

Priority Research Program and Equipment Precision psychiatry programm

Call for projects 2025:

Postdoctoral grants

Application address

app@pepr-propsy.fr

Deadline application

**August 31, 2025**

**CALL FOR PROJECTS**

June 25, 2025

Preamble

Psychiatric disorders affect a significant proportion of the population and pose a major challenge to healthcare systems. Their management still largely relies on diagnostic and therapeutic approaches that struggle to account for the heterogeneity of disorders and patient trajectories. Advancing precision psychiatry, which integrates breakthroughs in neuroscience, genomics, artificial intelligence, and biomedicine, is essential for improving the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of psychiatric conditions.

In this context, the PROPSY Priority Research Program and Equipment (PEPR), financed by France 2030, aims to accelerate innovation in psychiatry and structure a French biomedical sector dedicated to mental health. In particular, this program supports the training of young researchers through post-doctorate funding targeted at precision psychiatry themes, in order to support innovative research projects.

A second wave of funding is planned for 2026, to further expand opportunities for young researchers and reinforce scientific advances in this field.

# Keywords

Precision psychiatry, bipolar disorders, depression, schizophrenia, autism, deep phenotyping, biomarkers, transdiagnostic process, genomics, immunology, metabolism, brain imaging, biostatistics, artificial intelligence

|  |
| --- |
| **Closure of the Call for Applications** Submission materials must be submitted electronically no later than:  September 1, 2025 at 11:59 pm (Paris time) |

|  |
| --- |
| It is essential to carefully read this entire document and the instructions available on the submission website.Contacts**Scientific Director of the Program: Marion Leboyer****Program Manager: Marie-Hélène Soto** **Questions should be sent to** **aap@pepr-propsy.fr** **before July 18, 2025.** |

#

#  Context and Objectives of the Call for Projects

The Priority Research Program and Equipment (PEPR) PROPSY is a national program launched in 2022 and funded under the France 2030 plan. It is led by Inserm and CNRS, with the support of the FondaMental Foundation. With a budget of €80 million over seven years, its goal is to transform the management of psychiatric disorders in France.

**Strategic objectives of the PEPR PROPSY:**

* Refining the characterization of psychiatric disorders and their heterogeneity. Identifying new biomarkers and therapeutic targets.
* Developing innovative therapeutic strategies in precision psychiatry.
* Structuring a biomedical sector in mental health, fostering collaborations between public research, the pharmaceutical industry, medical technologies, and digital health.
* Strengthening training and enhancing the attractiveness of professions related to psychiatry and mental health research.

The PEPR PROPSY is based on an interdisciplinary approach that combines genomics, brain imaging, computational neuroscience, and artificial intelligence. It integrates existing databases and establishes large-scale cohorts, notably French Minds, to identify diagnostic and prognostic markers and optimize patient care.

Besides, psychiatric disorders constitute a major public health challenge due to their high prevalence, significant psychosocial impact, and economic burden. They are among the leading causes of disability and contribute to a reduction in life expectancy by 15 to 20 years due to somatic comorbidities and the risk of suicide.

# This call for projects will fund between three and six postdoctoral research projects in line with PEPR PROPSY priorities.

#  Research topics of the Call and expected projects

Proposals must fall within one of the following themes:

1. **Markers for stratifying dimensions and/or clinical forms transnosographically to major mood disorders, psychotic disorders and neurodevelopmental disorders**
* Identification and/or validation of uni or multimodal clinical, cognitive, omic, immunological, environmental, brain imaging, EEG and/or digital markers/signatures, from PEPR PROPSY databases, existing national and international databases or those currently being acquired.
* Exploration of pathophysiological mechanisms (i.e. genes x environment, immuno, immuno-genetics and immuno-metabolism) underlying abnormal biological pathways.
1. **Epidemiology and trajectories, medico-economic studies​**
* Analysis of environmental risk factors (infections, pollution, stress, lifestyle) associated with mental illness.
* Longitudinal analysis of dimensions, trajectories, risk and resilience factors.
* Analysis of psychiatric or somatic comorbidities.
* Medicoeconomic studies of induced costs, organizational, diagnostic or therapeutic innovations.
1. **Preclinical research into pathophysiological mechanisms**
* Analysis of the impact of pollution on normal and pathological brain development.
* Study of interactions between early immune abnormalities and genetic vulnerabilities.
* Anomalies underlying transnosographic dimensions.
* Abnormal biological pathways and pathophysiology.
1. **Modeling and artificial intelligence**
* Development of learning algorithms (AI, machine learning, contrastive learning) from PEPR PROPSY multimodal databases (imaging, omics, clinical, etc.) and/or national or international databases, existing or under construction.
* Exploitation of multimodal databases to identify algorithms for stratifying psychiatric pathologies.
* Prediction models for mental illness risk, comorbidity and response to treatment.

# Eligibility

## 3.1. Requirements

* Candidates must have a **PhD** in neuroscience, artificial intelligence, epidemiology, health economics, biology, brain imaging or related disciplines.

## Assessment and Selection Criteria

**The evaluation of applications will proceed in several stages:**

1. Verification of eligibility and admissibility of applications: This stage will ensure that the applications meet the administrative and formal criteria defined in the call for projects.

2. Scientific evaluation of the applications: Each admissible application will be reviewed by a panel of external scientific experts. These experts will assess the scientific quality of the project, its originality, and its feasibility.

3. Based on the experts' evaluations, the COMEX of PEPR PROPSY will establish the final ranking of the selected applications.

4. The results will be officially announced by Inserm, the lead institution of PEPR PROPSY, which is responsible for managing these funding opportunities.

**Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Weighting** |
| **Suitability for PEPR PROPSY objectives (precision psychiatry objectives, diseases studied in PROPSY, etc.).** | 50 % |
| **Scientific excellence of the project (quality, originality, feasibility)** | 30 % |
| **Candidate's skills (academic background, research experience)** | 15 % |
| **Supervision and research environment (quality of laboratory and collaborations)** | 5 % |

## Eligibility Criteria

The submission file must be sent in full to the e-mail address indicated before the AAC closing date and time.

The submission file for the AAC must be in unprotected PDF format, must not exceed the number of pages indicated for the documents concerned (cf. 5.1.), and must respect the minimum font size: 11, Arial. Any document exceeding the number of pages indicated will automatically render the file inadmissible.

**All required documents must be written in English.**

#

#  Funding terms

## Funding

PEPR-funded calls are exceptional in nature, and differ from recurrent funding for academic or research establishments. The funds allocated represent additional resources for new initiatives. They can be used to launch innovative research projects and finance, for example, the purchase of equipment, as well as personnel and operating expenses specifically assigned to these projects.

The funding granted under this call for projects is intended to support post-doctoral contracts in precision psychiatry. Each successful project will receive a grant to cover the costs of recruiting a post-doctoral fellow and implementing the research project.

* **Amount of subsidy per project**: from €115,000 to €248,000 including a maximum 18% management fee.
* **Co-financing**: Projects may include co-financing. These must be detailed in the application file, specifying their origin and use.
* **Financing period:** 24 to 36 months.
* **Use of funds**:
	+ Remuneration of the post-doctoral fellow in accordance with current funding grids
	+ Operating costs directly associated with the research project, including consumables, access to databases, software and specialized computer equipment
	+ Travel expenses for conferences and research missions
	+ Contribution to post-doctoral training costs

## Contractual Arrangements

* **General Terms**

Post-docs selected under this call for projects will be recruited by a French higher education or research institution (university, doctoral school, Inserm, CNRS, CEA, INRIA, INRAE, etc.), which will manage the funding allocated by the PEPR PROPSY via Inserm.

The post-doctoral contract will be established for a period of 24 to 36 months, in accordance with the legal provisions in force in France. The doctoral student will have salaried status, and will receive remuneration in accordance with current funding schedules.

## Commitments of the Awardees

**Publication and dissemination**

Research resulting from funded doctoral contracts must be published in open access, in line with PEPR PROPSY's open science policies (cf. 4.4).

PEPR PROPSY must be mentioned in the acknowledgements and the publication sent to the PEPR PROPSY management.

**Participation in PEPR PROPSY activities**

Post-docs are expected to participate in seminars, training courses and events organized as part of the program.

**Priority to PROPSY-EDU actions**

Winners will be given priority access to the PROPSY-EDU program, dedicated to training and career development in precision psychiatry ([PROPSY-EDU](https://www.propsy-edu.fr/)).

**Project follow-up**

**Winners and their managing institution will be required to submit an annual report on the progress of their work, the results obtained and the use made of the funding allocated.**

## Open science

As part of the ANR's contribution to promoting and implementing open science, and in connection with the French National Open Science Plan (PNSO) and Plan S at the international level, recipients of 7 the France 2030 grant commit to ensuring immediate open access to peer-reviewed scientific publications and adopting a FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) approach for research data, in line with the principle of "as open as possible, as closed as necessary." Therefore, all scientific publications resulting from projects funded under the PEPR will be made available in open access under the Creative Commons CC-BY license or an equivalent license, using one of the following three routes:

• Publication in a journal that is natively open access.

• Publication in a subscription-based journal that is part of a transforming agreement or transformative journal.1

• Publication in a subscription-based journal. The publisher's version or the accepted manuscript for publication will be deposited in the open archive HAL by the authors under a CC-BY license, in line with the Strategy of Non-Transfer of Rights (SNCD), as specified in the conditions of the funding decision or contract.

Moreover, the coordinating institution commits to ensuring that the full text of these scientific publications (accepted version or publisher’s version) is deposited in the national open archive HAL, at the latest at the time of publication, and to referencing the ANR project number from which they originate.

The ANR encourages the deposit of preprints in open platforms or open archives and recommends using persistent or unique identifiers (such as DOI or HAL Id). Additionally, the ANR recommends prioritizing publication in journals or books that are natively open access.2 Finally, the coordinating institution commits to submitting a first version of the Data Management Plan (DMP) within 6 months of the program’s start, as outlined in the grant agreement.

#  Application procedure

## Content of the submission package

The file, written in English, must include :

* Candidate's **CV** with list of publications (see attached CV template)
* The **application form** including a description of the research project. (see attached scientific outline)
* A **financial appendix** detailing projected expenditure. (see attached financial document)
* A **letter from the project's scientific supervisor** stating that he/she is willing to supervise the applicant and explaining his/her motivation to work on the project / 1 page
* The **short CV of the project's scientific supervisor, listing his or her main publications**
* A **letter from the director of the host laboratory** indicating its commitment to providing administrative and material support required for the project / 1 page
* A copy of the **doctoral diploma**

|  |
| --- |
| No additional documents will be accepted after the closure of the call for applications, the date and time of which are specified on page 2. |

The submission package must be submitted to the address specified on page 2.
The templates for the scientific and financial documents are available on the webpage of this call for applications (see address on page 2).

The scientific document must be converted into an unprotected PDF for submission. The financial document must be submitted in both Excel and PDF formats.
Any application that does not comply with the submission guidelines will be considered ineligible and will not be evaluated.

## Submission of Applications

* **Submission deadline:** September 1, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. (Paris time).
Application packages must be sent via email to the following address: aap@pepr-propsy.fr
* An acknowledgment of receipt will be sent to candidates after the submission of the application.

**Contact :** **aap@pepr-propsy.fr**

**Scientific Director: Marion Leboyer (marion.leboyer@inserm.fr)**

**Program Manager: Marie-Hélène Soto**