

## ConTex Frequently Asked Questions

### What is ConTex?

The **ConTex** office was established by the **University of Texas System** to support a program of cooperation with Mexico's National Council of Science and Technology (**CONACYT**). This new program will expand current collaboration with CONACYT and many other first-rate academic institutions in Mexico.

### Doctoral Fellowships

#### What is the ConTex doctoral program?

The doctoral fellowship will give aspiring researchers the opportunities to make new discoveries and scientific breakthroughs while studying with world-class faculty. Students from Mexico will receive financial support to study at one of 14 University of Texas institutions, studying with top researchers, while preparing for entry into a global workforce. Fellows will receive financial support for up to 5 years of doctoral study at a University of Texas institution.

#### What does the fellowship cover?

Upon selection, Mexican students will be guaranteed financial support for up to 5 years of tuition, fees, health insurance, and a monthly stipend. Student funding and its continuance will be contingent upon satisfactory progress in the degree program.

#### What is the stipend support amount and basis (9 or 12 month)?

At least \$1,100 per month. Departments are expected to subsidize this amount in order to match their existing PhD stipend program requirements. The stipend is awarded on a 12-month basis.

#### Is there a specific number of fellowships assigned to each UT system institution?

All UT System institutions will share in the total allocation of 30 Mexican students; however, all admitted students are guaranteed the fellowship during the first year of this program.

#### Will students admitted to UT Austin need to compete with other students admitted to other UT System institutions for the ConTex fellowship?

The ConTex doctoral fellowships are available with no competition for funding among institutions.

#### What criteria will be applied for the award of fellowships?

In order to win a ConTex Fellowship, students must:

1. Register on the [ConTex website](#);

2. Apply to one or more Ph.D. programs at UT System institutions;
3. Apply directly to CONACYT for a foreign study scholarship ([becas al extranjero](#)).

**Is the award made on a first come-first served basis?**

No. Request for funding applications will be evaluated by ConTex and CONACYT as soon as they are received. As part of the request for funding, students will be required to submit their letters of program acceptance to the ConTex office and complete a fellowship application.

**How will funds be managed?**

CONACYT will transfer tuition, fees and health insurance funding support for admitted and selected Mexican doctoral students to the ConTex office to distribute to other UT System Institutions. The monthly stipend will be disbursed directly by CONACYT to the student at the beginning of every month. The International Office will process all student payments which will then be billed to the ConTex office for reimbursement.

**Will students have pre-approved funding at the time of application submission to UT Austin?**

No, but once admitted, a ConTex fellowship is highly probable, as long as student completes fellowship application through CONACYT.

**Is this fellowship available to Mexican-born students who have permanent residency status in the U.S., or multiple citizenship status including Mexican?**

In order to be eligible for this fellowship, a student must be a citizen of Mexico. A tuition waiver will be necessary in order to activate the in-state tuition option.

**Is this fellowship available to undocumented students? (i.e. DREAMers)**

Undocumented students, who gained wider access to Texas higher education in 2001 through the passage of [House Bill 1403](#) are a growing population on the UT Austin campus. Although many undocumented students have lived in the U.S. the majority of their lives, they are considered a part of the international community that the International Office serves.

Students are encouraged to contact [International Texas Resident Team](#) at Financial Aid with individual financial aid questions/concerns. The International Texas Resident Team consists of Financial Aid Officers who are familiar working with undocumented students.

International Texas Resident Team  
[InterTX@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:InterTX@austin.utexas.edu)  
(512)475-6282

**Is there a blanket tuition waiver in place for all ConTex supported students?**

In-state tuition will be granted to students who are awarded the ConTex fellowship.

**How will the admissions office find out if the student receives the fellowship?**

It is the student's responsibility to advise the appropriate respective institutional financial office regarding their fellowship award. Although, the [ConTex Office](#) will facilitate this process.

**Is there a deadline to apply for the fellowship?**

Yes; students are responsible for submitting their fellowship request for funding application along with their letter of program acceptance by March 16.

**What is the ConTex fellowship application process?**

Information and application instructions can be found at the ConTex website:

<https://contex.utsystem.edu/funding/>

**Will the UT Austin Admissions Office (or admitting department) need to instruct the student on how to apply for the fellowship? How will students know about the program?**

ConTex is embarking on a wide-spread advertising campaign in Mexico, via social media and other outlets.

At UT Austin, individual departments may notify accepted Mexican students (international classification) in their offer letters.

**Will (English) language training be provided?**

No; Mexican students are expected to be proficient in English and meet all other admission requirements. Language instruction is not included in this fellowship program.

Note: the International Office offers further information about ESL cost-based services at: <http://world.utexas.edu/esl/programs>

**Does the ConTex program include fellowship support for masters-level students?**

Not at the moment, but this might be considered for future programs.

**Does the ConTex program support existing PhD students or only new applicants to a PhD program?**

It supports both existing and new, under the same guidelines.

**Does the ConTex program support doctoral study in the Fine Arts?**

No, not at this time.

### **Does the ConTex program only support STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) disciplines?**

No. It also supports the social sciences and Humanities. Contact the [ConTex Office](#) for clarification on a specific program or field of study.

### **How will I get paid?**

All PhD fellowships will be processed by the International Office. Questions about this can be addressed to: [intlfinaid@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:intlfinaid@austin.utexas.edu) or the [ConTex Office](#).

## **Collaborative Research Grants**

### **Should the budget for student expenses be split depending on student origin (i.e. expenses for Mexican students working in Mexico or at UT Austin should appear under the Mexican budget) or student work destination regardless of origin (i.e. expenses for Mexican students working at UT Austin should appear under the UT Austin budget)?**

There is no preferred method in this case. You may look at which way does more to balance out the budgets between the two institutions, or the way that makes more sense to the PIs.

### **What type of expenses are allowed?**

- Undergraduate research assistants' salary or stipend (not tuition)
- Master's students' salary or stipend (not tuition)
- PhD students based in the UT System: salary or stipend (not tuition)
- Graduate students' health insurance

For a full list of allowed and unallowable expenses, visit the [Call for Proposals page](#).

### **What type of expenses are NOT allowed?**

- Any type of funds paid to Mexican PhD students already receiving CONACyT funding
- Salary payments to co-PIs, including Summer salaries
- Fringe benefits other than health insurance
- Indirect costs or overhead assessments

For a full list of allowed and unallowable expenses, visit the [Call for Proposals page](#).

### **Are postdoctoral stipends an eligible budget expense under this grant?**

No. Postdoctoral stipends or salaries are not covered by this grant. However, faculty applying for a collaborative research grant may encourage postdocs to submit a separate application for a [ConTex Postdoctoral Research Fellowship](#), naming the PI as a sponsor/mentor.

### **What is the visa process for this grant and for other ConTex grant programs?**

Please visit the [International Office website](#) for immigration related questions.

### **How will I be able to access my funds after the award has been announced?**

Once the PI's department is informed of the award, an account will be created from which to fund the grant's research expenses. Please contact your departmental accounting contact if you have any questions. For additional support, contact the [ConTex Office](#) for guidance or your [Human Resources Representative](#).

### **How can departments assist with processing collaborative grant awards?**

Once departments are notified of an award, they must submit a new 20-account (budget group) request to the Office of Accounting. Instructions can be found on the [Financial and Administrative Services website](#). The award letter can be submitted as backup to this request.

## **Postdoctoral Fellowships**

### **Which fields are covered by this ConTex fellowship?**

- Environmental sciences
- Science
- Sustainable development
- Technology development
- Energy
- Health
- Social science

For a full description of study areas, visit the [Call for Proposals page](#).

### **What is the application process?**

Postdocs must contact a prospective faculty member or researcher at UT Austin to request permission to work in his/her lab or area. A list of faculty members and research staff can be found under each respective area of study:

<https://www.utexas.edu/academics/areas-of-study>.

For additional information and the call for proposals, visit the [ConTex website](#).

### **How will I get paid?**

At the time of award, the [ConTex Office](#) will request approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the [Business Contracts Office](#). The MOU authorizes the transfer of award funds to UT Austin. Once your department or mentor is informed of the award, an account will be created from which to pay you. Please contact your faculty/researcher sponsor first, if you have any questions. For additional support, contact the [ConTex Office](#) for guidance or your [Human Resources Representative](#).

### **How can departments assist with processing postdoc fellowships?**

1. Once ConTex informs the student's department head of the award, departments must submit a new 20-account (budget group) request to the Office of Accounting:
  - Form type: [Education and General](#)
  - Type of account: 20 AUF
  - Sub-accounts: 70 Schol/Fellow (to pay the stipend); 73 Other (to pay Health Insurance)
  - Instructions can be found on the [Financial and Administrative Services website](#).
2. After the account (budget group) is created, a new University Affiliate position can be set up in [HRMS](#) for the postdoc, as Research Affiliate-Postdoctoral (A010 – HRMS code)
  - The stipend is then processed from the 70-subaccount as a [scholarship/fellowship payment](#)
  - The Postdoc can be reimbursed for health insurance expenses from the 73-subaccount (postdoc must provide proof of payment). The postdoc may purchase insurance from the open market or from UT. Information about UT's health insurance benefits can be found on the [Human Resources website](#).
  - Procedures for Research Titles can be found on the [Office of the VP for Research Policy website](#).