

Impulscience®

RULES

2026

Article I. PURPOSE

As a family-run public-interest foundation since its creation in 1987, Fondation Bettencourt Schueller (hereinafter referred to as “**the Foundation**”) aims to “take talents to the top” to contribute to France’s success and influence. To this end, it researches, selects, supports, mentors and champions women and men who are rethinking our future in three fields that make a concrete difference to the common good: life sciences, arts and an inclusive society. With a philanthropic mindset, the Foundation takes action through prizes, donations, personalized support, effective communication and co-creation initiatives.

The Foundation has set the objective of making a lasting impact on the life science research ecosystem to boost the influence of French biomedical research and accelerate the innovation process.

The creation of **Impulscience**® supports this mission, drawing on the undeniable expertise of the European Research Council (ERC) in identifying and funding European basic research. This initiative aims to reward and support high-level researchers in France and boost the attractiveness of France as a research hub to retain and attract talents.

Impulscience supports high-level, mid-career life science researchers who are established as team leaders and hosted by French public research organizations. These researchers must have been selected during ERC calls for proposals and rated “A” after the second selection phase. Due to the lack of European funds, these candidate researchers will not have received ERC funding despite the quality of their applications.

Every year, Impulscience endowments are awarded to up to seven researchers by the Foundation’s Scientific Committee (hereinafter “**the Scientific Committee**”). This Committee selects laureates after a detailed examination of applications, followed by interviews of the candidates.

The endowment amounts up to €2.3 million for 5 years per laureate. This funding is broken down as follows:

- Endowment for the laboratory, including:
 - The researcher's salary, only if he/she has no permanent position
 - The overall budget for the laboratory's operations, allocated at the researcher's discretion: salaries (non-permanent researchers and students), equipment (provided that the purchase takes place within 30 months of the start of the project), subcontracting costs, and consumables
- A gross annual personal allowance for the researcher (up to €18,000, depending on the salary policy of the host institution), paid by the host institution
- Management expenses for the researcher's host institution (the support manager and recipient of the funds), set at a maximum of 10% of the total endowment– valid for all institutions in France

This support is individual and can be transferred to another institution by the researcher if the researcher decides to pursue work at another institution (up to the maximum funding remaining available and providing that the new host institution is linked to a French public research organization).

The researcher undertakes to dedicate to the supported project the percentage of working time stipulated in the corresponding ERC call for proposals (50% for Starting grants, 40% for Consolidator grants and 30% for Advanced grants).

The Impulsience endowment may be cumulated with other private or public funds for the same project, if authorized by the sources of funding, with the exception of ERC grants. For ERC calls for proposals, the laureate may submit an application for the same project supported by the Foundation, in line with ERC rules, if the Foundation's support ends at the latest 2 years after the deadline for the call for proposals, to avoid an overlap in funding.

These rules, available on <https://www.fondationbs.org/en/what-we-do/life-sciences/impulsience>, set out the prevailing terms and conditions for the 2026 endowment.

Article II. ELIGIBILITY

Impulsience is exclusively open to researchers who:

- Present an innovative life science research project
- Work as a team leader or a principal investigator within a research team in a public laboratory in France at the time of application or at the start of the project at the latest
- Applied and were shortlisted for an ERC Starting, Consolidator or Advanced grant 2025 (in any field of research: *Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Engineering, or Social Sciences and Humanities* but did not obtain funding despite the quality of their project (rated "A" at the end of Step 2 of the ERC evaluation, *reserve list* included)
- Successfully defended their PhD at least 5 and up to 25 years before January 1, 2026 (PhD thesis defended between January 1, 2001 and December 31, 2020). This eligibility window may be extended in some cases, upon presentation of evidence of:
 - Maternity leave (18 months per birth) or paternity leave (effectively taken) for all births before or after finishing a PhD
 - Long-term sick leave (>90 days) to recover from an illness or care for a family member (child, parent, spouse or sibling)

- National service
- For candidates who have both a medical or pharmacy degree (M.D. or PharmD) and a PhD in science, the date used to calculate the eligibility period is the date on which the first of these diplomas was awarded. An extension equivalent to the duration of the medical training carried out after obtaining the first of these diplomas (in medicine/pharmacy or science) may be granted, up to a maximum of 4 years.

The Foundation's Scientific Committee will evaluate the quality, innovation, risk taking and impact of the projects, as well as the abilities, creativity and enthusiasm of the project leaders during their presentations, in line with the spirit of the Foundation's actions.

Any researcher who has already been an Impulscience laureate may reapply, as long as the support from the Foundation ends by December 31, 2026.

Candidates must submit an online application form, available on the Foundation's website (<https://monespace.fondationbs.org>) from April 7, 2026. Application deadline is May 21, 2026, for candidates who responded to the ERC *Starting* or *Consolidator* 2025 calls. For candidates who responded to the ERC *Advanced* 2025 call, whose call results will be communicated in June 2026, the application deadline is June 22, 2026.

Article III. APPLICATION

(a) *Completing the application*

Once the outcome of the ERC call for proposals is announced, candidates who meet the eligibility criteria mentioned in Article II of this document may access the Impulscience online form on <https://monespace.fondationbs.org>. This form will be available starting on April 7, 2026.

Candidates must enter, in English, information on their research project as submitted in the ERC call for proposals. However, information about their scientific background may be updated. The information may be modified up to the submission deadline (May 21, 2026, for candidates who responded to ERC *Starting* or *Consolidator* calls, and June 22, 2026, for candidates who responded to the ERC *Advanced* call). The application must be completed by attaching the following documents, in PDF or JPEG format, to the online form in the dedicated place:

- These rules, dated and signed on page 8
- Step-2 Evaluation Report received after the deliberations of the ERC evaluation panels
- The project budget, as submitted to ERC call
- Doctoral degree certificate, clearly indicating the date of successful PhD defence, and any additional documents if the candidate requests an extension of the eligibility window
- The commitment found in Appendix 1 of these rules, completed (first page) and signed (last page) by the host institution. If the candidate is designated a Laureate by the Foundation's Scientific Committee, the committed host institution will receive the Impulscience funds and sign the Agreement. This institution may be different from the one mentioned in the ERC application.

For any questions, please contact us at sciences@fondationbs.org.

(b) *Submitting the application*

The application, duly completed and accompanied by the abovementioned documents, must be submitted through the online platform and validated electronically by May 21, 2026 at 23:59 (Paris time) for candidates who responded to ERC *Starting* or *Consolidator* calls, and by June 22, 2026 at 23:59 for candidates who responded to the ERC *Advanced* call. An acknowledgment of receipt will be sent by email to the candidate once the form is validated.

Only complete applications that include the application form and attachments, respect the conditions required by these rules and are submitted online by the closing date will be considered.

If the application is considered ineligible after verification of its compliance with these rules, a notification of ineligibility will be sent by email to the candidate. Any false statements will disqualify the application outright.

Article IV. CONDITIONS FOR EXAMINING APPLICATIONS

(a) *Examination of the eligibility of applications*

The Scientific Secretariat will examine the applications to verify their eligibility and compliance with the conditions set out in these rules. Complete, eligible applications will then be forwarded to the Scientific Committee, which will shortlist the candidates according to the following criteria:

(b) *Selection criteria for applications:*

In a plenary meeting, the Scientific Committee will evaluate each candidate on the following criteria:

- The candidate's excellence and the fit between the researcher's expertise, career and project
- The originality, ambition, creativity and risk taking involved in the scientific project
- The feasibility and consistency of the proposed approach
- The project's impact on the field of human health
- The candidate's enthusiasm, energy and creativity, in line with the Foundation's mindset ("taking talents to the top")

The Scientific Committee's decisions are final and confidential and not subject to any challenges or appeals of any nature by the candidate, as acknowledged by the candidate when submitting an application.

(c) *Candidate presentations*

The shortlisted candidates will present individually to the Scientific Committee in a plenary meeting. The candidate will have thirty (30) minutes to present the project and answer questions from the Scientific Committee. In this presentation, the candidate is encouraged to address comments raised by ERC panel and to provide updates to the project, if any. The candidate must be present and may not be accompanied by third parties. An exception may be made for candidates who are working abroad at the time of Scientific Committee's plenary meeting and are in no way able to present to the Committee in person: in this case, the candidate may ask for a presentation by videoconference but may not in any circumstances be represented by a third party.

The date and technical arrangements for the presentations will be communicated to the candidates at the latest 3 weeks in advance.

(d) *Composition and role of the Scientific Committee*

The Scientific Committee¹ in charge of the Foundation's operational scientific expertise is composed of eminent French and foreign scientists with scientific and medical expertise covering the main life science fields.

In a plenary meeting, the Scientific Committee will evaluate the applications, attend presentations by the shortlisted candidates and designate the Impulscience laureates according to the selection criteria described in IV(b).

The Impulscience laureates (hereinafter "**the Laureates**") will be designated in a majority vote by the Scientific Committee members, each having one vote in a secret ballot. In the event of a tie, the Chair of the Scientific Committee casts the deciding vote. Proxy votes are not accepted.

Scientific Committee members that have a conflict of interest must declare this before candidate presentations. They will not participate in the discussions concerning this candidate but will participate in the final vote for the other candidates.

The Scientific Committee is not obliged to designate a Laureate for the 2026 Impulscience awards if the quality of the applications presented is deemed to fall short of its standards.

Article V. CONDITIONS FOR GRANTING IMPULSCIENCE ENDOWMENTS

The granting of Impulscience endowments is conditional upon:

- The signature of the Agreement by the Laureate and by the Laureate's host institution
- The effective presence of the Laureate at the Foundation's scientific ceremony in Paris in November 2026 (confirmation pending).

Article VI. ENDOWMENT

The endowment allocated to the Laureate will amount to up to two million three hundred thousand euros (€2,300,000), paid over a period of 5 years.

At the time of application to Impulscience, the budget must be identical to the one submitted in ERC call. If the candidate is designated a Laureate by the Foundation's Scientific Committee, the budget must be adjusted in consultation with the Foundation in relation to the expenses eligible for Impulscience (listed in Appendix 1) before the Agreement is signed. As far as possible, the project should start within 6 months after the Foundation's scientific ceremony.

Upon the Laureate's signature of the Agreement, the Foundation will make a first transfer to the Laureate's host institution.

¹ The list of the Foundation's Scientific Committee members is available for consultation on <https://www.fondationbs.org/en/what-we-do/life-sciences>.

The remainder will be paid in annual installments to the Laureate's host institution over the following 4 years, according to the terms and conditions set out in the Agreement.

Regarding the annual personal allowance, the candidate is informed that social security contributions and applicable taxes will be deducted and managed by the host institution. No appeals concerning these deductions may be submitted to the Foundation.

The endowment is not awarded in exchange for or as remuneration for any activity performed on behalf of and for the benefit of the Foundation. It constitutes a donation subject to obligations, as defined in the Agreement.

Article VII. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FOUNDATION AND THE LAUREATE

For all intents and purposes, applicants are reminded that:

- No hierarchical relationship of any kind is established between the Foundation and the Laureate. The Foundation can in no way be considered to be the employer of the Laureate, who can only receive instructions from the host institution, laboratory or university. The Foundation has no claim of any nature to the intellectual or property rights resulting from the Laureate's work.
- Impulscience has an exclusively philanthropic vocation and does not involve chance or a financial commitment by the Laureate.
- Since the Foundation does not intervene in any rights ownership or sharing issues resulting from the research work, it consequently cannot be held responsible for them in any way.

Article VIII. SUSPENSION, CANCELATION AND POSTPONEMENT

The Foundation reserves the right to modify the present rules or suspend, cancel or postpone the organization of Impulscience 2026 if required to by circumstances or reasons beyond its control, without being held responsible and without detriment to or loss of opportunity for the candidates.

However, Impulscience may not be canceled after the plenary meeting to designate Laureates, except in the event that the Scientific Committee fails to designate them.

Article IX. COMMUNICATIONS, AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING AND DATA PROTECTION

(a) Communications for Laureates

The Laureate authorizes the Foundation to use the Laureate's image and name. The Laureate agrees to provide any information necessary for the Foundation's communications.

(b) Automated data processing and data protection

Personal nominative data (PD) will be collected in order to properly consider applications. In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (RGPD), this data will be processed (automatedly or not) by the Fondation Bettencourt Schueller team and by the Scientific Committee.

For the candidates: all the PD will be kept up to three years after the application, in compliance with the regulations in force. The first names and surnames of the candidates will be kept beyond this period, in order to allow a follow-up of the applications already submitted to the Foundation.

For the Laureate: for administrative and accounting management, communication and follow-up purposes, the PD will be kept for the duration of the support and the conditions of their collection and conservation, over this period and beyond, will be specified in the Agreement.

Fondation Bettencourt Schueller hosts the PD processed on secure servers and takes the necessary measures relating to the security of their processing. Although the Foundation takes care to favour data storage within the European Union, you can find out more about potential transfers and flows by consulting the personal data protection policy on the website <https://www.fondationbs.org/en/personal-data-protection-policy>.

The processed data will be used by authorized personnel at the Foundation, as well as subcontractors and partners, if any, in the European Union for the purposes aforementioned.

Pursuant to the modified French Information Technology, Data Files and Civil Liberties Act and General Data Protection Regulation (n°2016.679, “GDPR”), the data subjects are informed of their right to withdraw, at any time, their consent to the processing of their personal data by the Foundation (i). They acknowledge that they have not been forced to consent to this processing (ii). They have the right to access (iii) the personal data processed by the Foundation, to rectify (iv) or erase this data (v), to request a restriction to its processing (vi), to oppose its processing for legitimate reasons (vii) and to request the portability of this personal data (viii). Finally, the data subjects have the right to define general and specific guidelines defining the way they agree the abovementioned rights may be exercised after their death. These rights may be exercised either directly through rgpd@fondationbs.org or by mail to the Foundation’s postal address.

Finally, the data subjects benefit from the right to lodge a complaint with CNIL, the French Data Protection Authority, in particular through its online complaints service at the following address: <https://www.cnil.fr/fr/plaintes>. Furthermore, the Foundation’s data privacy protection policy is directly accessible upon request or through its website, accessible through the following link: <https://www.fondationbs.org/en/personal-data-protection-policy>.

Article X. CALENDAR

Start of online applications	April 7, 2026
Deadline for validating the application form :	
- Candidates who responded to ERC <i>Starting</i> or <i>Consolidator</i> calls	May 21, 2026
- Candidates who responded to ERC <i>Advanced</i> call	June 22, 2026
Candidate presentations and Scientific Committee deliberations	July 1 - 2, 2026
Fondation Bettencourt Schueller scientific ceremony (confirmation pending)	November 2026

Article XI. APPENDIX TO THESE RULES

The present rules include an Appendix, which forms integral part of thereof.

Appendix 1: ENGAGEMENT DE L'INSTITUTION D'ACCUEIL ET MODALITES FINANCIERES

For the candidate

Place:

Date:

Candidate's signature, preceded by "read and approved"

ANNEXE 1

ENGAGEMENT DE L'INSTITUTION D'ACCUEIL ET MODALITES FINANCIERES IMPULSCIENCE

Nom et prénom du candidat :

Date de naissance du candidat :

Nom et acronyme de l'Institution d'accueil :

Adresse du siège social :

Numéro d'identification SIREN :

La signature de cette annexe engage l'Institution d'accueil à respecter les conditions et obligations listées, dans le cas où le candidat serait désigné Lauréat Impulscience 2026 par le conseil scientifique de la Fondation. Dans ce cas, l'Institution d'accueil sera récipiendaire des fonds et signataire de la Convention de partenariat.

OBLIGATIONS DE L'INSTITUTION D'ACCUEIL LIEES AU PROJET

L'Institution d'accueil s'engage à accueillir le candidat, si celui-ci est nommé Lauréat Impulscience 2026, pendant toute la durée du Projet, et à :

- garantir que le Projet sera réalisé sous la direction scientifique du Lauréat, qui lui consacra le pourcentage de son temps prévu par l'appel à projet de l'ERC auquel il a postulé : 50 % pour les *Starting Grants*, 40 % pour les *Consolidator Grants* et 30 % pour les *Advanced Grants*.
- ne pas prélever plus de 10 % du montant de la dotation pour couvrir les frais de gestion.
- fournir au Lauréat une copie de la Convention signée.
- garantir l'indépendance scientifique du Lauréat, notamment pour :
 1. l'utilisation du budget pour atteindre les objectifs scientifiques du Projet
 2. la publication en tant qu'auteur principal des résultats issus du Projet, et l'invitation en tant que co-auteurs de ceux qui ont contribué de manière substantielle au travail. Il est entendu entre les Parties qu'il s'agit d'une obligation de moyens, dépendant notamment des contraintes éditoriales indépendantes de la volonté de l'Institution d'accueil
 3. la préparation de rapports scientifiques pour le Projet
 4. la sélection et supervision des autres membres de l'équipe de recherche, en fonction des profils nécessaires pour mener à bien le Projet et conformément aux pratiques de gestion de l'Institution d'accueil
 5. l'accès à des locaux et à des équipements appropriés pour mener le Projet

- fournir un soutien au Lauréat et aux membres de son équipe en ce qui concerne l'infrastructure, l'équipement, les droits d'accès, les produits et autres services nécessaires à la réalisation du Projet.
- soutenir le Lauréat et lui fournir une assistance administrative, notamment pour :
 1. la gestion générale du Projet et de son équipe
 2. l'établissement de rapports financiers, notamment en fournissant des informations financières claires et en temps utile
 3. l'application des pratiques de gestion habituelles de l'Institution d'accueil
 4. la logistique générale du Projet
 5. l'information immédiate du Lauréat sur tout événement ou circonstance susceptible d'affecter la Convention
- accepter le principe de la portabilité du soutien et permettre le transfert de la Convention à une nouvelle institution d'accueil uniquement avec l'accord explicite préalable de la Fondation. Les équipements acquis et achetés grâce au soutien de la Fondation sont considérés comme attachés au Projet. L'Institution d'accueil convient que le Lauréat sera autorisé à les déménager à ses frais, à son départ et sans autre condition.
- s'assurer que le Lauréat fournisse ses meilleurs efforts pour réaliser l'intégralité du Projet et s'engage à rembourser, le cas échéant, les frais engagés par la Fondation dans les conditions prévues dans la Convention.
- soutenir le principe fondamental de l'intégrité scientifique de l'activité de recherche et participer notamment à la diffusion des bonnes pratiques de recherche. En cas de signalement -et si ce dernier est recevable- engager la procédure correspondante et informer la Fondation de cette instruction.

OBLIGATIONS DE L'INSTITUTION D'ACCUEIL LIEES A L'ADMINISTRATION DU PROJET

L'Institution d'accueil s'engage à :

- respecter les dépenses éligibles à Impulscience, et transmettre l'information demandée par la Fondation pour le suivi du soutien, comme listées ci-dessous.
- respecter l'ensemble des charges et obligations lui incombant pour le personnel participant au projet et dont il est l'employeur.
- ne pas justifier auprès d'un autre financeur les éléments financés par la Fondation.
- dans l'hypothèse où les conditions d'affectation et/ou le calendrier du Projet ne pourraient être ultérieurement satisfaits, à en prévenir sans délai la Fondation et à lui proposer une autre affectation. Il est à cet égard précisé que la Fondation ne sera en aucun cas tenue d'accepter le changement proposé, c'est-à-dire l'utilisation par l'Institution d'accueil et le Lauréat de tout ou partie du soutien accordé au financement pour un autre projet que celui initialement convenu.
- garantir la Fondation et son personnel contre tout recours relatif à l'exécution du Projet par l'institution d'accueil, notamment des tiers vis-à-vis desquels l'Institution d'accueil demeure seul responsable, de telle sorte qu'elle ne puisse en être inquiétée de quelque manière que ce soit.

Dépenses éligibles et suivi du Projet

a) *Les dépenses éligibles*

La dotation maximale allouée au Lauréat s'élève à **deux millions trois cent mille euros (2 300 000 €)**. Si le candidat est désigné Lauréat par le conseil scientifique de la Fondation, le budget de la candidature devra être ajusté en concertation avec la Fondation par rapport aux dépenses éligibles à Impulscience avant la signature de la Convention.

- Frais de fonctionnement :
 - Salaires (personnel non-permanent) avec charges sociales et patronales, et indemnités de stage.
 - Achat ou location d'équipement et de consommables utilisés spécifiquement pour la réalisation du Projet, ainsi que les frais de maintenance associés. L'achat d'équipement doit avoir lieu dans les 30 premiers mois du début du projet.
 - Dépenses de sous-traitance et facturation interne.
 - Frais de déplacement du personnel participant au Projet, dans le cadre de congrès scientifiques ou de collaborations.
- Prime annuelle personnelle pour le chercheur (jusqu'à 18 000 € bruts par an, en fonction de la politique salariale de l'institution d'accueil), pendant 5 ans.
- Frais de gestion de l'institution d'accueil, fixés à maximum 10 % de la dotation totale.

D'autres dépenses éligibles seront étudiées au cas par cas, comme la décharge d'enseignement (pour le Lauréat uniquement) et la rénovation de locaux (à condition que ceux-ci soient exclusivement utilisés par le Lauréat et son équipe).

La répartition prévisionnelle des frais de fonctionnement peut être modifiée tout au long du projet sans autorisation préalable de la Fondation pour les variations, à la hausse ou à la baisse, inférieures à 20% du montant total alloué à chaque poste de dépense. L'autorisation préalable de la Fondation doit être demandée pour les variations, à la hausse ou à la baisse, supérieures ou égales à 20% du montant total alloué à chaque poste de dépense. Dans tous les cas, la Fondation doit être informée au préalable.

b) *Le suivi du Projet*

Le soutien de la Fondation est soumis à la réception, chaque année, de :

- un bilan scientifique.
- un bilan financier faisant état des dépenses avec justificatifs pour la période passée et factures des dépenses supérieures à 10 000 €.
- un budget prévisionnel pour la période à venir.
- un rendez-vous de bilan avec la Fondation ou une visite du laboratoire si elle le demande.
- les réponses à toutes les questions complémentaires éventuelles de la Fondation.

Pour ce faire, la Fondation adressera au Lauréat un lien vers un formulaire de suivi en ligne. Tous les documents scientifiques et financiers devront être adressés via ce formulaire.

Le représentant légal de l'institution d'accueil

Prénom/nom :

Fonction :

Fait à :

Le :

Signature :