

Call for Research Proposals: Strategic Use of Data in Digital Transformation in Education

2026 CALL GUIDELINES

1. BACKGROUND

Fundación Ceibal and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) have entered into an agreement covering 2025–2027 to strengthen the capabilities of policymakers in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to use educational technologies appropriately and sustainably, in alignment with each country's pedagogical goals, while promoting inclusive and equitable education.

One of the agreement's specific objectives is to generate evidence on the current state of educational technology integration in countries across the region. Accordingly, this call for research proposals will address critical challenges related to Digital Transformation in Education (DTE) in the region. The call is supported by the National Agency for Research and Innovation (ANII).

2. OBJECTIVE

This call will fund applied **research projects that promote the strategic use of data in digital transformation in education across Latin America and the Caribbean**. It offers a strategic opportunity to generate evidence through one of the following types of projects: 1. Interoperability and educational data ecosystems; 2. Institutional culture of data use for decision-making; 3. Equity in data access and multisectoral coordination; 4. Artificial intelligence in educational data management: responsible use and evidence of impact.

Research projects must address one or more of the topics listed in the [Concept Note](#).

Projects are expected to generate evidence and resources that contribute to planning teacher training as part of Digital Transformation in Education, producing innovative, high-quality outputs supported by strong, effective teams.

More detailed information on potential research areas is provided in [Annex I](#). The full schedule for this call is available in [Annex II](#).

3. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This call is open to research teams affiliated with research centers, organizations, and universities in Latin American and Caribbean countries that were not selected in either of the two previous calls under the project *Strengthening Local Capabilities to Achieve Sustainable, High-Impact Digital Transformation in Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (2025–2027)*, led by Fundación Ceibal and funded by IDRC.

Private consulting firms specializing in educational research, public policy, or digital transformation may also be eligible, particularly those with demonstrated experience in applied research projects and the operational capabilities needed to implement the project.

4. REQUIREMENTS

At the time of application:

- Each project must have a principal investigator and may also have a co-principal investigator.

- Each project must have a lead applicant organization and may include participating organizations. A lead applicant organization may submit more than one project under the same call.
- The lead applicant organization must not have received funding under either of the first two calls of the project Strengthening Local Capabilities to Achieve Sustainable, High-Impact Digital Transformation in Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (2025–2027), led by Fundación Ceibal and funded by IDRC.
- The project must have the endorsement of the lead applicant institution and any participating organizations.
- Curricula vitae (CVs) must be submitted for all project participants¹.
- Individuals who, as of the application deadline, have outstanding obligations under any ANII program (such as overdue technical progress reports, final financial statements, closing reports, or surveys) are not eligible to apply.
- Where applicable, the project must include proof of submission to the Ethics Committee.
- All documents required in the application form must be attached.

For approved projects:

- Project activities must begin in March 2027.
- Whenever the project or its outputs are presented, its results are disseminated in any format, or any related activity takes place, it must be acknowledged that the project is carried out under the project Strengthening Local Capabilities to Achieve Sustainable, High-Impact Digital Transformation in Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (2025–2027), led by Fundación Ceibal (Uruguay), funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) (Canada), and supported by ANII (Uruguay). The project must be identified by its designated name or code, and the guidelines governing the use of the Fundación Ceibal, IDRC, and ANII brands must be followed.
- Where applicable, signing the contract will be subject to final approval by the Ethics Committee.

5. DURATION AND FUNDING

Projects lasting up to six months may receive funding. Projects may request an extension of up to three months, provided they submit appropriate justification.

Up to 100% of the total project cost may be funded, subject to a maximum of USD 50,000 (fifty thousand US dollars).

A maximum of USD 75,000 (seventy-five thousand US dollars) will be allocated under this call.

6. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following expense categories may be funded to implement the project:

- Materials and supplies.

¹ Project participants serving as principal investigators, co-principal investigators, or researchers who are affiliated with Uruguayan institutions may submit their CVs in [CVUy](#) format. Their CVs must be up to date as of the application deadline.

- Laboratory equipment.
- Other equipment.
- Consultants.
- Training.
- Services.
- Minor building infrastructure modifications.
- Reference materials.
- Software.
- Intellectual property protection.
- Promotion and dissemination: Participation in national or international conferences, presentations, or symposia, and publication of academic articles in peer-reviewed journals.
- Public outreach: Expenses related to activities intended to communicate knowledge gained to a broad, nonspecialist audience will be eligible. Accessible communication formats and styles should be used for audiences unfamiliar with the specific subject, with the aim of encouraging dialogue among different sectors of society and contributing to the democratization and social appropriation of knowledge.
- Administrative expenses (maximum 5% of the total project budget).
- Contingencies (maximum 5% of the total project budget).
- Technical personnel: Additional costs arising from researchers' increased time commitment to the project, or from hiring new researchers to meet project objectives, may be funded. Fees for technical or support personnel will be accepted only when their participation is clearly defined and justified in relation to the proposed objectives and work plan (maximum 70% of the total project budget).
- Travel and accommodation: Expenses for meals, accommodation, and local transportation at the destination for team members and visiting professors will be funded only for activities related to project implementation or presentation of results. Expenses will be reimbursed as specified in ANII's Guide to Budgeting Travel Expenses for R&D Projects and Scholarships.
- Visiting professors: Fees for days spent in the country working with the research team will be eligible.
- Transportation tickets.

All expenses must be related to activities undertaken as part of the project. The purchase of vehicles, land, equipment, or supplies not directly related to the project objectives will not be funded.

The Evaluation Committee reserves the right to disallow any item in a proposal's budget if it considers the item irrelevant.

7. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Funding will be awarded through a competitive call.

Proposals must be submitted using the online application form prepared by ANII for this purpose.

No changes may be made to a proposal after the application deadline.

The application form may be completed in Spanish or English.

8. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

The evaluation process will involve Fundación Ceibal, ANII, and an Evaluation Committee comprising three specialists appointed by Fundación Ceibal. The committee's membership will be made public.

At the start of the process, all participants involved in evaluation must sign a document establishing ethical principles concerning confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

The evaluation process consists of the following stages:

1. **Eligibility.** ANII will assess proposals for compliance with formal requirements (timely and proper submission, including letters of endorsement signed by the head of the organization²). Proposals that do not meet the formal requirements set out in these guidelines by the application deadline will be deemed ineligible and excluded from further evaluation, and the project leads will be notified.
2. **Relevance and prioritization.** Fundación Ceibal will assess the relevance of projects and prioritize them according to the following criteria:
 - a. Project relevance, taking into account the call's thematic focus and possible subthemes identified in the Concept Note.
 - b. Track record, capabilities, and financial soundness of the lead applicant organization.

Before the technical evaluation begins, project teams may be invited to a virtual meeting to clarify one or more aspects of their proposals. At a minimum, the project lead and, where applicable, the heads of participating organizations must attend.

At this stage, up to 30 projects will be selected for evaluation by the Committee.

3. **Technical evaluation.** The Committee will use the evaluation criteria and scoring framework set out below. It will prepare a reasoned, consensus-based report that includes a final list of projects recommended for funding.
4. **Funding decision.** Based on the Committee's reasoned, consensus-based report, and taking into account diversity in countries, organization types, and project types, Fundación Ceibal will submit the proposed projects for funding to ANII's Board of Directors for approval. Fundación Ceibal may recommend partial funding for projects where justified.

The Evaluation Committee will conduct the technical evaluation using the following criteria:

Technical evaluation
1. Conceptual clarity, feasibility, and innovation of the proposal (40%)
2. Budget and other resources (20%)
3. Team capabilities (20%)
4. Work plan (20%)

9. MONITORING AND DISBURSEMENTS

² Letters of endorsement must bear either a handwritten signature or a digital signature recognized in the relevant country.

Project funding will be formalized through a contract signed by ANII and the lead applicant organization.

Fundación Ceibal and ANII will carry out technical and financial monitoring in accordance with the specified activity plans and milestones. Technical monitoring will include submission of technical progress reports using a format provided by ANII. ANII may also request interim technical or financial reports at any time. Fundación Ceibal will support implementation of selected projects and may request additional information and meetings with project leads during implementation.

An initial advance payment will be made, followed by a disbursement around the midpoint of project implementation, in accordance with the financial implementation schedule approved by ANII. Ten percent of the total grant will be withheld until the final report and audit report have been approved. Expenses incurred against this 10% must be included in the project's final financial statement. All project expenses must fall within the implementation period. Expenses dated before the project start date will not be accepted.

Exceptionally, projects may complete implementation within no more than three months after the end date stipulated in the contract.

10. RESULTS AND OUTPUTS

Research results will be published on Fundación Ceibal's website for the project Strengthening Local Capabilities to Achieve Sustainable, High-Impact Digital Transformation in Education in Latin America and the Caribbean and incorporated into the resource database of the Latin American Network for Digital Transformation in Education (Red LATE). The results will also be compiled in a final technical report to be published in [REDI](#) ANII's open-access institutional repository. All research outputs produced by selected projects must be included in this final report and deposited in the Fundación Ceibal Collection and ANII's institutional repository (REDI). They may also be deposited in the open-access digital repository of the project lead's organization.

11. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Any intellectual property rights, whether industrial property rights or copyright, arising from implementation of the funded project will be governed by the applicable general Uruguayan legislation.

12. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

By applying, applicants authorize ANII and Fundación Ceibal to communicate and disclose through various channels (website, press, etc.), without time limitation and within the scope of their statutory mandates, identifying information about applicants (individuals or legal entities), as well as information about the call and the project, such as the amount of funding, ANII's contribution, other contributions, a publishable summary, associated individuals or institutions, and other information or personal data necessary to ensure transparency in the fulfillment of ANII's statutory mandates, except for information expressly classified as confidential.

ANII will process data in accordance with its [privacy policy and terms of use](#).

13. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Submission of an application constitutes full acceptance of these guidelines. Fundación Ceibal, IDRC Canada, and ANII reserve the right to decide on any circumstances not expressly covered herein, without applicants having any right to make a claim.

Award of funding entails a commitment by the principal investigator to collaborate with the Agency and Fundación Ceibal in activities to which they are invited, such as project evaluations, participation in evaluation committees, or dissemination activities.

ANII is governed by [Law N° 18.084](#).

ANNEX I

Information on potential research areas under this call:

1. Interoperability and educational data ecosystems

Research evaluating models for integrating fragmented educational information systems (enrollment, performance, infrastructure, socioeconomic context) and generating evidence on which data architectures are feasible and sustainable in settings with limited technical capabilities. This area also includes projects focused on integrating multisectoral information systems and sources, standards, interoperability, and governance models that can consolidate ecosystems capable of producing actionable information to uphold rights.

2. Institutional culture of data use for decision-making

Studies documenting and evaluating existing national or subnational initiatives or pilot experiences in which data analysis has actually informed pedagogical or management decisions to identify the institutional conditions that enable a shift from “collecting” to “using” data. This area includes generating evidence on training and support models for management teams (national, subnational, and school-level) in data analysis. It also includes projects focused on developing capabilities, organizational practices, collaboration mechanisms, and institutional conditions that help transform data into evidence for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating educational policies and programs.

3. Equity in data access and multi-stakeholder coordination

Research focused on the identified gap in data access between government and nongovernment stakeholders. This includes data governance and open-data models that could provide more equitable access for academia and organized civil society without compromising data protection, while enhancing the use of evidence for educational purposes. The underlying premise is that partnerships between government and nongovernment stakeholders can promote more effective use of data, support capability building, and generate context-specific knowledge.

4. Artificial intelligence in educational data management

This area seeks to generate empirical evidence on specific AI applications grounded in data generation and analysis—such as early identification of at-risk students—by evaluating both their effectiveness and the governance conditions needed for ethical use. Projects should focus on AI applications for managing, integrating, processing, and using educational data.

ANNEX II

Schedule

- Call opens: October 27, 2026
- Q&A webinar: November 17, 2026 – 2:00 p.m. (UYT / GMT-3)
- Proposal submission period: October 27, 2026, through December 8, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. (UYT / GMT-3)
- Announcement of selected proposals: February 2027
- Implementation of selected projects begins: March 2027