



“Young researchers” – 2025 FAQ

1- What is the intervention area of Cariplo Foundation?

The intervention areas include Lombardy Region and the provinces of Novara and Verbano Cusio Ossola.

2- Where can I find the Letter of Agreement (“Lettera accompagnatoria”) for projects submitted in response to Phase I, and the partnership agreement?

The documents are available in the "Bandi" section of Fondazione Cariplo's website. The documents are available in PDF version, and should be filled in the missing parts without editing the original text.

3- Who should submit the Letter of Agreement?

The Letter of Agreement should be submitted only by the Leading Institution of the project.

4- Can the Letter of Agreement be digitally signed? When is the digital signature considered valid?

It is possible to sign the Letter of Agreement digitally. For the digital signature to be valid, it must be possible to verify its authenticity (the identity of the signer), integrity (which guarantees originality) and non-alteration of the signed documents. Therefore, the document must not be renamed, merged, or have its extension altered after the signature is applied.

5- Where can I find the Lol and the declaration regarding the non-profit status of the foreign partner?

The Lol is available online, in word format, in the "Bandi" section of Fondazione Cariplo's website; the declaration is available on the platform in the "Attachments" section, in word format. All documents must be uploaded in PDF format.

6- What is the deadline of the Call for proposals - Phase I?

- Physical Sciences and Engineering March 24th, 2025
- Social Sciences and Humanities March 26th, 2025
- Life Sciences March 28th, 2025

Please note that the portal will not allow the submission in case of:

- incomplete project documentation
- incomplete data and attachments (Leading Institution and partners).

7- What are the eligibility criteria concerning the achievement of the PhD degree?

The PI of the Leading Institution is eligible if they received their PhD degree no more than 2 years before the call deadline i.e. if the date of the thesis defense falls in between:

- March 24th, 2023, and March 24th, 2025, for Physical Sciences and Engineering
- March 26th, 2023, and March 26th, 2025, for Social Sciences and Humanities
- March 28th, 2023, and March 28th, 2025, for Life Sciences

except for the extensions made explicit in the text of the call.

8- Where should "maternity, paternity and serious illness" be indicated, in order to take advantage of the extension in the eligibility period?

Extensions must be indicated in two places:

- online form
- project form (LOI), under the "Career breaks" section.

9- What documents are required in case of maternity, paternity or serious illness, in order to take advantage of the extension in the eligibility period?

The following documents must be provided. In case of:

- maternity --> birth certificate of each child born before or after obtaining the PhD title
- paternity --> official document certifying the period of leave taken for each child born before or after obtaining the PhD title
- serious illness -> official document certifying the period of illness taken after obtaining the PhD title

10- What document is required as PhD certificate?

It can be a copy of the PhD diploma certificate or an official letter issued by the university, in both cases stating the date of the doctoral thesis defence. A stamped certificate is not required. Self-certifications in free format are not accepted.

11- Is there an upper age limit for the scientific head of the Leading Institution?

No, there is no age limit for the scientific head of the Leading Institution.

12- Does the temporal requirements for obtaining the PhD title apply only to the head of the Leading Institution or also to the heads of the partner units?

This requirement concerns only the scientific head of the Leading Institution.

13- Can a researcher who obtained their PhD outside of Fondazione Cariplo's intervention area apply for the call? Can foreign researchers also apply?

The call is open also to young researchers who received their PhD degrees outside of FC's reference territory. There are no restrictions on the nationality and origin of the applicant. However, it is necessary that the Leading Institution with which the PI is applying is located in the intervention area of Fondazione Cariplo.

14- Is the involvement of project partners mandatory? In the case of partnership projects, are there constraints on the number of partners and the percentage of funding distribution?

The involvement of project partners is not mandatory. In the case of partnership projects, there are no constraints in the number of partners nor in the funding distribution. Partners must be eligible for funding by Fondazione Cariplo. In addition, it is important that the choices are well justified and functional for the implementation of the project itself.

15- What is the difference between partners and external collaborators?

The main difference is that partners receive a contribution, while external collaborators do not. Partners are expected to sign a formal partnership agreement. External collaborators are entities/individuals with whom an informal collaboration will occur without allocating a portion of the funding.

16- Can foreign entities be involved in the partnership?

The project can be submitted in partnership with foreign entities. The Leading Institution must issue a declaration on the non-profit nature of the partner, using the appropriate forms available in the reserved area, "Attachments" section.

17- How does the Phase I review process work?

The completeness of the documentation and eligibility of the applicant organizations (Leading Institution and partners) will be examined by the offices in Fondazione Cariplo. Once formal checks are completed, the selection of the LOIs proceeds through a review panel, based on external international reviewers who will examine the received proposals on the criteria of responsiveness to the content and purpose of the Call. Specifically, the reviewers will express an opinion considering the scientific quality of the proposal and the appropriateness of the young researcher's CV.

Reviewers are selected based on recognized competence in their research fields as well as on their experience in evaluating research projects.

Following the evaluation, the proposals deemed suitable will be invited to proceed to phase II.

18- When should Phase II project be submitted?

The timeline will be communicated with the email invitation to proceed to Phase II. Phase II documentation requires the submission of a detailed project proposal and budget formulation.

19- Will reviewers' feedbacks be sent to the applicants at the conclusion of Phase I?

All PIs, whether admitted or not to proceed to Phase II, will be emailed the reviewers' feedback.

20- What documents will reviewers have access to for evaluation purposes?

In Phase I, reviewers will be provided with the file named "CODE_LOI_Surname" only. The other documents uploaded to the portal will only be visible to Fondazione Cariplo Offices.

21- Are there any constraints regarding the duration of the project (minimum or maximum duration)?

There are no constraints on the minimum project duration, while the maximum duration must not exceed 36 months. The duration must be appropriately chosen considering the project objectives.

22- What information should be included in the "Environmental Impact" section of the project?

In line with its Mission and priority intervention lines, Fondazione Cariplo requires specifying the specific actions to be adopted during the project's implementation to comply with environmental sustainability principles. The "Environmental Impact" section aims to raise awareness of this issue.

23- The Call encourages contamination between different disciplinary areas, methodologies or approaches. How should these guidelines be reflected in the proposal?

When relevant to the proposed research, applicants are advised to follow this recommendation to increase the likelihood of their research proposals being accepted. For instance, it is possible to plan collaborations with researchers from other disciplinary areas or with different research approaches may be considered. Additionally, employing methodologies other than those utilized during the PhD thesis can also be explored.

24- Is it possible to involve Third Sector organizations within the project?

Yes, it is possible. There are two possibilities for involving them. Third sector organizations eligible for funding that have scientific research among their statutory aims can participate as project partners. In all other cases, it is suggested to recognize their participation under item A07 professional services of third parties.

25. What criteria must be met when suggesting potential reviewer names?

It is possible to suggest reviewers deemed suitable for evaluating the proposal; Fondazione Cariplo may decide to contact them, but does not commit in doing so. The suggested reviewers must be affiliated with non-Italian institutions and must be free of conflict of interest with the project team. A conflict of interest in peer scientific review exists when a reviewer has a direct or indirect interest in the funding of the proposal, compromising their impartiality of judgment. Specifically, a conflict of interest occurs when the reviewer has ongoing research collaborations or other significant professional activities with the Principal Investigator (PI) or the project mentor; has co-authored scientific publications with the PI or the mentor; can benefit personally, professionally, or economically from the evaluation outcome.