

The ARAID (Agencia Aragonesa para la Investigación y Desarrollo) Foundation is an Agency created by the Government of Aragon with the aim of promoting research, development and innovation in the Aragon region. It is a non-profit organization, with the legal status of a Foundation.

During the past 5 years, the ARAID Foundation has operated as beneficiary and managed the ARAIDEU (ARAID-European Union Fellowships) attraction of researchers Program throughout its whole duration. Information concerning the selection timetables and procedures for the Calls were available at the Project website (www.araid.es).

The ARAIDEU Program had originally 48 months and 4 Calls for applications targeting the selection of 24 Experienced Researchers and their attraction to diverse Research Host Institutions in the Aragon region. The coincidence in time with the worst of the economic crisis had a severe impact in the program.

There were problems to ensure the funding for the period, and the second Call (2011) was annulled. There was also a general drop in the average salaries paid by Host Institutions, and both this and the crisis prevented Experienced and Senior researchers to apply and/or accept the economic conditions if selected. This affected the initial aim of reaching 24 researchers, and also to keep at least 50% of the Selected Researchers hired (by ARAID) after the end of the co-financing period.

The wish to fully achieve the initial objectives though pushed the Foundation to request a revision on the Economic prevision and EC Contribution, as well as an extra year extension during which to launch one extra Call and reach the desired number of Person months in the project.

By the end of the Program, 29 Researchers have been funded in the 5 Calls that were launched.

Selected candidates were hired with fixed term full-time contracts including insurance, social security and unemployment contract costs. The participating host organizations spanned anywhere in the region and sectors from independent Research Centres to Academic Centres to SMEs. In their majority, Researchers opted to select Public Research Institutes as their Hosts.

Only one was hired by a private company. The gender balance of ARAIDEU Researchers was female 42%-58% male, and 2 patents were developed until the time of preparation of this report. Fellows have benefited from the signed ARAID-Host frame agreements, that provided legal frame for ethical issues and IPR, and enabled them to participate in projects and activities, having similar if not exact rights and obligations as if they were personnel employed by the host. Besides the usual dissemination activities as Researchers, attending congresses and conferences, preparing scientific publications (+150) etc., the Researchers of ARAID have also participated in outreach activities, highlighting the involvement of ARAID as Partner in the Researchers Night activities in 2011/12/13/14 and 2015.

The Foundation has been concerned with the fair treatment of its fellows, making it its mission to provide stimulating and favourable working conditions. It has also been supportive of families, allowing the maximum amount of leave days for both maternity and paternity reasons. In this respect a revision of the ARAID procedures in HR has started in 2013, in the frame of the EC activities on Research Excellence. As a result of this, ARAID was awarded the "HR Excellence in Research" logo in 2015, being the first institution in the region to win this award.

The program was the evolution of an existing attraction of researchers program that did not specifically involve the mobility as requirement, but pointed on the incorporation of promising and excellent researchers to the region. In this respect, ARAIDEU's aim was to combine both, and attract promising

Researchers from abroad. The percentage of researchers that remained in the region hired (by ARAID or Host Institutions) in R&D positions is higher than 50%. The ARAIDEU Program aims at diminishing uncertainties in the researchers' professional life, providing them with high quality research equipment but also a stable and friendly environment.

This is a long-term investment for science and knowledge excellence in Europe and worldwide, but also an investment in order to remain prosperous as a region. In perspective, considering the timing with the crisis scenario, the outcome is very positive, and despite the uncertainties, the Program received support from the Hosts Institutions, particularly the National research Council and the University of Zaragoza, the European Commission, and the Regional Government, that as a funding body made the necessary commitment to maintain the Program throughout its duration.

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Host Institutions:

- Institute for Biocomputation and Physics of Complex Systems
- Institute of Material Science of Aragon
- The Zaragoza Scientific Centre for Advanced Modelling
- Aragon Health Sciences Institute
- The Institute of Nanoscience of Aragon
- Modern History Department of the University of Zaragoza
- Nuclear Physics and High Energies Laboratories in the University of Zaragoza
- University Centre of Defence
- Condensed Physics Department at the University of Zaragoza
- Department of Microbiology, preventive medicine and public health at the University of Zaragoza
- Institute of Chemical Synthesis and Homogeneous Catalysis
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