Laboratorio Subterráneo Canfranc

Terms and conditions of access, use and technical support for the Canfranc Underground Laboratory (LSC) Biology Platform for experiments

The purpose of this document is to set out the criteria for access to and use of the facilities at the Canfranc Underground Laboratory (LSC), as well as to define the terms under which technical support is provided for the various experiments. Its aim is to ensure transparency in the allocation of resources and available working time, whilst guaranteeing fair treatment for all users.

Scope of application

This document shall apply to all personnel involved in experiments, research projects or collaborating organisations that request the use of the Centre's facilities and services.

These conditions govern the procedure for submitting and evaluating proposals, the planning and allocation of working slots, access to the facilities, the use of scientific equipment and the scope of technical support provided by LSC staff.

The submission of a proposal for the use of the Biology Platform implies acceptance of the conditions set out in this document, without prejudice to compliance with current regulations on safety, occupational risk prevention, biosafety and other applicable provisions of the Canfranc Underground Laboratory.

Application procedure

Planning for the use of the LSC's facilities will take place on a half-yearly basis. Researchers wishing to use the Biology Platform must submit a duly completed 'Proposal Form for Experiments on the LSC Biology Platform' within the deadline set by the LSC for each half-year. The timetable for submitting applications and the dates of the Scientific Committee's meetings will be available on the LSC's website.

Proposals received will be reviewed and assessed by the LSC Scientific Committee during the relevant meeting, in accordance with the published timetable. Following this assessment, a report will be issued setting out the scientific evaluation of the proposal and, where applicable, its approval for implementation on the LSC Biology Platform.

This procedure applies both to new proposals for experiments and to experiments previously approved by the Scientific Committee that require a further work window in the following semester. Scientific approval of an experiment does not imply the automatic allocation of working time in subsequent semesters. Consequently, experiments wishing to continue using the Biology Platform must submit a new planning application for each semester, which will be reviewed to determine whether they may continue.

Only those half-yearly proposals or applications that have received a favourable assessment will proceed to the technical planning phase. During this phase, the staff responsible at the LSC will analyse the logistical requirements of the experiment, including the expected duration, preferred dates, estimated daily time commitment, work location, technical support requirements, the equipment required and any other operational requirements indicated on the form.

The allocation of work slots will be carried out taking into account the availability of facilities, equipment and technical staff, with a view to optimising the use of resources. Where there are competing applications, work slots will be allocated in the following order:

1. Compatibility with previously approved planning.
2. Technical requirements or time constraints of the experiment.
3. Availability of facilities and equipment.
4. Availability of LSC technical staff.
5. Date of receipt of the application.

Any significant changes affecting the duration of the experiment, the scheduled dates or resource requirements must be communicated to the LSC as soon as possible so that their feasibility can be assessed and, where necessary, the schedule updated.

Principle of optimising public resources

The LSC's facilities are a shared scientific resource. Both LSC staff and experiment staff must make efficient use of laboratory time, avoiding unnecessary bookings, under-utilisation of the facilities or blocking resources in a way that prevents their use by other experiments.

Services offered by the Biology Platform

The LSC Biology Platform provides experimenters with access to its facilities, scientific equipment and technical support for carrying out experiments under conditions of low background radiation.

The services offered by the Platform include:

1. **Access to the Biology Platform's facilities**, including the surface and underground laboratories, in accordance with the approved schedule.
2. **Support prior to carrying out experiments**

The LSC can provide support to experiments with regard to the acclimatisation of cultures prior to the experiment being carried out. The time allocated to these tasks will be a maximum of 45 hours per experiment per semester, with a limit of 2 hours per day.Estas horas podrán distribuirse de acuerdo con las necesidades de cada adaptación, pudiendo concentrarse en días consecutivos, por ejemplo, en adaptaciones de bacterias; o bien desarrollarse a lo largo de semanas consecutivas, sin necesidad de una dedicación diaria, por ejemplo, en adaptaciones de células.

Los experimentos que requieran un tiempo de adaptación superior al establecido deberán solicitarlo previamente a través del *Formulario de Propuesta de Experimento de la Plataforma de Biología del LSC* para su evaluación, teniendo en cuenta la disponibilidad de recursos y la planificación del laboratorio.

3. **Involvement of technical staff during the conduct of the experiments**

LSC technical staff may devote a maximum of 400 working hours per semester to participating in the conduct of experiments. These hours will be distributed amongst a maximum of five experiments per semester, with a maximum allocation of 80 hours of technical staff time per experiment per semester set as a benchmark.

The allocation of technical staff will be determined during the half-yearly planning process, taking into account the needs of each experiment and staff availability.

For experiments lasting longer than this period, any experimental activities exceeding this limit must be carried out entirely by the experiment's own staff. Technical staff will limit their involvement to providing support for the facilities and scientific equipment.

As a general rule, the involvement of LSC technical staff will be conditional upon the presence of experiment staff whilst the activities are being carried out.

Support service for the completion of experiments

In exceptional circumstances, the LSC may offer a support service for the completion of experiments, provided that this need has been identified and communicated during the planning phase and technical staff are available.

This service may be provided when, for duly justified reasons, the experiment team is unable to remain at the LSC for the entire duration of the experiment. In any case, it is an essential requirement that the experiment team participate in person in the start-up and the majority of the experimental work, with the LSC's technical staff only undertaking tasks relating to the final phase of the experiment.

This collaboration will be included within the limit of 80 hours per experiment per semester and may not exceed 4 hours per day. Its sole purpose is to ensure the successful completion of the experiment; it does not replace the research team's responsibility for its planning, execution and results.

4. Working hours

The LSC's normal opening hours will be as follows:

- Monday: 10.30 am to 4.30 pm.
- Tuesday to Thursday: 8.30 am to 4.30 pm.
- Friday: 8.30 am to 1.30 pm.

As a general rule, work will not be permitted at weekends or on public holidays.

Extended opening hours on weekdays

Requests to work outside the LSC's normal opening hours must be submitted sufficiently in advance to allow for assessment and will be subject to the availability of laboratory staff. Wherever possible, such requirements should be indicated on the Experiment Proposal Form on the LSC Biology Platform, in order to facilitate their assessment and planning. If such requirements cannot be anticipated at the time of application, they must be communicated to the LSC once the proposal has been approved so that their feasibility can be assessed and, where appropriate, incorporated into the experiment's planning.

Job requests on non-working days

Requests to work on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays must be indicated on the Experiment Proposal Form on the LSC Biology Platform. These requests will initially be assessed by the Scientific Committee and, if the Committee considers that the relevance of the experiment justifies the LSC considering the provision of this service, the LSC will analyse its feasibility based on the availability of resources and the laboratory's schedule.

Work carried out on non-working days will, in all cases, be subject to the availability of LSC staff and to the organisational and safety conditions necessary to carry it out.

A favourable assessment by the Scientific Committee does not, in itself, guarantee the availability of this service.

5. Use of specialised equipment

The person in charge of the LSC's biology laboratories will provide technical support for the use of the specialised equipment available on site, including:

- Flow cytometer
- Fluorescence microscope
- Clinostat (microgravity simulation).
- Microplate reader (coming soon to the laboratory)

The use of this equipment must be arranged in advance to ensure its availability and proper functioning.

6. Access to the underground laboratory

Access with LSC vehicles

Experiment staff may access the underground laboratory using LSC vehicles, provided that they are accompanied by laboratory staff and that their visits are coordinated with the usual arrival and departure times of LSC staff.

The use of LSC vehicles will be subject to availability. LSC staff will have priority in the use of these vehicles; therefore, access for experiment staff will be subject to there being space available.

Access by private vehicle

Experiment staff may access the underground laboratory using their own vehicle, provided that it has been previously registered and authorised by the LSC.

To obtain authorisation for the vehicle, it will be necessary to provide documentation proving that the vehicle has a valid technical inspection (ITV) and compulsory insurance.

7. Independent access to the underground laboratory

Access to and independent work in the underground laboratory will only be authorised once a preliminary period of supervised work has been successfully completed under the supervision of the person responsible for the LSC's biology laboratories.

During this period, it will be verified that the staff member:

- Has received the relevant safety training.
- Is familiar with the laboratory access protocol.
- Is able to correctly apply the established working and safety procedures.

Once independent work has been authorised, access will only be permitted:

- During the LSC's working hours.
- Provided that LSC staff are present in the underground laboratory, even if they are carrying out tasks in another work area.

It is the responsibility of the LSC to provide initial training, verify knowledge of the procedures and formally authorise independent access when it is deemed that staff possess the necessary skills.