



Internal procedures for the distribution of funds associated with the María de Maeztu Strategic Research Program - Grant CEX2021-001195-M funded by MCIN/AEI /10.13039/501100011033

Openly available in the program website <https://www.upf.edu/web/mdm-dtic/>, research section Approved by the Scientific Board members of the MdM program (guarantors), meeting 23/02/23, and Executive Board, meeting 27/02/23.

The implementation of this Program will adhere to the established standards and regulations of both the university and the department within their respective domains of responsibility. For aspects not explicitly addressed by these existing regulations, this document outlines the specific procedures governing the strategic research program, which is funded under the Spanish Research Agency's recent call.

Existing regulations and procedures

- The University's overarching framework for activity execution, including financial management and personnel recruitment, is accessible on its main website.
- Specific departmental implementation guidelines for these regulations, covering financial, administrative, and recruitment aspects, are available to all members via the department's intranet.
- The department's PhD fellowship program details the specific contractual conditions for the recruitment of PhD fellows.

Internal call

The primary objective of this new MdM Strategic Research Program (SRP) is to leverage the unit's expertise in both artificial and natural intelligence. This expertise will support research initiatives with an ICT component that intersect with other UPF disciplines or contribute to the Planetary Wellbeing Initiative. This effort aims to expand the unit's influence by fostering interdisciplinary synergies across the university, particularly with the Planetary Wellbeing Initiative, ultimately advancing towards transdisciplinary research. This approach recognizes that complex societal challenges often require transdisciplinary solutions.

A secondary strategic goal is to enhance the unit's role in local and international innovation ecosystems while upholding its commitment to open science. The MdM SRP will achieve this by improving the identification of KERs and implementing new policies to facilitate their transfer.

Project selection and funding

Internal calls will establish the framework for incorporating existing research and innovation lines, supervised by Project PIs, which form the core of the MdM SRP's implementation. These lines may receive co-funding from MdM funds to align their execution with the SRP's objectives. The outcome of these calls will be the formation of the MdM SRP research team, comprising the Scientific Director (SD), the Direction Board, and the Project PIs.

These calls enable the MdM SRP's Executive Direction to anticipate funding needs throughout the program's duration. Should funds remain after the initial calls, new calls may be issued during the execution period to allow additional faculty members to join.

The Executive Direction will engage with candidate Project PIs to ensure project alignment with the MdM SRP's defined impact indicators. The selected projects will constitute the core of the SRP's





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implementation, with details published on the program's website and validated by the MdM SRP's Scientific Board.

Selected projects will be incorporated into the MdM SRP's specific research plan. The use of funds will be determined individually during project execution, based on their relevance to the MdM SRP's goals and execution success. This implies that project inclusion guarantees a preliminary reservation of funds, with specific usage executed as the program develops.

Progress evaluation

The Executive and Scientific Boards will closely monitor all projects within their respective areas of responsibility. Regular quarterly meetings of the overall MdM SRP and scheduled events will serve as key evaluation milestones.

General Policies

The Department's administrative support section handles recruitment procedures, widely publicizing openings on specialized and general job boards and distribution lists. All departmental selection processes, from CV assessment to interviews, are conducted in English, adhering to principles of merit-based recruitment and equal opportunities for all genders and minorities. UPF is the first Spanish university to receive the "HR Excellence in Research" accreditation from the European Commission, recognizing its commitment to fair and transparent recruitment and appraisal procedures aligned with the "Charter & Code."

PhD positions

MdM SRP funding for PhD positions primarily strengthens existing PhD training mechanisms (general and interdisciplinary fellowships). While the program aims for flexibility, exceptions to full MdM funding for PhDs may be accepted for specific projects with adequate justification, such as short-term support before a candidate enters a regular PhD fellowship program. Each faculty member may receive support for a maximum of one PhD position per call. As per funder requirements, one FPI grant will be assigned to each departmental research line, with priority given to candidates already accepted into the PhD program. The unit has established mechanisms to assess PhD students' scientific quality, and no new overarching monitoring mechanism will be created for their progress.

Other positions

Opportunities for postdoctoral researchers, technical support, and undergraduate/postgraduate students to work on MdM projects are provided, especially if they foster collaboration between UPF departments. Given potential variability, specific conditions are determined on a case-by-case basis, considering their contribution to MdM SRP goals and prior practices within the involved research team.

Bonuses ("complementos salariales") for permanent **are not funded** by the MdM SRP.

Other expenses

The MdM SRP co-funds expenses associated with the implementation of the projects, within the limitations set by the funding agency and with the previous approval of the MdM management bodies. It is not guaranteed to refund any cost which has not been previously approved by them. All activities will require the clear acknowledgement of the financial support of the MdM program (reference CEX2021-001195-M).



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Examples may include:

- Conference costs: only for the presentation of results in peer-reviewed conferences and when the work includes the acknowledgement “This work is part of Maria de Maeztu Units of Excellence Programme CEX2021-001195-M, funded by MICIU/AEI /10.13039/501100011033”
- Travel: trips required for the execution of the project, such as meetings with partners or relevant dissemination activities such as the organization of tutorials in international conferences. Detailed agendas and minutes are requested.
- Invited speakers and visitors: the MdM foresees the invitation of international speakers along its duration to support the implementation of the program:
- The MdM SRP may co-fund speakers involved in the current seminar series, with the limitations already defined for them in internal policies.
- For the organization of special events linked to the evaluation and dissemination of the MdM SRP activities, the MdM SRP funds the associated travel costs (with the limitations set by the funding agency for daily allowances, transportation, etc) and a fee of 1.000 EUR to the speaker.
- Visiting research to work during a period at the unit, directly contributing to the advancement of the program. Minutes of these visits are requested.
- Equipment: required for the execution of the program.
- Dissemination and Outreach: the MdM SRP program includes a number of transversal activities. Costs associated with their execution, within the limitations set by the funding agency and UPF, are accepted. The actions must include the acknowledgement of the financial support.
- Subcontracting of services: specialized services such as advice in legal aspects linked to commercialisation may be subcontracted to external entities, following all the applicable legislation.
- Participation in activities of the SOMMA alliance and the organisation of shared events with this community.

Scientific Advisory Board

The scientific advisory board was created in November 2013, and its regulation is defined within the Research Commission of the Department (including the members and the periodicity of the visits). The MdM SRP validates the specific research initiatives being proposed to be carried out and evaluates the research results funded by the MdM SRP as part of the overall evaluation of the department. This board also helps to promote international research collaborations and their contribution in activities promoted by the MdM SRP may be sought. Costs related to the visit may be supported by the MdM, following the internal rules of the department.

