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# **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2023**

## **Paediatric cancer research: creation of senior international Chairs**

### **PEDIAchaire23**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS: 04 July 2023 – 4 p.m.**

**Online submission of electronic applications:**

<https://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Appels-a-projets-en-cours/PEDIAchaire23>

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# 1 Context and objectives of the call for applications

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Every year, approximately 2,300 children and adolescents under 18 years of age are affected by cancer in France, accounting for around 1% of all diagnosed cancers.

Today, thanks to the findings of fundamental research and the resulting medical progress, 8 out of 10 children recover. However, cancer remains the leading cause of death in children aged over 1 year. Moreover, two-thirds of children who recover from cancer suffer from sequelae linked with the disease and the treatments administered.

Since 2019, fundamental paediatric cancer research has been awarded an additional annual budget earmarked for this topic. This funding, aimed at stepping up oncopaediatric research, reinforces the efforts of the French government, which has made research in paediatric cancer care a priority.

In this context, and with a view to enlisting and coordinating the best research teams working in different scientific fields around paediatric cancers, a number of types of national structure have already been funded and set up by the French National Cancer Institute, particularly through funding of research team federations and consortia.

Within the scope of the new additional funding for 2022 earmarked for paediatric cancers and with a view to continuing this process of boosting research in childhood cancers, it would appear to be critical to enhance the expertise already available in the country, **by hosting top-ranking researchers (French or other nationalities) based abroad**. This would represent additional new support, which could potentially have a significant impact on oncopaediatric research.

The objective of this call for application is therefore to enable senior researchers **to move or return to France, form their team, and develop an ambitious research programme in a French research structure**.

The **fundamental and/or translational research** programmes developed should be **original and innovative** and will cover a **5-year term**.

The proposed budget is a **maximum of €2.25 million per Chair**. **The Chairs created will be earmarked for setting up a research programme with no associated teaching activity**.

**A maximum of two applications (i.e. set-up of team and associated programme) will be funded.**

**Host research institutions meeting the eligibility conditions (see sections 2 and 3) and interested in setting up a Chair are invited to contact eligible applicants (see sections 2 and 3) via their network.**

**Interested applicants are also invited to link up with host institutions capable of hosting them to set up the Chair. Application files should be validated jointly by both parties.**

## 2 Terms of reference of applications

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### 2.1 Candidate

This call for applications “Paediatric cancer research: creation of senior international Chairs” is aimed at **all researchers working abroad, regardless of nationality**.

Applicants must have a **degree of experience in paediatric cancer research**, as indicated by recognised scientific productions in this research field (evidenced by scientific publications in high-impact peer-reviewed journals). They must have the necessary skills to conduct research autonomously (obtaining funding, coordinating teams around a project, publishing and scientifically transferring findings, filing patents, etc.).

Applicants must also have extensive knowledge of **current issues oncopaediatric research**.

This call for applications is open **solely** to senior researchers who must have at least 15 years’ experience since being awarded a doctorate in science.

The applicant must undertake to devote 100% of their time to the developed programme.

### 2.2 Programmes to develop and team

The programmes developed can be fundamental or translational research programmes. Therefore, the transfer aspect to a short-term clinical application is not absolutely necessary. The level of potential impact of the envisaged programmes on paediatric oncology research must be high.

In order to ensure programme feasibility, the programmes must be designed to match the technical environment of the host institution. The programmes must also provide substantial added value to the institution.

The call for applications **is open to all disciplines** (haemato-oncology, biology, cancer sciences, humanities and social sciences, etc.).

**No research theme is therefore imposed.**

Moreover, applications from medical researchers are encouraged.

To form their team, the Chairholder may:

- hire staff (see 5.2 - Eligible expenditure);
- welcome personnel making an internal mobility;
- set up collaborations involving staff already working in the host institution.

The Chair and the team formed will be affiliated with the applicant’s host institution.

## 2.3 Host institution

The applicant's host institution **must undertake to ensure optimal hosting conditions**. Access to technological platforms must be provided and a workspace of at least 50 m<sup>2</sup> must be assigned and match the programme's specific needs.

Furthermore, provision of financial assistance by the host institution, facilitating the hosting of the applicant, in addition to the grant is strongly encouraged. This additional assistance must help fund overheads, in particular, during the first year of the Chair's term.

**The applicant and the host institution must agree on the terms in respect of hosting and implementing the programme and undertake to adhere to these terms in the event of the application being selected.**

## 3 Application procedure

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### 3.1 Applicant eligibility

**At the time of application submission, all applicants must:**

- have at least 15 years' experience since being awarded their doctorate in science, and undertake to remain working until the end of the term of the Chair;
- be working abroad.

### 3.2 Programme coordination

The programme will be coordinated by **a single person (i.e. the applicant)**.

In addition to their scientific and technical role, the applicant will be responsible for implementing the programme, producing the required documents (scientific and financial reports), organising meetings, progress, transferring and communicating findings.

### 3.3 Host institution and grant recipient institution

The host institution is the grant recipient and must belong to the following institutions:

- Public research institutions (university, public scientific and technical research establishment [EPST], industrial and commercial public undertaking [EPIC], etc.);
- Healthcare institutions (university hospitals (CHU) or cancer control centres (CLCC)).

An agreement will be drawn up between the Institute and this institution which will receive the grant to create the Chair. The terms of use of the funds will be set out in the agreement.

In accordance with Section 2, the host institution must ensure optimal hosting conditions for setting up the applicant and their team, and for running their programme.

The recipient institution is responsible with regard to the French National Cancer Institute for the progress of the programme, for submitting all scientific and financial reports, and for the prompt transfer of funds to the newly formed team by the applicant.

### 3.4 Term of the Chair

The term of the Chair is 60 months.

## 4 Selection procedure and evaluation criteria

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### 4.1 Selection process

In order to conduct the evaluation, the Institute relies on an international scientific evaluation committee (EC), whose reviewer members are recognised for their scientific and medical expertise in the research field, particularly in paediatric cancers.

Before they can conduct the evaluation, the reviewers undertake, via the PROJECTS portal, to:

- . Comply with the requirements of the Institute's code of ethics, available to view at: <http://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Deontologie-et-transparence-DPI/Acteurs-de-l-evaluation-de-projet> ;
- . Keep the documents and information to which they shall have access confidential;
- . Declare any direct or indirect links that they may have with the applications to be evaluated.

The membership of the evaluation committee is published following the call for applications evaluation process.

The main stages in the procedure for selecting applications are as follows:

- . **Checking of admissibility and eligibility criteria:** the Institute checks that the applications submitted meet the criteria set out in the call for applications document;
- . **Evaluation of applications:** the applications will be evaluated in two stages:
  - based on the application files;
  - via an audition before the EC, for applications preselected by reviewers, EC members.

The members of the EC evaluate the applications;

- ⇒ The members of the EC collectively discuss the quality of the applications;
- ⇒ The EC proposes a list of applications to be funded;

**Results:** the Institute's decision and publication of results.

## 4.2 Admissibility

The complete application file must be submitted by the deadline (see section 6) and in the required format (see section 7).

All of the requested documents must be included in the application file.

The application description file will be written in English.

Applications meeting all the administrative criteria for admissibility will be considered by the evaluation committee on the basis of the files and interviews.

## 4.3 Eligibility

- The application must meet the objectives and comply with the terms of reference of this call for applications (see section 1 and section 2);
- The duration of the research programme must be 60 months;
- The applicant may only submit one application for this call for applications;
- The same application may not be submitted in response to more than one call for proposals from the Institute at the same time;
- The same application may only be submitted to other funding bodies once the coordinator has been notified by the Institute of the decision not to select the application under the call for applications;
- The applicant must not be a member of the EC for this call for applications;
- The application files must be clearly structured and drafted, and comply with the submission procedure featured in section 7. For the attachments, it is recommended to use a page layout which makes the documents easy to read. Because the evaluation is international, the complete programme and the attachments must be written in English, the French version is optional (except for the programme summary for the general public for which a French version is required);
- The forms should include all information needed to carry out an overall assessment of the quality of the programme, including statistical analyses, logistic aspects where these are important for the proper performance of analyses, and specific justification of the requested budget.

## 4.4 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria will cover:

### **The applicant and the host institution:**

- . Applicant's proven experience and major scientific contributions in oncopaediatrics (particular emphasis shall be placed on the key articles published by the applicant proving their expertise in this field);
- . Ability and role in effective supervision of a research team;
- . Ability to fund their team's research activities by responding to international calls for proposals;

- . Applicant's qualities and expertise in relation to the objectives of the programme;
- . Suitability between the applicant's profile and the research institution with a view to carrying out the programme;
- . Applicant's added value for the hosting institution;
- . Hosting provisions and conditions provided by the hosting institution;
- . Additional financial support proposed by the host institution, where applicable.

**The programme:**

**Scientific quality:**

- . Excellence in relation to current scientific knowledge;
- . Innovative aspects of the research programme;
- . Relevance of the programme in relation to current oncopaediatric issues;
- . Position of the programme in the national and international context;
- . Clarity of the objectives;
- . Perspectives of national and/or international collaborations

**Methodology and feasibility:**

- . Methodological quality and relevance of the technologies envisaged;
- . Suitability and justification of the proposed schedule in relation to the objectives of the programme;

**Financial feasibility:**

- . Human resources allocated to the programme;
- . Credibility and justification of co-funding, if applicable;
- . Suitability and justification of requested funding in relation to the objectives of the programme.

## 5 General provisions and funding

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### 5.1 Grant regulation

Funding shall be assigned according to the provisions of Regulation No. 2020-01, regarding grants allocated by the French National Cancer Institute, available to view at: <http://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Reglement-des-subventions>.

The Chairholder and the legal representative of the grant recipient institution must undertake to adhere to this regulation as follows:



- . The applicant registers their commitment directly via the PROJECTS portal in the “undertakings” section of the application (click-validated signature<sup>1</sup>);
- . the legal representative of the grant recipient institution must complete and sign (handwritten) the “undertakings” form available for download on the PROJECTS portal. The applicant must then submit all the scanned forms in the “undertakings” section of the application via the PROJECTS portal.

## 5.2 Eligible expenditure

The Institute grants, for **€2.25 million** may fund:

- . **personnel costs** and particularly some or all of the future team lead’s and Chairholder’s remuneration. This term must be validated in agreement with the host institution.  
Funding for postdoctoral fellows, technicians and/or engineers may be requested, but PhD students are not eligible for funding.
- . **consumables and operating costs**, particularly:
  - consumables associated with conducting the project (minor equipment, laboratory product, tests) apart from office consumables which fall under the category of management costs;
  - intellectual property costs in respect of patents or licences arising from conducting the programme;
  - costs related to publishing the results of funded projects, including, for example, any additional costs applied for the publication of open access articles;
  - travel or business expenses in respect of permanent or temporary staff assigned to the programme (conferences, seminars, CRA/CTT monitoring, etc.);
  - organisational costs in respect of meetings, seminars linked with the programme and within the term of the programme (room hire and equipment hire) apart from reception costs which fall under the category of management costs;
  - services: the grant recipient can request the services of third parties outside the programme;
  - receipted expenses according to an internal invoicing procedure: these expenses correspond to services provided by one of the recipient’s entities (department, division), subject to a price list and accounting records. This internal invoicing must be in proportion to the actual use of services for the needs of the programme;
- . **equipment** capped at €150,000 including taxes. This €150,000 cap applies to individual items of equipment (and not to the total amount spent on

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<sup>1</sup> Click-validated signature which, in accordance with the general terms of use of the PROJECTS Portal, has the same validity as a handwritten signature and is deemed to be a legal undertaking to comply with the regulation.

equipment). In addition, the total amount spent on equipment may not exceed 30% of the amount of the grant allocated by the Institute;

- . **overhead costs:** capped at 8% of the total cost of eligible expenditure (personal costs, operating costs, equipment) actually paid. The management costs are flat-rate and cover:
  - the general administrative costs associated with administrative management and programme follow-up (such as, in particular, the administrative time allocated to fund transfer agreements, tracking of funding of participating teams), purchases of office consumables, stationery, etc.;
  - Reception costs in respect of meetings, conferences and seminars (food trays, cocktail reception).

The grant paid by the Institute must be used by the grantees for the sole purpose of conducting the programme identified in the grant allocation agreement.

### **5.3 Activity report and financial report**

Each Chairholder will undertake to provide scientific activity reports and a financial report as per the terms defined in the grant regulation.

The midway (30 months) report will be supplemented by a mandatory interview of the Chairholder, by members of the evaluation committee (EC). They will review the progress and will issue, if required, recommendations for the successful implementation of the programme.

### **5.4 Cumulative funding**

A programme submitted in the context of several calls for applications or proposals may only obtain one funding grant (except in the event of co-funding clearly defined in the application), irrespective of the funding body, unless explicitly approved in advance by the bodies concerned.

In the event that cumulative funding is observed, the Institute reserves the right to stop funding the programme and request repayment of the sums paid.

### **5.5 Communication in relation to the funded programme**

Within the framework of the national open-access science plan, the grant recipient institution and the Chairholder must make sure to:

- . Provide abstracts (scientific and general) of the drafted research programme which will be published on the Institute's website;
- . Prioritise publications in open-access journals or publications. Failing that, the recipient and the team involved in the programme undertake to submit the scientific publications resulting from the funded research programmes to an open-access archive;
- . Enter and update a data management plan on the DMP OPIDoR portal: <https://dmp.opidor.fr/> according to the same frequency as for the submission of activity reports defined in the grant allocation agreement. The grant allocation agreement shall recall the schedule and the procedure for submitting this data management plan. Specifics available

at the following address: (<https://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Reglement-des-subsidations/Plan-de-gestion-de-donnees> ) ;

- . Mention the Institute's financial support in any publication, regardless of format (particularly articles, abstracts), produced in the context of the programme. Such mention must cite the programme's unique and scientific ID obtained from the PROJECTS portal.

## 6 Schedule

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Publication of the call for applications February 2023

Deadline for submission of the application file 4 July 2023 – 4:00 p.m.

Evaluation committee meeting and interview October 2023

Publication of results November 2023

## 7 Submission procedures

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### 7.1 Submission procedure: PROJECTS portal

Applications are submitted directly via the PROJECTS portal: <https://projets.e-cancer.fr>

**Create/activate account:** to login, use your reference email as your login on the PROJECTS portal home page.

- . If you have not yet registered, create your account and enter your contact details and work profile.
- . If you are already registered, a message will be displayed indicating that your email address already exists. In this case, simply click on "Forgot password?" and follow the instructions.
- . Finally, if you think that you are already registered and your email address is not recognised, contact us at the address: "assistanceprojets@institutcancer.fr".

**Application file submission:** all application files must be submitted solely under the candidate's name and contact details. Applications submitted under another name/email address shall be **inadmissible**.

### 7.2 Application file:

The applicant logs onto their account in the PROJECTS portal and:

- They enter the data requested online (supplementary sections);
- They submit the documents required for submission:

- programme description in the “Programme overview” section;
- projected budget in the “financial appendix – projected budget” section;
- Supplementary attachments to the application may be added, in the “Programme description” section, under “Supplementary attachments”. N.B. each document must contain the application number received upon submitting the application.

Validation/submission: the final validation requires a review to ensure the data is complete, clicking on “final submission” generates an email acknowledging receipt and confirming file submission.

**N.B.** once validated, you will no longer be able to return to the contents of your file.

## 8 Publication of results

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Results will be sent to the application proposers. The list of funded Chairs will be published on e-cancer.fr, the French National Cancer Institute’s website.

## 9 Contacts

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You can contact us if you require further information on:

➤ **Scientific matters:**

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