## Introduction

The Endowment Fund was launched in 2019 to support projects through sponsorship, with endowment funds.

* The Endowment Fund promotes, supports, and develops projects in France and around the world.
* **Five projects were supported in 2021, primarily in India**, with a focus on soil research.

The Endowment Fund launched a call for projects in **January 2025** with four main focuses: preserving soil quality, training farmers, increasing the productivity of agricultural systems, and scientific research.

* Projects must be of general interest and can receive a grant of €200,000 to €400,000. Applications close on April 20, 2025.
* Projects will be evaluated by a board of directors accompanied by experts. The results must be made public.
* Projects may include co-financing and multi-stakeholder partnerships. International projects are also eligible.

In India, the Fund has supported two notable projects:​

1. **IRD Sediment Study in the Berambadi Catchment Area**: This project focuses on studying sediment dynamics to enhance sustainable agricultural practices in the region. ​[Fonds de Dotation Roullier+3Nature+3Fonds de Dotation Roullier](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-025-92206-2)
2. **Plant Inoculation Project**: Conducted in partnership with the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), this initiative aims to improve plant health and yield through inoculation techniques. ​

## Q&A webinar

**10 + 13 March 2025.** [AAP Recherche Sols 2025-2028: call for research projects Fonds de Dotation Roullier.](https://www.fondsdedotationroullier.org/en/evenement/webinar-registration-call-for-research-projects-soil-research-2025-2028/)

See: <https://paepard.blogspot.com/2025/03/call-for-research-projects-fonds-de.html>

The aim of the Q&A webinars (**10/03** in French + **13/03** in English was to answer all questions about this call for projects, which encourages innovative research into soil and the associated environmental challenges. The first webinar lasted 1 hour and the second webinar ½ hour. Some 50 participants attended the French Q&A webinar.

The **four main areas** of the call for projects launched **in January 2025** are: preserving soil quality, training farmers, increasing productivity, and scientific research.

* Soil preservation is essential for agricultural production and ecosystem services.
* Farmer training is crucial for adapting agricultural practices to maintain soil health.
* Increasing the productivity of agricultural systems is necessary for agriculture to be sustainable.
* Scientific research must be innovative to discover new things about soils and their biodiversity.

**Support Methods and Project Eligibility**

* Support can take two forms: a grant of €200,000 to €400,000 to finance generic projects, and technical support provided by experts from the Roulier Group and the Global Innovation Center.
* The Endowment Fund plans to select between one and three winners for project review.
* Eligible organizations include higher education institutions, public research organizations, NGOs, foundations, international development organizations, institutions, and associations.
* Projects must be of general interest, and the results will be made public.
* The call for projects was launched on January 20, 2025, and applications will close on April 20, 2025.

## Main questions

**What types of innovative sustainable soil projects are eligible for Rusty Foundation funding?**

The Rouillier Foundation is seeking innovative projects focused on four main areas:

* Preserving the quality of agricultural soils and improving their health and fertility
* Training farmers in new soil management practices
* Increasing the productivity of agricultural systems
* Promoting scientific research on soils

Projects must combine research and practical application, with a direct connection to farmers. They can focus on:

* Soil structure
* Soil biodiversity
* Ecosystem services
* New sustainable agricultural practices

Projects can be:

* Led by research institutions, universities, NGOs, or associations
* Multi-stakeholder
* Focused on France or internationally
* With an innovation and applied research dimension
* the solidity of the project is the key, not geography
* projects must address at least one dimension of the four main axes, but it is not necessary to check all four.

The objective is to support projects that improve the understanding and management of soils while enabling farmers to make a decent living from their production.

**Co-financing and the method of payment of subsidies.**

* the co-financing agreement will be negotiated with the partners and that payments will be made in installments conditional on a technical financial report.
* Non-priority countries can submit projects, but funding will focus on priority areas.
* The percentage of funding is not defined and will depend on the projects and actions.
* The number of partners is not a selection criterion, but that it is preferable to have trusted partners.

**Details on supporting documents and partnerships.**

* The results must be accessible to all, but intellectual property will remain with the researchers.
* The supporting documents will mainly be technical and financial reports, and that specific documents will only be requested in case of doubt.

**Participation to conferences and Communication**

* participation in conferences and webinars will be required for the communication of the project.
* that project leaders will be invited to Saint Malo for a meeting and a conference.
* expenses related to farmers' participation will be covered.

**How can we facilitate connections between project leaders on similar themes and territories?**

Informal networking platform:

* Share your projects, themes, and territories in the chat
* Use Teams to identify interesting organizations
* Give project leaders the freedom to contact each other directly

Information dissemination:

* The endowment fund could distribute a questionnaire to organizations
* Allow participants to see the list of other connected people

Objectives of this networking:

* Promote collaborations between project leaders
* Develop projects that meet the fund's expectations
* Study themes across broad territories
* Create connections between project leaders in France and internationally

The approach is flexible and collaborative, leaving the initiative up to participants to create connections organically.

**Project Evaluation and Relevance**

* Concept notes can be sent to assess the relevance of projects.
* the relevance of projects will be assessed based on their potential for commercialization and their impact.

**Considering Change and Project Perspectives**

* that the project must be designed to be scalable and have an impact on other areas.
* the thinking behind the project must demonstrate that it is not intended to end once the funding ends.
* the project must have a dimension of scale to be eligible.

**Calendar and Application File**

* There are no strict deadlines for letters of intent, but they can help clarify eligibility issues.
* financial tables must be clear and that adjustments can be made based on specific project needs.

**Partnerships and Agreements**

* Partnerships can be finalized and included in the application.
* letters of commitment and agreements must be provided to demonstrate the partners' preparedness.
* the application must include information on the partners involved in the construction of the project.

**Technical Support and Project Engineering**

* Technical support will be provided by experts from the Global Innovation Center and the Expert Network.
* Technical support will not be continuous, but rather advice and guidance.
* Direct exchanges with partners will be organized to discuss project progress.
* All production areas are eligible, including livestock and crop production.
* Strategic meetings will be important.

**Support for Communication and Promotion**

* Technical support will also include assistance with communication and project promotion.
* technical support will be provided by experts from the Global Innovation Center and the Expert Network.
* technical support will not be continuous, but will consist of advice and guidance.