



CALL FOR MAX PLANCK TANDEM GROUPS IN COLOMBIA

Background

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia (Minciencias), the Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Unal) and the Max Planck Society (MPG for its abbreviation in German) from Germany announce this international call to integrate two Tandem research groups to be working for a period of 5 years. This is part of the Cooperation Agreement signed between Unal, the University of Antioquia, Minciencias and the MPG for the establishment of tandem groups, associated with Max Planck Institutes in Colombia in 2014 (please refer to **Annex I**).

Young researchers with highly qualified postdoctoral experience are invited to submit research proposals, with the goal of establishing tandem research groups at the Unal, in close collaboration with researchers at one of the 86 Max Planck Institutes (MPG). Candidates must be beginning their scientific career, must have at least three years of postdoctoral experience and the motivation to develop and lead an internationally competitive research program.

The teams should strengthen individual collaborative ties between the research group leader and the MPG, to ensure the continuity of scientific collaboration and research activities for mutual benefit. Its main objective is to promote research collaborations on topics corresponding to the areas mentioned in section number 5, with the Max Planck Institutes, following the highest quality standards that significantly contribute to increasing the international circulation of the best minds, with the idea to support early career scientists engaged in independent, interdisciplinary and high impact activities.

The conditions of the call are specified below.

1. Objectives

- 1.1. To select two researchers who are motivated and willing to lead a Tandem Research Group, which will be financed by the participating institutions, in accordance with the provisions of the aforementioned cooperation agreement.
- 1.2. To help establishing new tandem research groups at the Unal that are led by outstanding young researchers with postdoctoral experience, in close collaboration with directors or principal investigators of different Max Planck Institutes.

2. Duration of the Tandem Research Groups

The tandem research groups will be established for 5 years, with the possibility of extending this period for 2 additional years, after a successful evaluation. The purpose of this extra period is to facilitate the permanent articulation of the leader and his group with the investigative work of the Unal, as well as the continuity of their research activities at the institution.

3. Requirements for application

Proposals must be sent by email to the Unal (<dib_bog@unal.edu.co> and <vrs_bog@unal.edu.co>) and to the Liaison Office for Latin America of the Max Planck Society (latam @ gv.mpg.de) under the conditions specified in sections 7, 8 and 9.

4. Eligibility

- 4.1. Vacancies for a tandem research group are only available for applicants with a PhD or equivalent degree. Eligible candidates must be at an early stage of a successful scientific career, with at least 3 years of



postdoctoral experience in internationally competitive research groups, as well as motivated to develop and carry out an internationally competitive research program.

- 4.2. This call is aimed, in particular, for candidates of excellence who have already held one or two postdoctoral positions in different laboratories and who want and are considered suitable to lead a research group, in order to jointly, develop their own research ideas.
- 4.3. Candidates must submit a letter of support on the MPG letterhead and signed by an authorized director or principal investigator of the respective Max Planck Institute, in which the director or researcher expresses both an interest in cooperating and in supporting the research group in Colombia, detailing past, present and future collaboration activities with the Institute, as well as the commitment to support research resources (please refer to Annex II).

5. Research areas

This call is open to submissions promoting the therapeutic use of biodiversity. Proposals can be framed within the following subjects:

- Biodiversity
- Biomedicine
- Bioeconomy

The selection of the topics was carried out taking into account the investigative and installed capacities of the Unal, in order to guarantee the interaction with the research groups and their researchers.

(a)

6. Schedule

Call opening	April 30, 2021
Deadline for submission of proposals including letter of support from a Max Planck Institute	August 27, 2021
External pre-evaluation coordinated by the Liaison Office of the Max Planck Society in Latin America	August 30 to September 6, 2021
Carrying out the selection symposium	September 13, 2021
Publication and notification of selected proposals	September 14, 2021

7. Proposal characteristics

7.1. The proposal must be presented in English in a PDF file and should include the following documents:

- a) Cover.
- b) Curriculum vitae that includes a list of scientific publications and a description of scientific achievements (maximum 3 pages).
- c) Three selected publications (full texts).
- d) Research plan for the group (maximum 2 pages). Consider sections 12.2 and 14.2 to organize the resources available during the 5 years.
- e) Draft budget for the 5 years: to specify how the available human resources will be distributed and what type of laboratory equipment and services will be required at the Unal. Consider sections 12.1, 12.2 and 14.2.
- f) Names and contact details of 6 potential international reviewers, 2 of which can be from Germany.
- g) Two letters of recommendation.

7.2. Letter of support mentioned in section 4.3 of the "Eligibility" section and the **Annex II**.

8. Proposal submission

8.1. The proposal must be submitted according to the schedule.



- 8.2. Proposals will not be accepted after the deadline, as well as appendices or explanations, unless the organizing institutions explicitly and formally request them.
- 8.3. Applications will only be accepted in a single PDF file, containing all the documents in the order indicated in.

9. Presentation procedure, review and selection

- 9.1. Candidates must send applications by email to <dib_bog@unal.edu.co>, <vicerecto_bog@unal.edu.co> and <latam@mpg.de>, with the subject "CALL MINCIENCIAS / UNAL / MaxPlanck 2021 ". Only proposals that have been received within the deadline established in the schedule will be processed.
- 9.2. Proposals will be reviewed considering the eligibility aspects, described in section 4. Proposals that do not comply with the terms of this call will not qualify for evaluation.
- 9.3. The accepted proposals will be reviewed by a committee of Minciencias, the Unal and the Max Planck Society representatives. The evaluation process will consider primarily the principal researcher. The criteria to be applied are:
 - a) The applicant must be a researcher with a notable scientific production regarding his/her career level and will be evaluated according to his/her CV summary.
 - b) The candidate must be qualified to independently coordinate a research project, as well as to establish and direct a research group.
- 9.4. The criteria for the selection of proposals will be the following:
 - a) Objectives definition.
 - b) Originality and importance of the contributions foreseen for the respective research field.
 - c) Innovative scientific reasoning and chosen methods.
 - d) Coherent articulation between the proposal and the requested resources according to the desired scientific or technological contribution.

10. Publication and notification of the selected proposals

The final results will be published on the following web pages:

The Personnel Directorate, Bogotá Headquarters: <https://bogota.unal.edu.co/estructura/direccion-de-personal/>

The Academic Personnel Division, Bogotá Headquarters:

<https://bogota.unal.edu.co/estructura/direccion-de-personal/div-personal-academico/>

The Research Division, Bogotá Headquarters: <http://investigacion.bogota.unal.edu.co/servicios/convocatorias/>

The Unal Bogotá Headquarters:

<https://bogota.unal.edu.co/>

Likewise, the final results will be notified by direct communication to the candidates.

11. Project contract

The selected proposals will be linked within the framework of the administration contract 242 of 2019, signed between the National University of Colombia and Minciencias, whose purpose is to manage the projects, giving technical and administrative support to the tandem Max Plack groups operating in the city of Bogotá.

12. Financing

- 12.1. The Tandem Research Groups are financed and supported in Colombia by Minciencias and Unal, in accordance with the provisions of the reference cooperation agreement. Each group will have funds for a period of 5 years and a value of US \$ 112,360 (TRM 3,560 COP) for each year of financing. Each group leader will be hired in accordance to the provisions of Colombian laws and regulations, as well as the internal regulations of the University (see numeral 14.1).
- 12.2. Activities related to cooperation between the parties will include, but are not limited to:



- a) Exchange of scientists.
- b) Joint scientific investigations.
- c) Exchange of doctoral and post-doctoral students.
- d) Joint seminars and workshops.
- e) At least one trip per year from the group leader to the associated MPG, to present the results of the cooperation activities.

13. Benefits granted by the Max Planck Institute

The Max Planck Institute interested in cooperating, will provide the following benefits to the respective tandem group:

- a) Access to scientific infrastructure, special laboratories and equipment of the associated MPGs and / or other MPGs in Germany.
- b) Access to doctoral studies (PhD) at the Max Planck International Research Schools, provided that Colombian candidates pass the corresponding admission requirements.
- c) Scientific advice and support from at least one director of a MPG.
- d) Justified travel expenses for each tandem group leader associated with the MPG in Germany, in accordance with the travel policies of the MPG.

14. Benefits granted by the Unal:

14.1. A salary of US \$ 51,200 per year (TRM 3,560 COP) for the team leader, who will be linked to the Unal as a special teacher, in accordance to internal regulations. In addition, there will be provided the following benefits: Bonus for services rendered, Benefits for services, Benefits for vacation, Vacation time, Benefits for Christmas, Layoffs benefits with their respective interests.

14.2. In addition, there will be provided resources for installation expenses. An appropriate laboratory and office, with access to scientific and technical infrastructure, to the facilities found in the University and to administrative services. The two selected group leaders will work in laboratories already equipped by the Unal, which have the equipment specified in **Annex III**.

The laboratories mentioned in Annex III were conditioned for the purpose of carrying out mainly molecular analysis. Likewise, there is a network of laboratories, headed by professors from the Unal (**please refer to Annex IV - list of Laboratories**), open to fostering interactions to develop the proposals. In addition to the above, the Unal, (Bogotá headquarters), has 570 research groups of which 368 are categorized by Minciencias and expect interaction with the selected researchers.

15. Confidentiality, publications and intellectual property

Minciencias, the Unal and the respective associated Max Planck Institute must formally establish a Cooperation Agreement for the tandem research group regarding financing, confidentiality, publication and intellectual property rights, among others, in compliance with the policies of each financing party.

16. Coordination of the call

All questions related to this call should be directed to the Bogotá Headquarters Research Division of Unal (dib_bog@unal.edu.co) and to dr. Andreas Trepte from the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (latam@gv.mpg.de).