



## **PUBLISHABLE SUMMARY**

### **Summary description of the project objectives**

The aim of this project was to continue reinforcing the Science System of the Basque Country (Spain) by attracting excellent scientists from any country in order to consolidate the Basque Region as a European Research Point for excellence in research.

Ikerbasque is a Foundation fostered by the Basque Government to strengthen the Basque Science System by means of attracting senior researchers. As part of this strategy, Ikerbasque has included a Fellowship programme for Visiting Senior Researchers to carry out research for 1 year in any of the Research Centres or Universities of the Basque Country.

During 2011, Ikerbasque offered 15 Fellowships in the framework of SMARTfellows project, increasing the number of fellows compared to the previous Fellowship calls for visiting senior researchers to investigate during 1 year in any of the Research Centres of the Basque Country. Ikerbasque intended to recruit an increasing number of fellows for the subsequent years from 2011 to 2014 with the support of the Marie Curie COFUND programme. All recruited candidates complied with the mobility rule: must be, at the time of been recruited, researching in any institution outside Spain. These fellowships had a maximum duration of 12 months and the granting of the Fellowship depended mainly on the research track record of the candidate and to a lesser extent on the innovative/interesting aspect of the presented research project and the research experience of the host Research Group. These Fellowships supported the temporary incorporation of outstanding researchers to the Research Groups at the Basque Universities and Research Centers.

This Fellowship call is particularly suitable for researchers that are planning a sabbatical period, and wish to spend a relatively short period in a relatively new and exciting scientific region of the European Research Area. The aim of the Fellowship initiative is to promote knowledge transfer and to strengthen international research networks. The benefits of a sabbatical year for a researcher are evident since the researcher has the opportunity to broaden his/her scientific knowledge and network of contacts, increasing the potential for future collaborations. In addition, it is widely recognised as a socially enriching experience. From the point of view of Ikerbasque these sabbaticals increase the opportunities for knowledge transfer, thus contributing to strengthen the Basque Science System and at the same time supporting transnational mobility for the advancement of science in Europe.

The researchers must demonstrate their experience in one of the following five research areas, which are intended to cover all the areas of human knowledge:

- Experimental Sciences: Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Mathematics, Biophysics...
- Engineering and Technology: Chemical, Telecommunication, Civil, Industrial, Electrical Engineering...
- Life Sciences: Medicine, Biotechnology...
- Social Sciences: Economy, Law, Social Psychology...
- Human Sciences: Psychology, Linguistics, History...

**Description of the work performed since the beginning of the project,**

2 SMART Fellows calls were released since the beginning of the project (January 2011 and January 2012). Due to the current economic crisis, unfortunately the calls initially planned for 2013 and 2014 had to be cancelled.

Information on the calls is available on the Ikerbasque website:

[http://www.ikerbasque.net/researching\\_in\\_euskadi/ikerbasque/visiting\\_professors.html](http://www.ikerbasque.net/researching_in_euskadi/ikerbasque/visiting_professors.html)

The applications were evaluated based on:

- Interest and potential of the research project
- Fellow candidate's profile and experience
- Selected Research Group's research track and excellence level

The main work within the project so far has involved the publication, evaluation, negotiation, and contractual procedures related with the above calls.

**Description of the main results achieved so far,**

The project achieved its objectives and technical goals for the first two years, and during the last period, minor deviations occurred due, as previously mentioned, to the current economic crisis;

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Estimated fellow months
<b>Fellowships contracted - Estimated</b>	15	16	17	18 (for 6 months)	<b>684</b>
<b>Fellowships contracted - Real</b>	19	18	13	2	<b>480.32</b>

The project has progressed successfully so far, although it has not completely achieved all the objectives originally planned for the whole duration. As can be seen from the table above, it was originally estimated that a total of 684 fellow months would be implemented during the four years of the project, however, that the number of contracted fellows has been 79% of originally estimated, and the real number of fellow months implemented is only 71% of the original estimate.

**Expected final results**

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 and the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014 when the project finished, two (2) calls were implemented, with 52 fellows contracted for a total of 480.32 fellow months, during the four year period.

***For more information, please contact:***

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