CNRS Competitions
Frequently Asked Questions about Videoconferencing

1. What are the reference texts?

The reference texts are the following:

- Ordinance no. 2020-351 from 27 March 2020 relating to the organisation of the exams and competitions during the health crisis stemming from the COVID-19 epidemic, namely Articles 5 and 6;

- Decree no. 2020-437 from 16 April 2020 implementing Articles 5 and 6 of Ordinance no. 2020-351 from 27 March 2020 relating to the organisation of the exams and competitions during the health crisis stemming from the COVID-19 epidemic.

The purpose of the provisions of the aforementioned ordinance and decree is to deal with the consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic’s spread and to manage the measures taken to limit the virus’ spread for all of the exams and competitions held between 12 March and 31 December 2020. The provisions allow the competitions’ organising authority to adapt the ways in which the competitions are overseen and held, namely using videoconferences for the interviews as well as for the jury meetings.

2. Who decides how the videoconference interviews are organised?

The competitions’ organising authority makes the decision on the use of videoconferencing, even where the applicant has not requested one.

The health emergency and any resulting travel restrictions have been taken into account in the decision to use videoconferencing.
3. Is it possible to use videoconferencing even though it was not provided for in the announcement of the opening of recruitment or in the terms stated in the applicant guide?

Yes, given the aforementioned reference texts.

4. Can interviews be done in person?

No interview will be done in person to ensure that all of the applicants go through the same interview process and that all applicants have equal access to the competition in view of the existing travel restrictions.

5. Where will the videoconferences take place?

The videoconferences can take place in the applicants’ home or, in case of force majeure, in an available administrative office or space.

The organising authority will decide where the videoconference will be held depending on the available technical equipment.

6. What technical guarantees are there to ensure that the videoconferences are held in the proper conditions?

All of the applicants will have the same technical guarantees for videoconferences.

These guarantees are as follows:

- The voice and image transmission of the applicants and jury members occurring in continuous, simultaneous, real time;
- The safety and confidentiality of any communicated data;
- Compliance with the regulations applied to the exam or interview as well as the confidentiality and safety of the subject matter;
- The set up and implementation of videoconferencing modifications for disabled applicants.

7. How will these technical guarantees be carried out?

Each videoconference will go through an initial technical test, including for the videoconferences taking place at home. The quality of your equipment, the connection and the transmission flow will be tested. If the test is not satisfactory, the necessary technical
equipment will be set up before the interview takes place to ensure that there are no technical problems.

Technical assistance will also be provided during each interview.

8. What are the technical guarantees for data protection?

The videoconferences will comply with the personal data protection and confidentiality rules. Videoconferences will not be recorded.

9. Is it possible to record your interview?

No. Recording the interviews is strictly forbidden and offenders will be sanctioned.

10. How long will the interview last?

The length of the interview will depend on the type of competition. It will be stated in the interview invitations.

11. How will the identity of the applicants be verified?

Before the start of their interview, the applicants appearing in the videoconference must show their invitation and I.D. to the jury.

12. What are the applicable rules concerning fraud?

If there are any attempts at fraud, the applicants involved will be eliminated from the competition and will incur administrative and financial sanctions.

13. What are the sanctions incurred in the case of an attempt at fraud?

- Reprimand
- Ban from entering any competition
- 3 years in prison and a fine of 45,000 euros for fraud
- Up to 3 years in prison and a fine of 50,000 euros for the falsification of documents
• Up to 10 years in prison and a fine of 1 million euros for identity substitution during the exams.

14. What are the different cases of fraud?

The following are considered to be cases of fraud or attempts at fraud:

 Communicating with a third person or another applicant during the exam;
 Using and/or keeping on your person any unauthorised equipment: untested computer, connected watch, calculator, etc. even if they are powered off;
 Using unauthorised documents or supporting material not included in the invitation;
 Stealing confidential documents and using them for the interview;
 Wilfully interrupting the sound or image of the videoconference;
 Using equipment that is different than the equipment tested;
 Connecting to unauthorised computer windows;
 Attempting to connect after the interview has been completed;
 Plagiarizing someone: recopying an entire text or a quote without citing its source, recopying material found on the internet, recopying the application of another applicant;
 Identity substitution: trying to pose as someone else.

15. Is it possible to use any supporting material?

The juries have the authority to decide if any additional material can be used or not during the introductions at the beginning of the interview. It will be specified in the invitation whether any supporting material may be used or not. The material's authorised format will be specified to the applicants.

The material must be sent, along with a submission form, to the Central Competition Service at least 3 working days before the start of the interview.

Only the material specified in the invitation can be sent. No additional documents will be authorised.
16. What happens if there is a technical problem during the interviews?

In the event of a technical problem, the regulations state that the interview can be extended or postponed.

In the event of a problem that interrupts less than half of the allotted time for the exam or interview, its length can be extended by a period of time that equals the time of the interruption.

In the event of a problem that interrupts more than half of the allotted time for the exam or interview, the videoconference can restarted or postponed. The initial interrupted attempt will not be taken into account when evaluating the applicant.

In the event that the sound or image is interrupted partially or totally, the applicants will be able to immediately send an alert message to the Central Competition Service and to members of the jury.

17. Who is the relevant authority that will decide whether to extend, interrupt, restart or postpone the exam or interview?

The president of the jury makes this decision.

18. Do the technical problems encountered during the exam or interview have to be documented?

Yes. The technical problems and the responses to them must be recorded in the interview’s minutes. If the applicants request it, their perception of the conditions in which the interview was conducted and the incidents can be noted in the minutes.
19. **If an interview is done in an administrative office or space, will the proper health safety conditions be guaranteed?**

Yes, all of the applicable safety measures will be implemented. The applicants must comply with the applicable hygiene guidelines.

20. **In which room at home can the interviews be done?**

There is no obligation to do the interview in any specified room.

What is most important is that applicants have their interview in a quiet, isolated room where they will not be disturbed and where they will have a good internet connection. Strong backlighting should be avoided. Applicants are advised to sit in front of a white wall if possible.

21. **Is it possible to do the interview in an administrative space?**

If the technical tests warrant it, the applicants will be allowed to do their interview in their unit’s space or in the meeting room of the closest regional delegation.

In the event of an interview in the unit spaces, the applicants must inform their director of the interview, and if necessary, receive travel authorisation if such authorisation is required nationally.

22. **How will the applicants be invited?**

The competition calendars are online.

The invitations will be sent out exclusively by email at least eight days before the start of the competition’s interviews. The organising authority is not responsible if the invitations are not received by email. It is the responsibility of each applicant to notify the Central Competition Service if they have not received their invitation. The invitations will indicate the general videoconference terms and conditions.

23. **How will the tests be performed?**
The applicants are requested to test their equipment using the user guide drawn up for this purpose. The applicants will be responsible for connecting to the test platform with a link that the Central Competition Service will send to them.

In the case of a technical problem, the applicants must contact the hotline made available to them from Monday to Friday, 9 am to 12 noon or 1:30 to 5:30 pm, Paris time (GMT +02.00) or contact technical assistance at the following address: dr16.support-concours@cnrs.fr

If the tests are not satisfactory, technical assistance will propose a solution according to the situations encountered.

24. How will the juries function during the competitions' admission phase?

The juries will either meet together physically or be set up in several different sites. They will have the possibility of holding their deliberations by videoconference.

25. How can the applicants see the juries during the interviews?

The jury members can be seen in their own individual windows.

There will not be a wide shot of all of the jury members together.

26. How exactly will the interviews by videoconference be held?

The interviews will not be recorded.

The applicants can connect before the start of their interview. They will then be placed in a virtual waiting room, which the jury will be able to see.

The juries will then let the applicants enter into the virtual exam room.

Before the interview, the members of the juries will introduce themselves. After the introductions, the quality of the sound and image transmission will be quickly checked.

In the event that supporting material is being used (usage specified in the invitation), desktop sharing will not be allowed.

The jury will monitor the length of the interview.
Mobile telephones must be put in silent mode so as not to cause any interruptions during the interviews.

At the end of the interview, the applicant will be asked to offer any observations they may have about the technical conditions of their videoconference.

27. In the case where supporting material is used, what will the applicable provisions be?

In order to facilitate the introduction, the material will be provided to the juries before the interviews. The material must be sent with a submission form at least 72 hours before the start of the interviews. During the introduction, no desktop sharing will be allowed unless the jury has decided otherwise and has specifically communicated this change in the invitations. The applicants can, however, use a printed version of their introduction as a supporting document.

28. How can applicants familiarise themselves with videoconferencing?

A user guide will be provided for the applicants.

29. What equipment will be used?

The applicants can use personal or professional desktop or laptop computers.

The use of headphones with microphones is not mandatory but is recommended. Headphones with a cable are recommended over wireless headphones.