

**The Deputy Vice-President A\*Midex**  
A\*Midex Foundation  
Aix-Marseille Université  
Jardin du Pharo  
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**Ladies and Gentlemen, Deans, Directors  
of Aix-Marseille University and schools  
of the Aix-Marseille site**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Directors of  
Research Units in Aix-Marseille**

Object: 2020 Excellence Chairs call for projects  
N/Reef: DB /CB/CD/20-02742  
File followed by: Camille Duran  
Phone: 04 86 13 61 45

Marseille, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear Madam or Sir,

The A\*Midex Foundation launches its fourth call for the **Excellence Chairs** program in March 2020. The ambition of Aix-Marseille University and its partners, through this programme, is to attract to the Aix-Marseille site high-level **teachers, lecturers and researchers of international standing, on structuring projects contributing to the strategy of the University and its partners.**

The Excellence Chairs program offers an attractive host environment to carry out a research and/or educational project: this may include payment of the project manager's salary for three years (renewable for two years under certain conditions), and an environment of up to €200,000 per year for investment costs (excluding infrastructure), operating costs, and payroll (post-doctoral student, doctoral student, engineer).

As announced to you in 2018, the A\*Midex Foundation launches annual calls on this programme, for a limited number of labelled projects per year (1 to 3 new projects per year). The 2018 call for projects led to the launch of three new Excellence chairs in early 2020. *We invite you to reserve the date to attend the public launch of these projects on March 31st at 3:30 pm at the Pharo. [Update : Cancelled]*

The results of previous calls for Excellence Chairs had led A\*Midex to evolve in 2018 towards the definition of a new operating mode - renewed in 2020 - based on the participation of deans and directors of components and schools, and directors of research units, invited as a first step to define a **strategic recruitment project**. In the case of teacher-researcher and teacher profiles, the commitment of the component/school to open a position in the competition at the end of the three years of the Chair if the project carried out was satisfactory is requested in advance; in the case of researcher profiles, the commitment of the component/school to open a position in the competition at the end of the three years of the Chair if the project carried out was satisfactory is requested in advance. Stabilization issues must also have been thought out in advance. The Foundation's International Strategic Council (or Board International) and the A\*Midex Steering Committee recommend a high requirement for profiles recruited under this scheme, in line with the criteria for obtaining European Research Council (ERC) grants - for research profiles - and to target profiles in the first half of their career more closely.

The call launched in 2020 March will be aimed at **profiles of teacher-researchers, teachers and researchers**. As a first step, it will be your responsibility to propose a project for an Excellence Chair on a strategic subject or theme on which it would be in the interest of the University and the site to position

itself through this mechanism. You will include at least three CVs of candidates already identified. The application form to be filled in will be put online on the University's website.

The Steering Committee of the A\*Midex Foundation, chaired by Mr Eric Berton, President of the Initiative d'Excellence Aix-Marseille and President of Aix-Marseille Université, and in which each of the seven partners of the Aix-Marseille IdEx is represented, will give its opinion on the strategic opportunity on the applications submitted, and will take the decision to pre-select 1 to 3 projects at the end of this first stage. The main criteria on which the Steering Committee of the A\*Midex Foundation will decide in this first stage will be, on the one hand, the strategic character for the site of the proposed project and, on the other hand, the quality of the profiles attached to the file. The pre-selected projects will then follow a process consisting of three additional selective stages: the organisation of international auditions of candidates, the opening of a position in the competition, and finally the validation of a complete project by the A\*Midex Steering Committee. This method of operation will be further detailed in the text framing the call for proposals.

*The indicative timetable is as follows (to be confirmed in the call documentation) :*

- 2020 March 17th - Call opening
- 2020 June 11th at noon - Call closes.
- 2020 July - Pre-selection (step 1)
- 2020 September-October - International Hearings (Stage 2)
- 2020 November – 2021 April - Organization of recruitment by competitive examination (stage 3)
- 2021 June - Validation of full projects Excellence Chairs (Stage 4)
- 2021 September (indicative) - Start-up of Excellence Chairs projects

### **"ERC" Excellence Chairs**

It is also possible to contact the A\*Midex Foundation directly with projects for the recruitment of **researchers and teacher-researchers who have obtained a European Research Council (ERC) grant** in another institution and wish to join the Aix-Marseille site, with a project transfer. These applications are examined on an ongoing basis and are therefore not subject to the call calendar. The proposed format is that of Chairs of Excellence – ERC: possible assumption of the project manager's salary by A\*Midex on a three-year contract; environmental budget of 150,000 € / year maximum (investment, operation, payroll) in addition to the ERC budget. The commitment of the component or school to open a position to the competition at the end of the three years of the chair remains a sine qua non condition for the teacher-researcher profiles.

If you have any questions, you can contact the Direction of A\*Midex ([amidex-direction@univ-amu.fr](mailto:amidex-direction@univ-amu.fr)) as well as Ms. Camille Duran, Project Officer Attractiveness and Internationalization at the A\*Midex Foundation ([camille.duran@univ-amu.fr](mailto:camille.duran@univ-amu.fr)).

Yours sincerely,



Denis BERTIN