

Call for Applications

IGFAE Director

2026 Selection Process

Santiago de Compostela

23/07/2026

Call for Applications for the Position of IGFAE Director

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Opening date: 23 July 2026

Application deadline: 15 October 2026

Reference: IGFAE_Director_Call

The Galician Institute of High Energy Physics (IGFAE) is opening a selection process to fill the position of Director of the Institute. The successful candidate is expected to take up the position during the first half of 2027.

IGFAE is a joint research centre of the University of Santiago de Compostela and the Regional Government of Galicia, dedicated to research excellence in particle physics, nuclear physics, astroparticle physics and related areas, from theoretical, experimental and technological perspectives. The Institute is also opening a new research line in quantum information science and technologies, driven by a recent agreement with the Galician Supercomputing Centre (CESGA).

The Institute's scientific activity is currently organised around three strategic areas: The Standard Model to its Limits; Cosmic Particles and Fundamental Physics; and Nuclear Physics from the Laboratory to Improving Human Health. IGFAE participates in major international collaborations, experiments and infrastructures, and its activities range from fundamental research on the elementary constituents of matter and the fundamental interactions to their technological applications.

Its mission also includes training new generations of researchers, attracting talent, knowledge transfer, innovation and the promotion of scientific culture, as well as fostering industrial returns from the major international infrastructures in which it participates—one of the Institute's defining features. IGFAE was recognised as a María de Maeztu Unit of Excellence in 2017 and obtained a second accreditation for the 2024–2030 period. It is also part of CIGUS, the network of research centres of excellence of the Regional Government of Galicia. The IGFAE headquarters were inaugurated in 2025, significantly expanding both the available physical space and the Institute's capabilities.

The opening of these premises marked the beginning of a new stage for the Institute, with enhanced experimental laboratory capabilities to address the major challenges facing physics in the coming years; a modern, open design aimed at strengthening internal integration and engagement with the wider community; and a layout that supports talent attraction and the creation and development of new research lines within the Institute.

The person appointed as Director will be expected to lead this new stage of the Institute, consolidate the progress achieved, strengthen its international standing, and promote an ambitious, inclusive and sustainable scientific vision for the coming years.

Candidate profile

In accordance with the Institute's Internal Regulations, the Director must be a scientist of recognised standing in IGFAE's research areas, hold a doctoral degree, and serve on a full-time basis. Candidates must therefore have an outstanding scientific track record that is internationally recognised in a field related to the Institute's activities.

The following will be particularly valued:

- Experience in leading teams, centres, scientific structures or major research projects.
- The ability to define and develop an ambitious scientific and strategic vision for the Institute.
- Experience in securing competitive funding.
- Participation in the leadership of international projects, collaborations or consortia.
- The ability to foster cooperation among the Institute's different scientific, experimental, theoretical and technological areas.
- Knowledge of the Galician, Spanish and European research systems.
- The ability to engage effectively with academic institutions, public administrations, funding bodies and other scientific and societal stakeholders, together with experience in knowledge transfer and relations with industry.
- A commitment to equality, diversity, scientific integrity, responsible research, and the creation of an inclusive and collaborative working environment.

English is a customary working language at IGFAE. To perform the duties of Director effectively, functional knowledge of Galician or Spanish will be required, or a commitment to acquire it within a reasonable period after taking up the position.

Duties of the Director

The Director will be responsible for:

- Providing scientific vision and defining the Institute's strategic objectives.
- Leading the preparation, updating and implementation of IGFAE's strategic plan.
- Directing, coordinating and promoting the Institute's scientific, technological, innovation and knowledge-transfer activities.
- Promoting scientific excellence and collaboration among the different research areas and programmes.
- Representing IGFAE before its promoting institutions, funding bodies and other national and international organisations.
- Promoting the recruitment, training and retention of scientific, technical and management talent.

- Driving the acquisition of competitive funding and contributing to the Institute's institutional and financial sustainability.
- Submitting activity plans, strategic proposals, budgets and the corresponding reports to the Institute's governing bodies.
- Coordinating with the Institute's governing bodies, the Governing Board and the Scientific Advisory Board, and directing and coordinating the internal scientific, technical and management structures.
- Promoting an inclusive, collaborative and respectful working environment based on the principles of equality, diversity, scientific integrity and good practice.
- Promoting innovation, knowledge transfer and collaboration with other research centres, scientific infrastructures, institutions and companies.
- Promoting science communication, public engagement, scientific culture and the Institute's relationship with society.
- Enhancing the collaboration, influence and international reputation of the Institute and its researchers, particularly within major international scientific infrastructures and the forums in which future strategies are determined.
- Performing any other duties assigned in accordance with the applicable regulations and IGFAE's governance system.

Applications

Applications must include the following documents, written in English:

1. Curriculum vitae
2. Motivation letter – maximum 2 pages
3. A statement setting out the candidate's scientific, strategic and organisational vision for IGFAE over the next four years – maximum 4 pages

Applications must be submitted electronically to directorcall2026@igfae.gal by 15 October 2026.

Informal enquiries about the call may be addressed to the IGFAE Director at carlos.salgado@usc.gal or director@igfae.gal, and/or to the Vice-Rectorate for Research and Open Science of the University of Santiago de Compostela at vr.investigacion@usc.gal. Both enquiries and applications will be treated confidentially.

Conditions of appointment

The initial appointment will be for four years and may be renewed in accordance with the regulations and evaluation procedures established by IGFAE's governing bodies and the University of Santiago de Compostela.

If, at the time of selection, the successful candidate does not have an employment relationship with the University of Santiago de Compostela, the appointment will be subject to the formalisation of a secondment agreement with their home institution or, where applicable, the establishment of an employment contract with the University.

The successful candidate is expected to take up the position during the first half of 2027.

Selection procedure

The IGFAE Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) will be responsible for evaluating the applications received and may draw up a shortlist of candidates for interview.

Shortlisted candidates may be invited to present their track record and their scientific, strategic and organisational vision for the Institute to the SAB.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, the Scientific Advisory Board will issue a mandatory but non-binding report, which will be submitted to the competent bodies, in particular the IGFAE Governing Board, which will propose the appointment.

The Director will be appointed by the Rector of the University of Santiago de Compostela, in accordance with the procedure laid down in IGFAE's Internal Regulations and the University's own rules, as well as, where applicable, those of the CIGUS network of research centres.

The selection process will be governed by the principles of merit, ability, transparency, equal opportunities and non-discrimination. The necessary measures will be adopted to identify and manage potential conflicts of interest.

Indicative timetable

[This timetable is provided for guidance only and may be subject to change]

- Publication of the call: 23 July 2026.
- Application deadline: 15 October 2026.
- Initial assessment and, where applicable, preparation of a shortlist: by 30 October 2026.
- Evaluation of applications and meeting of the Scientific Advisory Board: November 2026.
- Issuance of the Scientific Advisory Board report: December 2026–January 2027.
- Appointment: first half of 2027.
- Expected start date: first half of 2027.

IGFAE promotes equal opportunities and is committed to creating a diverse, inclusive and respectful working environment. Applications from women and people belonging to groups currently underrepresented in research and scientific leadership are particularly encouraged.