

## CALL FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS 2023-2

### Supporting the development of innovative healthy, nutritious and ethical foods together with preserving biodiversity

Download proposal template and send your  
proposal to [contact@fcsrovaltain.org](mailto:contact@fcsrovaltain.org) between May and  
August 2023 (deadline August 21<sup>th</sup>) in an email entitled  
“AAP 2023-2 – Food & Health”

### The Rovaltain Foundation

The Rovaltain Foundation, a Foundation for Scientific Cooperation in Environmental Toxicology and Ecotoxicology Research, was created in July 2013 by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Its purpose is to support research in Health & Environment, to promote the dissemination of knowledge in this field, in order to ensure the reduction of contaminants and their effects on ecosystem and human health.

To achieve this goal, the Rovaltain Foundation finances research projects through a framework validated by the Foundation's International Scientific Advisory Board and its administrative council.

## Context

Intensive agricultural practices, the use of pesticides and the effects of global warming have had dramatic consequences on biodiversity and soil quality over the last decades. As a result, a significant decline in agricultural production quantity and quality is expected in the forthcoming years. Besides that, the use of additives and other allergens in processed foods has led to the development of numerous health issues, including many types of food intolerances and allergies.

How can we protect both human and ecosystem health when it comes to food production ?

Together with devoting efforts to rethinking and revising the agricultural landscape and practices, it is also necessary to support the development of innovative applicable solutions able to provide healthy food for humans and to preserve the ecosystems.

In this context, the aim of the Call for Proposals 2023-2 is **to support the development of innovative healthy, nutritious and ethical foods while preserving biodiversity.**

This Call for Proposals issued by Rovaltain will finance one project of 2- or 3-years duration with a total maximum budget of 320,000 euros.

This call targets projects that address one or more of the following elements:

- Enhance biodiversity among neglected crop species of high nutritional value (quinoa, amaranth, etc).
- Develop food innovations without gluten and additives.

## **Eligibility of proposals**

- Projects based on biofortification will not be eligible.
- Projects must have one or several clearly identified objectives and their potential role in contributing to the development of future research projects (leverage effect) should be addressed.
- Projects must clearly present the environmental and societal goals, including an international scope to allow access to the results of this research by the populations of the most vulnerable countries.
- Projects carried out within or in close collaboration with public research laboratories are welcome.
- Projects may be led by a single team or involve several partner teams. The call for research projects is open to French research teams from higher education and research institutions, research organisations and public institutions with a research mission as well as non-profit accredited Social and Solidarity Economy companies. The concept of social

and solidarity economy ESS\*<sup>1</sup> refers to a set of companies organised in the form of cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, or foundations, whose internal functioning and activities are based on a principle of solidarity and social utility. The social and solidarity economy acquired a real legal status with the French law of 31 July 2014. National or international partners are welcome. Partners of another nature are also allowed, provided that they bring clearly demonstrated added value in the project.

- For ESS companies, the research and development program must be conducted in collaboration with public research laboratories. The funds allocated to the project will be paid to the project leader; he/she will manage the project's funds for the entire collaboration and will compile and submit the scientific and financial reports at the end of the project.
- The project leader must not be a member of the Rovaltain Foundation (board of directors, scientific council, etc).
- The duration of the project, including the preparation and submission of the final report, must not exceed 36 months.
- The financial support provided by the Rovaltain Foundation will not exceed 320,000 euros.
- The project leader must participate in the promotion and demonstration activities organised by the Rovaltain Foundation during the project period and during the 12 months following its closure (maximum 2 solicitations).
- Proposals and reports must be written in English.

### Review of project proposals

The main steps of the selection procedure are as follows:

- The call for proposals is open from May 4<sup>th</sup> 2023. Proposals in response to the call can be submitted until August 21<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- Examination of the eligibility of project proposals by the Rovaltain Foundation according to the criteria presented below.
- Peer review by external experts selected by the Rovaltain Foundation (August 2023 - Nov. 2023).
- Evaluation of project proposals by the International Scientific Council (SC) of the Rovaltain Foundation, based on the external reviews (Nov. 2023).
- Public announcement of the project selected for funding (Dec. 2023).
- Finalisation of the scientific, financial, and administrative process for the selected project (Jan 2024).

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<sup>1</sup> In French, this concept is known as « Economie Sociale et Solidaire » ou ESS.

## Evaluation of proposals

Projects submitted under the Call for Proposals Food & Health 2023-2 will be evaluated by external experts identified by the Rovaltain Foundation as well as by the scientific council. The evaluation will be carried out on the basis of the criteria set below:

- Scientific quality of the project, in particular its innovative nature.
- Feasibility and justification of methodological choices. In particular, every methodological choice, e.g. experimental plan, parameters, models, must be justified.
- Ability of the consortium to carry out the proposed project according to the proposed schedule. The CV of the principal investigator, included in the proposal template, should demonstrate how their past experience fits with the proposed project. The project must include a paragraph on the relevance of the consortium (½ page).
- The quality / expertise of the team, in terms of its relevance to the objectives established in the project.
- The clear demonstration of the environmental and societal goals.
- The adequacy of the financial demand in relation to the scope of the project.
- The potential leverage effect of the project for starting new collaborative research and implementation activities.

Based on the assessments provided by the external reviewers and the Scientific Council, a ranking of the projects will be established and submitted to the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

## Ethics - animal experimentation

Projects requiring the use of animal testing within the framework of European Directive 2010/63/EU must demonstrate how they abide by the relevant regulations in force at the national level, particularly in terms of obtaining experiment authorisations. The organisation responsible for implementing these experiments and its approval number should be clearly indicated in the project proposal. Where the experimental project has already been granted approval by the competent authorities, the authorisation number must also be indicated in the proposal.

## Funding rules

The financial support granted to the project will not exceed 320,000 euros. Eligible expenses are those strictly necessary for the implementation of the project. They include:

- Staff costs, namely the wages of fixed-term contracts, vacations, social charges, internship bonuses and payroll taxes included.
- Operating expenses including laboratory costs (purchase of products or consumables, access to equipment), publication costs, travel expenses for permanent or temporary staff assigned to the project (in particular, participation in promotional events organised by the Foundation), conference registration fees related to the project.
- Subcontracting, the cost of which must remain less than 30% of the total amount of the grant, unless the project leader is able to justify an exception.

NB: If the project is co-funded, (1) the nature and amount of co-financing must be specified, and (2) applicants must explain what would happen if they do not receive the co-funding, i.e. if the project will still be carried out if the projected co-funding is not received. Finally, if the project completion depends on other parameters besides the Rovaltain Foundation funding, these constraints must be specified in the text and in the budget template.

## Budget Template:

Categories	Rovaltain Foundation funding	Other funding (amount, funders)	Self-funding	Total
Staff cost				
Small equipment				
Consumables				
Reagents				
Analysis kits				
Subcontracting of analyses (< 30% of the total budget)				
Travels (meetings and conferences)				
Structure costs (< 4% of the total budget)				
Communication				
<b>TOTAL</b>				