



## **Guidelines for applicants**

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## 1. TOUCH PROGRAMME

### 1.1. Programme description

TOUCH (“Towards the next generatiOn of excellent yoUng doctoral researchers on mental health by developing an intersectoral & transdisciplinary approaCH”) is a new excellent doctoral programme led by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) for the recruitment and training of 24 doctoral candidates in the field of mental health and wellbeing, providing a new dimension through highly interdisciplinary and intersectoral research while fulfilling all the principles of Open Science and maintaining the highest research quality standards. UAB is the main Beneficiary and coordinator of the programme (12 doctoral positions offered) together with 7 institutions from the Sphere UAB-CIE as Implementing partners by recruiting, hosting, and training PhD students. Implementing partners include 3 research centres (CED – 2 positions, CRM – 2 positions, CVC – 1 position), 1 research foundation (FSIE – 2 positions) and 3 research organisations linked to prestigious hospitals from the Barcelona area (I3PT –2 positions, IR Sant Pau – 1 position, VHIR – 2 positions). Several renowned international organisations complete the programme through their involvement as Associated partners collaborating in the successful development of the training programme for higher impact and a multiplier effect. Figure 1 presents a schematic description of the COFUND partnership.

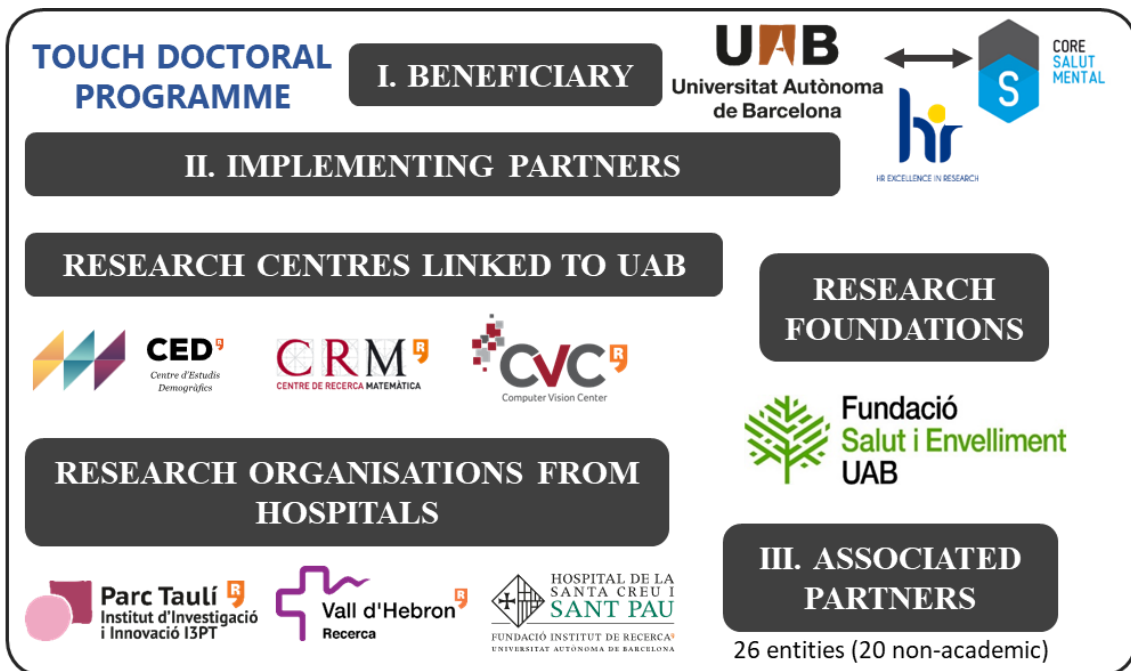


Figure 1: Schematic representation of TOUCH doctoral programme.

TOUCH is a doctoral programme created to provide a tailor-made training programme for recruited fellows to educate tomorrow’s researchers in mental health through a broad set of scientific, transferable, and business skills to develop the mind-set of future academics and entrepreneurs. The programme offers a bottom-up approach in which doctoral fellows will be free to choose from a wide range of multidisciplinary research topics in 4 major sub-themes:

- 1) Fostering mental health and wellbeing across lifespan
- 2) Transdisciplinary approach to mental health & wellbeing determinants
- 3) Multilevel strategies for assessment and intervention in mental health & wellbeing: from genomics to personomics
- 4) Governance in mental health systems: participation, education, and community.

TOUCH builds up on the CORE partnership on Mental Health as a strategic excellence network for the development of novel research and innovation in the field of mental health through an interdisciplinary, intersectoral and international approach to mobilise UAB as Beneficiary and coordinator plus its local network of research organisations and hospitals in the Sphere UAB-CEI and international partners in the search for the next generation of young researchers in the mental health field.

The international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary aspects of the programme and its research options include:

- **International:** recruitment of top international fellows fulfilling the mobility rule. Strong collaborative network with international organisations through secondments, short stays, networking and participation in training activities. Exposure of fellows through international events as part of their training (conferences, workshops, etc.). International experts involved in the evaluation and selection process.
- **Interdisciplinary:** available research themes multidisciplinary by nature involving different areas of interest and potential applications. A range of training activities to be organised in non-research oriented skills. Networking to be promoted with other researchers from different disciplines through attendance to events, secondments, and training.
- **Intersectoral:** Non-academic sector involved in the programme through secondments. Proactive involvement of private companies, hospitals and social entities during the training. A strong focus of the programme is to create future career research opportunities beyond the academic sector.

## 1.2. What does TOUCH offer?

**3-year full-time contract** (37,5 hours/week) and a gross salary of 2.375 €/month (the salary will be the same for the 3 years).

**Over 60 opportunities** to undertake research projects with **renowned supervisors** (see [offerd PhD positions](#)).

The availability of **world-class research infrastructures**.

An **excellent training programme**, including:

- **Initial workshops:** two workshops will be organized gathering doctoral fellows recruited under each Open Call. The workshops will last 4 days and will include **scientific lectures** given by high profile experts of the field, and **training in transferable skills**.
- **Hands-on schools:** training doctoral candidates on **theoretical and practical aspects** (e.g., developing projects, completing experiments, solving problems, etc.) on specific topics relevant for the field of mental health. 4 hands-on-schools of 3 days will be organised, each of them will be focused on one of the four thematic areas of the programme. Doctoral candidates will have to participate in 2 of the 4 trainings offered.
- **Workshop on research diversity:** this half-a-day workshop is aimed at introducing doctoral fellows about the value of **diversity**, the challenges and outline the tools to make diversity work in research proposals and projects.
- **TOUCH programme on scientific and communication skills:** this programme aims at training doctoral fellows, with innovative techniques and proven didactic concepts, in a range of key topics, including lectures and practical tools on **oral & poster presentations, scientific publishing & how to read a paper, outreach & online science communication, and career development**.
- **TOUCH retreat for personal development:** 3 days retreat away from research for **personal development and team building** activities to promote networking in a relaxed environment.
- **Secondments:** exchange visits are planned for all recruited fellows throughout the project at partner laboratories and premises for intersectoral and interdisciplinary transfer of knowledge. **Secondments will last 3-6 months** with a minimum of one secondment/doctoral fellow.

### 1.3. Research projects

Candidates will be able to select from a wide variety of hot research topics at the forefront of current science in mental health. The research projects offered by the TOUCH programme are listed below:

TOPIC	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	INSTITUTION
Improving psychosis risk detection through artificial intelligence	<a href="#">Ana Barajas Vélez</a> <a href="#">Enrique Gutiérrez Álvarez</a> <a href="#">José Blas Navarro Pastor</a>	UAB
Molecular determinants of sex- and neuropsychiatric-specific vulnerability to cognitive disability during aging	<a href="#">Arnaldo Parra Damas</a> <a href="#">Carlos Saura Antolín</a>	UAB
Neuroimaging and personality in Clinical and Health Psychology	<a href="#">Joan Deus Yela</a> <a href="#">Laura Blanco-Hinojo</a>	UAB

Migrant's mental healthcare and multilevel personal networks	<a href="#">José Luis Molina</a> <a href="#">Chiara Broccatelli</a> <a href="#">Paula Cristóbal Narváez</a>	UAB
A transdisciplinary multi-scalar approach to foster mental in Europe by means of nature-based therapies	<a href="#">Juan Vicente Luciano Devís</a> <a href="#">Helen V.S. Cole</a> <a href="#">Margarita Triguero Mas</a>	UAB
Predictive processing, creativity and mental health	<a href="#">Lorena Chanes</a> <a href="#">Diana Ramírez</a> <a href="#">Jordi González</a>	UAB
Critical intersections of health, vulnerability, and discomfort in education: touching the students' lives with arts-based autobiography to build a caring university community	<a href="#">Montserrat Rifà Valls</a> <a href="#">Mireia Foradada Villar</a>	UAB
Nourishing Cognitive Resilience: Investigating Diet and Biomarkers in Midlife Aging	<a href="#">Marta Portero Tresserra</a> <a href="#">Mercè Jodar Vicente</a>	UAB
The mind-body connection: Bridging the gap between lifestyle factors and cognitive wellbeing from clinical to demographic analysis	<a href="#">Marta Portero Tresserra</a> <a href="#">Jeroen Spijker</a>	UAB
Inflammaging, Cognitive Function, and Brain Health: Assessing the Effects of a Dietary Intervention	<a href="#">Marta Portero Tresserra</a> <a href="#">Carlos Barcia González</a>	UAB
Healthy Entourages throughout Athletic Careers	<a href="#">Miquel Torregrossa</a> <a href="#">Marta Borrueco</a>	UAB
Precarious employment trajectories, psychosocial risks, and mental wellbeing	<a href="#">Mireia Bolibar Planas</a> <a href="#">Albert Navarro Giné</a>	UAB
Mindful Collaboration: Shaping Care Strategies through Mental Health User Involvement	<a href="#">Neus Vidal Barrantes</a> <a href="#">Miquel Domènech</a> <a href="#">Joan Moyà-Köhler</a>	UAB
Link between the consumption of ultra-processed foods and drinks and major depressive disorder through gut microbiota-brain dysbiosis	<a href="#">Oren Contreras Rodríguez</a> <a href="#">Narcís Cardoner</a>	UAB
Single-cell calcium imaging and machine learning in fear memory models	<a href="#">Raul Andero</a> <a href="#">Katharina Schultebrucks</a>	UAB
Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and borderline intellectual disability children: cognitive, biological, and emotional correlates	<a href="#">Roser Nadal</a> <a href="#">Silvia Fuentes</a> <a href="#">Montserrat Pàmias</a>	UAB
Psychopathic-traits and prosociality in a community sample of children: biological and emotional correlates	<a href="#">Silvia Fuentes</a> <a href="#">Roser Nadal</a> <a href="#">Alexandre Hyafil</a>	UAB
Developing New Models and Measures of Genetic and Psychological Sensitivity to the Psychosocial Environment to Understand both Risk and Resilience in Mental Health	<a href="#">Neus Vidal Barrantes</a> <a href="#">Thomas R. Kwapil</a>	UAB
Dissecting the contribution of dysregulated sense of agency to psychotic disorders	<a href="#">Neus Vidal Barrantes</a> <a href="#">Alexandre Hyafil</a>	UAB
Mental health of dependent people with chronic diseases	<a href="#">Elisenda Rentería</a> <a href="#">Jeroen Spijker</a>	CED
Mental health and multimorbidity in Catalonia	<a href="#">Iñaki Permanyer</a> <a href="#">Jeroen Spijker</a>	CED
Computational modeling of working memory decline in normal aging	<a href="#">Klaus Wimmer</a>	CRM
Mathematical modelling of disease trajectories across modalities	<a href="#">Diego Vidaurre</a> <a href="#">Christopher Butler</a>	CRM
Modelling circular inference, from the general population to psychotic experience	<a href="#">Alexandre Hyafil</a> <a href="#">Neus Vidal Barrantes</a>	CRM
Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Mental Health Support	<a href="#">Diana Ramírez</a> <a href="#">Lorena Chanes</a> <a href="#">Jordi Gonzalez</a>	CVC
A deeper understanding of human cognition and mental health through AI and Data Science	<a href="#">Diana Ramírez</a> <a href="#">Lorena Chanes</a>	CVC

	<a href="#">Jordi Gonzalez</a>	
Enhancing Elderly Mental Health through Reminiscence Therapy and Robotic Companionship	<a href="#">Sara Domènech Pou</a> <a href="#">Ramón Miralles Basseda</a>	FSIE
Assessing the Impact and Effectiveness of the AMICOPE Multicomponent Community Intervention on Mood in Older Adults: A Mixed Methods Approach	<a href="#">Sergi Blancafort Alias</a> <a href="#">Ramón Miralles Basseda</a>	FSIE
Prevention, follow-up and management of post-ICU sequelae based on digital health tools	<a href="#">Sol Fernández Gonzalo</a> <a href="#">Guillem Navarra Ventura</a>	I3PT
The digital transformation in primary care and specialized mental health centers through artificial intelligent/machine learning tools for the prevention and monitoring of patients at risk of suicide in Catalonia	<a href="#">Virginia Soria Tomás Marc</a> <a href="#">Fradera Jiménez</a>	I3PT
Integrative Omics and Neuroimaging of Treatment Resistance in Psychiatric Disorders: An AI Approach	<a href="#">Marta Cano</a> <a href="#">Eva Armengol</a>	IR Sant Pau
Caregiver-Centric Innovations in Intensive Home-Treatment for Acute Mental Illness: A Comprehensive Approach	<a href="#">Ana Martin Blanco</a> <a href="#">Jeroen Spijker</a>	IR Sant Pau
Intergenerational transmission of psychopathology: Effects of parental genotypes	<a href="#">Marta Ribasés</a> <a href="#">María Soler-Artigas</a>	VHIR
Usefulness of multidomain markers in the course of post stroke and neurodegenerative dementias	<a href="#">Mar Hernández Guillamón</a> <a href="#">María Pilar Delgado</a> <a href="#">Martínez</a>	VHIR

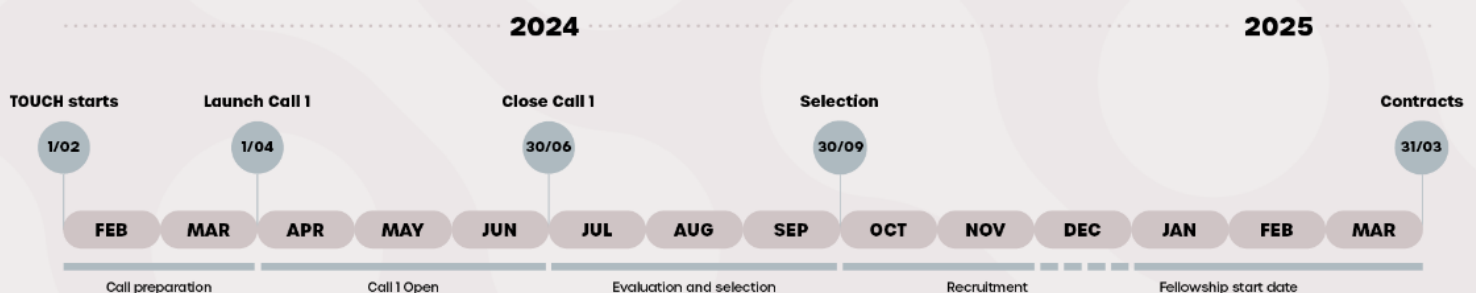
**Table 1:** TOUCH research projects.

It is recommended to contact the host groups to discuss common interests. Contact details and a comprehensive description of each research project are given on the [offered PhD positions](#) tab.

## 2. CALL FOR CANDIDATES

### 2.1. Timeline

- **1st call open:** April 1st, 2024.
- **1st call deadline:** June 30th, 2024, at 00:00h CEST.
- **Evaluation and Selection:** July - September, 2024
- **Expected publication of results:** October, 2024
- **Fellowships start date:** December - March, 2025 (flexible incorporation)



**Figure 2:** TOUCH call timeline

## 2.2. Application process

All applications must be submitted through the TOUCH online application platform:

<https://webs.uab.cat/touch/application-platform/>

Each candidate must provide **3 choices of research projects** from the pool of available research topics and supervisors (see [offered PhD positions](#)). Applications must include all the personal information and documents requested and be submitted within the call period (April 1<sup>st</sup> - June 30<sup>th</sup>) to be eligible. Candidates must submit an application in English containing the following information and documents:

- **Information from the applicant:** includes a **CV** in [Europass template](#) (maximum 4 pages) and a **motivation letter** (maximum 2 pages). The CV should include applicant's background, awards, scholarships, meetings, publications, etc. The motivation letter should be added at the end of the CV and specify the preference of a maximum of three topics and supervisors from the available list and the reasons and motivation for selecting those options. All applicants should also provide at least two **letters of recommendation**, ideally from faculty members (including master's thesis advisor) who know the applicant's academic skills and experiences.
- **Proof of academic records:** digital/scanned copy with all **academic certificates** (Bachelor's and Master's degree) and the respective official transcription in English or Spanish. Detailed information on the documents required for admission to a PhD programme can be consulted on the [UAB website](#), but, in general, candidates must hold a Spanish degree or equivalent and a Master's degree. In case of not providing a Master degree certification, the candidate must include a declaration of compliance with all requirements to access to the doctoral programme at the time of starting the fellowship (template provided in the [documents and templates](#) section).
- **Proof of English level:** doctoral candidates must have a demonstrable level of **English**. A proof of upper-intermediate level must be included in the application; this should take the form of one of the recognised international qualifications (minimum CEFR B2, Cambridge English First (FCE), PTE Level 3, IELTS 5-6.5 or TOEFL > 72). Copy or internet print of the exam results must be uploaded to the online application system. Applicants from native English-speaking countries can apply without the need for proof of level. An official degree (including postgraduate) conducted in English as the only Language will be also accepted as a proof of level.
- **Mobility declaration:** template provided in the [documents and templates](#) section.

An **acknowledge email** will be automatically sent to each candidate after submission of an application.



## 2.3. Eligibility criteria

In support of **equality and non-discrimination** principles, gender, age, nationality, race, or any other ethical-related issues will not be considered during the application and selection process. Scientific/academic merits and excellence of the candidates are the only criteria for evaluation.

The two eligibility criteria to comply by prospective candidates are related to mobility and experience:

- **Mobility rule:** candidates must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Spain for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately preceding the deadline for the programme call.
- **Experience rule:** researchers must be doctoral candidates at the date of recruitment, i.e. not already in possession of a doctoral degree at the deadline of the open calls. Researchers who have successfully defended their doctoral thesis but have not yet formally awarded the doctoral degree will not be considered eligible. Recruited researchers must be enrolled in a doctoral programme leading to the award of a doctoral degree at UAB at the time of signing the contract.

## Diversity aspects

Applications from candidates with disability, special assistance, researchers at risk, LGBTQ+ community, etc. are encouraged: in this respect equal opportunities in terms of **diversity** will be fully taken into consideration both during the recruitment process and also during the training programme execution. In case of similar CVs, applications from minority or underrepresented groups will be preferably selected.

## 3. SELECTION PROCESS

### 3.1. Evaluation process

The TOUCH selection process is carried out in four main phases (Figure 3):

**Eligibility check:** each application will be carefully checked against the mobility and doctoral candidates' eligibility rules and those not fulfilling the criteria will be considered ineligible. Applications submitted after the deadline or missing application documents will also not be accepted. Only those applications passing through the eligibility check will go to the external evaluation. It is expected that the full process will take 10 days to complete.

**Evaluation of merits:** applications will be evaluated by the external Scientific Evaluation Committee (SEC) through a peer-review system by panels of independent experts (4 in total, one per scientific area). Each application will be reviewed by 5 experts: 1 representative of the coordinator UAB, 1 representative from the organisation selected

by the candidate as first choice and 3 external experts in the field. Candidates will be evaluated and scored by SEC against several criteria (see section 3.2), and a Summary Report will be prepared after a consensus meeting of each panel, including strengths/weaknesses for each candidate and comments for each criterion. Once all the evaluations for a single application are accepted, those with the highest and lowest overall marks will be discarded to ensure a fair and transparent procedure. The three remaining scores will be averaged, providing the Final Evaluation Score. Results will be communicated to all applicants via email, with 26 candidates shortlisted and passing through to the interview stage. An Evaluation Summary Report will be sent to all the applicants that participated in this phase and were not shortlisted, including Final Score; funding decision and a summary of strengths and weaknesses as identified by the evaluators. It is expected that the full process will take 1 month to complete.

**Interviews:** the 26 shortlisted candidates from the evaluation of merits (twice the number of positions available) will be invited to a 20-minute remote interview with the following structure: Part 1 (10 minutes): introduction and oral presentation of the candidate's merits, including scientific/academic background and appropriateness for the position using any additional material (.ppt) to present her/himself. Part 2 (10 minutes): interactive Q&A session to get additional insights and assess the suitability of the candidate (interest in the programme, level of independence, potential as future leading researcher, self-identification of strengths and weaknesses, etc.). An Interview Report will be prepared for each interview.

**Final scoring and ranking:** the final ranking of the candidate will be calculated considering the results from the evaluation of merits (50% scoring weight) and the interviews (50% scoring weight). An Evaluation Summary Report will be prepared and sent to those fellows not selected for funding, including if they are part of the reserve list and their position in the ranking. After the final ranking list is produced, those candidates within the top-13 will be able to choose/confirm the final research project and supervisor (it can be the same as in the application or a different one). The final list of awarded fellows (only ID number, no personal data) will be published on the programme. A reserve list will be established in case one of the selected candidates rejects the offer. The selected candidates will be asked to sign an acceptance letter within a period of 15 days to secure their fellowship. Once the acceptance letters are received, the awarded fellows will be contacted via email with an invitation to start negotiating the terms of the contract and the associated procedures to enrol them in the PhD doctoral studies. In this email the contact details of the person in charge at the hosting institution and the future PhD supervisor will be included.

TOUCH will also ensure that all the projects within the doctoral programme comply with the **ethical principles** of Horizon Europe. Any projects affected by ethical issues will have to provide evidence to the TOUCH Ethics Committee, the EC and hosting organisation Ethics Office/Committee to get an ethical clearance, including an ethics Self-Assessment Questionnaire following the Horizon Europe template. The questionnaires will be collected and put at the disposal of the Project Officer for their approval.



Figure 3: TOUCH selection workflow.

### 3.2. Evaluation criteria

Different criteria and sub-criteria for the selection of researchers under TOUCH will apply for the two stages that conform the evaluation and selection process after passing the eligibility check (Evaluation of Merits + Interviews). These criteria are summarised in Table 2, along with the scoring, thresholds, and priority (in case of ex-aequo). The evaluation considers not only the educational aspects of the applicant, but also other activities in the context of career progression and development of personal skills. These criteria will ensure an objective and consistent selection procedure, in alignment with the principles and requirements of the *Code of Conduct*. Since this is a doctoral programme, applicants will be at the early-stage of their research careers, so the score does not rely exclusively on bibliometric indices, but mainly on **education and other relevant aspects, skills and competences** (teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management or scientific-technical implication in research and innovation projects, foreign language skills, computer literacy and social or public awareness activities). The interview stage will consider additional aspects which may not be so evident from the CV, for example creativity, level of independence, leadership skills, overall potential as researchers and self-identification of strengths and weaknesses. A maximum score of 50 points may be obtained from the evaluation of merits, with 26 shortlisted candidates passing through the interviews stage (x2 the number of available positions). An additional 50 points will be decided on the interview stage, providing the final score and ranking (over 100). Table 2 shows the weight of each evaluation and selection criterion, the thresholds applied, and the ex aequo priority in case that two applications obtain the same score (applications from refugees and researchers with disabilities will be prioritized).

PHASE	SELECTION CRITERIA	SCORING (over 100)	THRES-HOLD	PRIORITY (in case of ex-aequo)	
<b>ELIGIBILITY CHECK</b>	Application submitted before the deadline / All necessary documents included / Mobility + definition doctoral candidates rules fulfilled / Academic requirements for doctoral studies	In order to pass to the evaluation of merits, applicants must fulfil all these criteria			
<b>EVALUATION OF MERITS</b>	<b>Education:</b> graduate (Bachelor) and postgraduate education (Masters) (0-20)	50	30	2	1
	<b>Research &amp; working experience:</b> participation in projects, research outcomes (publications, awards), attendance to conferences/events, patents, research skills and competences, support letters (0-15).				2
	<b>Motivation letter:</b> interest and motivation to join the programme (0-5).				3
	<b>Others:</b> mobility (research stays), supervision and mentoring, public awareness, English level, suitability of the profile to the programme, industrial experience (0-10).				4
<b>INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>Research skills:</b> scientific excellence, level of independence, motivation and potential as a future lead researcher, scientific quality of the presentation and answers during the Q&A session, capacity to discuss the suitability of the candidate for the position (0-25).	50	25	1	1
	<b>Interpersonal skills:</b> professional attitude, team player, reliability, motivation, etc. (0-15).				2
	<b>Communication skills:</b> English skills & oral communication skills (0-10).				3

**Table 2:** evaluation criteria, scores, thresholds and priority for TOUCH programme.

### 3.3. Redress appeals

An opportunity to submit a **request for redress** will be available for applicants after each evaluation phase, if they believe that the process or scores obtained are not fair. A period of 10 days will be given for the redress procedure after receiving the email informing of their eligibility, evaluation of merits or final ranking position after the interview stage. Requests must be sent by email to [pr.cofund.touch@uab.cat](mailto:pr.cofund.touch@uab.cat) using the redress template (see [documents and templates](#) section). The Project Management Team will carefully review each redress request on an individual basis before taking a final decision. A maximum of 10 days will be given to communicate the result of the redress procedure. If the appeal is accepted, the application will be reviewed again. For the evaluation of merits, the application will be sent to different experts to contrast with the original evaluation to spot inconsistencies in the process.

## 4. CONSORTIUM INSTITUTIONS

### 4.1. Coordinator institution



The [Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona](#) (UAB), with 27.135 undergraduate students, 57 departments, 28 research centers, 68 PhD programmes and over 4.800 PhD students, has consolidated amongst the 200 best universities in the world within the main university rankings (183rd in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2023) and is leading Spanish universities in the QS world university ranking (QS WUR 2023).

Established as a Campus of International Excellence (CIE) since 2009, UAB has devoted strong efforts to position itself as one of the leading research and knowledge frameworks in Europe. For this, it has established the [Sphere UAB-CIE](#), a partnership that encompasses the research institutes, business parks, technological companies, foundations, and university hospitals affiliated to UAB or located in the surroundings of UAB to establish a unique environment for collaborations and synergies. Currently, the Sphere UAB-CIE involves 80 organisations from the fields of social sciences, humanities, technology, experimental sciences, and health in which the university has taken on a central role and has stimulated the search for synergies, the optimisation of resources and, in short, the exploration for new frameworks of collaboration.

### 4.2. Implementing partners



The [Centre for Demographic Studies](#) (CED) works towards several objectives. First and foremost, it focuses its research on furthering our knowledge and understanding of demographic patterns and trends in the Catalan, Spanish and international context through basic and applied research. It also provides training in demography through teaching programmes and courses aimed at professionals from different fields and works to disseminate demographic knowledge and tools in the field of academia, government and social organisations.

The CED has 17 lines of research grouped into three research areas: 1) Families, Inequality and Social Change, 2) Globalisation, Migrations and Space, and 3) Health and Ageing. With regard to applied demography, its activity focuses on methodological and data processing studies, sociodemographic studies and population projections and models.

The CED offers specific postgraduate programmes in demography in collaboration with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB). The doctoral programme carries the Spanish distinction of quality and the master's programme is backed by a network of collaborating European demography research centres.

With the only specialised library in Spain dedicated to demography and population studies, the CED also provides the scientific community and the general public with an important demographic databank and access to sociodemographic data through the Social Explorer platform. In Europe, the CED is responsible for the Integrated European Population Microdata (IEPM), a Europe-wide harmonised census microdatabase, which is being developed in collaboration with the University of Minnesota's Minnesota Population Center ([www.iecm-project.org](http://www.iecm-project.org)).



The [Centre de Recerca Matemàtica](#) (CRM), founded in 1984 by Professor Manuel Castellet, is the oldest mathematical research institute in Spain. Located at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), it operates as a consortium between the Catalan Government, the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (IEC) and the UAB. The CRM is part of the CERCA Agency, ERCOM and EPDI.

The CRM manages the Barcelona Graduate School of Mathematics and is associated with the Instituto Español de Matemáticas. Funded mainly by the Catalan government, it also receives funding from various European and Spanish entities.

A key function of the CRM is to host international research programs in mathematics, facilitating collaboration between international and local researchers. It emphasizes the promotion of research in Catalonia and encourages interactions between experts from various fields.

CRM's mission is to excel in mathematical research and training on an international scale. This includes conducting high-quality research with real-world applications, transferring knowledge to address societal challenges, providing advanced mathematics training, and disseminating mathematical advances to the academic community and society.



The [Computer Vision Center](#) (CVC) is a non-profit institution founded in 1995 as a Consortium by the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), and it is located in the UAB's Bellaterra Campus in Barcelona, Spain. With an outstanding team of more than 130 researchers and technicians, 2.000m<sup>2</sup> devoted to R&D and the most advanced resources in hardware and software, the CVC now holds an international reputation for innovative research, technology transfer, and the development of spin-offs in the field of Computer Vision. Its mission is to develop prestigious research with international impact, to transfer knowledge to companies and society, and to train scientists and high-level professionals relevant in Europe. The CVC performs exciting and pioneering research in Computer Vision, in particular in the following key areas: Advanced Driver Assistance Systems, Medical Imaging, Object Recognition, Document Analysis, Image Sequence Evaluation, Color in Context (Texture), Machine Vision, Interactive and Augmented Modelling, Human Pose Recovery and Behaviour Analysis,



Learning and Machine Perception and NeuroComputation and Biological Vision. The CVC is committed to transferring its knowledge and expertise, and to work with industrial partners for collaborative R&D. We develop interactions and collaborations by offering commercial services and Computer Vision solutions to the industry through feasibility studies, project development and monitoring, systems certification and technical consultancy. The CVC also carries out Ph.D. research and thesis tutoring for Ph.D. students, supports the master's degree Program in Computer Vision (UAB, UPC, UPF) and have a year-round schedule of seminars and other introductory and advanced courses in Computer Vision topics.



The Health and Ageing Foundation UAB, officially known as [Fundació Salut i Envel·liment UAB](#) (FSIE), is dedicated to advancing knowledge and fostering excellence in the realms of health sciences, ageing, and social and health care. The foundation operates across four organizational areas, namely:

Research in Health and Ageing (GREiS Research Group): Exploring frontiers in health and ageing, our GREiS Research Group pioneers innovative initiatives that contribute to the evolution of healthcare.

Citizens and Patients Engagement (Co-creation Methodologies): Actively involving citizens and patients, we utilize co-creation methodologies to ensure our projects align closely with real-world needs and experiences.

Professional Development in Healthcare: Advancing healthcare practices for elderly patients, our initiatives span primary care, hospital care, and social care settings, promoting overall well-being.

Consultancy and Ageing Projects (Public Institution Collaboration): Collaborating with public institutions, our projects address key issues affecting the elderly, providing effective solutions to combat loneliness and improve cognitive and physical well-being.

Formed as a non-profit entity, the Fundació Salut i Envel·liment UAB is the result of a strategic merger between the Fundació Institut Català de l'Envel·liment, the Fundació Dr. Robert (a center for advanced education in health and life sciences), and the Fundació Biblioteca Josep Laporte (a documentation center in health and life sciences).



The [Parc Taulí Research and Innovation Institute Foundation](#) (I3PT) is the result of the integration of excellence in knowledge and the innovative and improvement capacity of research groups, integrated into the lines of research and belonging to the constituent entities of the Institute: Consorci Corporació Sanitària Parc Taulí de Sabadell, Fundació Parc Taulí, UDIAT Diagnostic Center, Sabadell Senior Citizen Service Center i Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

The tradition of years of working together between the five entities, together with the sum of scientific knowledge and research capabilities of all of them, the results achieved in recent years and the uniqueness of the management of innovation in medical technologies, leads to the establishment of the I3PT as the next step needed to further

strengthen this joint trajectory and provide better management tools and opportunities to continue to improve and grow in R & D & I results.

I3PT maintains and enhances research activity in areas where they are scientifically excellent, but without losing sight of everything that is transferable to the market, that is, all potential innovations that will initially be treated as strategic until they are evaluated, regardless of the line or scientific area in which they belong. Excellence is a strategic pillar but so is sustainability, as products that can be transferred to the market must contribute to sustaining the Institute's innovation model, either through valuing and marketing, capturing business globally or through its internal application to the health activity of the institutions that form part of the Institute.

The research carried out at the Institute meets the criteria of quality, sustainability and excellence.



**Institut  
de Recerca  
Sant Pau**

The [Research Institute Sant Pau](#) (IR Sant Pau) is a scientific foundation whose mission is to promote basic, clinical, epidemiological, and healthcare research in the fields of health sciences and biomedicine. The main aims are to improve people's health and quality of life through the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge, training of researchers at the international level, the generation of health care innovations, and the application of advances in care practices and health policies.

The Institute, located on the Sant Pau Campus, is a biomedical research center of excellence. It has been affiliated with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) since 2009 and it has been a member the CERCA system in Catalonia since 2011. It is organized by five strategic areas: Cardiovascular; Oncohematologic; Epidemiology, Public Health & Primary Care; Translational Medicine; and Neurological Diseases, Neuroscience & Mental Health.

The group Sant Pau-Mental Health Research group pertains to this latter area. A large variety of neuroscience techniques are used, such as identification of biomarkers, brain imaging, deep-brain stimulation or omics sciences, to gain knowledge and test treatment strategies for major depression, schizophrenia, eating and personality disorders.



The [Vall d'Hebron Research Institute](#) (VHIR) is a public institution that promotes and develops biomedical research, innovation and teaching at the Vall d'Hebron University Hospital. Since 1994, we have been working to identify and implement new solutions to society's health problems, achieving national and international

leadership and excellence in clinical and translational biomedical research.

The VHIR has more than 2,000 employees, of whom more than 1,100 are researchers; the rest are responsible for making research possible or transferring it to society once it has been carried out. This can take the form of projects, technology and innovation transfer, communication or sponsorship.



We investigate to solve people's health problems. Our scope is not only basic or translational research; we are also leaders in clinical research.

We have hospital beds less than 50 metres from laboratories and our patients benefit from our research. This is what we believe in and what we strive for. This is recognised by industry leaders who choose our hospital to carry out their first clinical trials, making us a global reference point.

The VHIR is strongly committed to creating initiatives that promote the principles of the RRI culture both internally and externally. Activities such as citizen engagement, gender equality, scientific divulgation and open access to research results.

### 4.3. Associated partners

The TOUCH associated partners include academic and non-academic organisations, from private companies and spin-offs to hospitals, social enterprises, and international research organisations. TOUCH has 26 Associated Partners interested in participating in the programme through the collaboration in research projects, hosting of researchers in secondments and training:

#### **Academic (6):**

- University of Kent
- Universidad de Deusto
- Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia
- Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Université de Fribourg
- Boston University

#### **Non-academic (17):**

- MyCarenet SL
- Federació Salut Mental Catalunya
- ILS Research gGmbH
- Cluster Salut Mental Catalunya
- Isensi
- Spora sinergies
- Fundació iSOCIAL
- Qualud SL
- Fundació de Recerca Clínic Barcelona
- Fundación 1º de Mayo-ISTAS
- Mind and Identity SL
- Institut d'Investigació en Intel·ligència Artificial
- IDIAPJGOL
- BDCare Big Data Research
- Associació Esportiva Projecte Inclusiu CIM
- G.TEC Medical Engineering
- Broomx Technologies SL

## Training (3):

- PRUAB
- ThePaperMill
- DIVERSlunity

## 5. CONTACT DETAILS

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