



**Supporting Talent in ReSearch@University of Padua**

**STARS@UNIPD – STARS Grants 2023**

**Guide for Applicants**

**&**

**Application Templates**

**Deadline: 28 February 2023 at 1 p.m.  
(Padua local time – Italy time zone)**

Date of call opening: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022

**Purpose of this document**

This document provides practical information to potential applicants as to assist them in preparing and submitting an application for a STARS Starting, Consolidator or Wild Card Grant. It is not intended to replace consultation of the STARS@UNIPD 2023 Call for proposals.

University of Padua, Italy  
STARS@UNIPD Funding Programme 2023  
Annex no. 2 to the Call for proposals – GfA



## **Guide for Applicants & Application Templates**

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## Objectives and principles of STARS Grants 2023

STARS Grants are envisaged to fund research projects for the duration of 30 months. They must be proposed by researchers holding excellent scientific qualifications and willing to launch or consolidate an independent research and a research team at the University of Padua (Unipd).

This selection announcement foresees three types of grant:

**STARS Starting and Consolidator Grants** are designed to support excellent Principal Investigators (PIs) at a career stage in which they are starting or consolidating their own independent research team or programme;

**STARS Wild Card Grants** will fund excellent PIs who submitted an ERC Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grant in the 2021 and 2022 calls indicating Unipd as their Host Institution and obtained "A" as final panel score in step 2.

PIs must demonstrate the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of their scientific proposal.

STARS grants operate on a "bottom-up" basis with no predetermined priorities. Applications can be made in any field of research with particular emphasis on the frontiers of science, scholarship and engineering. **Scientific excellence** is the sole criterion on the basis of which STARS frontier research grants are awarded.

A PI may submit **only one proposal under the STARS grant call** in one of 27 scientific research areas, grouped in three Macro-areas (Physical Sciences & Engineering, Life Sciences and Social Sciences & Humanities) corresponding to the three ERC research domains as described in Annex 1 of the call.

A single submission deadline is foreseen for **STARS-2023-StG, STARS-2023-CoG, STARS-2023-WiC Grants: 28 February 2023, 1 p.m. (Padua local time - Italy time zone)**

For each type of grant, PIs of any age and nationality, who wish to pursue research at a Department of the University of Padua and meet the following criteria, may apply:

- **STARS-StG:** the PI defended his/her first PhD within a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 5 years prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023; eligibility extensions are foreseen (see section "Specific eligibility criteria").
- **STARS-CoG:** the PI is a tenured Professor or Researcher at Unipd or a Researcher on a fixed-term contract of type a) or type b) and defended his/her first PhD within a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 years prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023; eligibility extensions are foreseen (see section "Specific eligibility criteria").
- **STARS-WiC:** the PI is a Professor/Researcher who submitted a proposal in the Starting, Consolidator or Advanced ERC Grant, 2021 or 2022, calls for proposals; (s)he indicated Unipd as Host Institution and obtained a final mark of "A", but was not funded due to lack of funds.

PIs holding an ERC research grant at the deadline of the call or who will be funded within the date of approval of the ranking list are not eligible to apply. PIs who have been previously funded in the framework of the STARS@UNIPD programme past editions are not eligible to apply.

The STARS-StG funding scheme is open to PIs who, at the time of proposal submission may or may not hold a permanent position at Unipd. In case the PI selected for funding does not hold a permanent position at Unipd, (s)he may be awarded a Research grant contract ("assegno di ricerca", please see Art. 7 of the STARS call) for the duration of the project.

## Budget of STARS Grants

Each STARS Grant includes a budget covering research costs (RC), which depends on the scientific domain of the proposal. STARS-StG and STARS-CoG may foresee an amount covering a research grant contract, type B<sup>1</sup> (RG, “assegno di ricerca”), to be foreseen when the PI does not hold a permanent position at Unipd<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, STARS-StG may provide an amount for a Mobility allowance (MA), designed to cover the mobility costs of researchers who certify to have resided or carried out their main activity in Italy for no more than twelve months in the three years immediately prior to the call deadline.

Each STARS-StG project budget may include:

- 1) the cost of a research grant contract (RG, “assegno di ricerca”) for the PI (up to 100,000 € gross amount for 30 months, equivalent to up to 40,000 € gross amount/year, that is ca. 32,000 € net amount/year). Any “Mobility Allowance” costs shall be covered as described in point 3;
- 2) a maximum funding of 175,000 euros for the Macro-areas LS and PE and 100,000 euros for the Macro-area SH, to cover research costs (RC);
- 3) a contribution for the **Mobility allowance** for 30 months, amounting to (only gross amounts are specified) 500 euros per month and maximum 15,000 euros for 30 months (Table 1).

Applicants for STARS-StG holding a fixed-term contract at the University of Padua (*Ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo a*) or *b*) – *Rtda* or *Rtdb*), whose expiration date is set before the end of the STARS project, may include in their budget both the research costs (RC) and the costs of a research grant contract for the PI (RG), whose duration covers the time span comprised between the expiration date of the PI’s fixed-term contract at Unipd and the end of the STARS project.

Beneficiaries of STARS-StG that at the time of recruitment hold a research grant contract whose costs are covered by previously funded projects must resign from such research grant contract before commencing the STARS project and therefore activate a new research grant contract as PI. Alternatively, they may consider requesting to postpone the beginning of their STARS project; such request must be adequately justified.

STARS-StG (amounts are expressed in K€)	RESEARCH COSTS (RC)			RESEARCH GRANT (RG)	MOBILITY ALLOWANCE (MA)
	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) PE Macro-Area: Physical Sciences and Engineering	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) LS Macro-Area: Life Sciences	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) SH Macro-Area: Social Sciences and Humanities	Maximum funding covering the PI grant (gross amount for 30 months)	Maximum funding covering the mobility costs from abroad (30 months)
With no grant covering the PI’s contract	175	175	100	N.A.	N.A.
With a grant covering the PI’s contract	125	125	75	100	15

Table 1 – Eligible STARS-StG costs

<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to article 3, paragraph 2, letter b) of Unipd regulation on research grant contracts. See also Art. 7 - Allocation of funding in the call.

<sup>2</sup> A **PI not holding a permanent position at Unipd** is either external to the University or holding a fixed-term contract at the University of Padua under the provisions of Law no. 240/2010, article 24 (*Ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo a*) or *b*) – *Rtda* or *Rtdb*). *Rtda/Rtdb* researchers are recommended to foresee a RG amount in their budget if their contract does not cover the whole 30 month duration of the STARS project.

Each **STARS-CoG project budget** may include:

- 1) the cost of a research grant contract (RG, “*assegno di ricerca*”), for the PI (up to 100,000 € gross amount for 30 months, equivalent to up to 40,000 € gross amount/year, that is ca. 32,000 € net amount/year);
- 2) a maximum funding covering research costs of 175,000 euros for the LS and PE Macro-Area, and up to 100,000 euros for the SH Macro-Area, for 30 months (Table 2).

Applicants for STARS-CoG holding a fixed-term contract at the University of Padua (*Ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo a*) or *b*) – *Rtda* or *Rtdb*) whose expiration date is set before the end of the project may include in their budget both the research costs (RC) and the costs of a research grant contract for the PI (RG), whose duration covers the time span comprised between the expiration date of the PI’s fixed-term contract at Unipd and the end of the STARS project. Beneficiaries of STARS-CoG holding a permanent position at the University of Padua may only include research costs (RC) in their budget.

STARS-CoG (amounts are expressed in K€)	RESEARCH COSTS (RC)			RESEARCH GRANT (RG)
	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) PE Macro-Area: Physical Sciences and Engineering	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) LS Macro-Area: Life Sciences	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) SH Macro-Area: Social Sciences and Humanities	Maximum funding covering the PI grant (gross amount for 30 months)
With no grant covering the PI’s contract	175	175	100	N.A.
With a grant covering the PI’s contract	175	175	100	100

Table 2 – Eligible STARS-CoG costs

Each **STARS-WiC project budget** may include a maximum funding covering research costs (RC) of 175,000 euros for the LS and PE Macro-Area and of 100,000 euros for the SH Macro-Area, for 30 months (Table 3).

STARS-WiC (amounts are expressed in K€)	RESEARCH COSTS (RC)		
	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) PE Macro-Area: Physical Sciences and Engineering	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) LS Macro-Area: Life Sciences	Maximum funding covering research costs (30 months) SH Macro-Area: Social Sciences and Humanities
PI holding a permanent position at Unipd	175	175	100

Table 3 – Eligible STARS-WiC costs

The contribution for research costs (RC) will cover costs for personnel, equipment, travel, consumables, publications and other costs needed to carry out the project (see budget table on page 36).

**Examples:**

*A candidate applies for a StG, Macro-Area PE and does not hold a position at Unipd: (s)he can ask for max 100.000€ for his/her salary and max 125.000€ for costs related to his/her research.*

*A candidate applies for a StG, Macro-Area LS and does not hold a position at Unipd: (s)he can ask for max 100.000€ for his/her salary and max 125.000€ for costs related to his/her research. If the candidate has been living abroad for more than two years prior the call deadline s(he) can include a contribution of 15.000€ for the Mobility allowance.*

*A candidate applies for a StG, Macro-Area SH and holds a position at Unipd: (s)he can ask for max 100.000€ for costs related to his/her research. No money for his/her salary is foreseen.*

*A candidate applies for a CoG, Macro-Area LS and holds a position at Unipd: (s)he can ask for max 175.000€ for costs related to his/her research. No money for his/her salary is foreseen.*

*A candidate applies for a StG Macro-Area SH and holds a fixed-term research contract type a) at Unipd, but the contract expires a year before the end of the STARS project: (s)he can ask for max 75.000€ for costs related to his/her research and max 40.000€ for his/her salary. If the candidate's employment relationship with Unipd changes during the project, the project shall continue but the residual amount related to the cost of the candidate's RG will be recovered by Unipd.*

*A candidate applies for a CoG Macro-Area PE and holds a fixed-term research contract type b) at Unipd, but the contract expires a year before the end of the STARS project: (s)he can ask for max 175.000€ for costs related to his/her research and max 40.000€ for his/her salary. If the candidate's employment relationship with Unipd changes during the project, the project shall continue but the residual amount related to the cost of the candidate's RG will be recovered by Unipd.*

## **Proposal allocation to a Scientific Area**

The allocation of proposals to the various scientific areas will be based on the expressed preference of the applicant (PI).

It is the PI's responsibility to choose and indicate the most relevant Scientific Area for the evaluation of the proposed research and indicate one or more keywords representing the research fields involved. Macro-Areas correspond to ERC domains and Scientific Areas correspond to ERC Panels.

The initial allocation to a Scientific Area is based on the preference of the PI; when necessary, due to the expertise required for the evaluation, a proposal may be reallocated to a different Macro-Area or Scientific Area with the agreement of both Chairs concerned.

## **Specific eligibility criteria**

The reference date towards the calculation of the eligibility period should be the certified date of the successful defence (and not the award) of the PhD degree (see Art. 2 of the STARS call) according to the national regulations of the country in which the degree was awarded.

However, the actual time lapse between the date of the PhD and the deadline specified in the call (1<sup>st</sup> January 2023) can be reduced in the following properly documented circumstances, provided that they started before the call deadline.

For **maternity**, the effective elapsed time since the successful defence of the first PhD will be considered reduced by 18 months or, if longer, by the documented amount of leave actually taken for each child born **before or after** the PhD defence.

For **paternity**, the effective elapsed time since the successful defence of the first PhD will be considered reduced by the documented amount of paternity leave actually taken for each child born **before or after** the PhD defence. The paternity leave must be

documented through a certificate released by the competent institution/authority (e.g. an official signed document from the employer or the competent institution/authority certifying start and end date(s) of the individual leave(s)).

For **long-term illness** (over ninety days for the PI or a close family member: child, parent, sibling or spouse) or **national service**, the effective elapsed time since the successful defence of the first PhD will be considered reduced by the documented amount of leave actually taken by the Principal Investigator for each incident which occurred **after** the PhD defence.

For **clinical training**, an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented time of clinical training received by the PI **after** the award of the first eligible degree up to a maximum of 4 years. For applicants whose first eligible degree is a medical degree, clinical training can be accepted from the date of the completion of their medical degree. No extension will be accepted for serving as a house doctor or hospital doctor unless it is part of a clinical training programme. In case of part-time clinical training, the exact total training time will be accepted on a pro-rata basis to extend the eligibility window of the applicant. Supporting documents: an official document signed by the institution responsible for the clinical training, certifying start and end date(s) of the individual training period(s).

For **natural disaster**, an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented time of a PI's inability to work for a minimum number of 30 days before the call deadline due to a natural disaster, which occurred **after** the date of the successful defence of the PhD degree. Please note that events other than natural disasters will not be considered (e.g. fire/flood in the building due to a human mistake or technical problem).

For **seeking asylum**, an extension can be granted corresponding to the documented time of the PI's inability to work before the call deadline due to seeking asylum, which occurred **after** the date of the successful defence of the PhD degree. The possible period of extension runs from the start date of asylum/refugee application to the date of decision on the applicant PI's refugee status and/or receipt of specific residence permit.

## PhD and equivalent doctoral degrees

In order to be eligible to apply to the STARS Starting, Consolidator or Wild Card Grants a PI must have successfully defended a PhD or equivalent doctoral degree.

It is acknowledged that, in certain fields, there are doctoral titles that enjoy the same status as and represent variants of the PhD. All of them have **similar content requirements**. Potential applicants are invited to consult the following document for useful references on degrees that will be considered equivalent to the PhD:

EURYDICE - "Examinations, qualifications and titles - Second edition, Volume 1, European glossary on education" <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/european-glossary-on-education-pbEC3212292/> published in 2004. Please note that some titles that belong to the same category as doctoral degrees (ISCED 6 – 1997 classification or ISCED 8 – 2011 classification<sup>3</sup>) may correspond to the intermediate steps towards the completion of doctoral education and they should not be therefore considered as PhD-equivalent.

A list of research doctorate titles awarded in the United States that have the same status as and present variants of the PhD within certain fields is available on line<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Information on ISCED Mapping is available at the following link: <http://www.uis.unesco.org>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-structure-us.html>.



These doctorate titles are also recognized as PhD-equivalent by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF).

### **Medical Doctors (applicants holding a degree in medicine)**

A first medical doctor degree (MD) will not be accepted by itself as equivalent to a PhD degree. To be considered an eligible PI, medical doctors (or applicants holding a degree in medicine) need to provide **the certificates of both a medical doctor degree AND a PhD OR proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency** (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment). Additionally, candidates must also provide information on their research experience (including peer reviewed publications) in order to further substantiate the equivalence of their overall training to a PhD.

If the PI holds a MD and proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency, the time reference for calculation of the eligibility time-window is the certified date of the medical doctor degree completion plus two years (i.e. 2 - 7 years past the medical doctor degree for STARS StG, and over 7 - 12 years past the medical doctor degree for STARS CoG).

For medical doctors holding both a MD AND a PhD, the date of the earliest degree that makes the applicant eligible takes precedence in the calculation of the eligibility time-window (i.e. MD and proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency or the date of the successful defence of the PhD degree). A medical degree takes precedence over a PhD degree **only** when an applicant has held an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment) **before** the date of successful defence of a PhD.

### **Examples on eligibility criteria**

#### **Starting Grants**

*A candidate has successfully defended his/her first PhD on 1/5/2015. (S)He is not eligible because s(he) obtained his/her degree since more than 5 years prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023*

*A candidate has successfully defended her first PhD on 1/3/2016. She is mother of 2 children. She is eligible because the elapsed time since the defence of the PhD will be reduced of 36 months (18 months per child).*

*A candidate has successfully defended his first PhD on 28/10/2017. He leaves for paternity for 3 months. He is eligible because the elapsed time since the defence of the PhD will be reduced of 3 months.*

*A candidate was awarded a MD on 1/6/2012 and then has defended a PhD on 1/10/2018. (S)He has worked as Associate Professor since 1/1/2015. His/her professorship appointment required doctoral equivalency. (S)He is not eligible for a STARS StG because the earliest degree that makes the applicant eligible is the MD and (s)he obtained it since more than 7 years prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023.*

*A candidate was awarded a MD on 1/1/2016 and then has defended a PhD on 1/09/2020. (S)He has worked as a Researcher since 1/1/2020. His/her appointment did not require doctoral equivalency. (S)He is eligible for a STARS StG because the earliest degree that makes the applicant eligible is the PhD and (s)he obtained it since less than 5 years prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023.*

### **Consolidator Grants**

*A candidate has been awarded his/her first Doctoral qualification on 1/4/2013 and is a tenured Professor at a French University. (S)He is not eligible because (s)he doesn't hold a position at Unipd.*

*A candidate is a Researcher on a fixed-term contract of type b) at Unipd and has been awarded his/her first Doctoral qualification on 1/4/2018. (S)He is not eligible for a Consolidator Grant, but (s)he is eligible for a Starting Grant.*

*A PI who was awarded a degree in medicine on 1/1/2005, completed three year clinical training in 2010 and held one or several research positions (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship or professorship appointment) prior to being awarded a PhD in 2014, is ineligible for both the STARS StG and STARS CoG Grant. The medical degree together with the research experience acquired during the research position(s) is considered equivalent to a PhD. Therefore, the earliest eligible degree is the medical degree – awarded 18 years prior to 1 January 2023 and not within the eligibility window (the date of the medical degree + 2 years = 1 January 2007, is used for the calculation of the eligibility window of 0-5 years for StG and 5-10 years for CoG). An extension for three years of clinical training is not enough to make the applicant eligible for the STARS CoG.*

### **Evaluation Criteria – Procedures for the STARS@UNIPD 2023 Call**

Unipd will appoint an Evaluation Committee as to select the winning project proposals. It will be nominated by the Rector of Unipd and composed of maximum 27 external experts of recognized international prestige, in the 3 ERC Macro-areas: PE - Physical Sciences and Engineering; LS - Life Sciences; SH - Social Sciences and Humanities. The Committee will work in three Sub-committees, one for each Macro-Area, composed of maximum 11, 9 and 7 experts (PE=11, LS=9, SH=7). If no projects are submitted within an area, no experts will be appointed in that area. Sub-committees will also make use of independent reviewers in the particular scientific areas of individual projects. The Evaluation Committee will be chaired by three coordinators (acting as Chairs of the Sub-committees) who will coordinate the work of the three Sub-committees.

Experts in the Evaluation Committee perform evaluations on a personal basis, not as representatives of their employer, their Country or any other entity. They are independent, impartial and objective, and behave in a professional manner.

For all STARS@UNIPD grants, scientific excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation. It will be applied in conjunction to the evaluation of both: the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project; the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the PI.

Proposals are submitted in a single stage and evaluated in two steps by the experts against the following criteria (Table 4).

#### **1. Research Project**

##### **Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility**

##### **Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project**

To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?

To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or developments across disciplines)?

To what extent is the proposed research high risk/high gain (i.e. if successful, the payoffs will be very significant, but there is a higher-than-normal risk that the research project does not entirely fulfill its aims)?

**Scientific Approach**

To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is high risk/high gain (based on the Extended Synopsis)?  
 To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?  
 To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?  
 To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI’s commitments adequate and properly justified (based on the full Scientific Proposal)?

**2. Principal Investigator**

**Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment**

**Intellectual capacity and creativity**

To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?  
 To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?  
 To what extent does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

*Table 4 – Evaluation criteria*

Conflicts of interest: under the terms of the expert’s contract, all experts must declare any conflict of interest beforehand and must immediately inform the STARS@UNIPD Internal Commission if they detect any conflict of interest at any time during the course of the evaluation.

Confidentiality: the expert’s contract also requires experts to maintain strict confidentiality with respect to the whole evaluation process. They must follow any instructions given by the STARS@UNIPD Internal Commission to ensure this. Under no circumstances may an expert attempt to contact an applicant on his/her own account, either during the evaluation or afterwards.

**Indicative timetable for the STARS@UNIPD 2023 Call for proposals**

<b>Call opening</b>	<b>1 December 2022</b>
<b>Deadline for proposal submission</b>	28 February 2023 hrs 1 p.m.
<b>Eligibility check</b>	22 March 2023
<b>Evaluation Step 1</b>	30 June 2023
<b>Evaluation Step 2</b>	29 September 2023
<b>Interview</b>	October 2023
<b>Evaluation results</b>	15 November 2023
<b>Financed projects ranking approval</b>	30 November 2023
<b>Date of project beginning</b>	1 January 2024
<b>Deadline for signing the PI StG or CoG contract ("assegno di ricerca")</b>	31 March 2024

## Instructions to submit the proposal

The application package consists of two parts:

- an administrative form containing information about the PI and concise information on the proposal;
- the research proposal must be prepared according to this Guide and needs to be attached to the administrative form in .pdf format. It should consist of
  - **Part B1**: extended synopsis; the PI's CV and track record (only for STARS StG and CoG);
  - **Part B2**: the scientific proposal.

To access the electronic submission system, please go to: <https://pica.cineca.it/unipd/tipologia/stars>.

1. Proposals must be submitted electronically, please do not send anything by e-mail or post.
2. Before starting the application procedure, please read carefully the call text, make sure you meet the eligibility criteria and verify which documents are required for the application.
3. Please note that all documents required for the application must be uploaded in a .pdf format (max. 30 MB) and, for some of the available signature methods, they must be printed, signed and re-uploaded in the electronic submission system. Please make sure to have a printer and a scanner available and ready for use.
4. It is possible to access the electronic submission system multiple times to fill in the proposal, saving the data entered every time. Once you access the system again, you can continue filling in the proposal by clicking on: "Modifica/Edit".
5. The electronic submission system provides instructions in Italian and English; please note that proposals must be written in English. In case of documents written in any other language, the application must also include an English translation thereof.
6. For further information, please write to: [talent.stars@unipd.it](mailto:talent.stars@unipd.it). For technical issues concerning the electronic submission system, please refer to the PICA-CINECA staff: contacts are available at the bottom of the electronic submission system home page <https://pica.cineca.it/unipd/>. A reply is not guaranteed when using contacts different from the ones mentioned above.
7. Once you have completed and submitted the proposal, you will receive an e-mail with confirmation of the successful submission.
8. Proposals' contents are registered via the electronic submission system and entered into a database to support the evaluation process.

### 1. HOW TO REGISTER AND ACCESS THE SYSTEM

The electronic submission system is open from 1 December 2022 to 28 February 2023 at 1 p.m. (Padua local time – Italy time zone). To access the system, please go to <https://pica.cineca.it/unipd/> and log in (Fig. 1).

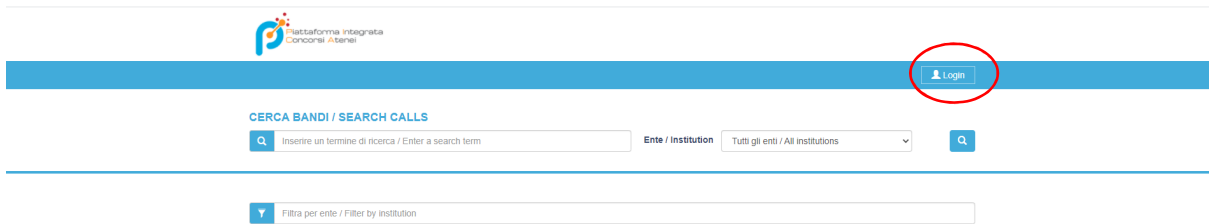


Fig. 1 – PICA starting page: login.

If you have Institutional credentials (only for candidates affiliated to Unipd), please click on “Accedi con SPID o Credenziali Istituzionali”, and choose “Università di Padova” to enter with IDP UNIPD – Single Sig On (Fig. 2).

If you register for the first time, please click on “New registration” and fill in the requested fields (Fig. 2, 3).

If you are a LOGINMIUR user, you can access the system using the username and password of your LOGINMIUR account. In this case, please select “LOGINMIUR” from the dropdown-list “Credentials”.

In case you have a username and a password but you do not remember them, please click on “Forgot your credentials?”

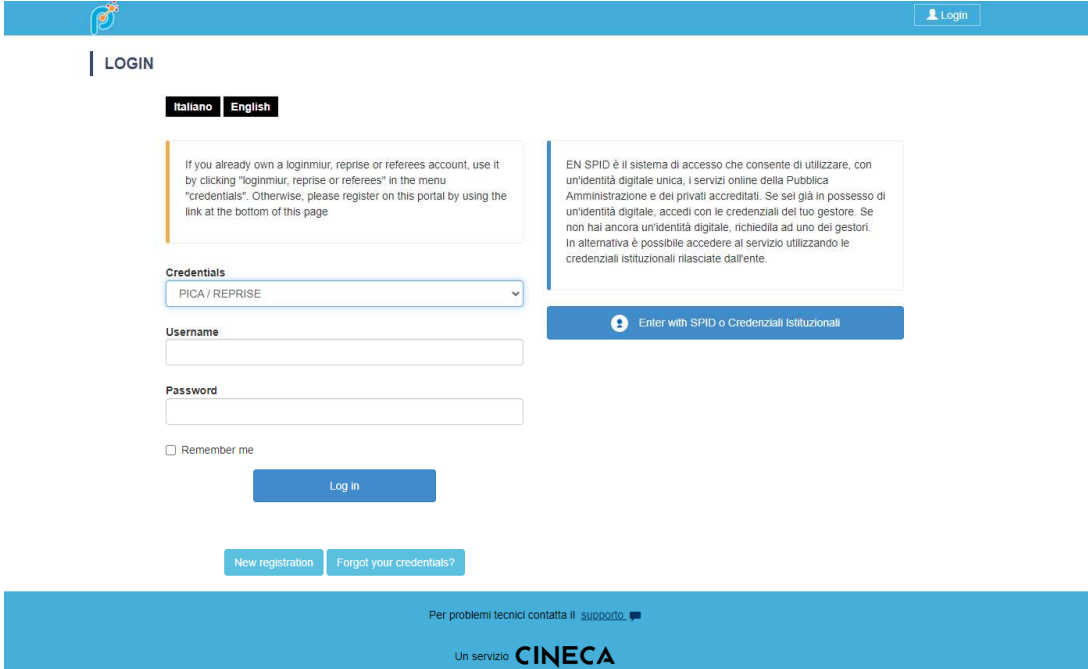
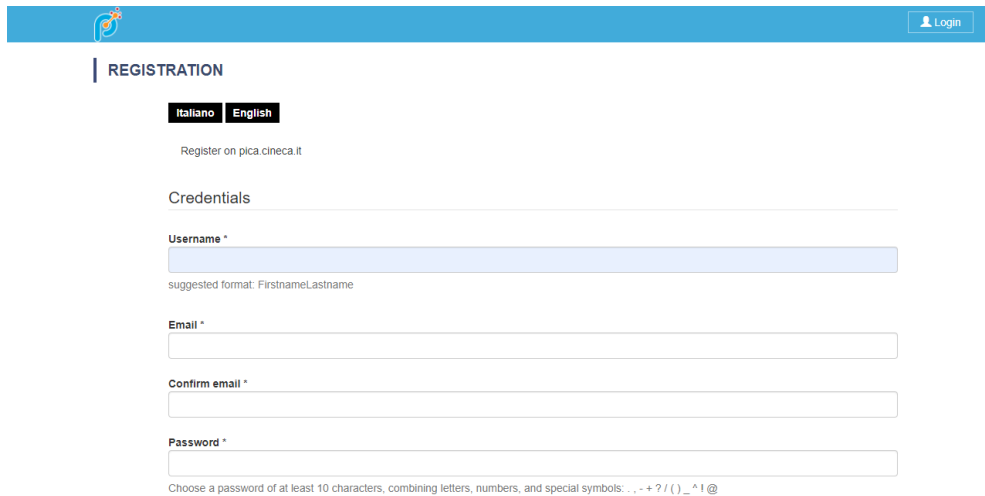


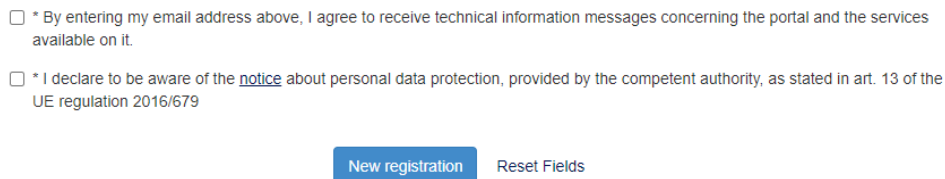
Fig. 2 – Login/Registration page.



The registration form is titled "REGISTRATION" and includes a language selector for "Italiano" and "English". It contains fields for "Username \*", "Email \*", "Confirm email \*", and "Password \*". A note below the password field states: "Choose a password of at least 10 characters, combining letters, numbers, and special symbols: . - + ? / ( ) \_ ^ ! @".

Fig. 3 – User registration.

After having completed all the requested fields, please click on “New registration” (Fig. 4); the system will send an email to the email address you indicated informing you on how to confirm your registration. In case you do not receive such email message, please contact the available support service by clicking at the bottom of the page.

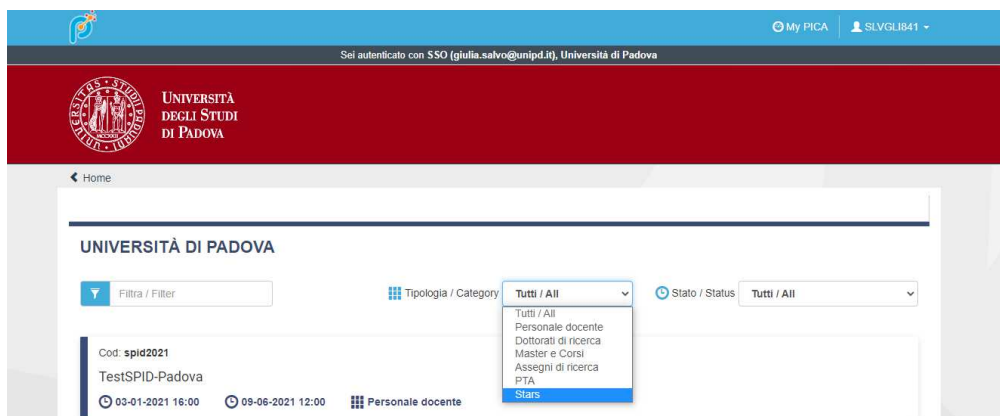


This section contains two checkboxes for terms and conditions. The first checkbox is for receiving technical information, and the second is for acknowledging the notice on personal data protection. Below the checkboxes are two buttons: "New registration" and "Reset Fields".

Fig. 4 – New registration.

## 2. ACCESS TO THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Once you have registered, you can log in to <https://pica.cineca.it/unipd> with your credentials, select from the lists of Universities, the University of Padua “Università di Padova” and select from the menu “Tipologia /Category” **STARS** and thus enter the submission portal (Fig. 5, 6):



The screenshot shows the user interface of the application portal. It features a navigation bar with the University of Padua logo and name. Below the navigation bar, there are filters for "Tipologia / Category" and "Stato / Status". A dropdown menu is open under "Tipologia / Category", showing options like "Tutti / All", "Personale docente", "Dottorati di ricerca", "Master e Corsi", "Assegni di ricerca", "PTA", and "Stars". The "Stars" option is highlighted.

Fig. 5 – Searching the STARS call.



Fig. 6 – Application form.

Click on “Compila una nuova domanda/New submission” to start a new submission.

Compila una nuova domanda / New submission

### 3. PROPOSAL SECTIONS

In Fig. 7 you can find the index of the sections of the proposal.



Fig. 7 – Index - Proposal sections.

Please remember to click on “**Salva e prosegui/Save and proceed**” after you have entered the requested data in each section.

If there is no error, the system will let you go to the next section. In case errors are detected, an error message will be displayed: data must be corrected in order to proceed any further.

#### 3.1. Registrazione progetto/Application

Based on the eligibility criteria established in Art. 2 of the call for proposals, you shall select the type of grant for which you intend to apply (you may only choose one):

- Starting Grant (StG)
- Consolidator Grant (CoG)
- Wild Card Grant (WiC)

You shall write title, acronym, abstract, budget, ERC area of the project and at least one keyword among the ERC ones, that can be selected from the dropdown-list. Concerning the Budget (Fig. 8), please select the various cost categories from the dropdown-list, which must correspond to the categories of the budget table in the Research Proposal PART 2 (see page 34); you can add a cost field (only one for category) by clicking on "Aggiungi/Add". For each cost category you shall indicate the total amount (e.g.: if two postdocs are planned, please indicate the total cost). If no PI costs are foreseen in your case, please fill in the corresponding field with "0". The "Total estimated eligible costs" (including the PI costs) will be filled in automatically by the system.

The screenshot displays a 'Budget' section with three rows of cost categories. Each row has a dropdown menu for the category and an input field for the estimated cost in Euros (€). The categories and their estimated costs are: Personnel - PI (0), Personnel - Postdocs (40000), and Travel (20000). Each row has a 'Cancella / Delete' button. At the bottom, there is a green 'Aggiungi / Add' button and a field for 'Totale stimato dei costi eleggibili / Total Estimated Eligible Costs' which is set to 60000,00.

Categoria di costo / Cost category	Costo stimato / Estimated cost
Personnel - PI	€ 0
Personnel - Postdocs	€ 40000
Travel	€ 20000

Totale stimato dei costi eleggibili / Total Estimated Eligible Costs: € 60000,00

Fig. 8 – Budget section.

You can also require the Mobility allowance, if needed. You shall indicate your place(s) of activity / residence in the past 3 years, inserting the most recent location first. You shall indicate the period(s) and the Country(ies) in which you have legally resided or had your main activity (work, studies, etc.) during the past 3 years and up until the call deadline (i.e. from 28 February 2020 to 28 February 2023). Please, note that short stays shall not be considered. Short stays are characterized by the type of activity rather than by a specific number of days. A period can only be considered as a short stay if the researcher did not reside or did not have their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country during that period (such as holidays or participation to conferences).

Please also indicate your hosting Department and, in case of StG, your Scientific Supervisor at Unipd.

You shall also indicate any applications to previous editions of the programme, specifying the year of the call. Please, note that as stated in the Art. 2 - Eligibility Criteria of the call, PIs who have been previously funded in the framework of the STARS@UNIPD programme past editions are not eligible to apply.



### 3.2. Trattamento dei dati personali e Dichiarazione di responsabilità/ Information notice on personal data treatment and Declaration of Liability

The candidate is requested to read and accept some statements on personal data handling.

### 3.3. Dati anagrafici e recapiti/Personal and Contact Data

This section already contains data that were entered during the registration procedure; you shall fill in the empty fields only. In case one or more of your personal data are incorrect, you can modify the information on your User profile, which can be found on the top right of the webpage.

### 3.4. Titoli di studio/Qualifications

Please fill in the fields with the information regarding your PhD degree. Write your PhD thesis title in the field “**Tesi di Dottorato / PhD Thesis** | Descrizione / Description”. You shall upload a copy of the certificate or a self-certification (note that a self-certification may be accepted only for Italian and EU citizens holding a PhD awarded by an Italian University).

Regarding the possible extension of the eligibility period, please read the section “Specific eligibility criteria” and upload the requested documents.

In case of MD, please see the instructions specified in section “Medical Doctors (applicants holding a degree in medicine)” of this Guide (page 9) and insert your MD qualification details as appropriate. You may have the possibility to upload the certificate for the proof of appointment in the field of extension.

Eventuale estensione del periodo di eleggibilità / Possible extension of the eligibility period

Estensione del periodo di eleggibilità / Extension of the eligibility period

Sì / Yes  
 No

Copia documenti giustificativi estensione / Supporting documents

Descrizione/Description

Carica/Upload

Scegli file Nessun file selezionato

Inserire in un unico file la documentazione che attesta i periodi di estensione  
Please upload all the supporting documents in a single file **Max 30MB**

Mesi estensione / Months

Indicare il numero totale di mesi di estensione usufruiti  
Enter the number of months of extension

Salva e prosegui / Save and proceed

Fig. 9 – Qualifications – Possible extension of eligibility period.

### 3.5. Allegati/Attachments

The maximum size for each file that needs to be uploaded is **30 MB**.

Depending on the type of funding for which you are applying (you may only choose one), please provide the following annexes:

#### a) Starting Grant (StG)

a1. Research proposal (Part B1 - Extended Synopsis, CV and Track Record)

a2. Research proposal (Part B2 - Scientific Proposal)

- a3. Letter of Commitment only IF the PI does NOT hold a permanent position at Unipd<sup>5</sup>
- a4. Copy of valid ID

**b) Consolidator Grant (CoG)**

- b1. Research proposal (Part B1 - Extended Synopsis, CV and Track Record)
- b2. Research proposal (Part B2 - Scientific Proposal)
- b3. Letter of Commitment only IF the PI does NOT hold a permanent position at Unipd
- b4. Copy of valid ID

**c) Wild Card Grant (WiC)**

- c1. Research proposal (Part B2 - Scientific Proposal)
- c2. Summary Report by ERCEA
- c3. Copy of valid ID

**3.6. Dichiarazioni finali / Final Declarations**

This section comprises a number of statements that need to be undersigned. For PIs applying for a Starting grant, there is the declaration of the actual duration in months of research grants previously awarded (“*assegno di ricerca*” according to Law 240/2010). Furthermore, in this section you can inform the competent offices if you need support in case of disabilities.

**3.7. Ethics issues table**

Please reply to the questions related to ethics issues in the two sections dedicated and upload the relevant supporting documents if needed.

**3.8. Security issues table**

Please reply to the questions related to security issues in the last section and upload the relevant supporting documents if needed.

**4. SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSAL**

At this point, you will view your application in the dashboard, please verify whether it is complete and then submit it by clicking on “Presenta/Submit” (Fig. 10)



Fig. 10 – Dashboard with status and possible actions for the drafted proposal.

<sup>5</sup> A PI not holding a permanent position at Unipd is either external to the University or holding a research grant contract (*assegno di ricerca*) or a fixed-term contract (*Ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo a*) or *b*) – *Rtda* or *Rtdb*) at the University of Padua, under the provisions of Law no. 240/2010, articles 22 and 24.

If the application procedure has been correctly completed, scroll down and click the button “firma/sign” at the end of the page, the system will then generate a .pdf file of the proposal.

In case of error, a warning message will be displayed: errors must be corrected to proceed.

In order to complete the submission, sign the document. Three options for signature will be shown (Fig. 11), please note that for foreign applicants only the first option will be displayed (“Handwritten Signature”).

**MODALITÀ DI FIRMA / SIGNATURE METHOD**

Cruscotto/Dashboard Domanda/Application Id: 416686

Il sistema supporta le seguenti modalità / The following options are available:

**Firma il documento manualmente / Handwritten Signature**

Per firmare manualmente il documento è necessario scaricare il PDF del documento sul proprio computer, stamparlo, firmarlo manualmente, effettuarne la scansione in un file PDF e caricare quest'ultimo sul sito. / To sign manually the document, you need to download the pdf file of the application, print it, sign it in original, scan it in a pdf file and upload it again on the website.

ATTENZIONE: la scansione, oltre alle pagine della domanda, dovrà contenere nell'ultima pagina la copia di un documento di identità in corso di validità (questo passaggio non è necessario se la copia del documento di identità è stata inserita tra gli allegati alla domanda) / WATCH OUT: the copy of a valid identity document must be included as the last page of the scanned pdf, after the application form pages (this step can be dispensed with if a copy of the document was uploaded as an attachment of the application form)

**Firma il documento sul server ConFirma / Sign the application on the server using ConFirma service**

Per firmare digitalmente il documento è necessario avere una dotazione hardware (ad esempio smart card o dispositivo USB con certificato digitale di sottoscrizione rilasciato da un Certificatore accreditato) compatibile con il servizio ConFirma. Dopo la firma sarà possibile scaricare il PDF firmato / In order to sign digitally the application it is necessary to have an hardware (e.g. smart card or USB with digital signature certificate issued by an approved certification authority) compatible with ConFirma service. After signing, applicants can download the signed pdf application

**Firma digitalmente il documento sul tuo personal computer / Sign the application digitally on your pc**

Per firmare digitalmente il documento è necessario avere una dotazione hardware (ad esempio smart card o dispositivo USB con certificato digitale di sottoscrizione rilasciato da un Certificatore accreditato) o software di firma digitale con cui generare, a partire dal file PDF del documento scaricato da questo sito, il file firmato in formato pdf.p7m da ricaricare sul sito stesso / In order to sign digitally the application it is necessary to have an hardware (e.g. smart card or USB with digital signature certificate issued by an approved certification authority) or a software for digital signatures in order to create a pdf.p7m file from the pdf file downloaded from this site. The pdf.p7m file must be uploaded in the website again

Fig. 11 – Signature options.

When the signed PDF of the proposal is uploaded, please click on “Send the application” to successfully send the proposal (Fig. 12).

An email message confirming the submission of the proposal will be sent to your account.

**FIRMA MANUALE / HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURE**

Firma il documento manualmente / Handwritten Signature

- 1 Scaricare (download) la form già compilata / Download your filled-in form
- 2 Stampare la domanda / Print out the application
- 3 Firmare in modo leggibile con inchiostro scuro l'ultima pagina della domanda stampata / Sign the last page of the printed application legibly, with dark ink
- 4 Effettuare la scansione, in un unico file PDF, della domanda firmata e del documento d'identità fronte/retro / Scan your signed application and your identity document (both sides), within a single PDF document **N.B.** Il documento d'identità non è necessario se già caricato all'interno della domanda / The identity document is not required if already uploaded in the application form
- 5 Effettuare l'upload del file PDF / Upload the PDF document  
 Nessun file selezionato

Fig. 12 – “Handwritten Signature” procedure.

## 5. HOW TO MODIFY OR WITHDRAW YOUR APPLICATION

Once proposals are submitted, they cannot be opened and no further modifications can be made; therefore, if you need to make any changes, you will need to cancel the proposal by clicking on “Ritira domanda/ Withdraw” (Figg. 13, 14).

Id: 416387 PRESENTATA/SUBMITTED

PDF

Fig. 13 – Withdrawal of the application.

*Domanda di ritiro dalla procedura selettiva / Request for Withdrawal of Application*

per il bando Supporting Talent Research @ University of Padova - STARS 2021 / Call Supporting Talent Research @ University of Padova - STARS 2021

ID domanda da ritirare / ID Application to withdraw  
416387

Bando / Call  
Università degli Studi di Padova - Supporting Talent in Research @ University of Padova - STARS 2021

Ateneo / University  
Università di Padova

desidero ritirare la domanda / I wish to withdraw my application  
• Dato obbligatorio / Mandatory field

Motivazione: / Justification:  
Test

Salva e torna al cruscotto / Save and back to dashboard

Fig. 14 – Withdrawal of the application.

After having confirmed the withdrawal, you shall sign the document generated by the system:

Firma il ritiro/Sign withdrawal

Please follow the instructions for signature procedures.

Once you have completed this procedure, you can register and submit a new proposal within the deadline of the call.

## 6. INTERVIEW

STARS-StG and STARS-CoG candidates admitted to Step 2 of the selection process will be invited for an interview with the Sub-committee of the relevant Macro-Area. Candidates will be notified of the date and time of the interview by e-mail (at the address indicated in the application form) with a notice of approximately 3-4 weeks.

In case of remote interviews (via Zoom platform), candidates shall make sure to be available at least half an hour before the interview, and to have a well-functioning connection; both audio and video connections are required to make the candidates' identification possible. In case the connection does not allow the Sub-committee to see/hear the candidate during the interview, the candidate will be called again for a maximum of three times during the day of the interview. Unipd will register the elements proving that the interview has (or has not) taken place, including log files proving whether the connection has been established and any other element the Sub-

committee considers useful to prove that the interview has (or has not) been completed. The Sub-committee shall call the candidate for three times. In the event the Sub-committee is not able to complete the interview, this will be evaluated on the basis of what has been discussed and considered successfully terminated. It will not be replaced with or integrated by any other forms of interview.

## **7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The call for proposals is managed by the International Research Office of the University of Padua:

- for questions or information about the proposal submission and the evaluation procedure, please refer to the International Research Office: [talent.stars@unipd.it](mailto:talent.stars@unipd.it);
- for technical issues concerning the electronic submission system, please refer to the PICA-CINECA staff: contacts are available at the bottom of the electronic submission system home page <https://pica.cineca.it/unipd/>.

## Instructions for completing “Part B” of the proposal

The research proposal (Part B) consists of two parts:

Part B1 (including cover page, sections a, b, and c) and

Part B2 (including sections a, b, and c).

The templates for these two parts are available in this guide (page 27). They can be downloaded at the following links: <https://www.unipd.it/en/stars2023> (Unipd website in English) or <https://www.unipd.it/stars2023> (Unipd website in Italian) and their use is mandatory.

**PIs applying for WiC grants should complete only part B2 of the proposal.**

### PART B1

**When drafting Part B1, PIs should pay particular attention to the extended synopsis (section a) and should not consider it as simply complementing Part B2. Since the experts will only evaluate Part B1 at step 1, it is important that the extended synopsis contains all essential information including the feasibility of the scientific proposal.**

**Please, note that at step 1 the experts have no access to Part B2.**

The information to be included in each section as well as the maximum length of each section or its sub-sections is described below.

**In fairness to all applicants, the page limits below will be applied strictly. Only the material that is presented within these limits will be evaluated.**

Each proposal page **shall** carry a **header** presenting the **PI's last name**, the **acronym of the proposal**, and the reference to the respective proposal section (**Part B1** or **Part B2**).

The following parameters **shall** be respected for the layout:

Page Format	Font Type	Font Size	Line Spacing	Margins
A4	Times New Roman, Arial or similar	At least 11	Single	2 cm side 1.5 bottom

### **Part B1 – Cover page:**

**Please abide by the format requirements, as exemplified in the online template provided in the STARS website.**

Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)

Name of the PI's host Department for the Project

Proposal full title

Proposal Acronym

Proposal duration in months

Proposal summary (half a page)

For inter-disciplinary/cross-panel proposals: please indicate the additional STARS review panel(s) and explain why the proposal needs to be considered by more than one panel.

## **Part B1 Sections a, b and c:**

### **The Research Proposal**

#### **a. Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal (max. 5 pages)**

The Extended Synopsis should give a concise presentation of the scientific proposal, with particular attention to the ground-breaking nature of the research project and the feasibility of the outlined scientific approach. Describe the proposed work in the context of the state of the art of the field. References to literature should also be included at the end of Part B1. References do not count towards the page limits. It is important that this extended synopsis contains all essential information as the experts will only evaluate Part B1 at step 1.

### **The Principal Investigator**

#### **b. Curriculum Vitae (max. 2 pages):**

The CV should include the PI's standard academic and research record. A suggested outline is available in the Part B1 downloadable template. The structure of the CV may be modified. Any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths should be clearly explained so that they can be fairly assessed by the evaluation panels.

The succinct "**funding ID**" which must specify any current research grants and their subject, and any on-going application for work related to the proposal **must follow the table format indicated in the Part B1 template**. The funding ID **will not count towards the page limits** and needs to be completed with the following information for on-going grants and applications:

**Project Title, Funding source, Amount, Period, Role of the PI, Connection to the STARS proposal.**

#### **c. Early achievements track-record (max. 2 pages):**

The Principal Investigator (PI) must provide a list of achievements reflecting his/her track record. The applicant should list (if applicable):

1. **Publications (up to five for Starting Grant and up to ten for Consolidator Grant) in major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals and/or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals, peer-reviewed conferences proceedings and/or monographs** of their respective research fields, highlighting those as main author or without their PhD supervisor as co-author (properly referenced, field relevant bibliometric indicators may also be included); preprints may be included, if freely available from a preprint server (preprints should be properly referenced and either a link to the preprint or a DOI should be provided);
2. **Research monographs and any translations thereof;**
3. **Granted patent(s);**
4. **Invited presentations to internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools;**
5. **Prizes/awards/academy memberships.**



## **Part B2**

### **Part B2 Sections a, b, and c:**

#### **The scientific proposal (max. 15 pages)**

**At this step part B1 and B2 of the proposals are evaluated (candidates applying for WiC grants have to submit only part B2)**

**Please abide by the format requirements, see the template on page 34. References do not count towards the page limit.**

The scientific, technical, and/or scholarly aspects of the project should be described more in detail demonstrating the ground-breaking nature of the research, its potential impact and research methodology. The fraction of the applicant's research effort that will be devoted to this project and a full estimation of the real project costs also need to be indicated.

#### **a. State of the art and objectives**

Clearly specify the objectives of the proposal, in the context of the state of the art in the field. When describing the envisaged research, it should be indicated how and why the proposed work is important for the field, and what impact it will have if successful, such as how it may open up new horizons or opportunities for science, technology or scholarship. Specify any particularly challenging or unconventional aspects of the proposal, including multi- or inter- disciplinary aspects.

#### **b. Methodology**

Describe the proposed methodology in detail including, as appropriate, key intermediate goals. Explain and justify the methodology in relation to the state of the art, including any particularly novel or unconventional aspects addressing "high-risk/high-gain" balance. Highlight any intermediate stages where results may require adjustments to the project planning.

#### **c. Resources (incl. project costs)**

It is mandatory to use the budget table template included in Part B2 to facilitate the assessment of resources by the experts.

State the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfill the objectives for the duration of the project. Requested resources should be reasonable and fully justified in the proposal. The requested grant should be consistent with the actual needs to fulfill the objectives of the project.

Specify briefly your commitment to the project, describe the size and nature of the team, indicating, where appropriate, the key team members and their roles.

Specify any existing resources that will contribute to the project. Describe other necessary resources, such as infrastructure and equipment.

When estimating the costs for travel, please also consider participation of the PI and team members in conferences and dissemination events.

Applicants are asked to provide Open Access (free of charge, online access for any user) to all peer-reviewed scientific publications resulting from STARS projects funded through this call. Open Access can be ensured through green or gold Open Access-routes, and Open Access must in any case be ensured through a repository 6 months after publication, at the latest (12 months for publications from the Social Sciences and

Humanities).

Costs for providing immediate Open Access to publications (article processing charges) are eligible and can be charged against the STARS grant if they are incurred during the lifetime of the project. When drafting the budget, it is highly advisable to consider the need to include such expenditure, and if that is the case, to make a realistic estimation of the amount needed.

In the budget table: include a breakdown of the budget subdivided in personnel costs, travel, equipment, consumables, publication costs (including any costs related to Open Access), and other direct costs.

### **Supporting Documents**

**Any additional annexes, including documents related to the PhD, the host Department "Letter of Commitment", the evaluation summary report and a scanned copy of a valid ID card or passport, as well as any relevant documents connected to the applicants' requests for eligibility extensions, should be provided and uploaded as separate .pdf documents. These annexes do not count towards the maximum page limit for Part B2.**

Subsequent to submission, and only in exceptional cases, the PI may be contacted if this is necessary to clarify questions of eligibility, ethics issues, research integrity or to verify administrative or legal data contained in the proposal.

### **Letter of Commitment**

Candidates applying for a STARS Grant, who do not hold a permanent position at Unipd, should attach a "Letter of Commitment"<sup>6</sup> signed by the Head of the hosting Department stating that the project is feasible and that the hosting Department commits to providing applicants with the facilities, instruments and knowledge necessary to implement their activities.

Once signed, the Letter should be saved in .pdf format and uploaded in the electronic submission system.

A template of the "Letter of Commitment" is available at the end of this Guide.

### **Ethics**

Some frontier research activities and methodologies may have ethical implications or raise questions which require sound ethical assessment in order to ensure that research supported by a STARS grant complies with fundamental ethical principles (see "Ethics issues table", page 38).

The completion of the Ethics table available on the electronic submission system is compulsory for each type of Grant.

Areas excluded from funding:

- (i) research activity aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes;
- (ii) research activity intended to modify the genetic makeup of human beings that

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<sup>6</sup> A PI not holding a permanent position at Unipd is either external to the University or holding a research grant contract (assegno di ricerca) or a fixed-term contract (Ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo a) or b) – Rtda or Rtdb) at the University of Padua, under the provisions of Law no. 240/2010, articles 22 and 24.

could make such changes heritable (apart from research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed);

(iii) research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer;

(iv) research that leads to the destruction of human embryos.

All research projects shall comply with the relevant national, EU and international ethics related rules and professional codes of conduct.

### **Ethics Review**

The Ethics review process concerns all projects funded by the STARS grants. The applicants should pay particular attention to the ethical aspects of the proposed work and should submit all ethics documentation available for their proposal.

The main areas that are addressed during the ethics review process include:

1. Human protection (including study participants and researchers)
2. Animal protection and welfare
3. Data protection and privacy
4. Environment protection
5. Participation of non-EU countries
6. Malevolent use of research results.

When submitting their proposal, applicants must complete the Ethics Issues Table. If they answer yes to one or more questions in the Ethics Issues Table, applicants must provide a detailed explanation on how to address the ethics issues.

Please include any supporting documents, such as any authorization you may already have. This will allow a more effective ethics clearance and an accelerated granting process if the proposal is retained for possible funding.

The Ethics explanation and any supporting documents should be uploaded in the electronic submission system.

Applicants should be aware that no funding can be provided by Unipd prior to a satisfactory conclusion of the ethics review procedure.

If a proposal is rejected because of ethics considerations, the applicant will be informed of the grounds for such a decision.

### **Research Integrity**

Cases of scientific misconduct such as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or misrepresentation of data will be considered as breaches of fundamental ethical principles and may result in the rejection of proposals.

### **No Contact with Reviewers/Experts**

Please note that NO direct or indirect contact is permitted between the PI or any team member or any person linked to the PI or to Unipd, AND any expert involved in the peer review evaluation of a STARS proposal. Any such contact may result in the decision to exclude the concerned proposal from the present call.

In view of the confidentiality of the evaluation process, applicants who participate in the step 2 interview are advised not to share the identity of panel members within their scientific communities.

**STARS Grants 2023  
TEMPLATES**

**Starting/Consolidator Grant (please choose one)**

**Research proposal [Part B1]  
(evaluated in Step 1 and Step 2)**

<Proposal Full Title>

<PROPOSAL ACRONYM>

**Cover Page<sup>7</sup>:**

- Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
- Name of the PI's host institution for the project
- Proposal duration in months

Text highlighted in grey should be deleted.

Proposal summary **(identical to the abstract from the online proposal submission forms)**.

The abstract should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. The abstract will be used as short description of your research proposal; it will serve in the evaluation process and in communications to contact the potential remote referees. It must therefore be short and precise, and should not contain confidential information.

Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. The abstract must be written in English. There is a limit of 2.000 characters (spaces and line breaks included).

Explain and justify the cross-macro Area or cross-scientific Area nature of your proposal. There is a limit of 1.000 characters, spaces and line breaks included.

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<sup>7</sup> Please insert the following key details on the header of your Application: [PI's Name Surname – STARS Funding scheme – Project Acronym].

**Section a: Extended Synopsis of the scientific proposal (max. 5 pages, [References do not count towards the page limits])**

*[The Extended Synopsis should give a concise presentation of the scientific proposal, with particular attention to the ground-breaking nature of the research project, which will allow evaluation panels to assess, in Step 1 of the evaluation, the feasibility of the outlined scientific approach. Describe the proposed work in the context of the state of the art of the field. References to literature should also be included.]*

***Please respect the following formatting constraints: use Times New Roman, Arial or similar, at least font size 11, margins (2.0 cm side and 1.5 cm top and bottom), single line spacing.***

## **Section b: Curriculum Vitae (max. 2 pages)**

*[Please use the following template. It should be modified only if necessary and appropriate.]*

### **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Family name, First name:

Researcher unique identifier(s) (such as ORCID, Research ID, etc. ...):

Date of birth:

Nationality:

URL for web site:

### **• EDUCATION**

200? PhD

Name of Faculty/Department, Name of University/Institution, Country

Name of PhD Supervisor

199? Master

Name of Faculty/Department, Name of University/Institution, Country

### **• CURRENT POSITION(S)**

201? – Current Position

Name of Faculty/Department, Name of University/Institution/Country

200? – Current Position

Name of Faculty/Department, Name of University/Institution/Country

### **• PREVIOUS POSITIONS**

200? – 200? Position held

Name of Faculty/Department, Name of University/Institution/Country

200? – 200? Position held

Name of Faculty/Department, Name of University/Institution/Country

### **• FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

200? – 200? Scholarship, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/  
Institution/ Country

200? Award, Name of institution/Country

### **• TEACHING ACTIVITIES (if applicable)**

200? – Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/Institution/Country

200? – 200? Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/ Institution/Country

### **• ORGANIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS (if applicable)**

201? Please specify your role and the name of event/Country

200? Please specify type of event / number of participants / Country

• **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (if applicable)**

- 201? – Faculty member, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 201? – 201? Graduate Student Advisor, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 200? – 200? Member of the Faculty Committee, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 200? – 200? Organiser of the Internal Seminar, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 200? – 200? Member of a Committee; role, Name of University/Institution/Country

• **REVIEWING ACTIVITIES (if applicable)**

- 201? – Scientific Advisory Board, Name of University/ Institution/Country
- 201? – Review Board, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 201? – Review panel member, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 201? – Editorial Board, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 200? – Reviewer, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 200? – Scientific Evaluation, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 200? – Evaluator, Name of University/Institution/Country

• **MEMBERSHIPS IN SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES (if applicable)**

- 201? – Member, Research Network "*Name of Research Network*"
- 200? – Associated Member, Name of Faculty/Department/Centre, Name of University/Institution/Country
- 200? – Founding Member, Name of Faculty/Department/Centre, Name of University/Institution/Country

• **MAJOR COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)**

Name of collaborators, Topic, Name of Faculty/Department/Centre, Name of University/Institution/Country

• **CAREER BREAKS (if applicable)**

Exact dates Please indicate the reason and the duration in months.

• **COVID-19 IMPACT TO SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTIVITY (if applicable)**

Please specify which of the following situations apply to you:

- Increased caring responsibility for dependent person, including home schooling of children;
- No access to laboratory facilities, archives, or other necessary facilities;
- No access to field work;
- Adaptation to online teaching;
- Physical and/or mental health issues;
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

*(optional)*

Explain with objective facts how your productivity was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a limit of 300 characters, spaces and line breaks included.



**Appendix: All on-going and submitted grants and funding of the PI  
 (Funding ID)**

Mandatory information (does not count towards the page limits)

**Current research grants (Please indicate "None" when applicable)**

<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Funding source</i>	<i>Amount (Euros)</i>	<i>Period (start-end date)</i>	<i>Role of the PI</i>	<i>Relation to current STARS proposal<sup>8</sup></i>

**On-going / submitted grant applications (Please indicate "None" when applicable)**

<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Funding source</i>	<i>Amount (Euros)</i>	<i>Period (expected start-end date)</i>	<i>Role of the PI</i>	<i>Relation to current STARS proposal<sup>3</sup></i>

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<sup>8</sup> Clearly describe any scientific overlap between your STARS application and any current research grants or on-going grant applications.

**Section c: Early achievements track-record (max. 2 pages)**

***(See the instructions for completing "Part B" of the proposal)***



benefiting from a STARS RG must be fully dedicated to the STARS project.

- **Postdocs:** costs for one or more research contract/s (RC, “contratti di ricerca”) to be assigned to researchers recruited on the project. The minimum duration of a research grant is 24 months and its cost is 40,000 euros approximately per year.
- **Students (PhDs):** it is possible to co-fund a **PhD position** (for which the PI has to act as the PhD supervisor or co-supervisor).

Costs for covering fellowships or fixed-term research contracts type a) or type b) (i.e. *Ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo a*) or b) – *Rtda* or *Rtdb*) are not eligible.

**Travel:** PI’s and team members’ travel costs and related subsistence allowances.

**Equipment:** costs of equipment or other assets.

### Other goods and services

This category covers the following items (the list is not exhaustive):

- **Consumables:** costs for consumables and supplies (e.g. animals, raw materials etc.).
- **Publications:** costs for scientific publications, including Open Access (e.g. books, manuscripts, articles, digital copies, etc.).
- **Other:**
  - costs related to intellectual property rights (IPR)
  - dissemination and communication costs (e.g. organization of conferences/workshops, videos, etc.)
  - translation costs
  - short-term scientists’ visits
  - sequencing
  - ...

Costs are eligible if their direct link to the project and their necessity for the project is demonstrated. Costs must be incurred during the project duration.

The project cost estimation should be as accurate as possible. The experts assess the estimated costs carefully; unjustified budgets will be consequently reduced.

Briefly specify your commitment to the project in the *resources* section. Please note that you should perform and complete your proposed research activity in full and you are engaging with the University of Padua in submitting a project proposal (at the first applicable call after the starting date of the STARS project) to either an ERC call or to a different funding programme, featuring an equivalent structure as the ERC calls (Art. 8 – Duties of PIs of funded projects, STARS@UNIPD 2023 Call for proposals), i.e.:

- a selection process based on the researcher's curriculum and career development;
- the funding for the contract and the research activities of the PI is provided to the Host Institution;
- the evaluation criteria are comparable to those of the ERC, providing for independent, open, transparent and merit-based selection procedures through scientific committees involving qualified experts.

An exemplary and non-exhaustive list of the above alternative programmes is provided herein:

#### 1. International fundings

- HFSPo-Human Frontier Science Program Organization: funds three-year long-

term fellowships. This transnational organization, financed by member states including Italy, operates in the Life Sciences macro-area (LS), but it also support intersectoral projects with Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE) and Social Sciences and Humanities (SH);

- EMBO-European Molecular Biology Organisation: funds two-year long-term fellowships and four-year grants, as like as EMBO Young Investigator. This European organization, financed by member states (including Italy) in favor of the EMBC (European Molecular Biology Council). EMBO supports projects in the Life Sciences macroarea (LS);
- Harvard-Armenise Foundation: US foundation funding 5-year Career Development awards (1 M\$) in the macroarea LS;
- Branco Weiss Fellowship – Society in Science: global fellowships programme, founded in 2002 and coordinated by ETH Zurich, which supports to exceptionally qualified researchers in all areas. The programme funds 5-year post-doc fellowships (CHF 100,000 per year), characterized by an international and transdisciplinary nature.

## 2. National (Italian) fundings

- AIRC: funds either fellowships designed for the training of young researchers, or various five-year grants, such as Start-up grants, My First AIRC Grants, Investigator Grants. The foundation supports projects in the Life Sciences macroarea (LS);
- Fondo Italiano per la Scienza (FIS): Ministry of University and Research's program designed to support excellent research, in any field, within highly qualified schemes very similar to those of the ERC. There are two funding schemes: Starting Grant, for early-career researchers with a PhD awarded from 2 to 10 years ago; Advanced Grant, for independent researchers, active in research for more than 10 years and with a profile that identifies them as leaders;
- Progetti di Ricerca di Interesse Nazionale: designed to fund research projects, in any scientific field, in order to promote the national scientific researches, and foster the participation in competitive calls of Framework Programmes of UE. The program supports projects requiring the cooperation of various universities/institutions, due to the complexity and nature of the proposals, which the financing needs exceed the normal availability of one institution.

If the PI wishes to submit a project proposal to a call (national or international) different from the ERC ones, (s)he will have to submit a request to the STARS@Unipd Internal Commission. The Commission will evaluate the characteristics of the call and, in order to confirm or deny their suitability. The Commission, in cooperation with the International Research Office, will monitor the ERC (or alternative) applications actually submitted by the beneficiaries of a STARS grant.

### Useful Links regarding rules and policies at UNIPD

The following resources are mentioned in the "STARS GRANTS 2023 Call for proposals" and in the present STARS GRANTS 2023 "Guide for Applicants & Application templates".

Please note that the short name Unipd stands for University of Padua, Italy.

- University of Padua (Unipd) Internal Regulation for the award of research grants pursuant to art. 22 of Law 240/2010 and subsequent modifications and integrations

[https://www.unipd.it/sites/unipd.it/files/2020/REG\\_assegni\\_art20\\_13112020.pdf](https://www.unipd.it/sites/unipd.it/files/2020/REG_assegni_art20_13112020.pdf)

(in Italian)

[https://www.unipd.it/en/sites/en.unipd.it/files/UNIPD\\_REG\\_Research\\_Grants\\_ENG%20%281%29.pdf](https://www.unipd.it/en/sites/en.unipd.it/files/UNIPD_REG_Research_Grants_ENG%20%281%29.pdf) (in English)

<https://elearning.unipd.it/infodiritto/mod/book/view.php?id=859>

- The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (C&C) | *Carta europea e Codice di reclutamento dei ricercatori*

<https://www.unipd.it/carta-europea-codice-reclutamento-ricercatori> (in Italian)

<https://www.unipd.it/en/hr-excellence-research> (in English)

- Rules and recommendations regarding Open access publications at the University of Padua (in Italian)

<https://www.unipd.it/sites/unipd.it/files/2017/REG%20accesso%20aperto%20produz%20scientifica%2001082017.pdf>

- Data protection and personal data handling Rules and recommendations adopted at Unipd

<https://www.unipd.it/privacy> (in Italian)

<https://www.unipd.it/en/privacy> (in English)

EU GDPR - General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, art. 13

<http://www.privacy-regulation.eu/en/13.htm>

- EU Regulation 428/2009 concerning dual use items in the sense of Regulation

[https://eur-](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:134:0001:0269:en:PDF)

[lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:134:0001:0269:en:PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:134:0001:0269:en:PDF)

### Ethics Issues Table

You will find the following questions in the last two sections of the online platform for electronic submission. This template is just for your prior consideration and you should not upload it.

<b>1. HUMAN EMBRYONIC STEM CELLS AND HUMAN EMBRYOS</b>		
Does this activity involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs) <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:373:0012:0015:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:373:0012:0015:EN:PDF</a> ?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Will they be directly derived from embryos within this project?	Yes	No
Are they previously established cells lines?	Yes	No
Are the cell lines registered in the European registry for human embryonic stem cell lines?	Yes	No
Does your research involve the use of human embryos?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Will the research lead to their destruction?	Yes	No
<b>2. HUMANS</b>		
Does this activity involve human participants?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Are they volunteers non medical studies (e.g. for social or human sciences research?)	Yes	No
Are they healthy volunteers for medical studies?	Yes	No
Are they patients for medical studies?	Yes	No
Are they potentially vulnerable groups?	Yes	No
Are they children/minors?	Yes	No
Are they other persons unable to give informed consent?	Yes	No
Does this activity involve interventions (physical also including imaging technology, behavioural treatments, etc.) on the study participants?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Does it involve invasive techniques?	Yes	No
Does it involve collection of biological samples?	Yes	No
Does this activity involve conducting a clinical study as defined by the Clinical Trial Regulation (EU 536/2014)? (using pharmaceuticals, biologicals, radiopharmaceuticals, or advanced therapy medicinal products)	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Is it a clinical trial?	Yes	No
Is it a low-intervention clinical trial?	Yes	No
<b>3. HUMAN CELLS / TISSUES (not covered by section 1)</b>		
Does this activity involve the use of human cells or tissues?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		

Are they human embryonic or foetal cells or tissues?	Yes	No
Are they available commercially?	Yes	No
Are they obtained within this project?	Yes	No
Are they obtained from another project, laboratory or institution?	Yes	No
Are they obtained from biobank?	Yes	No
<b>4. PERSONAL DATA</b>		
Does this activity involve processing of personal data?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Does it involve the processing of special categories of personal data (e.g.: genetic, biometric and health data, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs)?	Yes	No
Does it involve profiling, systematic monitoring of individuals, or processing of large scale of special categories of data or intrusive methods of data processing (such as, surveillance, geolocation tracking etc.)?	Yes	No
Does your research involve further processing of previously collected personal data (including use of preexisting data sets or sources, merging existing data set)?	Yes	No
Is it planned to export personal data from the EU to non-EU countries? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Specify the countries involved: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		
Is it planned to import personal data from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Specify the countries involved: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		
Does your research involve the processing of personal data related to criminal convictions or offences?	Yes	No
<b>5. ANIMALS</b>		
Does this activity involve animals?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Are they vertebrates?	Yes	No
Are they non-human primates? (NHP)	Yes	No
Are they genetically modified?	Yes	No
Are they cloned farm animals?	Yes	No
Are they endangered species?	Yes	No
<b>6. NON-EU COUNTRIES</b>		
Will some of the activities carried out in non-EU countries?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Specify the countries involved: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		



In case non-EU countries are involved, do the activities undertaken in these countries raise potential ethics issues?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Specify the countries involved: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		
Is it planned to use local resources (e.g. animal and/or human tissue samples, genetic material, live animals, human remains, materials of historical value, endangered fauna or flora samples, etc.)?	Yes	No
Is it planned to import any material (other than data) from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? For data imports, see section 4.	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Specify material and countries involved: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		
Is it planned to export any material (other than data) from the EU to non-EU countries? For data exports, see section 4.	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Specify material and countries involved: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		
Does this activity involve <a href="#">low and/or lower middle income countries</a> (if yes, detail the benefit-sharing actions planned in the self-assessment)?	Yes	No
Could the situation in the country put the individuals taking part in the research at risk?	Yes	No
<b>7. ENVIRONMENT &amp; HEALTH and SAFETY</b>		
Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes that may cause harm to the environment, to animals or plants (during the implementation of the activity or further to the use of the results, as a possible impact)?	Yes	No
Does this activity deal with endangered fauna and/or flora/protected areas?	Yes	No
Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes that may cause harm to humans, including those performing the activity (during the implementation of the activity or further to the use of the results, as a possible impact)?	Yes	No
<b>8. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE</b>		
Does this activity involve the development, deployment and/or use of Artificial Intelligence? (if yes, detail in the self-assessment whether that could raise ethical concerns related to human rights and values and detail how this will be addressed)	Yes	No
<b>9. OTHER ETHICS ISSUES</b>		
Are there any other ethics issues that should be taken into consideration?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Please specify: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		

I confirm that I have taken into account all ethics issues above and that, if any ethics issues apply, I will complete the ethics self-assessment and attach the required documents.

### Security Issues Table

You will find the following questions in the last two sections of the online platform for electronic submission. This template is just for your prior consideration and you should not upload it.

<b>1. EU CLASSIFIED INFORMATION (EUCI)</b>		
Does this activity involve information and/or materials requiring protection against unauthorised disclosure (EUCI)?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Is the activity going to use classified information as background information?	Yes	No
Is the activity going to generate EU classified foreground information as result?	Yes	No
Does this activity involve non-EU countries which need to have access to EUCI?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Do the non-EU countries concerned have a security of information agreement with the EU?	Yes	No
<b>2. MISUSE</b>		
Does this activity have the potential for misuse of results?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Does the activity provide knowledge, materials and technologies that could be channeled into crime and/or terrorism?	Yes	No
Could the activity result in the development of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) weapons and the means for their delivery?	Yes	No
<b>3. OTHER SECURITY ISSUES</b>		
Does this activity involve information and/or materials subject to national security restrictions?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Please specify: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		
Are there any other security issues that should be taken into consideration?	Yes	No
<b>IF YES</b>		
Please specify: (Maximum number of characters allowed: 1000)		

**[Print on the official letterhead of the University of Padua Hosting Department - Please note that the Letter is mandatory for PIs that do not hold a permanent position at Unipd<sup>9</sup>]**

**Letter of commitment of the hosting Department  
STARS Grants Call 2023**

The University of Padua (*Università degli Studi di Padova*), Department of << name, in English, of the Department that is associated to the proposal >> (*Dipartimento di <<name, in Italian, of the Department that is associated to the proposal>>*), confirms its intention to host << Name of the PI>>, PI of the project << Title - acronym of the project >>.

Should the proposal be funded, the University of Padua, Department of <<name of the Department>> commits itself to:

a) employ the Principal Investigator for the duration of the grant [only if the PI is not employed by Unipd] :

b) ensure that the work will be performed under the scientific guidance of the Principal Investigator

c) guarantee the Principal Investigator's scientific independence, in particular for the:

- use of the budget to achieve the scientific objectives;
- authority to publish as senior author and invite as co-authors those who have contributed substantially to the work;
- preparation of scientific reports for the project;
- selection and supervision of the other team members (hosted, and employed, by the Department, in line with the profiles needed to conduct the research);
- possibility to apply independently for funding;
- access to appropriate space and facilities for conducting the research.

d) provide — during the implementation of the project — research support to the Principal Investigator and the team members (in terms of infrastructure, equipment, access rights, products and other services necessary for conducting the research);

e) support the Principal Investigator and provide administrative assistance;

f) take all measures to implement the principles set out in the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers – in particular regarding working conditions, transparent recruitment processes based on merit and career development – and ensure that the Principal Investigator, researchers and third parties involved in the project are aware of them.

Date .....

Name of the Head of Department

Signature of the Head of Department

.....

.....

<sup>9</sup> A PI not holding a permanent position at Unipd is either external to the University or holding a fixed-term contract at the University of Padua under the provisions of Law no. 240/2010, article 24 (Ricercatore a tempo determinato di tipo a) or b) – Rtda or Rtdb).