

Terms of Reference

Executive Director

*Center for Research and Educational Innovation, Science and Technology
(CiiECYT-AIP)*

I. Background

The Center for Research and Educational Innovation, Science and Technology (CiiECYT) is a non-profit Public Interest Association (AIP), created to promote a development model based on applied science, educational innovation, and human talent development, with an emphasis on specialized technical education and its connection to Panama's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Its lines of work include:

- Future Skills Observatory, Foresight, and Educational Innovation.
- Promotion of the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem linked to specialized technical and higher education.
- Research and evidence use for educational, scientific, technological, and productive public policies.
- Programs and projects connecting applied science, the productive sector, public sector, and civil society.

CiiECYT-AIP Vision: to become a center of advanced higher education and scientific research and innovation in the main areas of knowledge, national and international productivity and competitiveness, serving as a reference for the educational and productive sectors of the country and the region, in knowledge generation and scientific production for the transformation of areas of impact, through science, technology, and innovation.

CiiECYT-AIP Mission: to generate spaces and conditions for advanced higher education based on relevant science, technology, and innovation for Panamanian human resources, in alignment with the educational, government, productive, and business sectors, for the construction of public policies grounded in scientific evidence obtained through applied research and innovation in relevant areas, driving structural and continuous change, integrating science, technology, and innovation into everyday activities; fostering continuous innovation among the stakeholders mentioned and, consequently, in Panamanian society and the country, seeking integration into the knowledge economy.

Within its governance framework, CiiECYT-AIP conducts a broad, transparent, competitive, and international open call process in accordance with Law 39 of 2018 and its regulations, the Statute of CiiECYT-AIP, and for this process.

II. Position Objective

To strategically and operationally lead CiiECYT-AIP to consolidate it as a platform of excellence in applied research and educational innovation, capable of building sustainable partnerships, mobilizing national and international resources, executing high-impact programs, and ensuring efficient, transparent, and results-oriented institutional management.

III. Scope and Main Responsibilities

The selected individual will be responsible for, among other functions, those described in this chapter.

III.1 Strategic Leadership and Institutional Positioning

- Translate the CiiECYT-AIP mission into an executable strategic agenda (priorities, programs, goals, indicators, and sustainability).
- Propose and/or update management instruments: institutional strategic plan, annual operational plan, results framework, and monitoring.
- Ensure CiiECYT-AIP's positioning as a leading actor in research, development, innovation, and entrepreneurship (R&D+I+E).

III.2 Program Direction and Research and Innovation Agenda

- Drive a portfolio of programs/projects that connects applied science, specialized technical education, and entrepreneurship with productive sectors, the public sector, and/or civil society.
- Promote knowledge transfer mechanisms (publications, policy briefs, pilots, scaling, curricular or technological innovation, etc.).
- Ensure methodological quality, ethical, relevance, and public utility standards of CiiECYT-AIP products.

III.3 Partnerships

- Design and implement sustainable partnership strategies with universities, research centers, the productive sector, public agencies, international cooperation, and/or civil society organizations.
- Establish agreements (MoUs/Conventions) and coordination spaces oriented toward verifiable results.
- Management competencies for interdisciplinary alliances of public-private networks and civil society for research, development, innovation, and entrepreneurship projects in technological and specialized technical education, with measurable governance and results.

III.4 Fundraising and Sustainability

- Develop an institutional sustainability strategy with diversification of funding sources (competitive grants, international cooperation, services, licenses, partnerships, etc.).
- Develop the identification, formulation, negotiation, and management of obtained resources, with emphasis on research projects, at the national and international level.
- Implement financial management and risk practices.
- Manage CiiECYT-AIP resources, both public and private, national and international, in a manner consistent with transparency and accountability standards.

III.5 Administrative, Operational, and Talent Management

- Direct the functioning of CiiECYT-AIP (internal processes, research group, resources, procurement, contracts, records, etc.).
- Implement strategic planning, monitoring, and institutional performance evaluation systems.
- Promote a work culture based on integrity, technical excellence, innovation, collaboration, and public service.

III.6 Institutional Communication and Accountability

- Present periodic reports on progress, results, budget execution, risks, and opportunities to the General Assembly, Board of Directors, and the executive team of the Specialized Higher Institute (ITSE).
- Represent CiiECYT-AIP in technical and strategic spaces, in accordance with institutional guidelines and formal delegations, when applicable.
- Generate research dissemination agreements in scientific publications, forums, media, and other related channels.
- Use evidence and data to inform educational, scientific, technological, and productive public policies.

IV. Expected Results

Without limiting the permanent functions of the position, the following is expected from the selected person:

- Executive institutional diagnosis (operations, portfolio, partnerships, financing, capabilities, gaps).
- Implementation roadmap: execution, priorities, achievements, critical risks, partnership agenda.
- Proposed minimum indicator dashboard.
- Prioritized and operational program/project portfolio (with goals and responsible parties).
- Portfolio of national and international resources under management and/or application.

- Active financing roadmap (calls, partners, proposals in progress).
- Formalized and functional partnerships (with results and governance mechanisms).
- Annual financial and technical results report with evidence.
- Annual Operational Plan and audit reports.

V. Profile and Eligibility Requirements

V.1 Minimum Academic Background

- Doctorate (Ph.D. or higher) in areas such as applied sciences, education, innovation, public policy, economics, engineering, natural sciences, entrepreneurship, or disciplines related to the mission of CiiECYT-AIP and Panama's science, technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship agenda.
- A combination of training in technology, educational innovation, specialized technical education, public policy, and/or entrepreneurship will be valued.

V.2 Minimum Professional Experience

- 10 years of relevant experience in research, educational innovation, specialized technical education, R&D+I+E, and/or public policy articulation.
- 7 years of management or leadership experience in institutions such as research centers, higher education, academic networks, international organizations, science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship agencies, or public policy articulation spaces (institutional management, programs, funds, partnerships, team leadership).
- 5 years of experience in managing public and/or private funds, and national and international fundraising (grants, competitive funds, contracts, international cooperation, public-private partnerships, service provision, licenses, or other modalities).

V.3 International Background and Experience

- Leadership or participation in applied research, educational innovation, specialized technical education, or entrepreneurship projects with demonstrable results.
- Demonstrable knowledge transfer results (publications, technical reports, impact studies, patents, prototypes, solutions, startups or spin-offs, innovation programs in specialized technical education).
- Contributions to public policies related to education, science, technology, entrepreneurship, and/or innovation.
- Experience in international contexts and global innovation, entrepreneurship, and science networks.

V.4 Key Competencies

Strategic leadership, negotiation and alliance building, results-based management, executive communication, integrity, evidence-based decision making, team management, sustainability orientation.

V.5 Languages

Advanced proficiency in Spanish and English (oral and written).

V.6 Desirable Experience

- Management of regional/university networks or multi-stakeholder platforms.
- Coordination of observatories or clusters linked to technical education and productive sectors.

VI. Contract Conditions

- Commitment: Full-time.
- Location: Panama City.
- Gross monthly salary range: US\$7,000.00 – US\$9,000.00, depending on experience and qualifications.
- Contract duration: Initially five (5) years, renewable in accordance with the CiiECYT-AIP Statute and decisions of the competent bodies based on annual performance evaluation.
- Additional benefits: Statutory benefits (social security, educational insurance, thirteenth month salary, vacation, and other labor benefits) and benefits approved by CiiECYT-AIP in accordance with its internal regulations and existing budget (one-time vehicle allowance, fixed amount for housing and children's education).
- Estimated start date: [To be defined]

VII. Confidentiality, Integrity, and Conflict of Interest

- Applicant information will be treated confidentially and used exclusively for the process.
- The selected person must sign institutional declarations and commitments (conflict of interest, confidentiality, integrity), in accordance with applicable internal policies.

VIII. Selection Process

The selection process includes: requirements verification, professional reference verification, technical evaluation with a weighted matrix, interviews and first presentation, open presentation, negotiation, and formalization.

Interviews will be conducted in English and/or Spanish, with the interview conducted in the applicant's non-native language.

VIII.1 Evaluation Criteria

Stage 1: Admissibility (pass/fail)

- Compliance with minimum requirements (education, years of experience, language).
- Complete submission in required format of the curriculum vitae.

Stage 2: Technical Documentary Evaluation (60 points)

Criterion	Points
Relevance and level of academic background	10
Relevant professional background (10 years) and leadership (7 years)	15
Fundraising	10
Fund management	5
Experience and impact in science, technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, specialized technical education	10
Experience in alliances, research ecosystems, multi-stakeholder governance	10
Subtotal	60

Stage 3: Interviews and Presentations (40 points)

Criterion	Points
Strategic vision and initial action plan (coherence, feasibility, results focus)	20
Leadership, executive communication, negotiation, multi-stakeholder articulation	10
Risk management, integrity, institutional judgment, and sustainability focus	10
Subtotal	40

- The "second open presentation" may feed into stage 3 through structured feedback, in accordance with the Selection Regulations.
- Cut-off score: 75 points.

IX. Application: Documents and Submission Method

Interested individuals must submit in Spanish or English, in a single PDF file, the following:

- Updated curriculum vitae (CV).
- Copies of university degrees and relevant certifications.
- Motivation letter addressed to the Board of Directors (maximum 3 pages).
- Initial action plan for CiiECYT-AIP according to the scope and responsibilities of the position described in Chapter III (maximum 5 pages or 10 slides).
- Minimum three (3) professional reference letters related to work completed.
- Submission method: Email to administracion@ciiecyt.org.pa with the subject: "Application Executive Director CiiECYT-AIP – [First and Last Name]".

- Deadline: [Date and time] (Panama time, UTC-5).

X. Final Provisions

CiiECYT-AIP will promote equal opportunity and a merit-based process.

The Board of Directors and/or the General Assembly may declare the call void if no suitable profiles are identified or if no application meets the minimum standards of the process.

XI. Annexes

XI.1 Annex 1: CV Format

- Name and surname:
- Nationality:
- Phone:
- Email:

Language proficiency:

Language	Proficiency Level
Spanish	
English	
Other:	

A1: basic / A2: brief messages on familiar topics / B1: everyday conversations / B2: non-specialized understanding / C1: fluent expression / C2: native or near-native precision.

Education:

Year (from – to)	Institution	Degree	Specialization

Professional Experience:

Year (from – to)	Institution Company Organization	/ / /	Position / Role	Main responsibilities

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Maximum five (5) references.

Attachments:

- Copies of degrees, certifications, diplomas.
- Copies of reference letters, contracts, settlement documents or similar. Work listed under "professional experience" without documentary evidence will not be considered. Order according to the professional experience record.
- Initial action plan for CiiECYT-AIP (see Annex 2).

XI.2 Annex 2: Initial Action Plan Guide

- Maximum 5 letter-size pages or 10 PowerPoint-style slides.

Pages:

- Executive summary: Direction vision. Strategic priorities. Value proposition for CiiECYT-AIP.
- Decision-oriented diagnosis: Opportunities / challenges identified. Capabilities, governance, partnerships, positioning. Strategic implication.
- Initial project portfolio: Present a balanced portfolio in four mandatory programmatic lines: applied research, educational innovation, specialized technical education, and entrepreneurship.

Project / Line	Problem it addresses	Objective	Expected results	Key partners	Implementation milestones (3)	Reference budget	Indicators	Risks / Mitigation

- Sustainability: Fundraising strategy. Partnership strategy. Management model.

XI.3 Annex 3: Evaluation Guide

Stage 1: Admissibility – pass/fail

Criterion to evaluate	Evidence
Education (Ph.D. or higher)	Copy of degree(s) / certifications.
Minimum requirements: Experience (10 relevant years; 7 years leadership; 5 years fund management and resource acquisition)	CV + supporting documents (contracts, settlement documents, certifications, products).
Advanced Spanish and English	Evidence in CV + verification in interview / presentation.

Complete and required format submission (CV + mandatory documents in a single PDF)

Single PDF with all required documents. Documentary integrity validation.

Stage 2: Technical Documentary Evaluation (60 points)

Criterion	Max. Score	Score Ranges (point assignment)
Relevance and level of academic background	10	5 pts: Ph.D. (meets minimum) in relevant area. 6–7 pts: Ph.D. + specialization / additional master's / relevant certifications (consistent formative trajectory). 8 pts: Ph.D. + postdoctorate and alignment with R-D-I-E. 9–10 pts: Ph.D. + postdoc and robust evidence of applied academic leadership (publications, technical production, research direction, transferred innovation, recognitions), with high relevance.
Relevant professional background	10	7 pts: 10 years. 8 pts: 15 years. 9 pts: 16–19 years. 10 pts: 20+ years.
Leadership	5	3 pts: 7–8 years leading teams/projects. 4 pts: 9–11 years with portfolio/budget management and multidisciplinary teams. 5 pts: 12+ years leading institution/unit/center with governance, accountability, and strategic decision-making.
Fund management	5	2 pts: basic execution and reporting. 3–4 pts: donor/audit compliance, procurement, budget control. 5 pts: system strengthening (internal control, risk management, transparency), audits.
Fundraising	10	5–6 pts: partial participation or leadership in proposals/funds; limited amounts and diversity. 7 pts: leadership in 2+ concrete efforts (national or international) with evidence of award/implementation. 8 pts: sustained track record (3+ efforts) and source diversity (public/private/cooperation). 9 pts: diversified portfolio with verifiable results and continuity. 10 pts: clear sustainability model and demonstrated results.
Experience and impact in science, technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, and	10	4–5 pts: participation in projects with limited products or no evidence of results. 6–7 pts: leadership in projects with verifiable deliverables (pilots, applied publications, prototypes, studies, programs). 8 pts: results with institutional adoption or scaling (implemented models, consolidated programs).

specialized technical education		9–10 pts: demonstrable impact at national/regional level (policies, replicated models, transferred innovations, supported ventures/spin-offs/startups) with evidence.
Experience in alliances, research ecosystems, and multi-stakeholder governance	10	4–5 pts: participation in specific networks or alliances. 6–7 pts: alliance leadership with formal mechanisms and initial results. 8 pts: public-private and civil society alliances articulated to projects (clear roles, governance, indicators). 9–10 pts: construction/leadership of sustainable ecosystems (consortia, platforms, committees) with measurable results and resource leveraging.

Stage 3: Interviews and Presentations

Criterion	Max. Score	Score Ranges	What must be evidenced
Strategic Vision and Initial Action Plan	20	10–12 pts: general vision, but with diffuse priorities, portfolio without clear KPIs and milestones. 13–15 pts: structured plan with priorities and basic portfolio, reasonable milestones, financing/alliances mentioned. 16–18 pts: prioritized, viable plan with KPIs, governance, risks, and consistent financing pipeline. 19–20 pts: outstanding plan: integrates all 4 lines, scaling, alliances, and financing with executable and measurable logic.	Strategic clarity, ability to prioritize, execution and measurement focus.
Leadership, Executive Communication, Negotiation, Multi-stakeholder Articulation	10	5–6 pts: communicates well, but limited negotiation/stakeholder management skills. 7–8 pts: solid leadership, responds clearly, demonstrates stakeholder management. 9 pts: high capacity to persuade, listen, build agreements, and manage tensions. 10 pts: outstanding: strategic direction, mature negotiation, demonstrated multi-stakeholder articulation, effective performance in both languages.	Handling difficult questions, clarity, ability to align interests.
Risk Management, Integrity, Institutional	10	5–6 pts: identifies risks in a general way without robust mitigations. 7–8 pts: proposes clear mitigations; management and accountability approach.	Control mechanisms, integrity, sustainability, and decision-making.

Judgment, and Sustainability	9 pts: systemic vision of risks (financial, reputational, operational). 10 pts: outstanding: institutional integrity/transparency approach + sustainability (diversification, governance, internal control) with concrete measures.	
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