

Ethical assessment

STAGE 1 – Prior ethical screening

Before recruitment at the Host Institution, each Junior Leader fellow, working in collaboration with their Principal Investigator or, alternatively, Director of Department or equivalent, should complete and provide a **Checklist on the Ethical Issues** of their research project to "la Caixa" Foundation Fellowships Programme.

The fellow will answer each of the questions included in the checklist related to the ethical aspects that need to be monitored, in line with the regulation of the European Commission on this matter. In case any relevant ethics issue is identified in the Checklist, the project will automatically pass to the next stage of the Ethical assessment.

As soon as the abovementioned documentation is received, "la Caixa" Foundation will send it to our collaborator, the Ethics Committee for Research (CEEAH) of the Universidad de Oviedo who will carry out a first screening to verify that the checklist is correctly completed in accordance to the project presented.

In case the Committee identifies errors or omissions in the completion of the checklist, the corresponding project will pass to the next stage of the Ethical assessment.

For the rest of the projects, that have not raised any ethical issue, the assessment procedure will end at this stage.

STAGE 2 – Ethical assessment of the project

This stage is composed by 2 subsequent assessment stages that will be conducted by the CEEAH. The project leader will interact directly with CEEAH and submit the necessary documentation.

The assessment rounds will follow the time schedule below:

1. Phase 1

The Ethics Committee will appoint an expert in the specific research filed within the committee and in conjunction, the provided documentation will be deeply studied. The Ethics Committee meet at least once a month to evaluate projects/procedures that could raise ethical issues. Therefore, within a month, will rule in one of the following way:

- **Complete:** The documentation has been reviewed and no objections or errors have been identified by the expert, meaning that the documentation is complete and correct.
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- Incomplete: The documentation has been reviewed and the expert has identified objections or errors, meaning that the documentation is incomplete and/or incorrect. In this case the fellow will have to amend the documentation or provide the missing information before the 2nd stage begins.

2. Phase 2

All complete documentation will be then sent to the full Ethics Committee who will rule in one of the following way:

- Favorable Assessment: The project complies with the ethical issues properly. An official approval will be issued by Ethics Committee. The committee will identify if the project needs follow-up on these aspects:
 - No follow-up required: If no follow-up is required, the assessment will end at this stage.
 - Follow-up required: The Ethics Committee will ask the fellow to provide subsequent Monitoring reports.
- Unfavorable Assessment: The project complies does not with the ethical issues properly.

This ethical assessment procedure is independent from the internal ethics protocols implemented by each Research centre. These protocols will have to be strictly followed by the hosted fellows during the whole duration of the fellowship.

At the same time, "la Caixa" Foundation Fellowships Programme will monitor any ethical issues that may arise through the progress reports the fellows will have to submit periodically.



