



# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

## SOIL RESEARCH

### 2025-28

## SPECIFICATIONS

DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SOILS THROUGH  
AGRICULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS AND PRACTICES THAT IMPROVE  
SOIL QUALITY

### 1. Context

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The **soil** is one of our planet's most precious resources. It's the foundation for our constructions and the medium in which 95% of our food is grown. At the interface between the hydrosphere and atmosphere, it is the theater for many exchanges between matter and energy that influence the quality of other ecosystems. Through its carbon storage capabilities, which are twice as great as those of the atmosphere, soil also offers a potential to attenuate the effects of climate change.

Agricultural production depends heavily on the health of our soils, which is measured by several indicators, notably organic matter, the main nutritive elements, microbiological and faunal bioindicators, as well as enzymatic activity. Productive soils that resist erosion directly reinforce the resilience of agricultural systems facing climate disruptions.

Our capacity to feed 9.8 billion people in 2050, in a context of global warming, will depend on our aptitude to restore soil productivity and ensure that our soils are able to adapt to the global climate changes currently in progress.



To reach this goal, two core directions are laid out in this call for proposals that aims to increase knowledge about our soils among farmers:

- **Restore and improve degraded agricultural soils** by encouraging the farmers to adopt practices that ensure long-lasting health for the soil and provide stable yield.
- **Stabilize soils where biodiversity, organic matter storage, physicochemical properties, and the capacity for retaining water and nutrients are declining.** This implies promoting techniques that preserve the amount of organic carbon stored in the soil.

Even though agriculture is affected by climate change, it's an activity that can contribute around 20 to 60% of the potential to attenuate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030. It thus becomes a solution to attenuate climate change by its comprehensive and systematic approach to reducing these emissions thanks to practices like the preferential use of organic nitrogen, the development of legumes, the methanization of livestock effluents, and agroforestry.

These actions aim to meet the triple challenge of food safety, adapting agricultural systems to climate changes, and mitigating anthropogenic GHG emissions by farmers.



## 2. The Fonds de Dotation Roullier

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Created in 2016 on the initiative of Daniel Roullier, founder of the Roullier industrial group, the Roullier Endowment Fund's (Fonds de Dotation Roullier) statutory mission is to research, encourage, and promote sustainable agriculture in France and around the world. The Fonds de Dotation Roullier contributes to its mission through **two methods of action**:

- **The Minerallium**, an exhibition in Saint-Malo that provides visitors with an understanding of the importance of minerals for plants and animal nutrition in agriculture.
- **The Fonds de Dotation Roullier also supports scientific projects** in France and around the world that encourage sustainable agriculture and preserve the environment and natural resources for the benefit of farmers, consumers, and other stakeholders in the agricultural domain.

For the Fonds de Dotation Roullier, "sustainable agriculture" refers to agriculture that is high performing as far as quality and productivity, that manages the natural resources necessary to all agricultural production (soil and mineral resources, water, air, biodiversity, etc.) in a sustainable manner, and allows farmers to earn a decent living from their activity.

Since 2019, the Fonds de Dotation Roullier has supported nearly a dozen research projects in France and abroad. This funding initiative aims to support research teams working to promote sustainable agricultural practices and better-informed farmers. With the launch of this call for proposals, the Fonds de Dotation Roullier hopes to broaden its philanthropic support.

## 3. Call for Proposals on Soil Research 2025-28

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In 2023, the Board of the Fonds de Dotation Roullier chose to focus their funding initiative on **general interest and scientific projects**. These project will be led by a project proponent<sup>1</sup> seeking to advance the understanding of soils and promote best practices among farmers in order to ensure productivity and quality, thus improving farmer's income while also preparing them for the environmental changes to come. These projects will aim to disseminate and leverage the results as widely as possible within the agricultural research community and its stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup>The definition of project proponents is given under point 5 - Target Project Proponents



The projects should focus mainly on the following geographical regions: France and Europe and/or the Maghreb and/or Latin America and/or India and/or North America.

The projects considered will take place over a period of 3 years, extendable to a maximum of 5 years.

The total financing accorded to each project will be between €200,000 and €400,000 maximum for projects having an overall budget from €200,000 up to several million euros. In addition to financing, the Fonds de Dotation Roullier may offer technical support within the realm of its expertise.

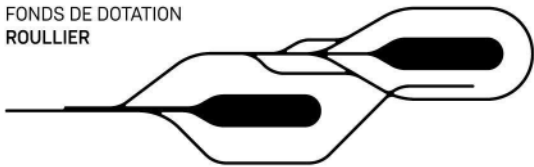
The funding accorded by this call for proposals will support the engineering aspect of the projects.

#### 4. **Objectives of the Call for Proposals on Soil Research – 2025-28**

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The Fonds de Dotation Roullier hopes that this Call for Proposals on Soil Research – 2025-28 will provide answers to the following question: **How can knowledge about soils be improved and shared with farmers to ensure the fertility and sustainability of soil resources?** In order to answer to this question, the Fonds de Dotation Roullier will support ambitious general interest initiatives that advance:

- **Preserving the quality of agricultural soil and improving its health and fertility** through its characterization and analysis, its restoration, and improving resistance to natural erosion
- **Favoring education/training for farmers** by enhancing their skills and sharing best practices to preserve soil fertility
- **Increasing productivity in agricultural systems** by improving yield and quality, diversifying production, and integrating environmental practices (particularly through reasonable management of inputs and greenhouse gas emissions)
- **Promoting scientific research** and innovation related to agricultural soils.



## 5. Targeted Project Proponents

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This call for projects is aimed at both French and foreign project developers. Entities with a commercial aim and individuals are not eligible for this call for proposals.

To be eligible, the project proponent must:

- Be a legal entity engaged in research activities such as a public research organization, a higher education institution, a university chair, an NGO or association, a foundation or endowment fund, an agricultural research and development structure, or a French or international institution.
- Put forward a general interest project aimed at serving the common good. Projects having a profit-making or commercial aim for the project proponent or its partners are not eligible.
- Possess recognized expertise in the fields of agriculture or food production.
- Be eligible for philanthropic funding.
- The project proponent may collaborate with partners such as research and/or training organizations, local authorities, public agencies, technical institutes, cooperatives, or companies.
- The partners working alongside the project proponent must be linked to the proponent through a formalized partnership.
- The partners must participate in defining and implementing the project. Their role and the value they bring to the project must be described.

## 6. Project Proponent Commitments

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- The project proponent must integrate an active member of the Fonds de Dotation Roullier in the steering committee to regularly follow the implementation and progress of the project and report to the Board of the Fonds de Dotation Roullier.
- The project proponent agrees to present the project and answer questions from members of the Fonds de Dotation, who will make project assessments as part of the review process.
- The project proponent will guarantee that the “general interest” aspect is respected.
- The project proponent will communicate key success indicators and make regular reports on the project to the Fonds de Dotation Roullier as indicated in the agreement that will link the project proponent to the Fonds de Dotation Roullier.



- The project proponent will provide communication elements regarding project implementation and results according to the terms defined in the agreement that will link the project proponent to the Fonds de Dotation Roullier.
- The project proponent will participate in events, seminars, and conferences organized by the Fonds de Dotation Roullier to present the project and its results.

## 7. **Project Selection Criteria**

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**Only projects demonstrating a tangible contribution to soil knowledge will be selected in 2025.**

After verifying that the project adequately addresses the focus topic for the call for proposals, it will be reviewed by a team consisting of a soil agronomy expert selected by the Fonds de Dotation Roullier and a member of its Board. This team will make its recommendations based on the following criteria (*see the CFP Soils project selection grid*)

- **Administrative compliance** of the application (complete and accurate package: properly filled out, accompanied by the required documents, files are named correctly and in the requested formats, requested funding amount and project duration, etc.), as well as the **eligibility** of the project proponent and partners.
- **Appropriateness to the focus question** and pertinence of the monitoring indicators. These technical, scientific, and financial indicators will appear in a regular reports to the Fonds de Dotation Roullier and must precisely measure the real contribution of each member of the consortium to the project's realization and the associated costs. Where applicable and if the project addresses such issues, it must demonstrate the ability to involve consumers.
- **Project quality**: innovative nature, reach, impact on natural resource management, adaptation to changes in climate, preservation of agricultural jobs, establishment of skill-based, territorial and international partnerships, etc.
- Consideration of previous research or the actions of other stakeholders on the same topic and/or in the same area.
- **Feasibility**: the proponent's technical and financial capacity to lead and coordinate the project and the consortium's potential to successfully carry it out: adequacy of the resources to be deployed, budget, and timeline, consistency between the general objective, specific objectives, planned activities, expected results, and their indicators, coherence of the estimated budget and financial structure.
- **Consideration of possible upscaling** of the initiative: the action's potential for sustainability, capitalization, dissemination, promotion, replication, advocacy, etc.



After consulting the reviews by the different teams, the Board will select which projects the Fonds de Dotation Roullier will support.

## 8. **Calendar for the Call for Proposals on Soil Research 2025-28**

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Project proponents may submit their applications to this call for proposals from **20 January 2025 until 21 April 2025** at midnight. All the required documents must be sent by email to the address [appelprojets@fdroullier.org](mailto:appelprojets@fdroullier.org), with the date and time of receipt serving as proof.

The subject line for the application email shall be as follows: [AAP-Recherche-Sols] – [Project Name]. The application file must be in PDF format and named as follows: [AAP-Application File -Project Name]. All designations are to be specified in the application file.

The assessors will evaluate the various projects from **21 April to 19 June 2025**. Each project will be evaluated by a two-person team made up of an expert in agronomy and a member of the Fonds de Dotation Roullier Board.

The Fonds de Dotation Roullier team reserves the right to request additional elements to those presented in the application if they deem it necessary.

All project proponents will be contacted during the week of 23 June 2025 to announce the results of the Board's deliberations. The Fonds de Dotation Roullier team will contact the selected project proponents to define the terms of the Fonds de Dotation Roullier's support.



## 9. Personal data

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The Fonds de Dotation Roullier and each project proponent commit to fully complying with the provisions of Law No. 78-17 of 6 January 1978, as amended (the “French Data Protection Act”), as well as any other regulations that complement or replace it, including, but not limited to (EU) Regulation 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (hereinafter the **GDPR**), which came into force on 25 May 2018, and any current or future provisions on personal data protection that are legally applicable in France.

To this end, the Fonds de Dotation Roullier and each project proponent commit, among other things, to fulfilling their respective obligations under the GDPR at their own expense, enabling the other party to meet its own obligations, and ensuring that these obligations are adhered to by anyone with access to any part of the personal data in the context of implementing this call for proposals.

In consequence, the Fonds de Dotation Roullier provides information regarding its privacy policy on its website: [Fonds de Dotation Roullier - Confidentially Charter and Privacy Policy](#) regarding the handling of personal data.