



Associació Celíacs
de Catalunya

**“VICENTE VAREA GRANT
FOR RESEARCH
ON PATHOLOGIES RELATED
TO GLUTEN INTAKE
AND THEIR TREATMENT”**

2021

I. SMAP - Coeliac Association of Catalonia

“Vicente Varea Grant for research on pathologies related to gluten intake and their treatment”

Brief note:

The Associació Celíacs de Catalunya (SMAP - Coeliac Association of Catalonia) presents the “Vicente Varea 2021 Grant for research into pathologies related to gluten intake (Coeliac Disease, Dermatitis Herpetiformis (DH) or Non-Coeliac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS) and their treatment”.

Dr. Varea is a fundamental figure in the history of our organisation as well as an exceptional gastroenterologist professional focused in coeliac disease. The Board of Directors from the Coeliac Association of Catalonia has decided to change the name of the grant in posthumous recognition of Dr. Varea and his career, achievements, commitment and research in the area of coeliac disease.

According to the most recently published meta-analysis on the prevalence of coeliac disease (CD), this pathology affects 1.4 people out of 100 (1.4%) worldwide, while in Europe it affects 0.8 people out of 100 (0.8%) which means that more than 7 million people suffer from coeliac disease in Europe. However, most of them (70%) have not been diagnosed, with the risk that this entails, as there are many serious health-associated complications if coeliac disease remains underdiagnosed, such as growth problems in children, iron deficiency anaemia, chronic fatigue, osteoporosis, neuropathies, intestinal lymphomas, and an increased risk of additional autoimmune diseases. Regarding Non-Coeliac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS), despite still being a recent syndrome about which much remains to be learned, its prevalence is estimated to be around 6% of the population. With regard to Dermatitis Herpetiformis (DH), it affects between 5% and 15% of people with coeliac disease. The only treatment for these three conditions is to strictly follow a gluten-free diet.

The Coeliac Association of Catalonia is especially aware of the need to promote research on coeliac disease, NCGS and DH in Europe, so it wants to show its support and recognition of people working in research on these diseases, presenting the Vicente Varea 2021 grant endowed with €10,000 for the best scientific research project on these pathologies and their treatment. The research topics admitted to the call range from medical-scientific issues to food technology. The evaluation of the projects will be carried out as in previous years by the Agency for the Management of University and Research Grants of the Catalan Government ([AGAUR](#)) providing objectivity, independence and quality to the evaluation process.

I. SMAP - Coeliac Association of Catalonia

This grant aims to promote scientific advances that lead to a significant improvement in the quality of life of people with coeliac disease, Non-Coeliac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS), or Dermatitis Herpetiformis (DH) and promote the development of knowledge of these pathologies, the improvement of diagnostic methods, their food safety, the improvement of the nutritional composition of gluten-free products, as well as raising social awareness of these disorders.

All candidates must send the project and the required documentation in accordance with the rules of the call to recerca@celiacscatalunya.org before 3 September 2021. The jury's decision will be announced in November 2021.

II. Rules

Aim

The Coeliac Association of Catalonia presents the 2021 edition of the Vicente Varea Grant to the best research project on coeliac disease, Non-Coeliac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS) or Dermatitis Herpetiformis (DH) and their treatment.

The prevalence of coeliac disease is 1% and has an annual growth rate of diagnosis of 15%. On the other hand, Non-Coeliac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS), still largely unknown, is estimated to affect at least 6% of the population.

As for Herpetiform Dermatitis it affects 5%-15% of coeliac sufferers.

The only current treatment for all three conditions is to follow a strict gluten-free diet for life. This means, considering the prevalence of these diseases, almost 50 million people in Europe should follow a gluten-free diet with medical guidance. However, we must keep in mind that the great burden of coeliac disease is its high rate of under-diagnosis due to the wide variability of symptoms and patterns of presentation. In Europe, 7 out of 10 coeliac sufferers do not know they have the disease, and it takes an average of 7 years to achieve a full diagnosis of an adult.

Some authors propose implementing active research of coeliac patients in Primary Care as a strategy to improve the current diagnosis rate.

II. Bases

In addition, the Coeliac Association of Catalonia is especially aware of the need to foster research on pathologies related to gluten intake. Therefore, the Association wants to show its support and recognition of people working in research on these diseases by presenting the 2021 edition of the Vicente Varea Grant that will provide the best scientific research project related to the study of coeliac disease, Non-Coeliac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS) or Dermatitis Herpetiformis (DH).

This grant aims to promote possible scientific advances that lead to a significant improvement in the quality of life of people with coeliac disease, gluten/non-coeliac wheat sensitivity, or herpetiform dermatitis and promote the development of knowledge of these pathologies, the improvement of diagnostic methods, their food safety, the improvement of the nutritional composition of gluten-free products, as well as raising social awareness of these disorders.

Endowment

A grant for a net amount of €10,000 will be awarded to the best research project on pathologies related to gluten intake and their treatment. The grant is subject to taxation according to current law.

Territorial scope

Europe.

Candidates

A grant will be awarded to the best original project.

All groups that carry out or wish to carry out basic, applied or clinical research on any of the pathologies related to gluten intake and their treatment, and that belong to universities, hospitals, research centres or companies located in Europe, in the public or private sector, may apply for this grant.

II. Bases

Research priorities:

- Identification of new pathogenic mechanisms and environmental factors
- Development of new treatment and possible care
- Histology, immunology and genetics
- Gluten-free diet: quality, safety and consequences arising from one-off or continual lapses in following the diet
- Coeliac patient follow-up: strategies and tools to encourage adherence to the gluten-free diet
- NCGS: pathogenesis and factors involved

Deadlines and submission

Candidates may submit their projects until 3rd September 2021, by email to the following address: recerca@celiacscatalunya.org

Evaluation

The decision of the evaluation will be final and will be announced publicly through the website of the Coeliac Association of Catalonia (www.celiacscatalunya.org) in November 2021.

The evaluation of the projects will be carried out by the Agency for the Management of University and Research Grants of the Government of Catalonia (AGAUR) providing objectivity, independence and quality to the evaluation process. Members of the applicant research groups will not be eligible to be members of the external evaluation panel. At least two expert external evaluators will participate in the review of all projects and each will review all submitted projects. The evaluation must consist of a qualitative and a quantitative assessment of the applications. Each of the criteria will be scored on a scale of 1 to 7. The criteria that will be evaluated are:

- Interest and contribution of the proposal
- Knowledge of the background and current state of the topic
- Argumentation of the objectives, the work plan and methodological standards
- Feasibility of work in the time envisaged and adequacy of the budget
- Impact and applicability of the results
- Résumé of the principal investigator in relation to the subject of the call and the topic of research

II. Bases

Once all the evaluators have assessed all the projects and assigned a final score, an average score will be given to each project and the one with the highest score will receive the Vicente Varea Grant.

The evaluators will sign a confidentiality commitment document and will also state that there is no conflict of interest in the evaluation of these projects.

Requirements

1.- The projects must focus on research (basic, applied or clinical) related to coeliac disease, on Non-Coeliac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS) or Dermatitis Herpetiformis (DH).

2.- The projects will have a minimum duration of 1 year and a maximum of 2 years, and the start period will be between December 2021 and May 2022.

3.- All groups that carry out or wish to carry out basic, applied or clinical research on those areas related to any of the pathologies due to gluten sensitivity and that belong to universities, hospitals, research centres or companies located in Europe, in the public or private sector, may apply for this grant. Projects that have been previously awarded grants for previous phases of the project may not be submitted until the final report of the project has been submitted to the Association.

4.- Each project will be led by a principal investigator with ties to the research centre in which the work will be conducted. Each researcher will only be able to submit one candidate project.

5.- SUBMISSION OF PROJECTS

All projects must be accompanied by the following documentation,

a)Registration form.

b)Research project (which must cover at least the following sections):

- Introduction.

- Working hypothesis.

- Objectives.

-Methodology and material resources available.

-Timeline (distribution of tasks and staff involved over time).

-Total cost of the project and budget requested by the present grant (maximum net amount: €10,000).

II. Bases

c)Résumé of the principal investigator showing the scientific publications and funded research projects in which he or she is participating or has participated.

d)Public information sheet.

e)Letter of conformity stamped and signed by the head of research at the centre to which the principal investigator is attached (see attached template).

All candidates must send this documentation to recerca@celiacscatalunya.org prior to 3 September 2021. The information provided, except for the Public Information Sheet of the winning project, will be treated confidentially.

6.- The application entails the acceptance of the rules of this Call.

7.- The evaluation will be carried out by the AGAUR and each project will be evaluated by at least two independent experts. Members of the applicant research groups are not eligible to be members of the team of evaluators.

8.- The contribution of the project to the knowledge of the pathologies related to gluten intake and the applicability of the results, as well as their quality (presentation, justification, suitability of the methodology, etc.) will be especially valued.

9.- The decision of the jury will be announced in November 2021.

10.- . Grant Delivery: The grant will be awarded in two instalments; 50% on the start date of the project and the other 50% when 50% or more of the project has been carried out. In order to make the second payment, it will be an indispensable requirement to present a report on the current state of the project, any duly justified deviations from the timeline and documentation as evidence of expenses in respect of the first period.

To justify the payment, the research centre will issue a certificate on behalf of the entity after each payment, in the event that the research centre prefers to issue an invoice; the maximum net amount (taxes included) will be €10,000.

11.- A grant supervisory committee will be created, made up of members of the research team and the Association, which will hold at least two meetings a year (either in-person or online).

12.The beneficiary of the grant may not assign, transfer or subcontract any of their rights or obligations arising from the award of the grant to any third party.

13. At the end of the project, the research team will have to present a report of the work carried out in which the objectives achieved and the conclusions are specified. In addition, a detailed account of the expenses must be included. The deadline for submission of this report will be three months from the date of completion of the project.

II. Bases

14. The research team undertakes to cite the Coeliac Association of Catalonia as the total or partial financing entity of the project in all those means and forms in which results derived from the grant-aided project are published.

15. The research team undertakes to inform the Coeliac Association of Catalonia of any communication, publication and/or presentation of the project at conferences, the media, etc. and provide a copy of the communication.

16. The winning team accepts the publication on the Association's website of the Public Information Sheet included in the Project, at the time of the award of the grant. It further undertakes to provide an update of this information when it has reached 50% of the project and another update at the end.

17. The principal investigator, or other members of the research team, agree to participate in conferences/symposia organised by the Coeliac Association of Catalonia. The winning project, as long as it does not present later phases, may be entered to participate in training and professional development activities aimed at patients or professionals with the aim of raising awareness or training the specific group to which they are addressed.

Candidates

Submission to the call entails full acceptance of the rules and the verdict of the jury. Projects that do not meet the requirements set out in these rules will not be accepted.

The submission of projects that apply for the grant entails the authorisation of the researchers to the Association to disseminate them in any of its media, following authorisation and review by the authors/researchers.

Deadline for submission

The submission period of the projects will be from 11/06/2021 until midnight on 03/09/2021.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

www.celiacscatalunya.org

Telephone. +34 934 121 789

recerca@celiacscatalunya.org

III. “Vicente Varea 2021” Grant registration form

- Project Title:
- Research Type:
 - basic, applied, or clinical
- Details of the Principal Investigator:
 - Full name
 - Tax ID no.
 - Position
 - Institution
 - Centre
 - Department
 - Postal address
 - Telephone
 - Email
- Details of the other members of the research team:
 - Full name / Tax ID no. / Position / Email

IV. Public information sheet

- Project Title:
- Expected start and end date:
- Details of the Principal Investigator:
 - Full name:
 - Research centre:
- Abstract
 - Approach to the problem or situation
 - Purpose
 - Theoretical framework
 - Working methodology
 - Main aims

V. MODEL LETTER OF CONSENT ASSIGNED CENTRE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

LETTER OF CONSENT FROM THE CENTRE

Mr/Ms.,
with tax ID/Foreign national ID no., as the legal representative
responsible for research at the centre
....., formally accepts the
request made by the researcher
attached to this centre, to apply for the Research Grant on Pathologies Related with
Gluten Intake, convened by Associació de Celíacs de Catalunya.

Date:

Signature and stamp