

**Social
Observatory
of "la Caixa"**

SOCIAL
RESEARCH
CALL

2019

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**IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE
APPLYING TO THE 2019 SOCIAL RESEARCH CALL**

Please **read the entire rules** for participation document before submitting your application.

Proposals that do not comply with the **full requirements** described in the rules will automatically be rejected.

The same **strict format guidelines** will apply to all proposals. Proposals that do not comply with the format guidelines will automatically be rejected.

No flexibility or exceptions in relation to fulfilment of the criteria will be applied in any case.

Redress procedure will not be available at any stage of the process.

Preamble

Today’s social challenges are complex, systemic, interconnected and urgent, and require conceptual clarity and evidence-based analysis, together with open-mindedness and originality in exploring new ideas. Social research is a driver of human progress and it has a powerful and responsible role in broadening our understanding of the major challenges of today.

”la Caixa” Banking Foundation is committed to fostering the role of scientific research to better comprehend current and emerging social challenges in Spain. To do this, the Social Observatory of ”la Caixa” is launching a new open competitive call **to fund excellent, innovative and socially-oriented research projects, based on robust quantitative methodologies** to provide reliable knowledge for policy-makers and civil society.

In order to find the most innovative ideas, closely connected with social concerns and priorities, we also need to look and search differently. In this regard, we have designed a selection process aimed at overcoming the gap between science and society: a new panel of practitioners and stakeholders will assess the social relevance of proposed projects, while a panel of international academic experts will guarantee their scientific excellence, novelty and feasibility.

Furthermore, to ensure researchers can focus on what they do best, a special effort has been made to implement an easy and straightforward programme encompassing an effortless submission procedure and flexible use of the grant.

Finally, in order to keep the value of the research ideas at the core of the evaluation, applicants will remain anonymous until the last step of the selection process, in the pursuit of talent discovery and the avoidance of preconceived biases.

From this perspective, we would strongly encourage talented researchers who are moved by the desire to bring new understanding – by challenging, by questioning, and by putting forward new ideas – to participate in the ”la Caixa” Social Research call, joining us in our endeavours to make science valuable for society and helping us to reflect on the great challenges of our times.

1 Objectives and scope of the call

The Social Observatory of "la Caixa" is launching a new call for **excellent social research** projects that rely on data to provide robust quantifiable evidence and insights about current and emerging **social challenges in Spain** through an **original and innovative approach**.

This call is intended to promote social research projects based on sound **quantitative data analysis** to produce **reliable evidence** for policy decision-makers and practitioners, building bridges between science and society.

To do so, applicants are encouraged to think outside the box in the project conception, execution and data management, including exploitation of existing data sources or the generation of new data. Therefore, projects are expected to have an original perspective, use novel concepts, new methodologies and approaches and/or to be disruptive in management of data.

In this first edition of the call, "la Caixa" Banking Foundation will allocate up to **EUR 1,300,000** to support **13 social research projects of up to 24 months duration**. Awarded projects will be granted with a maximum of **EUR 100,000 each**. The call is intended to support high quality research that delivers outstanding and high-impact scientific contributions. In this regard, awarded projects are expected to deliver results through at least one scientific publication, a short dissemination article and one knowledge-brokering activity.

2 Call timeline



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Requirements for eligibility

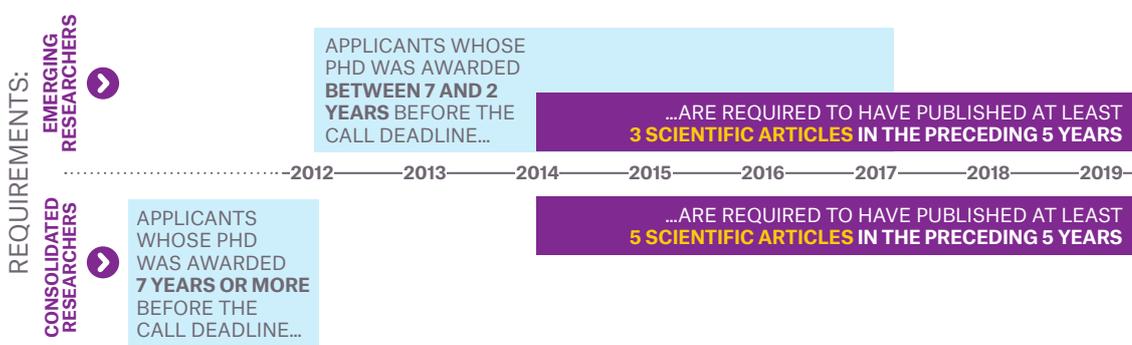
Any condition indicated in any of the sections of these rules for participation will be considered a requirement for eligibility, since full compliance with them is mandatory for all participants. Specifically, the following criteria need to be met:

Proposal

- 3.1 Data-driven methodology:** This call will fund data-driven research projects that help us to broaden our understanding on current and emerging social challenges in Spain using **quantitative methods**. The projects awarded with a grant must generate new evidence-based knowledge. Specifically, the research must involve existing data (including longitudinal, cross-national, administrative data); new data especially generated for the research project and/or new forms of data (such as internet data derived from social media and other online interactions or geographical information systems).
- 3.2 Innovative proposals:** The call encourages pioneering proposals introducing unconventional and **innovative approaches** in terms of a) proposed methodology, b) production or re-use of quantitative data and c) the social challenge to be analysed.
- 3.3 Defined scope:** The projects must be focused on **Spain**. In the case of comparative perspectives, Spain must be included in the analysis. Therefore, the data used to carry out the study must refer to Spain. Studies regarding subset units (such as regions, metropolitan areas, cities) within Spain are eligible as long as the results contribute to understanding the concepts in broader terms or the results are relevant, at least, to the entire country.
- 3.4 Social research:** Because social challenges are complex and require converging spheres of knowledge to provide comprehensive and innovative answers, the call is open to proposals from all disciplines focused on social issues as long as they fulfil all the requirements contained in these rules for participation. The research needs to be **socially-driven**: the core of the analysis must concern current or emerging social challenges, shedding light on social phenomena and providing a better understanding or measurement of social interactions.
- 3.5 The following proposals are excluded from this call:** social research projects without an empirical approach based on real data, literature reviews, pure theoretical approaches, social intervention projects (unless the intervention(s) itself constitutes the research object of a quantitative analysis), design of courses and materials and any other proposals that differ from drawing up a research question(s) and testing hypothesis. In order to look for novel ideas and promote the generation of new research lines and knowledge, **proposals that imply the continuation of projects in the course of development**, or subsequent phases of projects the results of which have already been totally or partially disseminated, as well as projects having been funded (either through "la Caixa" or any other third-party grants) **will not be considered eligible** at the time of submission and may give rise to rejection during the life cycle of the granted project.

Principal investigator

- 3.6** The call is aimed to support proposals led by **individual researchers** (“PIs”) of any nationality who conduct their research activity at a public or private university or research centre legally based in Spain.
- 3.7** The call is open to researchers who can demonstrate **research independence and evidence of prior achievements**. For this reason, applicants (PIs) need to meet the following requirements:
- » **Emerging researchers:** applicants whose PhD was awarded between 7 and 2 years before the call deadline (i.e. between 13th June 2017 and 13th June 2012) are required to have published at least 3 scientific articles in the preceding 5 years.
 - » **Consolidated researchers:** applicants whose PhD was awarded 7 years or more before the call deadline (i.e. before 13th June 2012) are required to have published at least 5 scientific articles in the preceding 5 years.



Only journals indexed in Scopus or Web of Science and journals recognized by FECYT will be considered for this purpose.

Should an applicant hold more than one PhD, the above-mentioned period will be counted from the degree awarded first.

Applicants whose PhD was awarded less than 2 years before the call deadline are not eligible.

- 3.8** In those cases of interruption of research activity between the date of the awarding of the PhD and the call deadline, the applicant may request an extension of such periods. To these effects, the following causes will be considered as an interruption of the research activity:
- » **Illness or accident** that had led to sick leave of three months or more. An extension may be requested for the number of justified months.
 - » **Maternity or paternity leave.** An extension of 1 year can be requested for each child.

The request must be duly justified by means of supporting documentation when required by "la Caixa" Banking Foundation.

3.9 Within the same call, **each applicant (PI) can only submit one single proposal**. Likewise, each proposal can only be submitted by one single applicant.

Similar proposals submitted by different applicants and applicants attempting to submit more than one proposal will be rejected from this call and the applicants concerned will not be allowed to participate in future calls and fellowships from "la Caixa" Banking Foundation.

3.10 Applicants awarded with a grant will not be allowed to submit new proposals in subsequent calls of the grant during the time the funded project is still being executed. By way of exemption, applicants may submit new proposals in subsequent calls of the grant during the final year of execution of the project.

Host institution

3.11 The host institution (the "HI") must be a non-profit research-performing organization: a public or private university or research centre legally based in Spain, which will sign **the grant agreement** with "la Caixa" Banking Foundation, together with the applicant, as PI of the project. As such, the HI needs to certify through explicit commitment, by means of a letter of commitment, its engagement of the PI for at least the duration of the project.

3.12 Specifically, the **host institution letter of commitment** will certify the endorsement of the proposed project and the commitment to signing the grant agreement with "la Caixa" Banking Foundation should the project be funded, and must be signed by both the legal representative of the HI and the PI and submitted by the former (see section 4). A specific template will be provided for this purpose.

3.13 The HI is required to offer the PI **independence to manage the project**. The HI must be willing to support the PI and the team members, if necessary, throughout the project period, providing an appropriate scientific and administrative environment for the project to be conducted.

3.14 Should the project be awarded with a grant, the **PI must be legally linked to the HI**, either by statute, work contract or other type of collaboration by the time the project starts and, at least, during the whole duration of the project.

4 Submission of proposals

4.1 In order to optimize the workload of applicants and evaluators, the submission of proposals is structured incrementally through a **two-stage procedure**:

- » **In the first stage**, a short proposal together with the HI letter of commitment needs to be submitted prior to the corresponding deadline through an online system available on the programme website.
- » **Successful preselected short proposals** are invited to submit a full proposal and to demonstrate the research capabilities of the PI and research team, if applicable.

FIRST STAGE

- » **Short proposal (3 pages):** Pitch your research question and hypothesis. Outline the objectives of the project, its scope and social challenge(s) addressed. Describe why your project is innovative and original. Briefly define the quantitative data used and methodology behind.



IMPORTANT: *The short proposal must be written for a **non-specialized audience**. The selection process will incorporate stakeholders from outside of academia.*

- » **Host institution letter of commitment:** submitted by the applicant.

SECOND STAGE

To proceed to the second stage, successful pre-selected proposals will be required to submit:

- » **Full proposal (15 pages):** Describe your research project in detail. Define the objectives of the project, its scope and social challenge(s) addressed. Explain in detail why your project is innovative and original. Trace with precision the research question(s) that your project is answering, describing the quantitative data and methodology behind.
- » **Capabilities (1 page):** Prove and highlight the suitability of yourself as PI and your team (if any) to carry out the project successfully. Consider any potential cooperating organizations if pertinent. Focus on synergetic value as much as individual performance.

- 4.2** Both short and full proposals will be **blind-reviewed**, therefore the short and full proposals must be **anonymous** and must not contain any information by which the identity of the applicant (PI), research group, or affiliation can be recognized. The letter of commitment and “Capabilities” document are exempted from this condition.

Proposals containing any information by which the identity of its members can be recognized will automatically be rejected.

- 4.3** Proposals must be written entirely in **English**. The whole process of submission and selection of applications, including the interview, will be carried out in English. Documents or statements must also be submitted in English.

- 4.4** **Templates** for each form will be available at the online submission platform as well as on the programme website. Proposals must strictly comply with the **format guidelines** indicated in the templates.

Proposals not abiding by the format guidelines will automatically be rejected.

- 4.5** The proposals must be completed with all the information and documents requested and submitted before the closing date of the call.

Incomplete proposals and/or proposals not complying with all requirements stated in these rules will automatically be rejected.

- 4.6** At the request of “la Caixa” Banking Foundation, the selected applicants will need to certify, with original or certified documents, the files and documents included in the application. Likewise, “la Caixa” Banking Foundation may request the original certificates of any data mentioned in the application.

Failing to provide such documents will automatically make projects ineligible even if they have successfully completed the entire selection process.

Applicants, by applying for the grant, acknowledge and agree in full to the content of these rules for participation.

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Evaluation process

5.1 Evaluation panels will be **multidisciplinary** and will be formed by independent experts combining both international and national profiles. With the aim of promoting social research that bridges science and society, **non-academic experts (practitioners and stakeholders)** will be incorporated in the first and final stages of the evaluation process.

THE EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS WILL PROCEED AS FOLLOWS:



⚠ 5.2 In the event that a proposal is dismissed at any stage of the selection process, **no redress or appeal procedure will be admitted.** The selection process will not be subject to redress nor will the technical and scientific assessment of the evaluators be called into question. The evaluation and selection processes in themselves guarantee the independence and objectivity of the evaluation.

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Funding and payments

- 6.1** The grant will be awarded to the host institution, which will be **responsible for distributing the budget** and justifying the destination of the funds received by "la Caixa" Banking Foundation. No funding will be granted to an individual.
- 6.2** The grant will fund projects with a maximum flat-rate amount of EUR 100,000 each (see section 7.4). Applicants **are allowed to use the grant in a flexible way as long as the expenses are incurred by the beneficiary and the funds are used to cover costs directly derived from the project**.
- 6.3** The payment schedule will be as follows:
- » **50%** of the grant at the start of the project. The starting date will be the date of the signing of the Grant Agreement with the HI.
 - » **30%** of the grant at the midline stage of the project, further to a follow-up report submitted the Programme Office of "la Caixa" Banking Foundation.
 - » **20%** of the grant after delivery of the outputs, (see section 7). The final payment will be released after submission of the scientific article to the corresponding indexed journal, approval of the dissemination article by the Social Observatory of "la Caixa" and justification of the allocation of the grant (including justification of the project's expenses).

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Responsibilities and project implementation

Outputs delivery

- 7.1** The funding scheme is highly focused on outputs that provide returns to society and science and that are of public value. Therefore, applicants who are awarded are expected to commit to three main outcomes:
- 1. Scientific Article:** The results of the project have to be published in the form of, at least, one article in an indexed journal. Only journals indexed with Scopus or Web of Science and journals recognized by FECYT will be considered for this purpose.
 - 2. Dissemination article:** In the form of a short article for lay audiences (Working Paper/Pre-print) that must be submitted to the Programme Office of "la Caixa" Banking Foundation at the end of the project. "la Caixa" Banking Foundation will be granted the right of publication of the dissemination article on the Social Observatory of "la Caixa" website and/or newsletter and/or any other dissemination channels of "la Caixa" Banking Foundation activities (see sections 7.11 and 7.12 for further details).
 - 3. Knowledge-brokering activity:** Applicants are expected to contribute and participate in one knowledge-brokering activity led and organized by "la Caixa" Banking Foundation. The implementation of such activities will be decided ad-hoc by the end of the project. The aim of this activity encompasses two dimensions: in the first place, knowledge brokering brings the scientific results of research to practitioners, policymakers and other relevant stakeholders in order to help them make informed decisions. Secondly, it helps researchers to discern and drive research priorities towards the challenges that are shaping society.

Use of the grant

- 7.2** The grant can be used in a flexible way, as long as it is fully allocated to cover costs directly derived from the project. **Eligible direct costs** are those costs which are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the development of the project and which can therefore be attributed to it directly. The grant allows for coverage of the costs of the PI, researchers and other staff (providing that a maximum of 10% of the grant can be used as additional remuneration only for PIs), travel costs, cost of goods and services, subcontracting and equipment. **Eligible indirect costs** (overheads) must not exceed 10% of the total amount of the grant.
- 7.3** The PI must provide a scientific-technical summary and justification of the costs incurred as well as any other additional information that "la Caixa" Banking Foundation may request, if deemed necessary, from the PI or the HI, which shall accordingly authorise each other for this purpose.
- 7.4** **In no case will the grant exceed the total costs of the project actually incurred by the HI.** Therefore, at the end of the project, "la Caixa" Banking Foundation will calculate the balance and issue the payment, if due, of any remaining amount of the grant. **Accordingly, if the costs actually incurred in the project were below the amount of the grant received, the HI will reimburse the amount paid in excess.** If the costs incurred in the project were above the amount of the grant, no increase of budget will be granted by "la Caixa" Banking Foundation.

Applicable policies and regulations

- 7.5** "la Caixa" Banking Foundation fosters the principles of **Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)**. These principles take into account gender equality in research and innovation (R&I), as well as other inclusion issues; open access to scientific results, ethics and research integrity and the engagement of social stakeholders in the design and performance of R&I.
- 7.6** Cases of **scientific misconduct** that may arise during the evaluation of a proposal and throughout execution of the project and the project outputs delivery, must be communicated immediately by the Host Institution to "la Caixa" Banking Foundation.
- 7.7** "la Caixa" Banking Foundation supports the principles of **open access**, following the principle of "as open as possible, as closed as necessary". With regard to scientific publications, HI and PI must follow the [open access policy of the "la Caixa" Banking Foundation](#).

Acknowledgments and dissemination rules

- 7.8** In all dissemination and communication of the project, "la Caixa" Banking Foundation will be mentioned as funding organization of the project. This shall be apply, if possible and unless "la Caixa" Banking Foundation requests otherwise, to all dissemination and communication actions, disclosures and activities, as well as to all equipment, infrastructure and main results funded by the grant. Communication and disclosure materials shall be submitted to "la Caixa" Banking Foundation for prior review and approval in writing.

- 7.9** Scientific articles and any other scientific communication published as a result of the grant must include the following text “*The project leading to these results has received funding from ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation under the project code <CODE ASSIGNED TO AWARDED PROJECTS>*”. PIs must notify ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation in advance of the publication of any such articles.
- 7.10** The logo of ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation and the reference to the contribution of ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation must appear in a way that is easily visible to the public and is sufficiently prominent (also taking into account the nature of the activity or the object), always subject to the prior revision and approval of ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation in writing. For this purpose, ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation authorises the use of the logo and may provide it in a digital format upon request.
- 7.11** ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation reserves the right (but shall not be bound) to publish and disseminate the results generated under the projects awarded with the grant and, in particular, the dissemination article mentioned in section 7.1.2. In any case, the publication or dissemination carried out by ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation will observe the right of the authors to be acknowledged as such.
- 7.12** In order to enable the publication and dissemination referred to in sections 7.1.2 and 7.11 above, the grant agreement will include the granting of exploitation rights in favour of ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation to the extent necessary for publishing, disseminating and translating the dissemination article through the Social Observatory of ”la Caixa” website and/or newsletter and/or any other dissemination channels of ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation activities, with no time limitation and on a worldwide basis.
- 7.13** Before applying for the grant, the PI must ensure that there are neither prior commitments nor third parties’ prior rights impeding compliance with this dissemination policy and, in general, with these rules for participation.

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Confidentiality. Privacy and data protection

- 8.1** The applicants authorize ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation to access, use and share the information of the proposals, including any and all documents referred to therein, whether submitted at the time of the application or at a later stage, for the purposes of this grant and to the extent necessary, including, but not limited to, the evaluation, selection and monitoring of the projects. The applicants confirm to ”la Caixa” Banking Foundation that such information and documentation can be shared and used for these purposes.

To the extent that the identifying and/or professional details of natural persons linked to the projects is provided in the application form and supporting documents, the applicants shall be understood to have informed those individuals regarding the information indicated in this clause and, where applicable, to have obtained the necessary consent of those persons for their inclusion in the proposals.

- 8.2** "la Caixa" Banking Foundation fully complies with the legislation in force in the field of personal data protection.
- 8.3** Any and all personal data collected within the framework of this call (including data submitted in the proposal) will be processed for the purpose of managing the participation of applicants in it, the basis of such processing being the management of the resulting relationship, and such data will be stored until the end of the applicable statutory limitation periods.
- 8.4** Personal data will only be communicated if required to comply with legal obligations. "la Caixa" Banking Foundation uses service providers (of technological and evaluation services) located outside the European Economic Area, with all those guarantees required by the applicable regulations. Data subjects can ask for more information and/or exercise their rights of access, rectification, erasure, restriction, portability and objection before the Data Protection Officer of "la Caixa" Banking Foundation at the postal address Avinguda Diagonal 621 – 629, 08028 Barcelona, or at the e-mail address dpd@fundacionlacaixa.org. Data subjects are also entitled to lodge a complaint before the Spanish Data Protection Agency.

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Additional remarks

- 9.1** All applicants (including, but not limited to, awarded applicants) guarantee that the projects (including, without limitation, the scientific and dissemination articles) comply and will comply with the applicable regulations and that they do not infringe nor will infringe any rights of third parties, including, but not limited to, intellectual/industrial property rights and/or prior commitments or agreements. In this regard, all applicants will hold the "la Caixa" Banking Foundation harmless from and against any damages resulting from any breach of this guarantee.
- 9.2** The submission of an application for this call implies all the applicants' express acceptance of these rules for participation as well as of the criteria and decisions that may be made by "la Caixa" Banking Foundation should questions arise on how to interpret the terms and conditions.
- 9.3** The PI shall ensure that any parties (legal or natural) involved in the projects are informed of these rules for participation and respect them to the extent applicable to them (e.g. the dissemination policy must be communicated to any co-authors of the dissemination article, if any).
- 9.4** The detection of non-compliance with these rules for participation, regardless of when they occur and the status of the application within the grant awarding process or the execution of the project, will entitle "la Caixa" Banking Foundation to reject the application or cancel the grant awarded.
- 9.5** Should the grantee not comply with the obligations established above, or with any other obligation included in these rules for participation, "la Caixa" Banking Foundation reserves the right to act as it may deem appropriate, which may include requesting reimbursement of the grant amounts.