

“System Funds: Guidelines for Max Planck Society Projects to be funded in 2026 and 2027”

General Characteristics

El Consejo Nacional de Rectores (Conare) and Max Planck Society open the call for scientific and technological research projects of common interest, which aim to complement the efforts of the academic and research units of Costa Rican public universities with Max Planck Institutes. The foregoing in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Max Planck Society, and Conare.

Objective of the Call

To finance research projects in all areas of knowledge developed between researchers of Costa Rican Institutions of Higher Education and researchers from any of the 84 Max Planck Institutes.

Presentation of the project

Costa Rican researchers should submit their proposals by e-mail to the corresponding Vice presidency for Research.

Proposed schedule

We are going to opening two consecutive calls to fulfill the allocation of resources to the selected projects in 2026 and 2027.

- I. In the first submission period, proposals must be submitted to the corresponding Vice Rectory for Research or to the CONARE Program Directorate, **no later than November 22, 2025.**
- II. In the second submission period, proposals must be submitted to the corresponding Vice Rectory for Research or to the CONARE Program Directorate, **no later than April 17, 2026.**

This is the proposed calendar for both calls:

Call period 1 (The selected proposals will be funded in 2026):

Activity	Responsible	Deadline
Opening of the call for proposal submissions	Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	September 22, 2025
Closing of the submission period	Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	November 21, 2025
Review of proposals, inclusion of project endorsements in the SFS, and submission to CONARE Divisions	Vice Rectorates for Research and CONARE Directorates	November 24-26, 2025
Evaluation of proposals	Responsible teams and Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	From November to december, 2025
Communication of results	Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	December, 2025
Approximate start of funding	Research teams	January, 2026

Call period 2 (The selected proposals will be funded in 2027):

Activity	Responsible	Deadline
Opening of the call for proposal submissions	Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	January 26, 2026
Closing of the submission period	Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	April 17, 2026
Review of proposals, inclusion of project endorsements in the	Vice Rectorates for Research and CONARE Directorates	From April 20 to April 24, 2026

Activity	Responsible	Deadline
SFS, and submission to CONARE Divisions		
Evaluation of proposals	Responsible teams and Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	From April 27 to May 29, 2026
Communication of results	Commission of Vice Rectors for Research	August-September, 2026
Approximate start of funding	Research teams	January, 2027

General guidelines

1. In order to participate, research teams must follow the corresponding internal regulations in their university.
2. Proposals must be submitted to the Research Vice Rectory of the coordinating institution or to the CONARE Program Directorate, in accordance with the established deadlines and with all required endorsements, for their referral to the CVI for subsequent evaluation
3. Proposals must be submitted in English following the attached form. They must include the attached cover page hand signed by the Max Planck Institute involved in the proposal (–namely the Director and the Group Leader). In case the contact is directly with the Director of a Max Planck Institute, he / she must sign in both boxes.
4. Projects must be submitted by active staff members from at least two public universities affiliated with CONARE, with the mandatory participation of at least one of the following three universities: Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica (TEC), Universidad Estatal a Distancia (UNED), or Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN). Additionally, each proposal must establish a clear link with the CeNAT-research program. For further information, please contact us (ssanchez@conare.ac.cr). Academic programs of CONARE (OPES and PEN)

may also participate. Priority will be given to proposals involving representatives from the largest number of institutions.

5. If the CeNAT program coordinates the proposal, it must ensure the joint participation of at least two universities, in accordance with the General Guidelines number 4.
6. The academic workload of the researchers must be planned and respected from the application stage, ensuring full compatibility with the development of the project. During implementation, workload adjustments will only be allowed in exceptional cases of force majeure, such as the resignation of a team member.
7. Each of the participating institutions must issue their respective endorsement.
8. The person in charge at the Max Planck Institute and/or the Costa Rican applicant must send to the Representative for Latin America of Max Planck Society with headquarters in Munich, Germany, a scanned copy of the cover page with the corresponding signatures at (latam@gv.mpg.de) until November 22 2025, as formal support for the project and its consent with partial financing thereof. "The electronic signature of the forms shall be the preferred means for the submission of proposals, (in accordance with the regulations in force). However, if necessary, handwritten signatures will be accepted."
9. The management of financial resources will be the responsibility of FUNCeNAT; therefore, all budget execution must be coordinated with this entity and will be governed in accordance with the applicable guidelines and procedures.
10. The research teams that are selected must participate in an induction session, coordinated by CeNAT representatives, as a prerequisite for the proper execution of the resources.

Inquiries should be sent to:

Contact in Germany	Contact in Costa Rica
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The conformation of Costa Rican research teams must meet the eligibility and accreditation criteria established in this call. A researcher cannot submit more than one project proposal.

Projects duration and financing

Projects will have a maximum duration of 3 years. For the Costa Rican group, the maximum amount that can be requested is 30 million colons to purchase consumables, minor equipment, academic mobility and publications, and scholarship for student assistance. The participating Max Planck Institute should provide resources for the same amount (as CONARE) in the form of access to infrastructure and special equipment, funding of human resources, travel expenses, etc.

Evaluation process and selection criteria

Max Planck Society will recognize the endorsement issued by one of its institutes as a scientific evaluation.

In the case of Costa Rica, projects must be recommended by the Vice presidents for the Research Commission, which in turn will have the support of a sub-commission to carry out the corresponding evaluations.

The proposals to be financed will be those that have the approval of both parties. Unilateral financing by one of the parties is not possible.