



**IICA COMPETITIVE FUND FOR TECHNICAL
COOPERATION (FonTC)**

**GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING AND SUBMITTING
PROPOSALS GEARED TOWARD SECURING RESOURCES TO
STRENGTHEN THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROVIDED BY
THE INSTITUTE 2016-2017**

“A SINGLE IICA”

San José, Costa Rica

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 2014-2018 Medium-term Plan (PMP) of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) establishes four instruments for providing technical cooperation to its member countries: flagship projects (FPs), externally funded projects, rapid response actions (RRAs) and pre-investment initiatives funded by the IICA Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation (FonTC). More precisely, the MTP ascribes to the FonTC the responsibility of serving as an internal competitive mechanism for providing funding and generating project proposals that seek to mobilize external resources and dovetail with the strategic objectives and eleven institutional contributions of IICA.

In addition to fulfilling its traditional role of financing technical cooperation projects, as of 2016 the FonTC will offer an additional mechanism geared toward funding initiatives focused on securing new resources to strengthen the Institute's technical cooperation.

The present guide details the guidelines and procedures for requesting resources from the FonTC in order to participate in external bids and competitions and, in this way, submit quality proposals on ways to secure resources for the Institute. Proposals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The annexes provide the formats that should be followed to prepare the proposals as well as the criteria that will be used to evaluate the proposals.

2. Objectives of the FonTC

The FonTC was created in 2011 to promote innovation geared toward contributing to the seizing of opportunities and solution of problems faced by the agricultural sector and rural life in the Americas. Its main objectives are to:

- a) contribute to the achievement of the objectives outlined in the IICA 2014-2018 MTP;
- b) promote technical cooperation of excellence among the technical personnel of IICA, by funding multinational projects with a focus on innovation;
- c) fund initiatives aimed at attracting external resources, whether for co-funding or the generation of resources at a later time; and
- d) develop and consolidate a network of strategic partnerships with international, regional, and national organizations, whose objectives are similar to IICA's mission and purpose.

3. Objectives of the new FonTC mechanism

1. To possess a portfolio of projects to be presented to donor agencies or governments for funding.
2. To prepare project proposals within the framework of national or international calls for projects, with the aim of contributing to the achievement of IICA's programmed contributions.
3. To promote participation by other organizations, institutions, and private entities in the preparation of project proposals to be managed by IICA.

4. Process for requesting resources

Starting in 2016, the FonTC will offer a new mechanism whereby interested professionals may request resources to support the preparation of initiatives (proposals for project profiles and studies) that will enter competitions organized by other agencies, in order to obtain external resources.

- a. Interested persons may request resources until 31st October 2017, the deadline to submit proposals.
- b. All requests must be geared toward securing external funds to support IICA's cooperation activities.
- c. Resources may only be requested for proposals that respond to calls issued by national agencies, regional funds or international organizations. No funds shall be allocated to respond to requests from national government bodies or officials who require support to execute studies or projects; these requests must be submitted via the other mechanisms IICA has in place for this purpose.
- d. This mechanism is open to all IICA professional personnel, excluding consultants or temporary staff. As a result, any IICA unit wishing to prepare and present an initiative to another agency may make a request to the FonTC.
- e. Proposals with a multinational scope will be prioritized.
- f. The maximum amount to be allocated per request will be USD 10,000 (ten thousand U.S. dollars); however, the FonTC reserves the right to allocate amounts that are either smaller or higher than those requested.
- g. The submission of a request does not imply that it will be approved or that the full amount requested will be granted; that is, the approved amount can differ from the requested amount.

5. Procedure for approving proposals

This procedure includes the following stages (Annex 1):

- 1) **Submission of the request:** All requests must be submitted to the FonTC Technical Secretariat (TS), following the format detailed in Annex 2.
 - a) This request may be submitted at any time of the year.
 - b) Every request must include an Endorsement Letter (Annex 3), wherein the Representative of the Delegation or the corresponding Direction of Technical Cooperation Unit (DTC) states his or her support for the proposal. The format for this letter will be available via Intranet.
 - c) The TS will review the application to ensure that it follows the Format for Proposal Outline (Annex 2).
 - d) If all requirements are met, the TS will forward the request via email to the members of the FonTC Steering Committee. Requests will be dealt with in the order in which they are received.
 - e) This stage should last a maximum of two working days.
- 2) **Review and technical assessment** of the request:
 - a) The members of the FonTC Steering Committee will be responsible for ensuring that the request fulfills the required criteria by detailing, among other things, the amount offered by the call; the project's relation to IICA contributions; the country or countries in which it will be implemented; the institution that issued the call; the corresponding Institutional Net Rate (INR); and the number of staff members and time needed for its implementation. The format provided in Annex 4 should be followed.
 - b) The TS will combine the evaluations of all of the members and convene a virtual meeting if no consensus is reached.
 - c) Any proposals that receive a positive evaluation from the Technical Committee will be forwarded to the Director General, who will review the Committee's technical assessment, analyze the proposal in relation to the availability of resources, and approve or reject the

recommendations issued by the Committee (estimated timeframe: maximum of three working days).

d) The TS shall inform the professionals who submitted requests of the decisions that were reached.

3) Budgetary Allocation and Programming:

a) The TS will submit the approved document to the Programming, Budgeting and Control Division (PBCD), which will assign the corresponding account, open the account in SUGI, and provide information to the proposer regarding the availability of resources.

b) The person responsible for the proposal must enter all the required information on the project in SUGI within three working days following receipt of the notification authorizing the resources.

4) Execution:

a) The person responsible for the proposal will carry out the work based on the submitted work plan and pursuant to institutional procedures.

b) Should any changes in the programming or allocation of resources become necessary during the execution of the proposal, the person responsible must inform the TS about the changes. The TS will be responsible for authorizing or rejecting the requested changes and sharing the decision that was reached with the person responsible, as well as with other institutional bodies.

c) The management of resources must follow Institute rules. Allocated resources must not be used to purchase any kind of equipment.

d) The person responsible for the proposal will commit to providing the FonTC with a copy of the proposal that was prepared, as well as evidence that it was sent to the requesting institution in due time and form. These documents must be submitted to the Technical Secretary of the Fund within a period of no more than ten working days after the deadline for submitting proposals to the requesting institution.

6. Requirements for participating in the Call

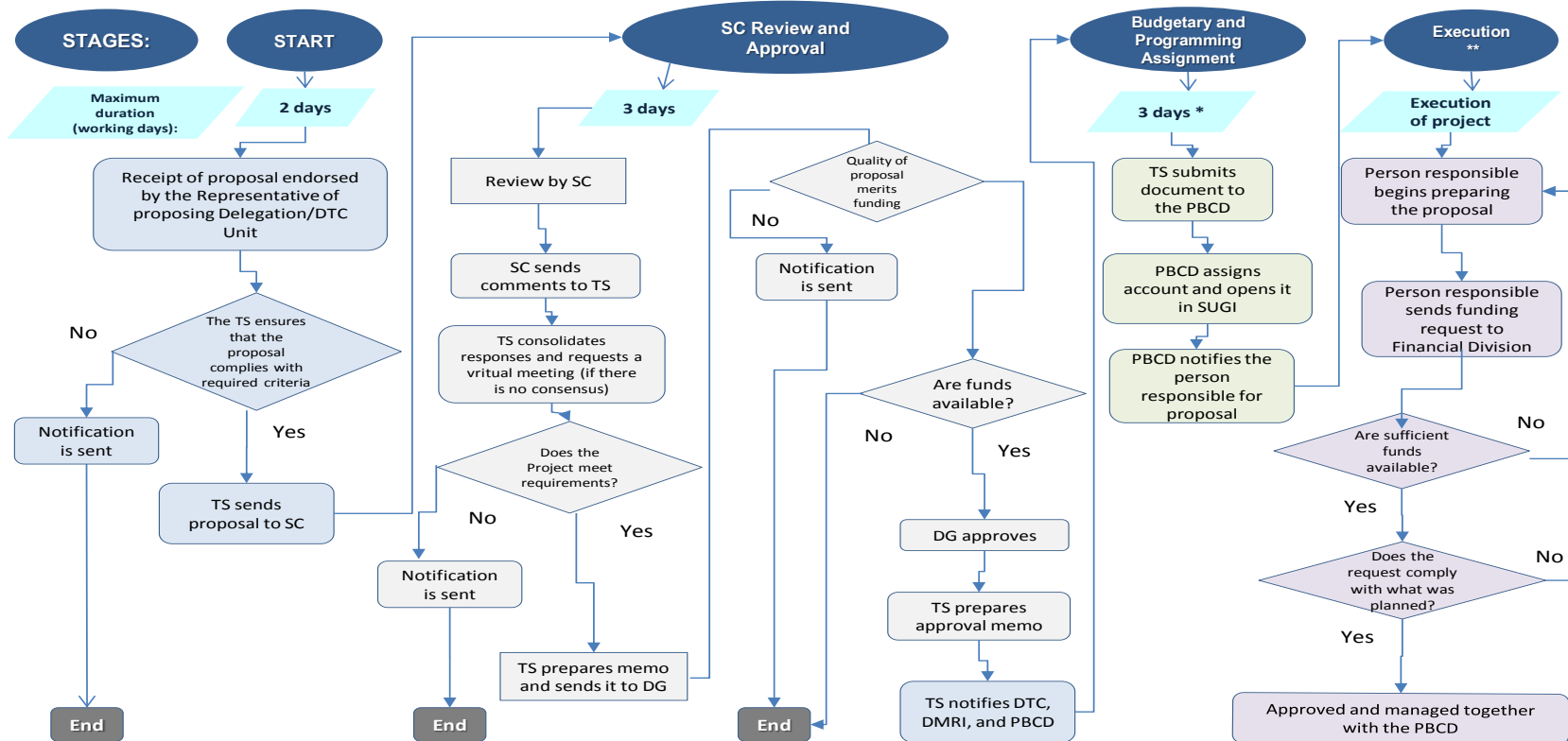
A. Funding requests submitted as part of this FonTC mechanism must provide the following documents and information:

i. Proposal Outline (Annex 2). If the outline does not include all the required information, the form will be sent back to the proposer and will not be evaluated by the FonTC Steering Committee.

ii. Terms of reference for potential funding of the proposal that will be prepared.

iii. Endorsement letter from the Representative of the corresponding Delegation or DTC Unit (Annex 3).

**ANNEX 1
FLOWCHART: APPROVAL AND DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSALS**



* This timeframe was estimated based on the PBCD time management.
 ** The execution must not exceed the maximum duration.

ANNEX 2
FORMAT FOR OUTLINE OF PROPOSAL

1. Identification of the proposal

1.1. Title of proposal

Example: Improving the positioning of small-scale farmers to facilitate their access to markets in selected territories of countries A, B and C.

1.2. Requesting person/unit

The staff member responsible for coordinating the preparation of the proposal that will be submitted to the funding source.

1.3. Potential funding source

For example: European Union, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, private sector companies, etc.

1.4. Description of proposal that will be prepared

Basic information about the call for proposals, various reasons for which IICA should participate, and description of the opportunity afforded by the proposal. The objective and scope of the proposal that will be submitted to the funding source must be described in three paragraphs.

1.5. Objective of request

Objective of the request being submitted to the FonTC.

For example: The objective of this request is to obtain resources in order to contract a consultant, carry out coordination meetings, and prepare the document that will be submitted as part of the call for proposals issued by the European Union.

1.6. Partners participating in preparation of proposal (if necessary)

For example: *“The directors of X, Y, AND, Z of the ministries of agriculture of countries A, B and C, and producer associations U_a, U_b and U_c, of which organizations O_A, O_B and O_C are members.”*

1.7. MTP contributions that the proposal would contribute to

Example: *“The proposal focuses on Contribution 4: Improved business and associative capabilities of the different stakeholders in the agricultural production chains.”*

1.8. Strategic objectives of the MTP that the proposal would contribute to achieving

Example: *“The proposal would contribute to improving competitiveness in selected territories and is therefore directly related to IICA’s strategic objectives 1 and 2 (improving the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector, and fostering agriculture’s contribution to the development of territories and rural well-being).”*

1.11 Products of the proposal outline

1.11.1 Product 1: Final proposal submitted to the funding source.

1.11.2 Description of IICA's strengths to participate in call for proposals

Describe the institutional strengths that would enable IICA to participate in the call for proposals and compete for resources.

1.12 Schedule for proposal outline

Work duration

This includes the amount of time needed to prepare the proposal.

TABLE 1. SCHEDULE FOR PROPOSAL OUTLINE												
RESULTS	PRODUCTS	ACTIVITIES	Weeks								PARTICIPANTS (Describe the participants involved in each activity)	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
			1. Meetings									
2. Trips												
3. Consultancy services *												
4. Preparation of document												
5. Translation of document												
6. Formal submission of the document												
7. Submission of final report to the FonTC												

* Detailed description of the consultancy services, including the names of possible consultants, products, activities to be conducted and timeframes.

1.13 Budget for proposal outline

TABLE 3. TOTAL BUDGET BY OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE	
Line items to be funded	FonTC resources in USD
Meetings (MOE 3)	2000
Trips to implement the project (MOE 4)	1500
Project documents and materials (MOE 5)	500
Translation of document (MOE 5)	1500
Consultancy services (MOE 8)	4500
Other costs (For example: mail) ¹	
TOTAL	10000

¹ This includes resources from external sources that are not included in IICA's MOE categories.

ANNEX 3

FORMAT FOR ENDORSEMENT LETTER

City and Date

FonTC Technical Secretariat:

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to endorse the proposal entitled _____, submitted by _____, for participation in the “CALL FOR PROPOSALS GEARED TOWARD SECURING NEW RESOURCES 2016-2017.”

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional information.

ANNEX 4

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPOSALS

A.2.1. Evaluation of profiles

In order to be approved, project proposals must fulfill the following eligibility criteria, each of which has a specific percentage assigned to it:

1. Ability to attract external resources (55%): A specific score is granted based on the external resources that would be collected specifically for the project, the amount offered by the call, and the INR to be obtained, as well as by the history of the institution that issued the call.
2. Feasibility (25%): This criterion evaluates the feasibility of participating in the external call and the possibility of obtaining funding. At the internal level, this criterion takes into account the proposal's focus on achieving clearly defined products and results and the possibility of achieving them within the timeframes established in IICA's call.
3. Degree of innovation (10%): The proposal is graded based on the degree of innovation suggested by the summary of the proposal (this assessment of the proposal is based on the problem statement and the description of how a specific situation would change if the project is implemented).
4. Relation of the proposal to IICA (10%): This criterion evaluates the proposal's ability to contribute to IICA's efforts to achieve a more productive, competitive, and sustainable agriculture. It takes into account the country or countries where it will be implemented and the number of staff members and the amount of time that IICA would need to provide for the preparation of the proposal (not the implementation of the project if it is approved).

A.2.2. Format to be followed by the Steering Committee to evaluate the proposals

The Steering Committee must complete the following table and send it to the Technical Secretariat, which will analyze and compile the evaluations.

Table A.2.1. Project evaluations: scoring

CRITERIA	SCORE (0-100)
1. Ability to attract external resources	
2. Feasibility	
3. Degree of innovation	
4. Relation of the proposal to IICA	

NOTE: A score of 0 to 100 can be assigned to each criterion. The TS will be responsible for calculating the weighted average based on the abovementioned percentages.

ANNEX 5

IICA'S CONTRIBUTIONS BASED ON THE 2014-2018 MTP

1. *Strengthened capabilities within the Member States at the national, regional, multinational and hemispheric levels to establish public policies and institutional frameworks in order to make agriculture more productive and competitive, improve management of rural territories, adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change, and promote food and nutritional security.*
2. *Implementation, through public and private institutions, of technological, institutional and business innovation processes aimed at making agriculture more productive and competitive, and increasing the production of highly nutritional staple foods.*
3. *Increased capabilities of the public and private sectors to ensure agricultural health and food safety, to help improve productivity, competitiveness and food security.*
4. *Improved business and associative capabilities of the different stakeholders in the agricultural production chains.*
5. *Increased capacity of actors in rural territories, especially those involved in family farming, for area-based social management,² to improve food security and rural well-being.*
6. *Enhanced capabilities of different stakeholders of the agricultural chains and rural territories in the integrated management of water and the sustainable use of soil for agriculture.*
7. *Increased capacity of public and private institutions to encourage the adoption of and implement measures for adapting agriculture to and mitigating the effects of climate change, and for the comprehensive management of risk in agriculture.*
8. *Improved effectiveness and efficiency of the food and nutritional security programs of the Member States.*
9. *Efforts to ensure that producers and consumers benefit from greater use of native species, promising crops and native genetic resources with food potential.*
10. *Improved institutional capacity to address losses of food and raw materials throughout the agricultural chains.*
11. *Greater capacity of Member States for joint work and participation in international forums and other mechanisms for sharing knowledge and mobilizing substantial resources for agriculture in the Americas*

² This includes planning processes, leadership, associativity, cohesion, access to goods and services, the promotion of opportunities to engage in dialogue, the preparation of proposals, capacity-building and the establishment of partnerships, among other things.