

MEAT SECTOR FUND

Challenge Mode

1. Background

On 27 July 2021, the National Agency for Research and Innovation (ANII) and the National Meat Institute (INAC) executed an agreement through which they agree to design and manage a program called “Meat Sector Fund” (hereinafter the “Fund”), which aims at providing solutions for the different research, development and innovation needs of INAC.

The topics to be addressed include, among others, the optimization of information systems linked to meat chains, the study of the processes used, the products obtained by industrial and commercial companies, and the management of environmental challenges in the search for long-term sustainable development.

An Agenda Committee was created, comprising representatives of INAC, the meat processing industry, the Uruguayan Association of Intensive Natural Meat Producers (AUPCIN), which has expertise in the area, and ANII. This committee is responsible for defining the agenda to which the Sector Fund responds in each of its calls for proposals.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this call is to receive proposals to meet the challenge of the Meat Industry Electronic Information System (SEIIC), selecting the most suitable ones to develop projects to be financed.

Challenges are relevant problems that affect the efficiency, scope or quality of the institution's products and services, and their solutions must be innovative projects or research and development projects.

3. BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries of this call may be individuals or legal entities generating knowledge, whether national or foreign.

They may apply individually, or in association with other national or foreign organizations such as companies, technology centers and/or public or private research institutes. These partnerships will be established through the execution of agreements defined by ANII.

4. FINANCING TERMS

The financing of the proposal or proposals selected for the solution of the challenge posed may reach up to 100% of the total cost of the project with a maximum amount of \$4,500,000 (four million five hundred thousand Uruguayan pesos) per proposal and beneficiaries will have a maximum term of 6 to 9 months to build the prototype.

Projects may not be focused on the acquisition of turnkey technology.

Items eligible for financing:

- a)** Fees for training services for the company's personnel.
- b)** Expenses associated with short courses abroad, for a maximum of up to 2 months, including airfare, lodging (food, lodging and transportation), tuition and other essential expenses arising from the course.
- c)** Fees of technical personnel for the execution of the project.
- d)** Salaries of the company's own personnel assigned to the project for up to \$960,000 (nine hundred and sixty thousand Uruguayan pesos) of the recognized amount of the project.
- e)** Expenses associated with consultancy services.
- f)** Purchase of materials and supplies.
- g)** Purchase of essential equipment for innovation development.
- h)** Expenses of trial, testing and lab equipment.
- i)** Expenses related to facilities and/or labor and environmental safety measures.
- j)** Purchase of bibliographic material.
- k)** Expenses related to the purchase and/or lease of software.
- l)** Expenses for technical and maintenance services related to the project.
- m)** Expenses related to the protection of intellectual property.
- n)** Specific building adaptations for the installation of equipment.
- o)** Unforeseen expenses of up to 5% of the project's cost eligible for financing.

Activities that are not directly related to the project may not be financed, explicitly excluding, among others, the following:

- a)** Fixed asset investment.
- b)** Investments (e.g., equipment and facilities) that are intended for the company's usual activity and/or operation.
- c)** Administrative personnel of the bidders.
- d)** Financial investments such as time deposits, mutual funds, stock purchases.
- e)** Payment of debts of any kind of company.
- f)** Recurring operating expenses of the company.

5. STAGES OF THE BIDDING PROCESS

1. Request for proposals. Call for project profiles by completing the online form on ANII's website.
2. Profile selection. The Agenda Committee (CA) will assess the profiles and select those who will submit the complete project.
3. Project submission by the selected profiles. An online form will be made available on ANII's website for submitting projects. Organizations will have 45 days to complete the formulation of the solution.
4. Technical assessment of the solution. Once the project submission stage has been completed, the technical assessment will be carried out by an Assessment and Monitoring Committee (CES) appointed for this purpose. The CES will be comprised of members proposed by the CA, appointed by ANII's Board of Directors and approved by the National Council for Research, Science and Technology (CONICYT), in accordance with current legislation.
5. The CA will make the final selection of the projects to be financed. This will be informed through ANII's website.

6. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS

During the first stage, an eligibility assessment will be carried out, then the CA will assess the profiles submitted and will select those that will submit the complete project. Compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the call will be assessed as well as the adjustment of the proposed solution to the Challenge. In the event that no profile submitted is satisfactory or relevant, the Board of Directors may declare the call void.

The CA may call for a face-to-face interview with the stakeholders whose involvement and/or participation it considers relevant for the implementation of the proposal.

The technical assessment of the projects received will be carried out by an Assessment and Monitoring Committee (CES) appointed for this purpose. The CES is comprised of members proposed by the aforementioned Committee, appointed by ANII's Board of Directors and approved by the National Council for Research, Science and Technology (CONICYT), in accordance with current legislation.

When assessing the projects, the following aspects will be considered:

1. Innovative merit: evaluates the type and degree of innovation that the execution of the project would imply.
2. Technical feasibility: the project must demonstrate that the proposal to be developed is technologically and/or methodologically feasible. Coherence of the objectives with the problem posed, clarity, as well as time and costs, are important.

3. Legal and environmental feasibility: the project must identify the regulatory provisions (labor, tax, social security and environmental, among others) in force, and establish the measures that will be taken in the event that it is implemented.
4. Capacity of the work team: the proponent of the solution must demonstrate that it has the capacity to carry it out, i.e., that it has the human resources capable of managing and supervising the activities set forth in the project.
5. Work plan: the project must set forth a work plan leading to the achievement of the proposed objectives, indicating the activities to be carried out, the times associated with the activities and their expected results.
6. Cost of the solution: the consistency and relevance of the budgeted items and amounts for the scope of the proposed project will be evaluated, as well as the resulting total cost.
7. Impact of the solution submitted.

The CA will take the assessment of the CES as input and will define which projects will be financed for implementation.

At any stage of the assessment process, experts or references at the national or international level may be called, depending on the nature of the challenge, who will advise the committee members on the topic under consideration.

7. DISBURSEMENT FORMALISATION AND PROJECT FOLLOW-UP

The financing of the projects selected by the CA in accordance with the provisions herein shall be formalized through the execution of an agreement between ANII and the bidder. Among other matters, it will be agreed that the bidder must establish domicile in Uruguay and that, in case of disputes, Uruguayan law and jurisdiction will apply.

The agreement will include a schedule of disbursements associated with milestones. The approval of each milestone will be made by ANII and will be a necessary condition for the release of the corresponding reimbursement.

10% of the total amount of the financing will be withheld until the final reports are approved.

8. CLOSING OF THE PROJECT

Upon completion of a project, the beneficiary must submit a closing report to ANII presenting the results obtained. The closing report will be evaluated and, if approved, the percentage of financing withheld will be paid. Part of this report will be published in REDI (redi.anii.org.uy), ANII's institutional repository.

In addition, a full technical report must be submitted to the funders.

Any works resulting from or related to the selected projects may be deposited in the open access digital repository of the institution of affiliation of the project leader in Uruguay, or otherwise in ANII's institutional repository as established in ANII's open access Regulations (<https://www.anii.org.uy/institucional/documentos-de-interes/30/reglamento-de-accesoabierto/>).

9. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The intellectual property of the solution shall belong to the bidder. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the parties expressly state that INAC shall have the right of free use of the solution within the national territory. To these effects, the bidder undertakes to grant INAC an exclusive, perpetual and free license to use the solution within the national territory. INAC may use this license for the fulfillment of its legal duties.

In addition, confidential information of the beneficiary to which access is provided may not be disclosed and it shall be ensured that it is not in the public domain. Such confidential information shall not be disclosed and access by third parties will not be allowed. In the case of total or partial disclosure of the beneficiary's work or its results, INAC must obtain the prior written consent of the beneficiary.

Once the project is completed, if there are future stages, without prejudice to the provisions regarding INAC's rights of use, intellectual property and other aspects will be agreed upon by the relevant parties.

10. PRIVACY

Submission of a proposal implies the authorization to ANII to communicate and disclose in different channels (website, press, etc.) without time limitation and within the framework of its legal duties, the identification data of the bidder(s) (individual or legal entity), as well as information on the call and the project, such as: amount of the project, ANII contribution, other contributions, publishable summary, related persons or institutions, etc. and other information or personal data necessary to ensure transparency in the fulfillment of ANII's legal duties, unless expressly classified as confidential. ANII will treat data in accordance with its privacy policy and terms of use.

11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Submission of a proposal implies acceptance of these Terms and Conditions. ANII reserves the right to decide on any circumstance not expressly provided for herein and bidders will not have the right to appeal.