

**EDUCATION SECTOR FUND
"DIGITAL INCLUSION: EDUCATION WITH NEW HORIZONS" PROGRAM**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS - 2020

1. BACKGROUND

The *Agencia Nacional de Investigación e Innovación* (National Research and Innovation Agency, hereinafter “ANII”) and the *Fundación Centro Ceibal para el Estudio de las Tecnologías Digitales en la Educación* (Ceibal Centre Foundation for the Study of Digital Technologies in Education, hereinafter “Fundación Ceibal”) devised in 2015 the "Digital Inclusion: Education with New Horizons" program as part of the Education Sector Fund (*Fondo Sectorial de Educación*) for the purpose of funding research projects to produce original data regarding existing knowledge in the field of teaching and learning assisted by digital technologies, which may be linked to the social or educational aspects of Plan Ceibal. This call is supported by Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the call is the funding of research projects consistent with one or more of the priority topics and lines defined for each of its two modalities (A and B), the execution of which can result in proposals or inputs that can be applied or transferred to the educational context. Each of the two modalities included in this call has specific objectives.

Modality A is intended for projects related to one or more of the research lines defined below, many of which are interconnected. This modality, jointly with the National Administration of Public Education (*Administración Nacional de Educación Pública* or ANEP), will prioritize projects that are relevant and applicable to Plan Ceibal.

LINES	TOPICS
Skills for the digital society	Skills and competences for compulsory education, according to different educational levels
	Transversal skills for a critical and creative use of digital technologies by teachers and students.
	Innovative methodologies for teacher training

	Social use of technology and digital citizenship
Use of data and artificial intelligence (AI)	Integration of AI competences in teachers' and students' curricula
	Key pedagogical resources for the development of digital competences by teachers
	Strategies for strengthening AI competences in schools' curricula.
	Machine learning and AI systems applied to educational settings
Digital inclusion	Teaching strategies aimed at the inclusion of vulnerable groups and/or groups with special needs
	Learning methods that favor inclusive, equitable and high-quality education.
	Novel ways of communicating through digital technology and their integration into learning
Innovation in teaching and learning	Learning dynamics with innovative approaches to the teacher-student-digital resources relationship
	Remote learning through digital technologies
	Novel ways of communicating through digital technology and their integration into learning
Feedback and evaluation	Teaching and learning assessment in technology-mediated settings
	Assessment of digital skills

	Assessment based on the use of mass data: analytics of learning and educational data mining
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The proposals must conform to at least one of the lines above, identifying the topics and the questions that the study shall address, and stating how the research may lead to concrete inputs, whether in terms of the transfer of knowledge, educational products or materials, or interventions at a social, community or other level, with quantifiable effects in the short term.

Modality B is supported by IDRC Canada and it focuses on the funding of projects or initiatives that can provide specific solutions to the problems or needs of Latin American and Caribbean countries related to the pedagogical continuity during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. These must not necessarily be related or applicable to Plan Ceibal.

The specific characteristics of each modality are detailed in the following section.

For both modalities, the selected projects must develop a series of products in order to ensure the dissemination of their research, pursuant to the following terms:

- A. The party of a selected project must agree upon the dissemination procedures with ANII and Fundación Ceibal. These may include the production of images, charts, infographics, and short interviews before, during or after the research.
- B. Once the research has concluded, a final report must be presented, including the research details, findings and recommendations. Projects selected for modality A must also produce an academic paper for publication in a relevant national or international peer-reviewed scientific journal.
- C. Additionally, projects must produce a dissemination article for a general audience, explaining the object of the research and how it contributes to education and society.
- D. The head or other members of a research team may be asked to participate in conferences, panels or symposia organized by Fundación Ceibal about or related to the Sectoral Fund.

2. MODALITIES

Modality A

This modality is aimed at research groups from public or private, national or international institutions.

If the candidate represents a foreign-based institution, it must have a Uruguayan counterpart; therefore, that project will have two proposing institutions. National institutions associated with foreign institutions with a considerable history of educational research on the issues addressed by the Fund shall receive special recognition.

Non-reimbursable funding shall be granted pursuant to the following terms:

- Projects with a duration of up to 12 months shall receive funding for 80% of the total cost, up to a maximum sum of UYU 1,450,000.

- Projects with a duration of up to 24 months shall receive funding for 80% of the total cost, up to a maximum sum of UYU 2,900,000.

Research projects of longer duration may apply for an initial term of 24 months, after which they must apply in further calls.

Modality B

Modality B has the same selection procedures as modality A but differs in its objective, topics, sums, terms and applying institutions.

This modality is funded with the support of IDRC and it is aimed at projects with the following characteristics:

- Projects of up to 5 months that provide specific solutions to the problems or needs of Latin American and Caribbean countries related to the pedagogical continuity during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Projects must be applicable at a scale that helps to solve national problems in the short term.
- Funding for 80% of the total cost shall be granted, up to a maximum sum of UYU 600,000.
- Projects must be led by an institution based in any Latin American or Caribbean country. Research teams are not required to have a counterpart based in Uruguay.
- Priority shall be given to proposals with the written endorsement of a competent authority from a national education agency or an official body with similar attributions, stating the usefulness and potential impact of the proposal.

Projects from foreign institutions shall receive the equivalent sum in USD at the current exchange rate of the date when the ANII Board approves the funding.

For both modalities, the minimum contribution by the beneficiary institutions must be 20% of the expected investment in the project. This contribution can be paid in money, for which any legal means of payment is accepted, or in kind¹, in which case a detailed valuation must be submitted.

3. RESTRICTIONS AND OBLIGATIONS

The project manager and co-manager may submit only one project per call.

The same individual can manage and co-manage a maximum of two research projects with national funding (from ANII, INIA, CSIC, etc.) running simultaneously.

The science manager and co-manager must allocate at least 10 hours per week to the project.

The project must start running in March/April 2021.

Applications will be rejected if their science manager or co-manager are in breach of any of ANII's programs as of the closing date of the call (e.g., overdue on technical progress reports, final accounts, closure reports, surveys).

It is compulsory to submit the curriculum vitae (CV) of all the participants in the project. National researchers, including grant holders, must submit their CV in the CVUy format,

¹ In-kind contributions may consist of transport, infrastructure and/or academic and technical staff fees.

updated as of the closing date of the call. Foreign researchers, support technicians, consultants and visiting professors are advised to submit their CVs in the CVUy format, although it is not mandatory that they do so.

No national member of a research team can exceed 60 hours per week taking into account all work-related activities (including teaching hours and time engaged in other public or private jobs).

All the documents requested on the application form must be attached.

It is mandatory for all the funded research projects to keep the information of their projects updated on the specified websites or platforms. Projects must also provide any information or input requested by ANII or Fundación Ceibal.

The party responsible for the project must mention that it is financially supported by the Education Sector Fund through the Digital Inclusion Program of ANII and Fundación Ceibal every time the project is presented, its results are disseminated and/or any activity related to the project is carried out. Projects funded under modality B must also mention the support of IDRC Canada, in addition to the aforementioned provision.

4. FUNDABLE ITEMS

Funding may be provided for the following items as part of the project:

- Materials and supplies.
- Laboratory and other equipment (not applicable for modality B).
- Consultants.
- Training.
- Services.
- Reconditioning of small-scale building facilities (not applicable for modality B).
- Literature.
- Software.
- Intellectual property protection.
- Promotion and dissemination (at least 10%).

Participation in national and/or international conferences, presentations or symposia, publication of academic articles in peer-reviewed journal (not applicable for modality B).

- Administrative expenses (5% maximum of the total budget).
- Incidentals (5% maximum of the total budget).
- Technical staff: funding will cover the incremental costs of the time devoted by the researchers to the project or the recruitment of new researchers to meet the project's objectives. The fees of the technical or support staff will only be admitted when their participation is clearly defined and justified according to the proposed objectives and work plan.
 - Travel expenses: Funding will cover the team's per diems and fares only for activities related to the implementation of the project or the presentation of its findings.
 - Visiting professors: fees for their stay in the country with the research team will be recognized (not applicable for modality B).

All the expenses must be associated with activities undertaken as part of the project. Funding will not cover the acquisition of vehicles or land.

The Evaluation and Assessment Committee (*Comité de Evaluación y Seguimiento*, or CES) reserves the right to modify a proposal's budget if a requested item is not deemed relevant.

5. SUBMITTING THE PROJECTS

This fund is granted as a competitive fund. The submission of proposals for both modalities of this call (A and B) will occur in two stages:

- Stage 1: Research project idea.
- Stage 2: Research project.

Ideas and projects must be presented on the form developed by ANII for this purpose.

The submission of project ideas should include a summary of the project, a justification of its applicability, its impact, the human resources involved, and a summarized budget.

The submission of the projects must include aspects such as the human resources involved and their background, a project summary, a background on the subject, general and specific objectives, the project's contribution to knowledge generation and problem solving, the methodology and expected outcomes, a description of the activities to be undertaken, an implementation schedule with the corresponding milestones, resources available for the implementation of the project, and budget.

In order to expedite the assessment process, applicants are advised to take the following into account:

- When submitting the research project, the applicant may propose the names of as many as three assessors external to his research group who may be considered by the Assessment and Monitoring Committee.
- When submitting the research project, the applicant may indicate the names of as many as three assessors external to the research group who he/she considers should not assess and evaluate the proposal.

After a project is selected for funding, a contract shall be signed between ANII and the beneficiary institution.

6. ASSESSING THE PROPOSALS

The assessment process will involve the participation of the Agenda Committee and the Assessment and Monitoring Committee. The Agenda Committee is comprised of members appointed by the ANII Board, the Fundación Ceibal Board, and IDRC. The Assessment and Monitoring Committee is comprised by members proposed by the Agenda Committee, appointed by the ANII Board and approved by the National Council for Innovation, Science and Technology (CONICYT), in keeping with the provisions of the current legislation.

The assessment process will involve four stages:

1. Once the call for project ideas has been closed, an eligibility analysis will be carried out. Ineligible projects will be removed from the assessment process and their research managers shall be informed thereof.

2. The Agenda Committee will undertake the relevance and prioritization assessment of project ideas in accordance with the criteria set out in these Terms and Conditions. This stage shall not involve an in-depth technical assessment, but aspects such as those listed in article 6.2 of this document will be analyzed. An ad hoc Plan Ceibal Commission will be set up for projects presented under modality A, which shall advise the Agenda Committee on the

proposals' relevance and applicability to the Plan. The opinions and input provided by this Commission shall not be binding for the funding Committees. As a result of this stage, the highest priority proposals will be selected, and the corresponding research teams will be asked to formulate the project in its entirety. The ideas that are not prioritized will not move on to the next stages of the process and their research managers shall be informed thereof. A maximum of 20 project ideas will be selected for modality A and 10 project ideas will be selected for modality B.

3. The Assessment and Monitoring Committee will be responsible for the technical assessment stage. Applications will be subjected to at least two technical assessments carried out by peers. These assessments will be major inputs for the Assessment and Monitoring Committee, but in no case will they be binding upon the outcome of the assessment process. The reports prepared by the assessors on each project shall be submitted to the research managers, who will have 5 calendar days to object the contents of the reports—should they deem it appropriate—in no more than two sides of a page. Project reformulations will be not be allowed; only comments on the assessment will be accepted. The final assessment of each project by the Assessment and Monitoring Committee will consider both the reports prepared by the assessors and any comments made by the applicant. This assessment will result in a list of high-quality projects recommended for funding. The Plan Ceibal Commission created for modality A projects may carry out the technical monitoring of the projects it deems interesting due to their potential for application jointly with Fundación Ceibal and ANII

4. The Agenda Committee will be responsible for the fourth and final stage, which will prioritize proposals meeting the quality requirements analyzed by the Assessment and Monitoring Committee and submit its recommendation of selected projects to the ANII Board.

6.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Proposals must submit the corresponding form, duly completed, and all the attached documents requested.

All the members of the research teams based in national institutions must complete their CVs in the CVUy System. This is not a requirement for foreign researchers.

No projects will be accepted after the period specified in the call.

6.2 RELEVANCE AND PRIORITIZATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

At this stage of the assessment, the Agenda Committee will consider several aspects, including:

- originality and clarity in the submission of the proposal;
- applicability and feasibility of transferring the knowledge generated in the research to educators, educational policy makers or users;
- cooperation with international research groups;
- background of the research team;
- contribution to the training of human resources and capabilities, and to generating valuable knowledge in the countries involved.
- For projects submitted for Modality A, proposals that are relevant and applicable to Plan Ceibal shall be given priority.

6.3 TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- Scientific-Technical Content: clarity and consistency between the general and specific objectives of the proposal, methodology and intended results; research strategy for the implementation of the proposed work plan and its feasibility.
- Novelty of the knowledge to be gained: impact of the generated knowledge on the

state of the art in the area, innovation and originality of the proposal.

- The project's impact or the tangible effects it may have on the country or on other countries involved, as well as on education.
- The project's potential for scalability and replication in other educational settings at a global scale.
- The team's technical capacity: background of the research managers and the research groups involved.
- Interdisciplinary nature of the research: suitable multidimensional approach to the proposal; training, experience and interdisciplinarity of the teams involved in the project.
- Funding: Access to additional funding will be an asset.
- Inter-institutional research group: Institutional partnerships and networking related to the intended objectives. Considering the different areas of the project, the interaction of inter-institutional efforts and the degree of involvement of other national or international research institutions in the project will be considered an asset.
- Ethical research: If the study has ethical implications, the necessary measures should be considered and ensured.
- Quality and relevance of the results: It will be necessary to ensure compliance with the established criteria regarding the expected results.
- Epistemological approach: Research designs that contemplate one or more of the epistemological approaches identified as priorities (learning analytics, foresight, benchmarking) will receive special consideration².
- Sustainability: Projects whose actions go beyond the intervention period, providing continuity or generating benefits or inputs that can be used beyond the period in which the research is conducted, will receive special consideration.
- The inclusion of the gender perspective in the proposals will be an asset.
- The ethical issues that may be involved in the research proposals must be identified and presented on the application form during Stage. The mechanisms for addressing those issues must also be defined, considering the restrictions included in section 8 and Appendix I.

6.4 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE

The Agenda Committee will consider the technical assessment (prioritizing academic excellence) and the significance of the project to prepare the final list of proposals recommended for funding. The degree of significance is related to the impact of the results of the project, considering its strategic approach and its consistency with the priority topics and objectives of the call.

7. PROJECT MONITORING AND DISBURSEMENTS

As regards to the disbursements, projects funded under modality A shall receive an initial advance payment in accordance with the schedule approved by ANII, after which there will be biannual disbursements. Projects funded under modality B shall receive an initial payment of 90% of the total sum to be funded at the beginning of the project. For both modalities (A and B), 10% of the total sum of the grant shall be held back until the final report is approved. It must be noted that the expenses incurred against that amount must be included in the final report of the project. All costs charged to the project must occur within the implementation

period. Projects funded under modality A may exceptionally complete the implementation within six months after the closing date specified in the contract.

Any publication resulting from or related to the selected projects must be made available on the open repository of Fundación Ceibal and in repository of the institution to which the project manager is affiliated, if any.

The results of the research must be compiled into a final technical report, which shall be submitted to ANII and published in the respective repositories of ANII and Fundación Ceibal.

8. REQUIREMENTS, PERMISSIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO THE RESEARCH

The research team is responsible for informing well in advance about the requirements and permissions needed to carry out the research, and for taking all the necessary steps to obtain the authorizations from each of the institutions directly or indirectly involved with the project. However, if the research requires accessing personal information of students or teachers in educational institutions, the research group, at the time of submitting its proposal, must provide proof of the agreement and the corresponding authorization for each case. For this purpose, a formal application must be submitted to the relevant educational institution, including all the information about the research project, the objectives, methodology, the composition of the research team and the duration of the project.

The research team is responsible for providing all the relevant information to the individuals or institutions involved. If the research requires access to educational institutions, the research team must have submitted its request for access to the corresponding institution before signing the contract with ANII, providing the file number assigned to the request.

9. SUPPORT/ADVISE BY FUNDACIÓN CEIBAL AND CENTRO CEIBAL

When applying for the project, the research teams must indicate whether they will request any type of support from Fundación Ceibal or Centro Ceibal in terms of advice for the development of platforms, applications, content, access to data, equipment or others.

In those cases where the products of the project are intended to be made available to the beneficiaries of Plan Ceibal, applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and in no case will they imply any responsibility whatsoever in the development by areas of Plan Ceibal and/or in the allocation of their own resources to the development of software, applications, platforms or educational content.

When requesting access to data from Fundación Ceibal or Centro Ceibal, a formal request must be submitted to the corresponding institution, detailing the request, the purpose, the research objectives, the potentialities and the inputs expected therefrom, as well as the reasons why accessing such data is necessary. This request should be submitted to the relevant institution at the time of formulating the complete project. The institution will then evaluate the legal, technical and ethical implications of providing access to the required data and the conditions under which it may be feasible.

The formalization of the contract with ANII will be subject to the observance of the abovementioned terms.

APPENDIX I: ETHICAL ASPECTS RELATED TO THE RESEARCH

Subjects participating in the research must have received all the information about the research, including what data is to be collected, for what purpose and for how long, and what actions will be taken to ensure the right to access, delete, rectify and remove that data.

It must be invariably guaranteed that all subjects sign an informed consent document clearly, concisely, and exhaustively stating the purpose of their participation in the study, the use that will be made of the data collected, and the action that will be taken to ensure the subjects' anonymity and prevent their identification and re-identification.

The research proposal should consider whether the mass collection and processing of personal data, the use and combination of different databases or different processing and analysis techniques, and the use of automated decision-making methods may affect the subjects, considering also the measures that can be taken to mitigate this effect.

For minors to participate in the research, the research team is required to hold informative meetings with their parents and/or legal guardians before requesting them to sign the consent documents. Minors who have not been authorized by their parents or guardians will not be allowed to participate in the research.

If the research involves access to personal data, the protection of such data and the privacy of the subjects involved must be guaranteed in accordance with the current relevant regulations and best practices at national and international levels. The data collected may only be used for the purposes they were requested for and they may not be used for secondary purposes and/or under the pretense of general-purpose data.

Particular consideration should be given to whether the research involves the collection, use and processing of special or particularly sensitive data modalities.

Provisions should be made for cases in which the research involves international transfer of data and/or cases in which the data collected are kept outside the national territory (Uruguay). In these cases, the institutions must ensure the highest standards of security, protection and privacy. If necessary, these cases will be analyzed by experts appointed for that purpose.