

Expression of Interest – EUNICE Doctoral Programme in Global Health (University of Cantabria)

Within the framework of the **EUNICE European University Alliance**, and fully aligned with its philosophy of long-term academic cooperation, co-creation of joint educational structures and the strengthening of research-based European integration, the **University of Cantabria (UC)** is currently designing a **Doctoral Programme in Global Health**, with the intention of submitting it to the **MSCA-COFUND Doctoral Programmes** call.

What we understand by Global Health

In this initiative, **Global Health** is conceived as a **broad, transversal and interdisciplinary field** addressing major health challenges that transcend national borders and disciplinary boundaries. These challenges include health inequalities, population ageing, mental health, environmental and climate-related risks, digital transformation of health and care systems, and the sustainability, governance and performance of health systems.

Rather than organising the programme around professions or narrowly defined diseases, the proposed doctoral programme adopts a **systems-oriented and challenge-driven approach**, aligned with European priorities (EU Health Union, Green Deal, Digital Europe, SDGs), and grounded in existing research capacity and critical mass at UC and its partner institutions.

The programme will be coordinated from **Health Sciences**, with strong leadership from **Nursing**, and active participation from **Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Psychology, Medicine, Engineering, Geography, Economics and Business, and related disciplines**.

Proposed research lines

The Doctoral Programme in Global Health will be structured around the following **seven core research lines**:

1. **Health Inequalities, Social Determinants and Vulnerable Populations**
2. **Ageing, Frailty and Life-Course Health**
3. **Digital Health, Health Literacy and Care Technologies**
4. **Global Mental Health, Work-Related Stress and Healthy Work Environments**
5. **Health Systems, Health Economics, Law and Public Policies**
6. **One Health, Antimicrobial Resistance and Global Health Security**
7. **Environmental and Planetary Health, Environmental Risks and One Health Approaches**

Together, these lines provide a coherent and flexible Global Health framework, enabling interdisciplinary doctoral research while ensuring sufficient focus, critical mass and long-term sustainability.

Invitation to participate as an active EUNICE partner

At this stage, we would like to **formally explore the interest of EUNICE partner universities** in participating as **active members** of this doctoral programme.

Specifically, we seek to identify:

- **Researchers interested in joining the programme** within one or more of the proposed research lines.
- **Potential co-supervisors** willing to co-direct doctoral theses jointly with supervisors from the University of Cantabria.
- Colleagues interested in contributing to **joint doctoral training activities**, such as transversal courses, advanced seminars or summer schools.
- Universities willing to **actively participate in the recruitment, supervision and training of doctoral candidates**, within an international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral doctoral programme.

Participation is conceived in the true spirit of EUNICE: based on **commitment, shared responsibility, mutual trust and genuine willingness to build a common doctoral structure together**.

[Academic requirements for supervision](#)

Please note that, according to **Spanish doctoral regulations**, to act as **director or co-director of a doctoral thesis**, researchers must hold a **doctoral degree** and demonstrate accredited research experience.

In the Spanish academic system, this research experience is formally recognised through a **research period (“sexenio”)**, which corresponds to a **six-year period of sustained and high-quality research activity**. In the field of **Health Sciences**, for example, the award of a sexenio is typically based on the publication of a **minimum of five significant scientific contributions** during a six-year period, published in **high-impact peer-reviewed journals indexed in international databases such as JCR or SJCR**, together with overall research coherence and impact. For international partners, an **equivalent level of research experience and productivity**, demonstrated through a solid publication record, active participation in competitive research projects and prior doctoral supervision, will be considered fully acceptable.

[Next steps and timeline](#)

We kindly ask all interested researchers to complete the following form **before next Tuesday, March 10**: <https://forms.office.com/e/5YXw2VBdDS>

This information will allow us to map the real research capacity within the alliance and to shape a robust, competitive and genuinely collaborative doctoral programme.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us (eunice@unican.es). We would be delighted to explore potential forms of collaboration and to continue building this initiative together within EUNICE.