

Connect Call (4th edition)

Rules for participation

23 October – 27 November 2024



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I. About Connect

a. Aim

Connect is one of three social science research calls created and funded by the Social Observatory of the "la Caixa" Foundation. Its other two calls are [Flash](#) and [Social Research](#).

The Social Observatory is a space for analysis, debate and reflection that examines the changes taking place in society and disseminates social science knowledge in order to foster an enriching and informed public debate.

The aim of the Connect Call is to **promote collaboration between research and practice** (in other words, the third sector and public administration) as well as to increase the impact of both on society. Connect therefore funds research projects designed and developed in partnership between these two spheres.

b. Amount

Up to 90,000 euros for each selected project

Includes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxes • Indirect costs • Fees (if any) • All necessary costs directly related to the research, including staff costs, data collection and processing, travel, allowances and accommodation or infrastructure, etc.
Not funded	Costs associated with implementing interventions

Each entity may include indirect costs in its budget. They can be used to cover structural costs of the entities without having to detail each item individually.

Indirect costs per entity cannot exceed 10% of the total direct costs allocated in the budget. In other words, the indirect expenditure of the entity cannot exceed €5,000 if its total direct expenditure is €50,000.

c. Subject

Proposals can examine any aspect of the social reality in Spain from a social science perspective.

The Connect Call does not fund research in strictly clinical, methodological or technological spheres.

2. Target audience

a. Who can participate

Connect is aimed at:

1. entities in the research and practice spheres,
2. non-profit (except private universities),
3. based and operating in Spain, and
4. that **form a consortium** to jointly promote a social science research project in Spain in order to generate a positive social impact.

<p>Entities in the research sphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities • Organisations affiliated with a university • Organisations registered as research centres in any public register, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) ◦ Technological Centres and Technological Innovation Support Centres ◦ CERCA Institution: Research Centres of Catalonia ◦ Register of Research Institutes and Centres and Register of Research and Development Personnel of the Valencian Community ◦ Register of Researchers, Research Teams and Research Centres of the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands ◦ Register of Agents of the Riojan Innovation System • Organisations that include research in their statutes
<p>Entities in the practice sphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third social sector organisations, also including second tier or higher level organisations (see the definition of third social sector in the law governing this sphere) • Public administrations or other local, supra-municipal, regional or national public bodies

How to form a consortium

In order to participate, the consortium must be formed by:

- **minimum one entity per sphere (2 in total) and maximum 4 entities in total.** The composition is flexible.

For example, the research sphere may include 3 entities and the practice sphere 1, or 2-2, or 1-1, or 2-1...

- If there is more than one entity for each sphere, the consortium must appoint a **research coordinating entity** and a **practice coordinating entity**. There must always be one coordinating entity for each sphere.

Work team

Research sphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each entity must provide at least one researcher with a PhD degree. • There must be an accredited organisation manager on the platform (administrative profile). • There must be a project leader: a researcher from the entity coordinating the research.
Practice sphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each entity will have a representative. • This person must be accredited on the platform.

Entities and work teams

Research sphere	<p>Entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coordinating entity for the research • Possibility of additional entities <p>Work team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one researcher per entity (with a PhD degree) • Project leader: researcher of the entity coordinating the research • Organisation manager of the entity coordinating the research
Practice sphere	<p>Entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coordinating entity for the practice • Possibility of additional entities <p>Work team:</p> <p>Representative of the practice entity/entities</p>

Role of these individuals

Research sphere	<p>Project leader: create and manage the proposal on the application platform and invite the other team members.</p> <p>Organisation manager: accept the project in the name of the university on the application platform.</p> <p>Other researchers: one person for each additional research entity must accept the invitation on the application platform.</p>
Practice sphere	<p>Representative: accept the invitation on the application platform.</p>

Shared leadership + Collaboration

It is important that the project leadership is shared and that all entities collaborate in carrying out the research.

b. Projects that can be presented

<p>Eligible</p>	<p>The project may fall into any of these categories or be a combination of them:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diagnosis of a social need in order to improve knowledge of the problem and make informed decisions. 2. Conceptualisation of interventions in order to systematise, reproduce or scale them up. 3. Evaluation of the impact of an existing project. <p>The project must generate quantitative evidence and may provide additional qualitative evidence.</p> <p>Both primary sources (data generated by the research per se) and secondary sources (surveys, administrative records, etc.) may be exploited.</p>
<p>Ineligible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of social interventions • Clinical interventions and treatments, whether pharmacological or non-pharmacological • Validation of scales, questionnaires or other psychometric instruments • Testing of prototypes

c. Duration

The project's development must be completed in 24 months

The deadline will commence from **15 September 2025**. All phases of the project have to fall within these 24 months: from inception to delivery of results.

3. When and how to submit proposals

a. Estimated timing

Online information session	Submission period for proposals	Evaluation of applications	Resolution of the call
14 May 2024	23 October – 27 November 2024 (before 2 pm)	December 2024 – April 2025	May 2025

b. Application process

The application process is carried out on the online application platform. All proposals must be submitted via this platform at the link below:

<http://grants.lacaixafoundation.org/>



Please note that...

We will only accept projects submitted through this platform. We will not accept applications received through other channels.

Contents of the proposal

Please refer to the separate document entitled ‘Contents of the Connect Call proposal’, which includes the following details:

1. the steps you must follow to submit the proposal on the platform (registration on the platform, acceptance, etc.),
2. an advance of the contents that the proposal will have to contain (general interest of the research, research design, budgets, etc.), and
3. a checklist so that you do not forget any steps.

The language of the proposal must be Spanish or Catalan.

If the language does not match the language of the evaluators, the contents of the proposals will have to be translated.

c. Acceptance of the rules

Participation in this call implies acceptance of the rules

Proposals that do not comply with all the requirements defined in these rules will be ineligible and therefore not proceed to the evaluation phase.

4. Evaluation of applications

a. Selection criteria

The criteria that will be used by the evaluators to select the proposals are as follows:

Evaluators for research sphere	Evaluators for practice sphere
Academic relevance (20%)	Social relevance (20%)
Design of research (60%)	Application of results (60%)
Organisations and teams (10%)	
Degree of collaboration (10%)	

b. Selection process

The selection process of the Connect Call has two phases:

Phase 1: Remote evaluation

Each proposal will be evaluated by 4 experts (2 from the research sphere and 2 from the practice sphere) according to the selection criteria. Each expert evaluates specific criteria according to his/her profile. Approximately 25 projects will be shortlisted after this first evaluation.

Phase 2: Interviews

A multidisciplinary selection committee consisting of 10 experts (5 from the research sphere and 5 from the practice sphere) will interview the shortlisted project teams.

These will be online interviews and a maximum of one person per entity can be connected. If any of the participants have special needs, we will make arrangements to facilitate his/her participation in the interview.

The evaluators will score all the interviewed projects. The ranking of the projects according to the score will be final and cannot be appealed.

Phase 1	Group of 4 evaluators	2 from research sphere
		2 from practice sphere
	Review of all proposals	
25 shortlisted projects		
Phase 2	Selection committee (10 experts)	5 from research sphere
		5 from practice sphere
	Online interviews	Max. 1 person per entity
Resolution		

An email will be sent to the 25 shortlisted projects informing them of the resolution of the call with the funded projects approximately eight weeks after the interviews.

All proposals evaluated will receive a feedback report a few weeks after each evaluation phase has concluded.

5. Selected projects

a. Obligations

The selected projects will have to comply with the following obligations:

1. **Sign an agreement** to regulate the awarding of the grant. The coordinating organisations undertake to sign a joint agreement between themselves and the "la Caixa" Foundation to regulate this grant.
2. **Compliance with ethical standards and conditions:** The people who make up the work team undertake to comply with the ethical, social, economic, human resources and contractual standards established by the collaborating organisations to which they are assigned during the planning and execution of the funded project. Furthermore, they also undertake to comply with the regulations applicable to their activity.
3. **Proof of execution of the project:** The execution of the project is justified by means of two reports
 - A. **Report on the research results:** This report may be evaluated by experts in the research sphere.
 - B. **Report on the application of the results in practice,** detailing the changes generated or likely to be generated in the organisation of the practice sphere based on the project's results. This report must include a plan for the application of the learning with a forecast of the changes that will continue to be generated in the short and medium term. This report may be evaluated by experts in the practice sphere.

Financial reports will also be requested to ensure that the budget is being properly used.

b. Responsibilities and guarantees

The project leader, coordinating entities and other participating entities are responsible to the "la Caixa" Foundation for the project's contents and results, including any documentation and information associated with it, without prejudice to the methods used for its substantiation (for example, artificial intelligence tools). In this respect, they guarantee:

- compliance with all applicable regulations in force,
- non-infringement of third party rights of any kind, and

- the application of best ethical practices.

Likewise, and within the framework of this call, they exempt the "la Caixa" Foundation from any liability to third parties arising from non-compliance with the aforementioned.

Moreover, the project leader, coordinating entities and other participating entities declare that they have not been sanctioned by means of a final ruling for any infringements of third party rights or for the commission of offences that may lead to criminal liability of legal entities and/or natural persons.

c. Payment process

The grant will be paid in two instalments:

70%	Upon signing the agreement
30%	When the completion of the project is proven

Payment will be made within 60 days at the latest after we receive the payment requests from the coordinating entities.

We will divide the payment into two parts:

- the part of the budget related to the practice sphere will be paid to the coordinating organisation of the practice, and
- the part of the budget related to the research sphere will be paid to the research coordinating organisation.

This will be done in accordance with the details of the agreement to be signed by both organisations. Each collaborating organisation undertakes to comply with the corresponding part of the budget presented and both will be responsible for distributing it among the other organisations, if any, always in accordance with what they presented in the budget.

d. Leave of absence during the project

If researchers and representatives of the selected projects are affected by illness or have to take leave of absence, they may request an extension of the project for the duration of their absence.

Situations to be considered:

- Illness (more than three months)
- Maternity or paternity leave
- Leave of absence to care for a family member (more than three months)

The project leader must present an official document at the beginning of the leave in order to request this extension.

e. Support

We will organise a number of training and networking sessions to promote the exchange of knowledge and best practices among the work teams during the development of the projects.

f. Dissemination of results

There is the possibility at the end of the project that the Social Observatory and the beneficiary entities may be able to establish new collaborations in other activities, such as the publication of articles, organising an activity, etc.

The results obtained as part of the call for proposals will be open to the public and may be disseminated and made available in future projects and research, both our own (for example, in future calls of the Social Observatory) and those of third parties.

6. Incompatibilities, acceptance of policies and privacy

a. Incompatibilities with other projects

Incompatibilities	<p>The project leaders of the projects selected in this call may not submit new proposals to any of the Social Observatory's calls until the project has ended.</p> <p>In turn, the projects selected in this call cannot benefit from any other financial aid, in terms of research expenses, from third parties or from the "la Caixa" Foundation.</p>
Compatibilities	<p>But the entities can participate in obtaining financial aid from the Calls for Social Projects of the "la Caixa" Foundation or other entities to fund the implementation of social interventions.</p>

b. Acceptance of the policies

The organisations must comply with:

- the [*"la Caixa" Foundation research results management and open access policy*](#)
- the [*"la Caixa" Foundation's research integrity policy*](#)
- the [*"la Caixa" Foundation's principles of responsible research and innovation*](#)
- the "la Caixa" Foundation's [*Code of ethics and principles of conduct*](#)

c. Personal data protection

As part of the application process, applicants will be duly informed about the processing of their personal data, as well as about the exercising of their rights with regard to personal data protection in accordance with the provisions of Article 13 and following of the European General Data Protection Regulation.

Likewise, the Fundació Bancaria Caixa d'Estalvis i Pensions de Barcelona, "la Caixa", with registered address at Plaça de Weyler 3, 07001 Palma (Balearic Islands), Spain, is responsible for the processing of personal data in order to resolve any doubts and queries in this call. The legal basis for this processing is the execution of a contract, at the request of the applicant.

The personal data will be stored until the end of the applicable statute of limitations. The data will only be transferred for the purpose of complying with legal obligations, as well as to third party providers acting in their capacity as processors. Access to said data by technology providers located outside the European Economic Area is subject to all the required legal guarantees.

You may request more information or exercise your rights of access, rectification, suppression, limitation, portability and opposition before the Data Protection Officer of the "la Caixa" Banking Foundation at Avinguda Diagonal 621-629, 08028 Barcelona, or by writing to dpd@fundacionlacaixa.org. Complaints may also be made to the Spanish Data Protection Agency (www.aepd.es).

7. Questions and contact



Please write to us if you have any questions:

observatoriosocial@contact.fundacionlacaixa.org



You can also visit our website:

<https://elobservatoriosocial.fundacionlacaixa.org/en/inicio>