Committee may interview the selected candidates and draw up the final list of candidates
3. Applicants can follow the status of their applications upon request by contacting academicoffice@irbbarcelona.org
4. Applicants who have not been successful but who have received a positive evaluation will be put on a waiting list to cover possible renunciations and future positions

VI. Calendar

- **30 April 2026** - Call opening
- **5 June 2026** - Call deadline and preselection of candidates
- **End June 2026** - Notification of selection results
- **September 2026** - Beginning of the internships and start of the programme
- **July 2027** - Receipt of students' summary reports

At the end of the internship, awardees must send a summary report, which will be sent to IRB Barcelona's Academic Office at academicoffice@irbbarcelona.org and the respective project supervisor. Students will also present their research work undertaken over the academic year in an open seminar organised for the IRB Barcelona community.

VII. Communication of Grant Award

Selected candidates will be informed of the grant award via email. After acceptance of the grant, awardees will receive detailed information.

VIII. Rights of Awardees

Awardees will have the following general rights:

1. To be provided with the necessary assistance to perform their studies and research activities. They will have a tutor who will provide assistance during their internship at IRB Barcelona.
2. To participate in complementary calls for funding to attend scientific congresses or other activities related to their studies.
3. To exercise intellectual property rights derived from their training activity in accordance with their contribution, as established in the Intellectual Property Law, approved by Royal Decree 1/1996, 12 April. These rights will be independent, compatible and accumulative with other rights that may arise from the

research developed, without negatively affecting the rights of the joint effort when the awardee participates in or is associated with a joint research project.

4. To have possible industrial property rights regulated by Patent Law 24/2015, 24 July, and Royal Decree 55/2002, 18 January, governing the exploitation and license of rights on discoveries made in public research organisations. Said rights will not be linked to the grant.

IX. Responsibilities of Awardees

Awardees must:

1. Fulfil the terms and conditions established in this call, as well as the conditions regarding the internships established by the university where they are enrolled.
2. Perform their research activity under the supervision of a project supervisor at IRB Barcelona while the grant is effective. In addition, they must perform the activities foreseen in the research training and specialisation programmes of the Institute, as well as satisfactorily fulfil the objectives of the training programme.
3. Attend the activities and complementary training offered by the IRB Barcelona when the event is part of the training for the undergraduate community or any other activity recommended by the Academic Office.
4. Comply with the internal regulations of IRB Barcelona, particularly regarding working conditions and the prevention of occupational risks.
5. Send a summary report to the Academic Office (academicoffice@irbbarcelona.org) and also to the project supervisor upon completion of the programme.
6. Inform IRB Barcelona in advance of their participation in the authorship of any publication or communication related to the work performed under the current call.
7. Inform IRB Barcelona if they receive other grants or funding.
8. Comply with the regulations derived from the "internship agreement" between the university, IRB Barcelona and the awardee.

X. Termination of grants

The grants will be revoked if the awardee has withheld or provided falsified information.

The grant will also be revoked if the awardee does not fulfil the responsibilities described in clause IX.

XI. Incompatibility

Awardees will be devoted exclusively to the research or technical training and specialisation activities defined in this call. The grants included in this call are not compatible with any other grant or fellowship for undergraduate internships from any public or private organisation.

XII. Data Protection

Following Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation), Organic Law 3/2018 of December 5, and other applicable regulations governing personal data protection, any personal data provided by applicants will be incorporated into the Academic file of IRB Barcelona, for which the Institute is the data processor. The purpose of keeping such data is to manage our relationship with applicants. Applicants may exercise the rights of access, rectification deletion, opposition, transfer and expiry, as well as limitation in data processing of said information by contacting the Institute at the following e-mail address: dataprotection@irbbarcelona.org, or by writing to the following postal address: C/ Baldiri Reixac, 10, 08028, Barcelona.

XIII. Dissemination

Any information regarding this grant will be placed on the announcement board on the IRB Barcelona web site.

XIV. Clarification

The Head of Human Resources and Academic Affairs Department of IRB Barcelona or designated representative will be responsible for clarifying queries regarding these terms and conditions.



Barcelona, 30 April 2026

Maribel Labrid
Head of Human Resources and Academic Affairs, IRB Barcelona

ANNEX 1. IRB Barcelona Research groups participating in the 2026 A Future in Biomedicine call

- [Amino Acid Transporters and Disease – Dr. Manuel Palacín and Dr. Joana Fort](#)

Project: Functional characterization of CD98hc isoforms in cancer cells

CD98hc (SLC3A2) is a membrane protein involved in amino acid transport and cell signalling, with an important role in cancer. Interestingly, this protein exists in multiple isoforms that have not yet been functionally studied. This project aims to investigate the biological role of CD98hc isoforms in human cancer cells, including their effects on cellular processes such as proliferation, adhesion and migration. The student will also explore how these isoforms interact with different protein partners, gaining exposure to basic molecular and cell biology techniques as well as data analysis.

- [Mitochondrial Biology and Tissue Regeneration - Dr. Ana Victoria Lechuga-Vieco](#)

Project: Mitochondrial control of CD8⁺ T cell exhaustion in cancer

This project aims to study how differences between mitochondria affect immune cell function in cancer. Mitochondria are very important for immune responses because they control cell metabolism and communication between cells. However, mitochondria are not all the same. Their variability comes from differences in mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), mitochondrial dynamics, and the presence of different mitochondrial subpopulations. These differences may influence how immune cells become activated and how they lose function over time. The project will focus on how mitochondrial diversity contributes to T cell exhaustion in the tumour microenvironment. It will also explore how metabolite-related communication between cells affects tumour-immune interactions, including CD8⁺ T cell cytotoxicity, antigen presentation, and the progressive loss of effector function. Using in vitro, ex vivo and in vivo models, the work will analyse how metabolic signals and mitochondrial function drive T cell dysfunction in melanoma and fibrosarcoma tumor models.

The project will include training in several techniques such as cell culture and co-culture systems, flow cytometry (immunometabolic profiling), immunofluorescence, mitochondrial functional assays, and basic methods for mtDNA analysis and metabolomics. There will also be exposure to data analysis and interpretation of multi-omics data. In addition, attendance to seminars and workshops in immunometabolism, mitochondrial biology, and cancer research will be encouraged.

Overall, this project aims to contribute to new strategies to improve immune responses by targeting mitochondria.