

Call for Projects TALENTS 2027

Deadline: November 16, 2026

Presentation of the call

1. CONTEXT

As part of the I-SITE Excellence Program (PEI) of the University of Montpellier (UM) and the France 2030 Investment Program, the University has aimed for each Research Pole to develop ambitious, long-term scientific actions, known as “Long Thematic Projects” (PTL). In this context, the UM Chemistry Research Pole proposes a PTL centered around the theme “**Chimie durAble pouR La Santé**”, CARLA, which will fund projects in the fields of health and the environment, placing sustainable development at the heart of their scientific approach. Sub-themes, crucial for addressing societal challenges, have been defined within the PTL CARLA (See Appendix).

2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The TALENTS call for projects is based both on the **selection of ambitious, breakthrough scientific projects** led by faculty members and researchers (EC/C) within the Chemistry Research Pole, and on the **recruitment of high-potential candidates** who may apply for prestigious funding (ERC, PF-MSCA, etc.) and/or academic or research positions (EC/C). To support the career development of the recruited early-career researchers, mentoring activities will also be implemented.

Accordingly, **2 fixed-term Researcher contracts (CDD), each for a duration of 18 months**, covering the thematic axes of the PTL (See Appendix), will be funded. These early-career researchers will be recruited under a fixed-term project contract (Articles L332-24 to L332-26 of the French Civil Service Code). In addition, each contract will include an **€8,000 budget**, primarily intended to cover travel expenses aimed at enhancing the international visibility of the laureate's work and, where appropriate, to contribute to the funding of specific equipment required for the project. The applications of candidates for the fixed-term Researcher contracts proposed by the laureates of the call for projects will be reviewed and approved by the PTL Steering Committee (COFIL).

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- This call for projects is restricted to teams within the main perimeter of the Chemistry Research Pole (IBMM, ICGM, ICSM, IEM).
- The project must align with the PTL CARLA themes (See Appendix) and meet the PTL's ambition.

4. SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects will be evaluated primarily according to the following criteria:

- Project quality
- The project's credibility in achieving its objectives and leading to an application for prestigious funding by the recruited candidate.
- Impact on the ecological transition and sustainable development objectives, in accordance with the UM SDTE¹.
- Identifying, at the application stage, a candidate who meets the ambitions of the PTL and the scientific strategy of the project leader will be considered an asset. The candidate for the fixed-term Researcher contract will be evaluated for approval by the PTL Scientific Committee.

¹ Ecological Transition Master Plan

5. FUNDING AMOUNT AND FINANCING TERMS

Each selected project will receive funding covering 18 months of salary at INM 596, i.e.

€82.39K per fixed-term contract, together with an €8,000 operating/travel budget.

All expenses must be incurred exclusively for the selected project, in accordance with the UM administrative framework and the eligibility conditions of this call for projects. Any amount incurred by the institutes outside the selected project, or any unspent amount, will be reclaimed from the institute.

6. CALL FOR PROJECTS TIMELINE

Opening of the call for projects

September 2026

Submission deadline

November 16, 2026 at 12:00 pm

Review by the COPIL of applications for fixed-term Researcher contracts proposed by the laureates for approval

February 1–15, 2027

Announcement of results

March 2027

Start of fixed-term contracts

On a rolling basis, before the end of 2027

7. COMMITMENTS OF THE PROJECT LEADER

- Promote gender parity and equality between women and men during the candidate selection process;
- Display the UM and FRANCE 2030 logos on all documents relating to the implementation of the project;
- Submit to the PTL coordination team, no later than 2 months after the end of the project, a scientific report that may be used in UM communication materials, according to a template provided by the PTL;
- Systematically apply the UM publication affiliation guidelines;
- Comply with provisions relating to open science and the French Law for a Digital Republic (open-access publication). Project leaders from laboratories under UM supervision must deposit the full text of publications in the HAL-UM open archive(<https://hal.umontpellier.fr/>);
- Where applicable, take the necessary steps to obtain the research authorizations/approvals required in regulated sectors (Nagoya Protocol, genetically modified organisms, use of animals for scientific purposes, health data, use of genetic resources and sharing of resulting benefits, bioethics, etc.);
- In designing and implementing the project submitted under this call for projects, comply with the values and principles of scientific integrity intended to ensure the honesty and scientific rigor of all research work, as referred to in Article L.211-2 of the French Research Code and set out in the French National Charter for Research Integrity and the University of Montpellier (UM) Charter on Scientific Integrity.

8. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The application form must be sent to the Director of the relevant research unit for a reasoned opinion. The Director will forward all proposals from the unit by email before the submission deadline to hala.bachour-haddad@umontpellier.fr. The project must be written in English or French and submitted in PDF format.

The form must be submitted using the following file name: Acronym_LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME

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APPENDIX

The CARLA project draws on the combined expertise of the Institutes of the Chemistry Research Pole (ICGM, IBMM, IEM, ICSM) and also benefits from the technological support provided by the Pole platform (UAR 2041). Its objective is to highlight three key sub-themes addressing the societal challenges outlined above. These themes range from the eco-design of drugs and biocides with a low environmental impact, to the creation of tailor-made materials and devices, and to reducing the impact of current and legacy chemistry on human health and the environment (Figure 1).

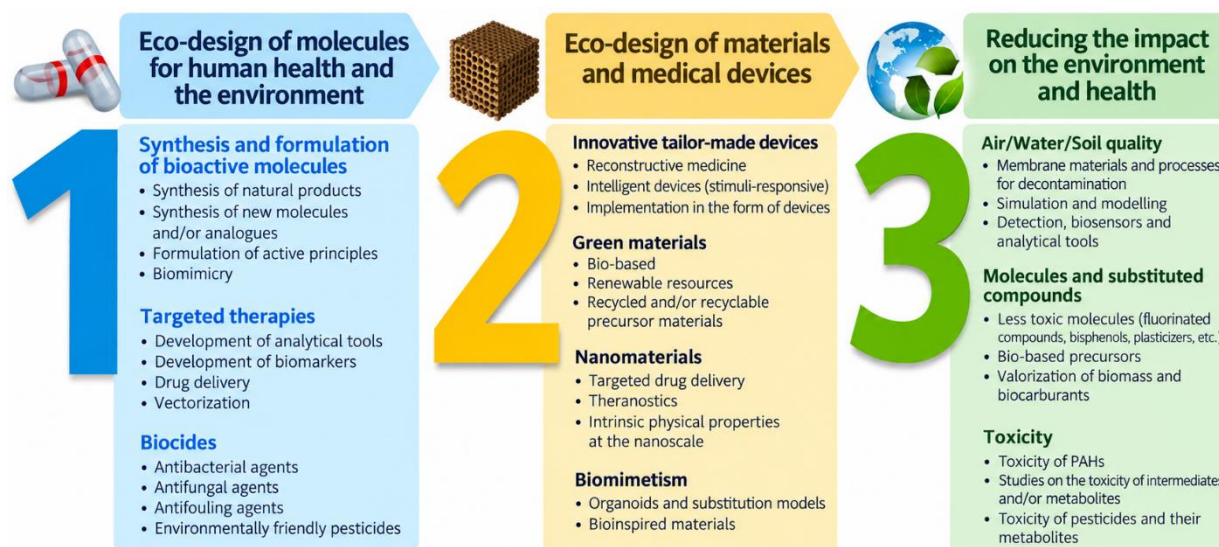


Figure 1. Presentation of the three sub-themes of the “Sustainable Chemistry for Health” PTL.

Eco-design of molecules for human and environmental health.

Within this research axis, multi-step synthesis and medicinal chemistry will be developed to design molecules that are both beneficial to health and respectful of the ecosystem. This includes targeted therapy, based on controlled release of bioactive molecules, biomarker development, and the application of vector-based targeting techniques. The sustainable chemistry dimension must be strengthened within this axis, particularly by reducing energy consumption, limiting harmful chemical precursors, and reducing solvent use. In doing so, the ambition of this axis is to bring together medicinal chemistry, green chemistry and sustainable chemistry in order to make a significant contribution to improving human health and protecting our environment.

Eco-design of materials and medical devices.

Within this research axis, the eco-responsible creation of biomaterials and nanomaterials will be addressed while exploring their use in the design of innovative medical devices. Bio-based materials and materials derived from renewable resources for biomedical applications will be prioritized. In addition, to better address environmental concerns, biomimetic approaches will be emphasized in order to reproduce natural processes and create planet-friendly medical solutions.

Reducing the impact on the environment and health.

The main objective of this research axis is to minimize toxic effects on human health and the environment. Efforts will focus on decontamination using advanced membrane processes and on the use of state-of-the-art detection techniques. Particular attention will also be paid to replacing harmful molecules such as plasticizers or persistent pollutants. In this context, specific expertise will be developed to assess the toxicity of substitute molecules in living organisms.