Frequently Asked Questions - 2026 Call for Proposals

- ## Who acts as the executing agency for FONTAGRO projects?

Beginning in 2025, all projects approved for financing by FONTAGRO's Board of Directors will be executed by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). All other participating organizations will assume the role of technical co-executor or associated organization, depending on their responsibilities within the project.

- ## How is the financing delivered?

Financing authorized by FONTAGRO's Board of Directors will be provided to co-executing organizations exclusively in the form of goods, inputs, services, and consultancies required for project implementation. **No cash disbursements will be made.** Acquisition and provision of these resources will be managed through IICA's country offices. For project fund administration, IICA will apply a fee of up to **8.1%** of the amount allocated to each office. This expense, along with the required **external audit** costs, will be covered by the financing granted by FONTAGRO to the project.

- ## Where should I submit my project for the 2026 FONTAGRO Call for Proposals?

Projects must be submitted exclusively through the **electronic application** link available in the 2026 Call for Proposals section of the FONTAGRO website. The **application guidelines** are also available in that section.

- ## Where can I ask questions about this Call?

We recommend first reviewing the Terms of Reference, the Operations Manual Section II, and other documents related to the 2026 Call. For specific inquiries, contact: fontagro@iica.int

- ## What is a Regional Research, Development, and Innovation (R&D&I) Consortium?

A Regional R&D&I Consortium is defined as a formal alliance of public and/or private institutions from different FONTAGRO member countries that share objectives and technical, financial, and administrative responsibilities for the joint design, implementation, and validation of regional agricultural and agri-food innovation projects. Regional consortia must include a minimum of two and no more than four FONTAGRO member countries, and must involve at least four organizations from the participating countries.

- ## How are Regional R&D&I Consortia formed?

FONTAGRO will co-finance existing or newly created Regional R&D&I Consortia formed by alliances of public actors or public-private partnerships that come together to generate technological solutions through the design and implementation of a regional technical cooperation project, in accordance with the Terms of Reference. See sections 5.1 and 5.2 of the current Terms of Reference for more detail.

- ## What is the minimum number of countries required for a Regional R&D&I Consortium?

FONTAGRO will co-finance projects implemented by Regional R&D&I Consortia involving institutions from at least two FONTAGRO member countries. This means the proposed activities must be carried out in at least those two countries. Once this requirement is met, institutions from non-member countries that are IDB member countries, as well as regional or international organizations, may participate as **associated organizations** with a facilitating or complementary role and **with their own resources**. For additional details, see section 5.6 of the current Terms of Reference.

- ## Can the private sector be classified as "other organizations"?

Regional R&D&I Consortia must promote institutional practices that strengthen entrepreneurial and/or public–

private innovation ecosystems and connect producers with science and technology actors. The private sector may participate in project submissions, always in partnership with R&D&I institutions. Consortia must link the various actors with end users or beneficiaries. To this end, each consortium must include a) at least one public or private scientific research center, b) direct beneficiaries, who must be included in testing or validation processes, c) an entrepreneur or entrepreneurial team (optional), d) other associated organizations (optional). Private companies may participate with a specific role within the consortium.

- **Can territorial entities (such as provinces) participate as co-executing organizations?**

Yes. Any legally established public and/or private institution that meets the criteria outlined in the Operations Manual Section II may participate.

- **May a consortium apply if one of its organizations is currently participating in another ongoing FONTAGRO project?**

Yes, the organization may apply, provided it has no outstanding debts or pending obligations with FONTAGRO, including overdue financial justifications or pending technical/financial reports. In addition, the institution's track record will be evaluated, particularly its performance in previous FONTAGRO projects regarding technical implementation, timely delivery of outputs, and proper financial execution.

- **Can the participation of an organization or country be objected to?**

Yes. FONTAGRO/IICA may object to the participation of an organization or country that does not comply with its regulations or internal decisions. FONTAGRO reserves the right of acceptance.

- **Is it necessary to submit signed counterpart letters from each co-executing and associated organization before the Call deadline?**

Yes. The project must include counterpart letters from each participating organization to be considered a Regional R&D&I Consortium and to comply with the regionality criteria.

- **What can be counted as counterpart funding? Can salaries, buildings, laboratories, etc. be included? Can it be in cash or in kind?**

Participating institutions must co-finance the project individually or jointly by contributing counterpart funding **in cash, in kind**, or a combination of both. The minimum total counterpart contribution must be twice the amount requested from FONTAGRO. Institutions receiving FONTAGRO funds through the project **must provide counterpart funding**. Counterpart items are at the discretion of each institution, but all counterpart resources will be **"auditable"** and therefore must have supporting **"documentary evidence"**. Salaries of staff participating as co-executors are recommended because they can be documented with payroll records. All counterpart contributions must be expressed in U.S. dollars. See Operations Manual Section II, section 1.5 Co-financing Mechanisms.

- **Are funds from associated organizations considered counterpart?**

Yes. If associated organizations contribute counterpart funds through an official letter, these resources will count toward the project's total counterpart contribution and will also be subject to external audit. Appropriate documentation will be required.

- **Are there restrictions on eligible expenditure items?**

Yes. There are restrictions on expenditure categories. For more information, consult the Operations Manual Section II, Eligible Expenditures. IICA/FONTAGRO may object to requests for certain goods.

- **If salary receipts are not available, can a certified HR statement be submitted instead?**

No. Counterpart expenses must be justified with financial documents and eligible supporting evidence. For more information, see Operations Manual Section II. External audit firms issue the final opinion on the eligibility of expenditures.

- **Is there a minimum amount that can be requested?**

The Call establishes maximum amounts but does not define minimums. However, during evaluation FONTAGRO may request adjustments to the budget depending on the project type, structure, and justification.

- **In what currency must project budgets be prepared?**

Budgets must be prepared in United States dollars (USD).

- **What is the duration of the projects?**

Projects may be submitted with a maximum technical execution period of 36 to 42 months and a maximum financial execution period of 48 months. Please review the current Terms of Reference and the Operations Manual Section II.

- **Can a university in Spain receive funds as a co-executing organization?**

Yes, a university in Spain may receive funds as a co-executing organization, provided the benefits of the research accrue to any of the FONTAGRO member countries.

- **Which projects will be asked to participate in an interview?**

Only finalist projects may be invited by FONTAGRO to a virtual interview as part of the final co-financing decision.