Frequently Asked Questions - 2027 Call for Proposals

Execution and financing model

1. 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 therefore take on the role of technical co-executor or associated organization, according to their role in the project.

2. How is the financing delivered?

Financing authorized by FONTAGRO's Board of Directors will be provided to co-executing organizations 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 an Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) fee of up to **8.1%** on expenses actually incurred. This expense, along with the cost of the required **external audit**, will be covered by the financing granted by FONTAGRO to the project.

Project submission

3. Where should I submit my project for the 2027 FONTAGRO Call for Proposals?

Projects must be submitted exclusively through the **electronic application** link available in the 2027 Call for Proposals section of the FONTAGRO website. The **application guidelines** are also available in that section.

4. Where can I ask questions about this Call?

We recommend first reviewing the Terms of Reference, the Operations Manual Section II, and other documents of the 2027 Call. For specific inquiries, write to fontagro@iica.int.

5. In what language must the project be submitted?

In Spanish. The project (Word and Excel documents) must be submitted in final form and in Spanish, even though the Terms of Reference are also available in English. See section 6.3 of the Terms of Reference for more detail.

6. What should I do if an institution in the consortium is not registered in the online system?

One proponent per project must request a single username and password well in advance of the closing date of the Call. Once registered, the proponent must complete the registration of the co-executing and associated organizations. If an institution is not registered, request its registration well in advance.

7. Can I modify the project after submitting it? Are late submissions accepted?

No. The project cannot be modified after submission. The deadline is **April 30, 2027, at 3:00 PM (Eastern Time, U.S., Washington, D.C.)**. Projects submitted after the deadline, through means other than the online system, or without complete Word and Excel documents in all their sections will not be accepted.

8. Can artificial intelligence (AI) tools be used to prepare the project?

The project document must declare the type of AI use in its preparation. The technical leader and the technical leads of

each co-executing organization are fully responsible for the content and must be able to defend it in an interview with the evaluation panel.

Consortium and participants

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

A Regional R&D&I Consortium is defined as a public-public and/or public-private alliance of institutions from at least two FONTAGRO member countries that share objectives, capacities, and technical, financial, and administrative responsibilities for the joint design, execution, and validation of agricultural and agri-food innovation projects of a regional nature. One of the co-executing organizations will act as technical leader, and at least one of the organizations must be a public research institution. It is recommended that the consortium have no more than four organizations. See section 5.1 of the Terms of Reference for more detail.

10. 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 of this Call. See sections 5.1 to 5.4 of the current Terms of Reference for more detail.

11. 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 different institutions from at least two FONTAGRO member countries. This means the technical activities of the project must be carried out in at least those two member countries. Once this requirement is met, institutions from countries that are not FONTAGRO members but are IDB members, as well as regional and international organizations, may participate as **associated organizations** with a facilitating or complementary role and **with their own resources**. See sections 5.1, 5.4, and 5.5 of the current Terms of Reference for more detail.

12. Can the private sector participate in the consortia?

Yes. Regional R&D&I Consortia must promote institutional practices and/or arrangements that strengthen public-public and/or public-private entrepreneurial 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. Note that consortia must link the various actors with end users or beneficiaries. To this end, each consortium must include: a) at least one public research institution, b) producer organizations as direct beneficiaries, which may participate as co-executing or associated organizations and must ensure the validation and adoption of results, and c) other co-executing or associated organizations, such as entrepreneurs or private companies (optional). Private companies may participate with a specific role in the consortium.

13. How should producer organizations participate?

Each consortium must include producer organizations as direct beneficiaries of the project. They may participate as co-executing or associated organizations, and their participation must ensure the validation and adoption of results. See section 5.2 of the Terms of Reference for more detail.

14. Can an associated organization receive FONTAGRO funds?

Associated organizations do not receive direct FONTAGRO financing. They participate by covering their own costs and/or contributing counterpart.

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

Yes. Any legally established public and/or private institution that meets the criteria set out in the Operations Manual

Section II may participate.

16. 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 its research include institutions from Latin American and Caribbean countries.

17. Can an institution participate in more than one proposal?

Yes. The same institution may participate in more than one proposal, provided it has the technical capacity and counterpart resources needed for each.

18. 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 expense justifications or pending financial or technical reports. In addition, the institution's track record in executing previous projects will be evaluated, particularly regarding the completion of technical activities, timely delivery of outputs, and proper execution of the allocated funds. Note that the consortium's technical leads may not be leading another FONTAGRO project at the same time; otherwise, the project will be disqualified.

19. Can the participation of an organization or country be objected to?

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

Counterpart and letters

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

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

21. Must any agreement or other legal document be attached to the project?

No. Only the signed counterpart letters from each participating organization (co-executing and associated) must be submitted with the project. If the project is selected for co-financing, IICA and the co-executing organizations will sign a legal agreement that marks the start of the project.

22. What can be counted as counterpart? Can institutions' counterpart include salaries, buildings, laboratories, etc.? Can it be in cash or in kind?

Participating institutions must co-finance the project, individually or jointly, by contributing counterpart funds **in cash or in kind**, or a combination of both. The project's minimum counterpart is the sum of the individual counterpart contributions of each participating organization, and in total it must be at least twice the amount requested from FONTAGRO. Organizations that receive FONTAGRO funds through the project **must provide counterpart** to the project. Each institution decides which items to contribute as counterpart. However, please note that counterpart amounts will be "**audited**," so institutions must plan in advance how they will provide "**documentary evidence**" for them. In general, we recommend using the salaries of the organization's staff participating as co-executor, since payslips serve as documentary evidence. All counterpart contributions are expressed in U.S. dollars. See the Operations Manual Section II, section 1.3 Co-financing Mechanisms and Project Presentation Formats.

23. Are funds from associated organizations considered counterpart?

If associated organizations contribute counterpart funds through an official letter, these funds will count toward the project's total counterpart contribution and will also be subject to external audit. These funds must therefore also be supported by documentary evidence, as in the previous case.

24. If, instead of payslips, a spreadsheet certifying the amounts and validated by the person responsible for human resources is submitted, is it valid?

No. Counterpart expenses must be properly justified with financial documents and expense receipts that are eligible for audit. For more information, see the Operations Manual Section II. In addition, the external audit firms issue the opinion on the final eligibility of expenses.

Scope, budget, and duration

25. Which Flagship Programs does the Call cover? Can a project align with more than one?

The Call covers five of the six Flagship Programs of the 2025–2030 MTP (Flagship Programs 1 to 5). Each project must align with at least one of them.

26. Is there a minimum amount that can be requested?

The Call establishes maximum amounts; no minimum amounts have been set. However, during evaluation the type of project, its structure, and the amounts requested will be analyzed, and FONTAGRO may ask for the requested amount to be reduced.

27. In what currency must project budgets be prepared?

In United States dollars (USD).

28. Are there restrictions on expenditure items?

Yes, there are restrictions on expenditure items. For more information, see "Budget and eligible expenses" in section 1.5 of our Operations Manual Section II. For example, salaries of the participating institutions' permanent staff (which must be recorded as counterpart) and construction works are not eligible for FONTAGRO financing. IICA/FONTAGRO may object to requests for certain goods.

29. What is the duration of the projects?

Projects may have a technical execution period of up to 42 months and a financial execution period of up to 48 months. The duration must be consistent with the technical proposal and the project's objectives. Please review the current Terms of Reference and the Operations Manual Section II.

Evaluation and results

30. Which projects will be asked to participate in an interview?

FONTAGRO may invite finalist projects to a virtual interview as part of the final co-financing decision. In the interview, the technical leader and the technical leads of each co-executing organization must be able to defend the content of the project before the evaluation panel.

31. How are results communicated? Can I request the evaluation report?

The TAS will communicate the co-financing authorization exclusively to the selected projects, through an official email and publication on the FONTAGRO website. Non-selected projects may request their evaluation report within 30 days of that publication.

32. Where can I see examples of projects co-financed by FONTAGRO?

The Projects section of the FONTAGRO website lists projects approved in previous calls.