

CRG-BGI Joint International PhD Programme  
Unlock your potential,  
spark your discovery



BGI

**4 fully funded PhD fellowships for a hybrid PhD between the CRG in Barcelona (Spain) and the BGI in China** to advance the future of medicine with interdisciplinary, groundbreaking research.

**APPLY BY 4TH FEBRUARY 2025**

## MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE CRG-BGI JOINT INTERNATIONAL PhD PROGRAMME

The Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG) in Barcelona, Spain, and BGI, China, are recruiting students to join the **CRG-BGI Joint International PhD Programme**. This collaborative initiative aims to leverage the strengths of both institutions to advance research at the cutting edge of genomics, integrating novel technologies like spatial transcriptomics, single-cell genomics, and advanced omics to tackle major scientific challenges.

### Programme Objectives

We aim to culture future leaders in life sciences who are ready to engage fully with the challenges and rewards of this cross-cultural, cross-disciplinary experience.

The CRG-BGI Joint PhD Programme is designed with the following key goals:

- **Develop next-generation researchers:** Establish a collaborative PhD programme that fosters talent to address complex issues at the intersection of bioinformatics, omics technologies and AI.
- **Innovative dual supervision:** Facilitate joint project supervision led by experts from both CRG and BGI, ensuring diverse perspectives and rigorous guidance for PhD candidates.
- **Strengthen CRG-BGI collaboration:** Reinforce and expand the collaboration between CRG and BGI to drive forward research and innovation in advanced genomics and biomedical technologies.

### Why to apply the CRG-BGI Joint International PhD Programme?

- **Access to advanced genomics facilities:** Engage directly with cutting-edge technologies, such as spatial transcriptomics and single-cell genomics, placing you at the forefront of genomics research.
- **Dual Supervision and mentorship:** Benefit from expert mentorship and diverse perspectives through joint supervision by group leaders from both CRG and BGI.
- **Focus on innovation and collaboration:** Participate in interdisciplinary, collaborative research that addresses complex bioinformatics and omics challenges, strengthening your network and career opportunities.
- **Integrated training across institutes:** Spend equal time at CRG and BGI, gaining a well-rounded experience with comprehensive training in scientific expertise and essential transferable skills.
- **International Exposure and Cultural Immersion:** Work at both CRG in Spain and BGI in China, gaining valuable global research experience in diverse environments.

## Benefits and Challenges

At both institutions, you'll find a dynamic and collaborative environment that reflects rapid technological development. The atmosphere is engaging and may differ from traditional programs, often involving work on multiple projects within an interdisciplinary setting where research, application, and education come together. This is a great fit for individuals with a curious and adaptable mindset who are eager to thrive and contribute within a vibrant, goal-oriented and curiosity driven scientific community.

## MOST FREQUENT QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### I. WHO CAN APPLY

#### 1. Can international students apply?

There are no nationality restrictions. Students of all nationalities can apply for the BGI-CRG Joint PhD Programme if the eligibility criteria are fulfilled.

#### 2. Can I apply if I have not finished my university studies?

You can only apply if you hold a Master's Degree or an equivalent of a University Degree that allows you to start a PhD in Spain by October 2025.

#### 3. Should I contact the supervisor(s) to discuss my application?

It is not necessary to contact the supervisor to discuss your application. In the application form, you will be asked to indicate your preferred research groups (max. 2 groups) and you will have a chance to talk to them during the recruitment process if you are pre-selected.

#### 4. I don't speak Mandarin/Spanish and am concerned that studying at BGI/CRG might be challenging.

Mandarin is NOT compulsory for working and studying within BGI, but you are advised to learn basic Mandarin to adapt to the life in China. For international students, BGI will provide a Chinese Language and Culture course. And do not worry as you will have a cultural mediator and soon make friends within BGI who will also help you get through the transition period. CRG is an international environment with English as the main working language and it provides language courses for Catalan, Spanish and English for free.

### II. SUBMISSION

#### 5. How can I submit my application?

Applications for the BGI-CRG Joint PhD Programme are accepted exclusively online through the online application system, which is available on the CRG website.

You will be required to submit the name of 2 referees together with the application form. You will only be able to submit the application once all mandatory fields, including uploaded reference letters by referees, have been uploaded. Therefore, it is your responsibility to make sure that the referees will complete the reference letters before the call deadline.

Once the application is submitted, you will receive an automatic email, an acknowledgement of receipt with a reference number which should be included in any further correspondence.

## 6. Do I need to register to submit an application?

Yes. To submit a new application please, go to the online application system, click on “Start new application”, complete and save the mandatory personal details. If the registration was successful, you will receive an automatic email confirming your registration and providing the login details. You will be able to complete the rest of the application before logging out or alternatively, you can log out and continue working on the application later and until the call deadline.

## 7. May I provide the reference letters on behalf of my referees?

No. Applicants need to provide contact details of two referees. Once clicked, the button “Send Request”, the referees will receive an automatic email to complete the recommendation letter online. The application will only be eligible if the recommendation letters were provided before the application deadline. Therefore, the applicant needs to make sure to send the request through the online application portal as soon as possible, before finalizing the application. Applicants will be able to check whether and when the recommendation letters were submitted but will not be able to read the recommendation letter itself.

## 8. Who should I name as referees?

Your referees should be 2 scientists who are familiar with your academic work and/or research experience and who can judge your potential as a PhD student.

Please select your referees carefully: one should be your current or most recent employer/supervisor, at least one must be able to comment on your university academic record, and at least one should be able to comment on your previous research experience. None of them should be affiliated with the institute you apply to (CRG).

## 9. I made a mistake in my application, and I have submitted it - can I change it?

No, you cannot make changes to submitted applications, and we will not do so on your behalf. Therefore, please double-check your application before submission.

## 10. Can I submit two fellowship applications to the call?

No, you may only submit one application.

## 11. If I do not have the transcripts of my master's yet, what shall I upload in the form?

If you do not have the transcripts of your master's by the time you fill the form, please upload an official document proving your enrolment in a Master's Programme and/or an official document stating that the transcripts are in the process of being issued.

## 12. When is the deadline for applications?

The deadline for applications for the current call is 23.59 (midnight) (CET) **on Tuesday, February 4, 2025.**

## 13. What kind of candidates we are looking for?

We value diversity and favor individuals with creativity, critical thinking, strong capability and personality. We welcome not only those with excellent academic performance, but also highly motivated applicants who can demonstrate their advantages in any aspect, including relevant scientific and technological background, independence, problem solving ability, good communication skills and adaptability to any environment.

### III. SELECTION PROCESS

#### 14. Which are the evaluation criteria for the applications?

The selection of the fellows will be organized in different steps and based on the candidates' academic qualifications and research excellence as described on the website. The call timeline is available on the website.

#### 15. Does the selection process involve an interview?

Yes, pre-selected candidates will be invited to participate in one-to-one interviews. The one-to-one interviews will take place from the **25<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 online**. Full details regarding the interview process will be sent to invited candidates.

#### 16. When will I know if my application has been pre-selected? When will candidates be informed about the final results?

All candidates will be informed about the pre-selection outcome **by mid-February 2025**. Candidates that will be invited to the one-to-one interviews will be informed about the outcome by the **beginning of March 2025**.

#### 17. If my application is successful, when will the fellowship start?

Successful candidates would be expected to start the PhD at the latest by **October 2025**.

### IV. OTHERS

#### 18. Do I need to register separately with a university to do my PhD at CRG?

Yes, but at this stage, you don't need to worry about university admission. All information and steps forward will be given to the selected candidates.

### MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BGI

[BGI](#) was founded in 1999 through its involvement in the Human Genome Project, BGI has become a global institute in life sciences, with branches in over 100 countries and regions. Through collaborations across industries, BGI applies advanced multi-omics research to medical health, resource conservation, and forensic services, establishing itself as a pioneering institution in life sciences. BGI has trained over 3,100 students, including 1,604 undergraduates, 1,007 master's students, and 578 PhD students, who have collectively authored over 1,000 SCI papers (400+ in CNS journals) and contributed to 600+ patent applications and 200+ software copyrights. Many of BGI's core team members and executives have grown from newcomers into key roles. According to the 2024 Nature Index, BGI ranks eighth globally among life science institutions and has led the Asia-Pacific region for eight consecutive years. It has published 5,081 academic papers (4,438 in SCI) with over 530,000 citations, including 591 articles in top journals.

### MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CRG

The [Centre for Genomic Regulation \(CRG\)](#), founded in 2000 in Barcelona, is a leading international biomedical research institute focused on understanding life from the genome to systems biology. CRG's vibrant PhD community drives transformative research across diverse fields, including genomics, systems

biology, and molecular medicine. We are actively seeking talented candidates from various backgrounds, such as **biomedicine, biology, molecular biology, mathematics, physics, statistics, and bioinformatics**. With world-class facilities, outstanding training, expert mentorship, competitive funding, and a supportive international environment, CRG empowers students to advance their scientific careers and shape the future of science.