

International call for research projects 2015

Sustainable Food Systems

Deadline for submission

- Letter of intent: 3rd May, 2015
 - Full project proposal (for preselected projects only): 30th June 2015.
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The Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation is pleased to issue its 2015 international call for research projects on sustainable food systems. The total budget of this call is €1 million. Applicants may submit a letter of intent from 15st March 2015 to 3rd May 2015. Preselected projects will then be asked to submit a full project proposal before 30th June 2015. Below you will find all the relevant information on the themes of research that will be considered this year, project eligibility and evaluation criteria, the timeline, the application procedure, and contact details.

The Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation

The Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation was established in 2010 in memory of Daniel Carasso, founder of Danone in France and Dannon, Inc. in the USA, and his wife Nina. The Foundation is a family organization, independent from the corporation, which President is Marina Nahmias, daughter of Daniel and Nina Carasso. .

1

Under the aegis of the Fondation de France, the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation funds projects in two areas of great importance for human development:

- Food to sustain life.
- Art to nourish the mind.

The Foundation wishes to promote new ways of considering “nourishment” that are useful to human self-development and to the creation of conditions that make life more harmonious:

- Because food systems and diets lie at the crossroads of economics, ecology, health, and social and cultural activities, they sustain life and are central to the issues at stake in sustainable development.
- Because art can be a way for people to assert their place in society by helping all – including the most vulnerable – to look afresh at society and guide us towards a more tolerant world and more rewarding lives.

More on the Foundation’s mission, vision and values on the website
www.fondationcarasso.org.



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The Foundation funds projects foremost in France and Spain, but recognizes that the stakes are global in scope and research and advocacy could be more powerful if international collaborations are pursued.

Hence, the international calls for research projects are part of the International Program on Sustainable Food Systems and Diets which funds projects globally (not necessarily including France and Spain). The international calls for research projects aim at promoting transdisciplinary¹ approaches to food systems taken as a whole by breaking down silos between disciplines and seeking to tackle all dimensions of sustainability in an integrated way. Any researcher from non-profit institutions worldwide is eligible to submit a proposal (more on eligibility criteria below).

Background to the Call

The Foundation defines a food system as the interactions between all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructure and institutions) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food, and the outputs of these activities. It includes the web of processes by which institutions, organizations, and individuals transform inputs into the food we consume. A core element of all food systems is the “food supply chain” or “food value chain” through which food moves from farm to fork.

Feeding the world on a healthy diet while safeguarding the planet’s resources is a vital challenge.

2

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Bioversity International definition of sustainable diets is useful to think about sustainable food systems: *“Sustainable diets are those with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations. They are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable, nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy, while optimizing natural and human resources.”* In the Foundation’s perspective, desirability, satisfaction and commensality are also crucial characteristics of sustainable food systems.

Food systems are diverse and complex. It is crucial to understand food systems and the cause-and-effect links that tie them together in order to identify realistic, viable solutions for feeding people adequately and sustainably in the future. Hence, in the Foundation’s mind, the study of food systems and their sustainability requires a transdisciplinary approach that

¹ We consider, based on Edgar Morin’s definition that sustainable food systems are « trans »disciplinary by nature meaning that they are linked to many disciplines, and greater than any one discipline. A food systems approach should consider all of those disciplines. It could be « pluri »disciplinary, meaning a juxtaposition of specialized researchers that each contribute in their own discipline to a part of the common project or « inter »disciplinary with the same researcher and team navigating several disciplines.



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considers their diverse inter-linkages between processing, distribution, preparation and consumption and their multiple dimensions (environmental, economic, social, cultural and nutritional).

Through the calls, the foundation is looking for pluri and interdisciplinary research projects based on collaborations between researchers of various disciplines addressing simultaneously several dimensions of sustainability.

Terms of reference of the 2015 Research call for Projects

TOPIC 1: Sustainable territorial food systems

Rationale: Many initiatives towards more sustainable food systems have territorial aspects, whether they aim to re-localize jobs and revitalize local economies, manage differently the land available locally, reduce malnutrition and improve health or test alternative governance mechanisms, increasing the participation of all stakeholders in policy and planning at a local level. The Foundation is not promoting unquestioning localism. But, the Foundation likes to think that the demonstration effect of local initiatives could have a significant influence in scaling more sustainable food systems and triggering policy change at a higher level.

However claims supporting the beneficial impact of adopting territorial food policies, including benefits to food security, economic development, environment, social justice, health and governance, are not clearly supported by existing information. A substantial increase in depth and scope of research is needed to better understand the effects of territorial food policies; for instance on human health related outcomes; climate change adaptation/mitigation measures or on social equity. Additional research on logistics and the provision of appropriate infrastructures implied by successful transitions towards more sustainable territorial food systems is also needed. More robust economic analysis of the benefits and costs associated with improving the sustainability of food systems at a territorial level are also required, as well as research on how to genuinely make them financially self-sustainable in the longer term.

TOPIC 2: Diversity in production systems and diversity in diets

Rationale: Past approaches to agricultural development have primarily focused on increasing calorie availability by boosting major staple crops. Of the over 7,000 plant species that have been used for food by humans, only three (maize, wheat, rice) supply the bulk of our energy needs. And the shift from diverse cropping systems to simplified, mainly cereal based systems, despite its contribution to feeding a growing world population, is considered to have contributed to imbalanced diets, causing micronutrient malnutrition since cereals are good sources of energy yet are insufficient to secure micronutrients and quality protein. It is thus in part responsible for the stunting as well as obesity and diet related chronic diseases, particularly amongst the poor. Furthermore, the increased agricultural production has been

achieved at significant environmental cost, illustrated by land degradation and overuse of water and chemicals.

It is now generally recognized that direct access to unprocessed fruits, vegetables and legumes is a key to healthy diets and to the prevention of obesity and related chronic diseases. However agronomic research remains mostly focused on producing standardized varieties, often serving the economic interest of the processing industry rather than supporting lifelong health and well-being of consumers. A small number of energy-rich but nutrient-poor foods have increasingly displaced a wide diversity plant based foods. Processing commonly includes adding fat and sugar thus arousing desirability by the consumers. On the contrary acceptability to consumers of introducing older varieties and generally adding more plant based foods in their diets is a challenge. Most nutritionists and increasingly the WHO and FAO are now insisting on the need to diversify agro-ecosystems, in order to ensure that farming systems support more diverse healthier diets.

More inter and trans-disciplinary research is needed to document how more diversity in production systems can support healthier and more diverse diets and better nutrition while taking into consideration cultural preferences. An increase in depth and scope of research is needed on how it might also support social progress in the rural sector including poverty reduction, how it can improve the resilience of the production system and improve employment and the stability of income and finally, how it can contribute to more sustainable food systems as a whole. More research is also required on how to ensure that this diversity is kept throughout the food chains, and made accessible, economically viable and desirable to the consumers.

TOPIC 3: Consumers trust and distrust in food and food systems

Rationale: Consumer behaviour has an enormous impact on food systems. Hence, it is important to understand how consumer behaviour can impact on the sustainability of food systems, if we want to influence consumer behavior in order to improve the sustainability of food systems. Traditional dietary recommendations for humans are mostly interested only in health/nutrition related outcomes, and do not consider a food systems approach. Furthermore, previous attempts at modifying consumer behavior in a way beneficial to health have not been particularly effective. The public is exposed to conflicting information on the benefits and risks of specific production systems, food components and diets on their own health on one hand, and the rising concerns about the environmental impacts and the need to safeguarding natural resources, equity, etc. on the other hand. This leads to increased public confusion, mistrust of nutritional recommendations, and lower responsiveness to proposals to adopt healthier food choices and behaviours.

Consumer surveys show that risk perception and distrust in the industrial food systems have never been higher in developed countries. At the same time, most experts, the food industry and regulatory authorities tend to repeatedly state that food safety has never been higher in these same countries. The industrialization of food and the food safety crises of the last



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decades have created the conditions for food scares and contributed to profound changes in people's attitudes towards food, choice patterns and food production. For instance, there is distrust in industrial food systems because of the impacts of their actual or assumed practices (e.g. intensive use of chemicals and antibiotics and lack of transparency and traceability such as in the recent horse meat scandal in Europe). This, in conjunction with other social, environmental and diet-related health problems, is encouraging consumers to seek out "alternative" or "unconventional" food supply chains (local products from shorter chains, products from specific origin or with specific characteristics etc.). Social science research suggests that food-related fears and anxieties are signs of the deep-seated need people have to take (or fully regain) control and ownership of their food supply. Alternative food supply chains tend to have in common a newer-build trust between producer and consumer, but usually also tend to have specific social, economic and environmental characteristics of more sustainable food systems. This needs to be better characterized in order to support such evolution.

On the contrary, in countries with little or incipient food processing industry, consumers tend to trust and desire, maybe excessively, industrial processed products from international brands that are associated with food safety, modernity, pleasure, recognition of social status. They tend to overconsume and misuse them and are forgetful of sanitary precautions (eg with frozen foods) which can lead to growing negative health impacts. In emerging countries, where a local food processing industry is growing rapidly in a loosely regulated context, crises and scandals occur, affecting, often severely, the lower socioeconomic strata, while consumers in the new urban middle classes shun local processed foods in favour of imports (eg China).

Multidisciplinary approaches to how trust and mistrust interact and affect or promote sustainable food systems are required.

Application Procedure

A project can be submitted by a single organization or a consortium. Each project consortium should appoint a project coordinator², ideally belonging to a research organization. He or she will, on behalf of his or her organization and in any commissioned project, have the following role and responsibilities:

- Be the project consortium's prime contact with the Foundation until the closure of the project.
- Submit the consortium's project proposal.
- Compile and submit consortium reports and other deliverables to the Foundation.
- Ensure that all project milestones are met and deliverables submitted and take action in accordance with the project management plan if any consortium partner fails to meet requirements.

² Projects may be executed by organizations that come together in a consortium.



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- Inform the Foundation of any potential obstacle to project implementation.
- Manage the funds that the Foundation grants to the consortium.

Projects must be written in English. They must be submitted by project coordinators. Applicants should use the Letter of Intent available at this address: <http://www.fondationcarasso.org/en/applying-funding>. Completed letters of intent must be sent by email to ad_international@fondationcarasso.org by May 3rd 2015 with the following title "Call for Research Project 2015 – Sustainable Food Systems - Topic X".

Timeline

Letter of intent submission opening date	15 st March 2015
Letter of intent submission closing date	3 rd May 2015
Preselection	Around 15 th May 2015
Full proposal submissions closing date (for preselected projects only)	30 th June 2015
Final selection announced	End of November 2015

Selection

Selection Process

The Research Call secretariat assesses the eligibility of project proposals based on the letter of intent. Those considered eligible are then asked to submit a full project proposal. These will be evaluated externally and selected through a peer review process by a panel composed of highly qualified international researchers selected by the Foundation. The projects selected by the panel will then submitted to the Foundation's Executive Committee for final approval before end of 2015.

6

Eligibility Criteria

All project proposals must first satisfy the following eligibility criteria:

- **Only non-profit organizations can benefit from the grant.** A project can be submitted by a single non profit research organization or a consortium including a non profit research organization. For profit private partners may be part of a consortium, but can not benefit from any part of the grant.
- Project proposal forms should be written in English and completed in full.
- Projects should focus on one of the three topics of the 2015 call.
- Projects should not replicate any ongoing project supported by the Foundation.



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- Projects results and outputs will be made publicly available.
- Project duration should be between 2 to 4 years.
- Project budget request should take into account that the total budget of this call is €1 million and the Foundation intends to fund several projects.
- Projects should use an interdisciplinary approach and include collaborators from different disciplines.
- Projects should address several dimensions of the sustainability of food systems (environmental, economic, social, cultural and nutritional).
- Research should include a results communication and dissemination strategy to ensure that food system stakeholders have access to results.

Evaluation Criteria

- Relevance of the proposal to the Research Call's terms of reference.
- Scientific quality and suitability to the requirements of multidisciplinary and considerations of several dimensions of sustainability. Whenever possible, projects should take into account all types of knowledge, especially that of stakeholders directly involved in the food systems, through consultations or by including them directly as partners in the consortium.
- The soundness of the work plan, management structure and the experience and quality of project partners.
- Amount of co-financing. The Foundation will not consider projects that require 100% funding by the Foundation. Already obtained significant co-financing will add value to the project.
- Overall project feasibility and suitability of means to ends.
- Expected outcomes and strength of projects' results dissemination, communication and stakeholder engagement strategies.

7

Contract conditions

All applicants must be able to commit to the following.

Project Governance

Where Foundation financing is greater than or equal to 50% of the total financing of the project, the Foundation may attend project steering committee meetings as an observer. In addition, all proposals for new partnerships relating to the project must be submitted to the Foundation prior to approval.

Eligibility of Expenditure

All expenditure and expenditure categories are eligible, provided that project requirements justify them. This might include permanent employee salaries and related overheads for public institutions, if some co-funding is secured. It should be noted that salary of all the participants to the project should be included in the budget of the project. Already covered salaries are considered as co-funding.

Reporting

A report is requested on an annual basis. All reports should cover the previous civil year, from January to December inclusive. They should be sent to the secretariat by 28th February of the following year. Annual reports should comprise an activity report and a financial report. Reports must be validated by the Foundation before the next instalment of the grant can be paid.

The Foundation does not require a specific format for activity reports.

- If project coordinators wish to use Foundation report formats, they will be provided with them.
- If a report uses a different format, the Foundation nevertheless requires it to include all the information requested in its own format.

Financial reports must be in the same format as the one used in the grant application.

Funding

Payments are made annually. Payment is dependent on the receipt and approval of the activity and financial reports. The amount of each bank transfer will be discussed with the project coordinator on the basis of the annual budget requirements. Grants are paid to the coordinator's organization.

Procurement Policy

Project partners agree to comply with the public purchasing procedures in force in their own countries.

Communication



The Foundation requires organizations to disseminate project results through communication channels such as scientific papers, presentations, stakeholder involvement, education and training material, web-based tools, conferences, workshops, and direct end-user intervention.

Researchers are encouraged to actively disseminate the results of their research projects and make them available for public benefit.

Recipient consortiums will be required to acknowledge the funding source and show the Foundation's logo on all in-house or third-party media (CDs, DVDs, flyers, posters, websites, press packs, press releases, etc.) related to the project being supported. To that end, the Foundation will supply its logo. If media are not suitable for that purpose, they should carry the wording "with the support of the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation, under the aegis of the Fondation de France" or "project supported by the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation, under the aegis of the Fondation de France". The supplied logo must in no circumstances be altered. Organizations may display the logo only for the duration of the project. They may not use the logo for any action other than ones related to the project.

Funded organizations should send to the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation copies of the materials that bear its logo or which mention it.

The Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation also reserves the right to highlight its contribution to the development of projects through heightened visibility (e.g. kakemono banners at conferences, public statements) and/or involvement in certain actions which are chosen in consultation with the project coordinator.

Furthermore, funded organizations should agree to transmit to the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation the documents (texts, photos, videos, music, etc.) that they used to promote their projects. The Foundation will use them copyright-free:

- in internal and external communication materials;
- at events that it organizes.

Intellectual Property Rights and Use and Access to Results

All the results and new intellectual property rights (IPR) generated by Foundation-supported projects must enter into the public domain as far as the law allows. All the results and output must be openly and freely accessible to anyone interested in them.

Contact

ad_international@fondationcarasso.org

Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation

International Program - Sustainable Food Systems and diets