

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

CAT (Constructive Advanced Thinking)

Goals

The aim of the CAT initiative is to foster networks of **excellent early-career researchers** dedicated to devise new ideas to understand and to tackle current or emerging **societal challenges**. Although the programme has a strong focus on the societal relevance of the projects, it is entirely **blue-sky**, bottom-up and non-thematic. CAT encourages a **collaboration with stakeholders outside academia** (industry, policymakers, NGOs...) who are willing to support or engage in innovative research initiatives.

In order to engage in fruitful discussions and mature their ideas, the groups will be given the opportunity to **meet for short stays** in different participating institutes, and to be **put in contact with their fellows and local research communities**.

With few guidelines and a very light application process, CAT is designed to maximize the creativity of research groups. This call has been incubated in the **Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study (NETIAS)** and also involves institutes beyond the network. The collaboration between different institutes in different countries aims at giving these groups access to a great variety of high-level thinkers and researchers in order to **go beyond the current frontiers of knowledge** and to develop highly innovative ideas on how to address very complex societal issues.

Support

CAT will provide teams of **early-career researchers** (three to five persons, possibly including a stakeholder) time and space for thought and discussion in the best research environments Europe has to offer. During a period of up to three years, teams will benefit from a series of short stays (i.e. between one and two weeks, two to three times a year, for a maximum of six stays) in participating institutes (see links below). Online meetings and digital research stays at the institutes are possible alternatives to onsite stays and can complete the work and time plan of CAT groups.

CAT will cover travel and accommodation expenses for the team meetings/ short work stays in the participating institutes. CAT will not fund salaries.

The participating institutes will support the teams by connecting them with the most knowledgeable and experienced researchers on-site as well as digitally, and by helping them valorise the obtained results through their legitimating channels. During their stay, CAT teams will benefit from the institutes' amenities and conviviality for work and exchanges. Discussions at the institutes will provide a unique sounding board for innovative ideas and will give valuable feedback.

Obligations for CAT groups

At mid-term, the continuation of the team's work will be subject to approval after evaluation of a short progress report. At the end of their project, in addition to the organization of one or more final meeting(s) presenting the results, the CAT teams will be expected to produce a final report in the form of a text, video, website or other media, that will be made public.

In keeping with the policies of the participating institutes, the researchers retain the intellectual property rights to their work.

Eligibility criteria

- Your project must address emergent societal issues.
- The **Principal Investigator** (team leader) must have a stable research position in a European (EU as well as UK and [associated countries](#)) higher education and/or research institution for the entire duration of the project. S/he must have obtained a PhD between January 2011 and December 2019.
- Doctoral researchers may also participate. However, no **team member** can have obtained her/his doctorate before January 2011.
- There is no specific requirement for representatives of stakeholder organizations.
- Each team should include participants from at least **two different countries** (current workplace, including non-European countries; any nationality).
- The team of 3 to 5 persons (stakeholders included) must be **fully constituted, with CVs** of all members named in the proposal attached.
- Each team must provide two **letters of support** from internationally renowned researchers (who are not part of the team). Each team can also provide one or more letter(s) of support from stakeholder organizations (policymakers, industry, NGOs...).

Applications

The proposal should come in the form of

- (1) a 300-word **abstract**;
- (2) a 3000-word max text OR a video of 15 min max (in this case, please include the web link in the abstract), describing the team's **research question** and how it plans to address it. The team's motivation as well as the societal issues addressed and the interdisciplinary aspects of the project should be specified;
- (3) a brief **work plan** for meetings and activities with an indicative calendar and duration;
- (4) a short description of the team including a **CV** for each participant and an indication of where they will travel from to the meetings;
- (5) **letters of support**: at least two from academic researchers; additional letters from extra-academic stakeholders outside academia are encouraged.

Submit proposals via the online [application platform](#).

Selection and evaluation process

The proposals will be examined by the participating institutes and peer-reviewed by experts. In the spirit of a bottom-up and open call, the way the teams understand the call and design their proposal is one assessment criterion. Other criteria include the societal relevance of the proposal, the quality of the team, its organization, the deliverables and the innovativeness of the approach to the issue at stake.

The CAT selection committee will allocate stays of teams to the various participating institutes. Teams may suggest specific participating institutes, providing the reasons, but the final decision will be taken by the selection committee. Selected projects will be given a binding list of institutes that can host them. This list is non-negotiable.

The institutes will discuss the dates of planned meetings with the teams.

Non-selected projects will not receive feedback on the reasons for rejection.

More information is available [online](#).

Questions can be directed to Daniela Kromrey via e-mail:
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Schedule

- **Deadline for applications : 1 September 2020, 15:00 CET**
- Successful applications will be notified in the beginning of December, 2020
- Invitations start after 1 January 2021

Participating Institutes

- IAS CEU, Budapest
- Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, Jerusalem
- Montpellier Advanced Knowledge Institute on Transitions, Montpellier
- Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, Amsterdam
- Paris Institute for Advanced Study, Paris
- Scienza Nuova, Torino
- Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, Uppsala
- Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Berlin
- Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung, Bielefeld
- Zukunftskolleg, Konstanz

