

Towards SDJ-S – Explore Sustainable, Desirable and Just Solutions

I. Context

In 2019, Agropolis Fondation launched the "Agriculture-based solutions" call with the overall objective of promoting agro-ecological transition for tomorrow's agricultures.

Since then, the COVID-19 crisis and the recent events in Ukraine have further emphasised the need to review agricultural models. The COVID-19 crisis has indeed highlighted the consequences of biodiversity loss¹, environment degradation and accelerated urbanisation². Therefore, there is a need to jointly consider human, animal and environmental health³. More recently, war in Ukraine has underlined the strong dependence of several African countries on cereals and fertilisers produced in Europe. In this context, agriculture, forestry and other land-use activities are seen as both the main drivers of climate change⁴ and biodiversity loss⁵ and the basis for solutions based on the relocation and profound rethinking of our food systems including the development and scaling-up of agroecology⁶ at many levels (spatial, temporal and jurisdictional)⁷.

Thus, global agriculture policies are now facing major challenges: nourishing and ensuring a good health to an increasingly urbanized world population that is expected to grow by nearly 2 billion by 2050, while responding to the major challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. The most vulnerable populations are paying the highest price for these global transformations (climate change, strong dependence on globalisation). At the same time, there is a growing consensus on the importance of using the "food system" approach to address various segments of the food production, transformation and consumption⁸. Food systems also face increasing societal demand to become more responsible by reducing negative externalities on the environment and human health, among others. In particular, it is a way to better understand how the aforementioned crises are challenging the notions of food democracy, food insecurity and food systems inter-dependence in a globalised world.

In this context, the academic and research site of Montpellier meets those challenges by focusing on 3 pillars⁹:

- Feed: Promoting an innovative agriculture to contribute to food security and environmental quality;
- Protect: Fostering a transition towards an environmentally-friendly society;
- Care: Improving human health in changing environments

¹ Lajaunie, C., & Morand, S., 2021, Biodiversity targets, SDGs and health: a new turn after the coronavirus pandemic? *Sustainability*, 13(8), 4353.

² Thoradeniya, T., & Jayasinghe, S., 2021, COVID-19 and future pandemics: a global systems approach and relevance to SDGs. *Globalization and Health*, 17(1), 1-10.

³ The "One Health" concept summarises an idea that has been known for more than a century: animal health, human health, and environmental health are intrinsically intertwined and interdependent. The health of one affects the health of all. We envisage and implement One Health as a collaborative global approach to understanding and managing risks for planetary health and encouraging a more sustainable ecosystem balance (<https://www.oie.int/en/what-we-do/global-initiatives/one-health/>)
Caron, A., Morand, S., Pedrono, M., Garine-Wichatitsky, M. D., Chevalier, V., ... & Binot, A., 2016, One Health and EcoHealth: the same wine in different bottles? *Infection Ecology & Epidemiology*, 6(1), 30978.

⁴ The latest Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report (<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/srcccl/>) showed that agricultural, forestry and other land-use activities accounted for about 23% of total net anthropogenic GHG emissions.

⁵ The last Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report explained that more than a third of the world's land surface and nearly 75% of freshwater resources are now devoted to crop or livestock production (<https://ipbes.net/news/Media-Release-Global-Assessment>).

⁶ Altieri M.A., Nicholls C.I., 2020, Agroecology and the reconstruction of a post-COVID-19 agriculture, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, vol 47(5), 881-898

⁷ Cash, D. W., W. Adger, F. Berkes, P. Garden, L. Lebel, P. Olsson, L. Pritchard, and O. Young. 2006. Scale and cross-scale dynamics: governance and information in a multilevel world. *Ecology and Society* 11(2): 8. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss2/art8/>

⁸ Mbow, C., C. Rosenzweig, L.G. Barioni, T.G. Benton, M. Herrero, M. Krishnapillai, E. Liwenga, P. Pradhan, M.G. Rivera-Ferre, T. Sapkota, F.N. Tubiello, Y. Xu, 2019, Food Security. In: *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*.

⁹ <https://muse.edu.umontpellier.fr/en/muse-isite/>

II. Objectives

With this CFP, Agropolis Fondation aims to explore sustainable, desirable, and just solutions to nourish current and future debates by focusing on **one of the above-mentioned 3 issues (Feed, Protect and Care) or their interfaces**.

In the framework of this call, two types of actions will be funded: **Exploratory projects (which may include Post-Docs)** and **Twin Master grants**.

Solutions can be considered as **'sustainable'** when environmental health, human health, and socio-economic challenges are recognized and treated as interconnected problems; they can be considered as **'desirable'** when they aim to meet objectives identified by a range of relevant public actors, stakeholders, scientists and/or communities working together; and, finally, they can be considered as **'just'** when attention is paid to fairness of treatment (humans, non-humans), equity of outcomes, and when notions of well-being during the course of their elaboration (and implementation) are involved.

III. Thematic coverage

Proposed projects **should focus on one of the 3 pillars (Feed, Protect and Care) or their interfaces**.

The proposals dealing with issues at the interface of at least two of the three pillars will be given priority.

The proposals dealing with the following topics will be notably, but not only, considered:

- Links between food, nutrition and health: for example, links between processed foods and health (disease and overall health), links between agroecological practices and human health, etc.
- Links between soil health, plant health and the quality of products (specifically sanitary and nutritional): for example, study of soil and plant microbiota to be crossed with food microbiology.
- Impacts of agroecology practices on biodiversity and vice-versa.
- Elaboration of indicators of socio-environmental integrity and well-being.
- Circularity and bioeconomy for a sustainable use of natural resources.
- Interactions between (food and environmental) global policies and local dynamics in terms of social equity and environmental justice.
- Scenarios and models, taking into account the expectations and aspirations of the stakeholders, notably at the territorial level.
- Links with the city through the food system(s): school canteens, public policies, supply chains...

IV. Projects types, cost, duration, eligibility

In the framework of this call, two types of actions will be funded: **Exploratory projects** and **Twin Master grants**.

Up to **450 k€** are available for this CFP which will fund two types of projects presented below:

EXPLORATORY PROJECTS: 2 TYPES

Objectives	Duration	Budget	Eligibility
Proposed projects should be inter-disciplinary and explore innovative tools, methods, concepts or approaches and the implementation and dissemination. Team equity between young and senior researchers would be a plus.	12 months <i>June 2023 to June 2024</i>	Up to 30 k€	Researchers from the Labex Agro network

The projects should be inter-disciplinary and explore innovative tools, methods, concepts or approaches and the implementation and dissemination. Proposed projects must include the recruitment of a Post-Doc.	12 months <i>June 2023 to June 2024</i>	Up to 50k€	Researchers from the Labex Agro network Recruitment of Post-Doc
--	--	------------	--

TWIN MASTER GRANTS

Objectives	Duration	Budget	Eligibility
Proposed projects should provide different but complementary approaches on the same research topic. The MSc students recruited should be from different disciplines or domains.	6 to 12 months <i>Between June 2023 and September 2024</i>	Up to €15k	Researchers from the Labex Agro network, Codirection

V. Evaluation process and criteria

The Fondation's Science Council (SC) shall review all eligible proposals.

The main following criteria will be assessed:

- Adequacy with the objective(s) of the call and the thematic coverage and, if applicable, the quality of the interface
- Scientific quality and overall coherence (clarity of objectives and expected outputs, etc.)
- Relevance and strategic nature of the scientific content of the proposal
- Interdisciplinarity of the project

Specificity of the evaluation by type of projects:

Exploratory projects:

- Overall feasibility and potential project trajectory (i.e., strategic positioning and ambition)
- Originality and innovativeness of the scientific topic to be addressed/explored
- Equity senior-junior researchers in the team (except for *exploratory Post-Doc project*)

Twin Master grants

- Scientific complementarity of the approaches proposed in the two subjects
- Quality of the co-direction and interdisciplinary nature of the project

VI. Eligible expenditures

Eligible costs for each support action presented in the table above are restricted to those that are directly related to mobility, such as:

- Travel expenses/air tickets, travel insurance
- Complementary salary or allowance and associated social costs or social security contributions
- Housing allowance
- Consultancies and services subcontracted specifically for the project (e.g., in case of proposal development)
- Limited consumable items
- Publication and dissemination costs, including cost related to organization of events
- Overheads (max. 8% of the grant amount for each partner)

Other related expenditures that could not be covered by the funds provided under this call should either be mobilized by the proponent or negotiated by the proponent to be covered by the host institution or other partners.

No more than 30% of the total grant should be transferred to partners outside of the Fondation's scientific network (Labex Agro), to external service providers or to consultants.

Non-eligible costs include items such as:

- Expenditures linked to internal services
- Salaries of staff that are not specifically recruited for the project
- Expenditures linked to existing infrastructures
- Expenditures already funded through other sources

The project's full cost must be presented including counterparts from the applicants and their partners in the Financial Annex.

VII. Submitting proposals, timetable, terms and conditions

01 December 2022	Opening of the Call for Proposals
10 March 2023, 11.59 PM	Deadline for the submission of proposals <i>Late and/or incomplete submissions will not be accepted.</i>
26 Mai 2023	Publication of results (selected proposals)

The deadline for the call is 10 March 2023, 11.59 PM CET

All the project proposals must be submitted online at:

<https://agropolis.jotform.com/assign/223254306533853/210936356109052>

All the selected projects must end before:

- **For exploratory projects: 30 June 2024**
- **For Twin Master Grant: 30 September 2024.**

All submitted proposals must be written in English.

Proponents should submit a duly completed Application Form online, including applicable annexes.

Incomplete submissions, late submissions and submissions exceeding the maximum number of pages allowed and which do not respect the required font will not be considered eligible. The proposal will not be evaluated.

Agropolis Fondation shall not be held responsible for submissions not received due to technical problems preventing the transfer of proposals electronically.

By submitting a proposal, the project coordinators assure that they have obtained the approval of their managing authorities and of all the parties involved in the project. Written confirmation of these approvals will be required prior to the implementation of the selected projects.

Please note that all proposals received under this CfP shall be archived and could be used by Agropolis Fondation for analysis in the context of its activities. A proposal shall not be shared with a Third Party without prior consent of its lead proponent.

For further information, you can contact: **Océane Trevenec**, Programme Officer: trevenec@agropolis.fr