



3rd Call for Joint Research Projects on Agriculture, Food, Nutrition and Health - AgroHealth2026



1. Call Opening

1.1. Introduction

The Lleida Biomedical Research Institute Dr. Pifarré Foundation (IRBLleida) aims to create synergies between basic, clinical, and epidemiological research, so that biomedical research becomes a driver for improving daily clinical practice.

The Agrotechnology research centre (Agrotecnio) aims to become an international reference centre addressing key challenges in the agrifood value chain in an integrated manner advancing to the implementation of the One Health Initiative, emphasizing an integrated approach that harmonizes and optimizes the health of individuals, animals, plants, and the environment.

Within the framework of these goals, IRBLleida and Agrotecnio, and after the positive impact of the last two editions, announce the **3rd Call for Joint Research Projects on Agriculture, Food, Nutrition and Health – AgroHealth2026**.

1.2. Summary

The [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) recognizes nutrition as a critical element of health and wellbeing. Better nutrition is particularly related to improved infant, child and maternal health, a stronger immune system, safer pregnancy and childbirth, lower risk of non-communicable diseases (such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease) and longevity. Furthermore, WHO has recently stated that 'by working together, the health and agriculture sectors can ensure policy coherence and deliver a safe and nutritious food supply that not only contributes to good health and well-being but also fosters healthy communities and economies.

Thus, Agrotecnio and IRBLleida will support **collaborative synergistic projects that extend the boundaries of knowledge and bridge agriculture in its broadest sense with biomedical research along the nexus of Agriculture, Food, Nutrition and Health**. The nexus also includes medical uses of plants as production vehicles for nutritional and pharmaceutical applications, the latter in the context of infectious diseases caused by HIV, SARS, etc.

2. Call Description

2.1. Scope

Projects should target unmet medical needs, including obesity, diabetes, lipidaemia, metabolic syndrome, exercise physiology, infectious diseases, molecular and cellular human metabolism, nutrient–gene interactions, nutrient-drug interaction, or



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chemoprevention, through approaches such as the reduction of harmful residues from food ingredients, the impact of nutritional intervention on disease, nutrient-gene interactions, or the development of novel functional foods and ingredients, or exploiting the advantages of plants as production platforms for recombinant pharmaceuticals, amongst others.

Collaborative research projects between a minimum of one Agrotecnio and one IRBLleida group should eventually lead to new collaborations that are sustained after the completion of the project. Thus, the generation of research outputs should allow the collaborating groups to apply for more ambitious competitive national and international calls. Both IRBLleida and Agrotecnio are committed in their support to young researchers, we thus encourage scientists under the age of 45 to apply with their proposals to this call.

The projects should follow the EU's Do No Significant Harm Principle (DNSH) regulations to undertake scientific research and technological development processes that take into account effects and potential impact on the environment and society.

2.2. Funding & Payment

Funds for the AgroHealth2026 call will be provided by Agrotecnio and IRBLleida. Up to three proposals with a budget of up to 45,000€ per project may be funded in this third Call.

Once the final award decision has been announced, the two institutes will make the funds allocated in the project available to researchers. If necessary, one of the institutes will transfer the funds necessary for the development of the project to the other. The two co-PIs will manage their own funds through their respective institutes.

2.3. Duration & Important Dates

Call Opening: May 22, 2026.

Call Deadline: June 30, 2026, at 3 p.m

Estimated provisional Resolution: November 2026

Estimated final resolution: December 2026

Once accepted, the project will have a duration of up to two years, starting in January 2027. This duration may be extended by a maximum of six months.

Call Opening	Call Description	Candidates Profile	Application & Award Decision	Beneficiaries' Obligations	Other Clauses
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3. Candidates' profile

3.1. Eligibility

Each proposal must identify two co-Principal Investigators (co-PI), one from each institution who must meet the following requirements:

- Be affiliated to Agrotecnio or IRBLleida, before the application deadline, and maintain their affiliation throughout the duration of the AgroHealth project.
- Have a doctoral degree.
- Have a scientific track record consistent with the proposed project.

3.2. Incompatibility

AgroHealth2026 grants are compatible with any other research funds if the specific activities to be covered by AgroHealth2026 do not overlap with other ongoing projects. If funding has been requested for activities included in the AgroHealth2026 proposal, within pending grant applications elsewhere, this must be explicitly stated in the application indicating the call or application and the estimated date of award decision. If funding for the Call is finally secured, the Principal Investigators will have to resign from one of the grants.

A researcher who submits a proposal to the Call as PI/co-PI of a project may not participate in any other project submitted to the Call. In the event of non-compliance with this requirement, all AgroHealth2026 projects with the participation of this researcher will be excluded from the Call.

Other researchers participating in the Call as collaborators may do so in no more than two projects. In the event of non-compliance with this requirement, PIs will be contacted, and collaborator should choose the two projects on which they want to be maintained.

4. Application & Award Decision

4.1. Proposal Submission

To participate in the call, the candidates will submit the following documentation using the [AgroHealth26 application form](#).

All the materials in the proposals should be written in English (unless otherwise specified). The materials needed for a full proposal to be evaluated are:

- Curriculum vitae (CVA FECYT format) of the two co-PIs of the proposal, selecting the best 5 publications for each of the Co-PI over the last 7 years (period extendable according to Annex I) that should be submitted using the PI Data Document.



- A detailed project proposal (single line spacing with Calibri 11) should be submitted using the [AgroHealth26 form](#). The proposal will include the following points:
 - Summary in Catalan, English and Spanish.
 - Background and state of the art.
 - Relevant bibliography.
 - Hypothesis.
 - Objectives.
 - Justification of the interest of the Project and synergies brought about by the collaboration.
 - Work plan and methodology.
 - Previous experience of the team related to the project topics.
 - Technology and/or knowledge transfer potential.
 - Prospects of extending collaboration beyond the project.
 - Other funds granted and/or requested (pending decision) substantially overlapping with the project proposed.
 - Adaptation to the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation.
 - Requested budget, maximum € 45,000 distributed in:
 - Personnel: Directly involved in the proposal (may not exceed 50% of the total grant requested).
 - Small equipment
 - Consumables
 - Subcontracting (may not exceed 50% of the total grant requested).
 - Travel expenses (may not exceed 5% of the total grant requested).
 - Other expenses: publication costs, etc. (may not exceed 10% of the total grant requested).

- If needed, ethics (CEEA and/or CEIm) and biosecurity committees' approvals or documents indicating that the proposals have been submitted for their approval.

- Signed Responsible Declaration Form (**Application Form Document**).

4.2. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation process will be carried out externally by independent experts in the field.

The key aspects that will be evaluated are the scientific excellence of the proposal, the track record of the two Co-PIs, the feasibility of the proposal and the potential impact of the project.

More specifically, the proposals will be scored according to the criteria indicated in the following table:

Criteria		Definition	Points
Scientific-technical aspects of the proposal	Quality, novelty and originality	-Hypothesis and Objectives are properly aligned. 5 points -Novelty of the proposal, originality in the conceptual and/or experimental approach. 5 points -The proposal contributes to extend the state-of-the-art, providing new insights and widening the scientific knowledge in the research field. 5 points	15
	Viability and workplan	-The methodology is clearly described, and it is appropriate for the suitable development of the project. 5 points -Adequation of milestones and equipment to the pipeline of the project. 5 points -Adequation of tasks distribution along participants and budget allocation. 2,5 points -The risks are identified, and mitigation plans are included. 2,5 points	15
	Impact	-Foreseen applicability and implementation of the solution. 5 points -Expected economic and social impact. 5 points	10
Curriculum of the PI 1		Evaluation of the principal investigator profile and adequation of the research production to the scientific field of the project. This evaluation will consider: -Scientific production and the impact on scientific community. 5 points -Leadership in competitive projects, specially to those which are related with scientific field of the proposal. 5 points -Intellectual and industrial property protection. 2,5 points	12,5
Curriculum of the PI 2		Evaluation of the principal investigator profile and adequation of the research production to the scientific field of the project. This evaluation will consider: -Scientific production and the impact on scientific community. 5 points	12,5



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership in competitive projects, specially to those which are related with scientific field of the proposal. 5 points -Intellectual and industrial property protection. 2,5 points 	
Potential Technology and Knowledge Transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mention and justification of uniqueness of the idea compared to the state-of-the-art. 5 points -Definition and viability of Knowledge-Transfer plan. 5 points 	10
Prospects for extending the collaboration beyond the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both groups have complementary objectives and lines of research. 2,5 points Previous funding and results. 5 points The proposal describes future goals beyond the project. 2,5 points 	10
Implementation of RRI policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of RRI policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gender equality in the teams and in their decision-making bodies. Gender perspective addressed along the proposal. 0-2 points -Citizen participation considering various actors who can participate throughout the process to align the results with the values, needs and expectations of society. 0-1 points -Scientific education: Improving the educational process to equip citizens with the skills and knowledge necessary to understand and participate in research and innovation debates. 0-1 points -Accessibility to the information generated, both at the beginning of the research and at the end (publications in open access). 0-1 points 	5
Young PI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one of the Principal Investigators under the age of 45 on the closing date of the Call (extendable according to Annex 1) Yes: 5 points No: 0 points 	5
Both Co-PIs belong to groups that were not funded together in 2nd AgroHealth2024 call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage the maximum number of new collaborations between Agrotecnio and IRBLleida groups, the proposals in which the two Co-PIs belong to groups that were not funded together in the same 	5



	project in the last AgroHealth call 2024. 5 points.	
Maximum	Total sum	100

4.3. Award Decision

A committee made up of the two directors and two additional members, each one designated by a director will oversee the call, reviewing, ratifying, and publishing the provisional recommendation for funding based on the evaluation of the proposals that will be performed externally.

Any allegations to the provisional award decision will have to be submitted within 5 days of its publication and will be addressed by the external company. If it is deemed necessary, the external evaluators will be requested to respond to them. Once the allegations are resolved, the final resolution will be published.

Once the final award decision is published, the PIs will have a period of 15 days to accept the grant.

5. Beneficiaries' obligations

5.1. Project Follow-up

At the end of the first year of the project, the co-PIs should jointly submit a medium-term report to the Grant Office of both institutes indicating to what degree the proposed objectives and milestones have been met, justifying any deviation from the original plan.

5.2. Project Outputs

The support of IRBLeida and Agrotecnio must be duly acknowledged in all project outputs. In any oral or written communication about the research project and/or the results obtained from the received grant, the main researcher (or the person who shows/ disseminates the results) must mention specifically the support of IRBLeida and Agrotecnio and use the logos of both institutions whenever possible.

5.3. Final Reporting

Within a maximum period of six months after the end of the project, the PIs will submit a joint final report to the internal Grant Office of both institutes, describing the degree of achievement of the objectives and the outputs initially proposed.



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6. Other Clauses

Participation in this call for proposals implies knowledge and acceptance of all its terms and conditions, including:

6.1. Proposal Documentation Confidentiality

The documentation associated with the proposals will be treated as confidential information, being obliged to maintain the confidentiality of the information all persons involved in the evaluation and assessment of the proposals, and may be used for informative and dissemination purposes, subject to prior consent of the applicants.

6.2. Terms and Conditions, Industrial and Intellectual Property

The intellectual or industrial property and exploitation rights that may derive from the implementation of the granted project will belong to IRB Lleida and Agrotecnio, recognizing as authors or inventors the people who have conceived and implemented these ideas and applying the intellectual and industrial property regulations of IRB Lleida and Agrotecnio.)

6.3. Personal Data Collection Purpose and Processing Information

Responsible for the processing

Identity: INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN BIOMÉDICA DE LLEIDA (BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF LLEIDA)

TAX ID: G25314394

Address: Avda. Alcalde Rovira Roure n°80, 25198, Lleida

E-mail: protecciodedades@irbllleida.cat

Purpose of data processing and conservation

Basic information on the protection of data processing: Database of grants.

At the **INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN BIOMÉDICA DE LLEIDA (hereinafter referred to as IRB LLEIDA)**, acting on behalf of both institutions, we process the information you provide as an interested party to manage the processing of your CV and application to the grant.

The data obtained will be kept for a period of up to 12 months.

Legitimation for data processing

The legal basis for the processing of your data is the consent of the interested party when contacting the INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN BIOMÉDICA DE LLEIDA.



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Recipients of your data

Your data will be communicated to third parties and collaborators related to the organisation. Apart from these entities, your data will not be communicated to third parties.

Rights of interested parties

The owners of the data processed by IRBLLEIDA always have the right to access their data, rectify it, oppose its processing, or delete it if they believe it is no longer necessary for the purposes for which it was collected. In addition, if you wish, you may request the portability of your data and limitation of their processing. In the latter case, we will only keep them for the exercise or defence of claims. You may also revoke your consent at any time.

To exercise these rights, you may contact IRBLLEIDA by e-mail at protecciodedades@irblleida.cat. Likewise, if you consider that your rights have been infringed, you may lodge a complaint with the Catalan Data Protection Authority.

7. Annexes

7.1. Annex I

In cases where the evaluation of any type of merit is subject to a defined assessment period, the time frame will be adjusted to exclude the proportional duration of interruptions due to the reasons listed below, calculated according to the following criteria:

- A) Periods of leave related to maternity or paternity, adoption, or foster care, taken in accordance with the protected situations recognized under the General Social Security Regime. An extension in weeks will be applied, calculated as 4 times the number of weeks of leave taken per child.
- B) Temporary incapacity due to serious illness or accident of the applicant, with a medical leave of three months or more. A one-year extension will be applied.
- C) Temporary incapacity during pregnancy due to pregnancy-related causes. An extension in weeks will be applied, calculated as 4 times the number of weeks of leave. This extension may be added, where applicable, to the one indicated in section A.
- D) Care for dependent persons, as established in Law 39/2006 of December 14, on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for People in a Situation of Dependency. An extension in weeks will be applied, calculated as 4 times the number of weeks of activity as a non-professional caregiver.

All the leaves must be correctly submitted at the time of the grant application.