

First Call for Research Proposals

Food System Transformation for Healthier Diets in Children and Adolescents in the Latin-American and Caribbean Region

1. Introduction to Colansa & Colansa's Research Awards

Colansa, the Community of Practice Latin America and the Caribbean Nutrition and Health, is a network of professionals and civil society organizations working in a collaborative environment to contribute to the development of healthy, sustainable, equitable, and inclusive food systems, as well as to improve the nutrition and health of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) through the generation of scientific knowledge and the contribution to the advancement of effective public policies. See <https://colansa.org>

Colansa will award research grants that focus on transforming food systems to achieve healthier, more equitable, inclusive and sustainable diets/populations in the LAC region. By funding world-class research, Colansa aims to contribute to the evidence base that helps policymakers, practitioners, and social movements make informed decisions for transforming current food systems and ensuring healthier and more sustainable diets for all.

2. Objectives and Purpose of the call

The first call of Colansa's Research Awards will focus on LAC regional projects that address different evidence needs for achieving food system transformation for healthier and more sustainable diets in children and adolescents (See Roadmap for Food Systems Transformation in LAC in the Extended Call). Proposals could describe current LAC regional challenges in children and adolescent's dietary intake and/or their drivers, evaluate policy actions or barriers, assess implementation needs including sustainability of actions, or explore potential economic or intersectoral impact of food systems transformation. It is desirable to include a children's right approach and an equity perspective in the proposal. Projects outside the geographical focus will NOT be accepted.

This call will fund qualifying projects with a maximum duration of 12 months (August 2024 to July 2025). Total budget available for the call is up to \$ 110,000 USD. It is anticipated that there will be funding for 3-4 proposals with a maximum of 35,000 USD per proposal (including overhead).

3. Context for the Proposals

In the LAC region, 11.5% of children under five years old live with chronic malnutrition (low height/age), and 30% of children and adolescents between five and 19 years old live with overweight or obesity. Both conditions are primarily the result of inadequate food intake in quantity or quality. Poor diets often have an early start with insufficient breastfeeding. Later, in childhood, poor diets are reflected by excessive intake of ultra-processed food products and insufficient intake of nutrient-rich foods such as rich fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and whole grains. Unhealthy diets during childhood and adolescence are associated with a series of health conditions in the short-, medium- and long-term.



Thus, there is an urgent need to transform the food systems responsible for the quality, safety, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability of children's diets to ensure that children in LAC enjoy healthy feeding practices. This transformation must consider the right to health of girls and boys, include actions to ensure healthy and sustainable foods in the environments in which they live, and prevent access to unhealthy, ultra-processed food products from becoming the norm in food environments, as is currently the case.

In October 2023, in Cuenca-Ecuador, the Global Alliance for Healthy Food for Children and Adolescents was formed, and the Cuenca Consensus was signed, urging the governments of the LAC region to implement concrete actions to advance the transformation of food systems. However, more evidence is needed for benchmarking, monitoring, prioritization, and effective implementation of actions to transform the food systems that promote healthier and more sustainable diets for children and adolescents in our region. The recognition of barriers and the existence of more vulnerable populations is also critical for ensuring advancing this goal without leaving anyone behind.

4. Eligibility

Graduate students, researchers, or civil society organizations based on LAC countries are eligible to apply for this call. All applicants need to have an affiliation such as a university, research institute, or non-profit organizations. Applications can be written in Spanish or English. Research teams could be from a single country (single-country team) or can include team members of more than one country of the region (i.e., multi-country team).

The following are NOT eligible to apply:

- 1) Natural persons without any of the affiliations above;
- 2) Governmental agencies or institutions; UN agencies or UN Country Teams;
- 3) Alcohol, tobacco, or ultra-processed food products companies or entities that have received direct financial support from alcohol, tobacco, or ultra-processed food products companies in the last five years;
- 4) Entities that have received any type of financial support from Bloomberg Philanthropies in the last five years;
- 5) Members of the steering committee of Colansa .

5. Application Process

Interested applicants should submit a research proposal following the guidelines provided in the extended call (**Annex 1**). Proposals must include the following components:

1. Project Title and Abstract (1200 characters with spaces as maximum)
2. Background (2400 characters with spaces as maximum)
3. Objectives and Research Questions (1200 characters with spaces as maximum)
4. Research Plan & Outcomes (4800 characters with spaces as maximum)
5. Dissemination and Impact (1200 characters with spaces as maximum)
6. Research Team (1200 characters with spaces as maximum)
7. Work Plan & Timeline (1200 characters with spaces as maximum)
8. Annex: References; CVs; Letters of Support (if applicable)
9. Budget and budget justification

- Applications can be submitted in pdf format to: investigacion.research@colansa.org



- All documents (i.e., proposal template, budget template, budget justification and annexes) should be submitted together as one package.
- You may not make changes to your application after it is submitted, but you can withdraw an application and send a new one, up until the deadline.
- Proposal templates, including any annexes, cannot be altered. Incomplete applications, use of different templates or applications exceeding the requested length will not be considered.
- Please DO NOT resend your application unless you do not receive a confirmation of receipt within three days.

6. Key dates

May 27 th 2024	Call Opening
July 7 th 2024	Submission Deadline
July 26 th 2024	Results of the Call
August 15 th 2024	Estimated Beginning of the Project

Further details of the call can be found at: <http://colansa.org/>

Further questions regarding this call can be addressed to: investigacion.research@colansa.org

