

HOW TO GET FUNDING FROM EMBRAPA TO SUPPORT RTI COOPERATION BETWEEN BRAZIL AND EUROPE?

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Introduction

International cooperation in research and innovation is not a choice but a necessity. Scarce funding resources, infrastructure, and most importantly talent should bring the countries together to solve the societal challenges of the 21st century together. The expansion of communication methods and tools brought researchers and innovators closer. Joint projects and publications and increased mobility of researchers became usual practice in the academic world.

While the academic world is unified, international cooperation became one of the most important tools for boosting competitiveness and tackling global challenges. Hence, relevant programs and activities become more visible in the portfolio of the national research and innovation support agencies, everywhere in the world.

On the other hand, international cooperation requires experience, patience, and good planning. The ENRICH in LAC Initiative prepared this Guide to support international cooperation endeavors of innovative Brazilian companies by explaining the steps of getting support from the Brazilian Agency for Industrial Research and Technological Innovation (EMBRAPPII) as they participate in a number of bilateral and multilateral initiatives with European funding organizations. However, due to the different funding model of EMBRAPPII collaboration opportunities are underutilized. This Guide clarifies the required processes and makes practical suggestions for Brazilian and European STI actors, mainly the innovative companies on how to engage and sustain bilateral/multilateral collaboration.

Although this Guide is prepared for Brazilian companies, European companies can also benefit from it by understanding the procedures at the Brazilian side and coordinate the collaboration process more effectively.

EMBRAPII Model

In a Nutshell

EMBRAPII is the Brazilian Agency for Industrial Research and Technological Innovation. Established as private not-for-profit organization, under the Governance of the Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI), of with the intervention of the ministries of Education (MEC), Health (MS), and Economy (ME).

EMBRAPII aims to:

- Support Brazilian established industries in the development of innovative technologies for development of products;
- Increase the competitiveness of companies in national and international markets;
- Focus on business demands;
- Offer flexible, agile and no bureaucratic R&D&I financing models;
- Share risks of investing in innovation and;
- Attract private and international investment to leverage innovation.

Through its flexible and non-bureaucratic operational system, EMBRAPII provides funding for companies to carry out their research and development activities together with an EMBRAPII Unit, from [TRL 3 to TRL 6](#) (that is, for pre-competitive R&D&I demands).

EMBRAPII signed an agreement with [BNDES](#) to support innovation projects in the following priority areas: digital transformation, defense, new materials as well as the following four themes related to social and environmental sustainability: forest bio-economy, biofuels, circular economy and strategic technologies for the Brazilian National Health System. Exceptionally, for some projects, with the BNDES, research was authorized within TRL 3 to 9.

Competence Areas

Currently there are 72 EMBRAPII Units located in a number of Brazilian states, focused on a very large scope of technology competence areas.



Advanced Communications

Agricultural Plague Biocontroller

Agro Industrial Technologies

Artificial Intelligence

Biomass Processing

Biomass Transformation

Bio pharmaceuticals and Drugs

Bio photonics and Instrumentation

Biotechnological Processes

Cyber-physical Systems

Coffee Agroindustry

Computational Solutions in Engineering

Connected Products

Development of Medicines

Digital Communications

Embedded Electronics

Embedded Systems

Embedded Systems and Digital Mobility

Food Technology and Engineering

Functional Materials

Green Chemical

Health Technologies

High Performance Materials

Industrial Electro Chemistry

Industrial Energy Technologies

Industrial Energy Technologies

Integrated Manufacturing

Intelligent Automotive Systems

Intelligent Energy Systems

Intelligent Systems

Internet and Mobile Computer Equipment

Laser Manufacturing

Manufacturing Automation Systems

Manufacturing Automation Systems

Manufacturing Systems

Materials for Eco-Efficient Construction

Metallurgy and Materials

Metal-Mechanical Technologies

Mobility

Monitoring and Instrumentation for the

Environment

Polymeric and Nanomaterials

Polymers

Polymers and Nanomaterials

Power Transmission

Renewable Biochemistry

Robotic Systems and Automation

Sensory Systems

Software and Automation

Steels and Special Alloys

Structural Integrity

Technologies Associated with Power Train

Underwater/Submarine Engineering

Vehicle Technologies and Systems

EMBRAPII Units across Brazil based on competence areas¹

¹Source : EMBRAPII

International Cooperation

In order to support the innovation capacities and the competitiveness of the Brazilian companies, and the multinational companies that perform R&D&I in Brazil, EMBRAP II has increased significantly during the past years its international cooperation programs at bilateral (e.g. with Sweden, Germany, UK, Canada, Israel, Switzerland, Czech Republic, USA, and Uruguay) and multilateral ([Cornet](#), [IraSME](#)) levels. EMBRAP II has partnered with Apex-Brasil and, through the Techmaker methodology, helps Brazilian and multinational companies to identify partnerships and international prospect.



Objectives of the EMBRAP II's international cooperation Programs:

- Promote the technological development of new products, processes or business solutions between Brazilian and foreign enterprises;
- Provide an international innovation-driven business environment;
- Strengthen cooperation between companies and technology research institutions in Brazil and abroad;
- Select joint projects presented by companies of all sizes and start-ups from both Brazil and foreign countries, aiming at engaging in science-based innovation cooperation between Brazilian and foreign companies. The selected projects shall result in an added value, which could not be achieved in one of the countries alone;
- Promote exchange of knowledge and expertise, establishment of lasting partnerships, and increase market expansion opportunities.

EMBRAPII's Funding Model

EMBRAPII provides 1/3 of total project cost in the form of subvention (that is, non-reimbursable resources) and expects that 1/3 shall be provided by the company as financial contribution, and 1/3 should be provided by an EMBRAPII Unit either financial or in kind counterparts. With this model, EMBRAPII aims to attract private investments in innovation and share the risks in investing innovation through flexible and agile operation. With this model, EMBRAPII mainly focuses on supporting and accelerating technological innovations from [TRL 3 to TRL 6](#).

Target Group

SMEs, Start-ups, and all size national or multinational industries operating in Brazil constitutes the main target group of EMBRAPII's funding.



Step by Step Guide for Brazilian Companies aiming to use the EMBRAPII Model for International Cooperation

STEP 1: Follow the Calls

Throughout the year, [EMBRAPII](#) announces international calls and organizes an online info sessions to present the process together with its partner agencies and organizations abroad. The call can be bilateral, meaning between Brazil and another country or multilateral, with the participation of more than two other countries. Projects must lead to the development of products or technical processes, which are differentiated from the ones existing in the market in terms of their functions or other features and provide an added economic, societal or environmental value for Brazil.



Subscribe to the EMBRAPII's [newsletter](#) and follow the announcements and join in this meeting to get firsthand information and benefit from the networking opportunities. Calls are usually bottom-up, meaning that there is no thematic focus or restriction. Open calls can also be followed on ENRICH in LAC [newsletter](#) and [social-media](#) channels.

Step 2: Identify the EMBRAP II Unit

Following the call announcement, if you are interested in preparing a proposal with an international partner, you need first to identify and approach an EMBRAP II Unit in Brazil. It is obligatory to work with an EMBRAP II Unit, as funding is given to the Unit and not to your organization. The Unit acts like a 3rd party for the RTD activities of your project on the Brazilian side. Joint projects must address research from experimental proof of concept to technology demonstrated in relevant environment [TRL 3-6](#). Exceptionally, for some projects research was authorized within [TRL 3 to 9](#).

Besides the support of EMBRAP II, you may also apply to FINEP or FAPs in your state call, in order to complement your budget for R&D&I, and prototyping.



Which EMBRAP II Unit should you choose? Choosing the right EMBRAP II Unit for your project is a crucial step. They are established based on specific thematic areas and technological competencies. Therefore, you need to look up the units on the EMBRAP II website and get in touch as soon as possible! Discuss their project portfolio, examine their infrastructure, human resources, and research outputs. You are advised to do this anytime, regardless of an open call! Do not hesitate in getting in touch with the manager of an EMBRAP II Unit. They are always very open and willing to work with new projects, new companies, independently of the size of your business.



Step 3: Find your International Partner

If you do not have a partner, with whom you want to submit the proposal, EMBRAP II and the other foreign funding agencies will help you identify partners. Contact EMBRAP II and indicate your request as soon as you have a project idea for an open call. Both funding organizations will help you to identify suitable partners in the foreign country.

Most management teams of the EMBRAP II Units also have a strong portfolio of international relationships that may also accelerate and help you finding your international partner. Please keep in mind that, according to the national guidelines of the partner country (ies), your international partner should also be a company, or a research center.

In addition to the efforts of the funding agencies, other partner finding platforms may serve your need:





[ENRICH in LAC Matchmaking Platform](#) enables virtual direct contacts and business initiation among RTI focused start-ups, companies, soft landing hubs, and other organizations between the LAC Region and Europe at any time! Simply register to the web-site and post your innovative Idea, project, product or service and look for available opportunities. If you need a special support the Platform managers will try to provide you suitable partner suggestions.



[Enterprise Europe Network](#) is the world's largest business and innovation network active in more than 60 countries worldwide. It brings together 3,000 experts from more than 600 member organizations – all renowned for their excellence in business support. Network experts will assess if you are ready for international partnerships; advise you on how to better prepare for internationalization and search potential partners for you, saving you time and money. Check out the web-site to explore all the opportunities and contact your local [Brazilian expert](#) for further support.

Step 4: Secure Your Financial Contribution

As a requirement of the EMBRAP II model, the Brazilian company has to provide a financial contribution to be able to submit a proposal. It is equivalent to 1/3 of the total project cost of the Brazilian side, and it has to be cash. No in-kind contributions are accepted from the company side. Therefore, 1/3 of the total project cost comes from the Unit, and 1/3 comes from EMBRAP II (as new money). Small companies can use SEBRAE resources up to 70% to cover this cash contribution requirement. In this case, you need to apply first SEBRAE then EMBRAP II. In order to get in touch with SEBRAE, to receive further financial support for your EMBRAP II international R&D&I project, [please check here](#).

Other financing institutions in Brazil, such as [FINEP](#), or the state FAPs (such as [FAPESP](#) (São Paulo), [FAPERJ](#) (Rio de Janeiro), [FAPESC](#) (Santa Catarina), [FAPEMIG](#) (Minas Gerais)), can also support you further for your 1/3 financial counterpart. Do not hesitate to contact them, and present your project. They are indeed important institutions for all international R&D&I initiative.



Step 5: Prepare the Proposal

At this stage, you should have identified both the EMBRAP II Unit and international partner and secured the 1/3 financial contribution. Now it is time to write the proposal! Usually, the Unit undertakes most of the proposal writing tasks on your behalf, collaborating with the international partner. The Unit will however require your time and your concrete engagement, to provide all required information of your company, and will also need to negotiate with you products, deadlines, and IP of your project. The deadlines are always very short, so you do need to be motivated, and ready to spend a good amount of hours, quickly, to support the project writing.



Step 6: Proposal Evaluation

Each partner submits their own proposal for the same project, with the same (expected) results, deadlines and IP definition, based on the requirements of their own national funding agency. Once you have agreed on the terms with the EMBRAP II Unit you want to work with, the financial support of EMBRAP II is automatically available, as it is actually already in possession of the EMBRAP II Unit, according to its work plan and targets. Foreign funding agency evaluates the foreign partner's application. Proposal has to be approved by all funding agencies to be able to get funding. If one side does not approve the proposal, it will not be funded.



Each company should focus on their own national funding directives carefully.

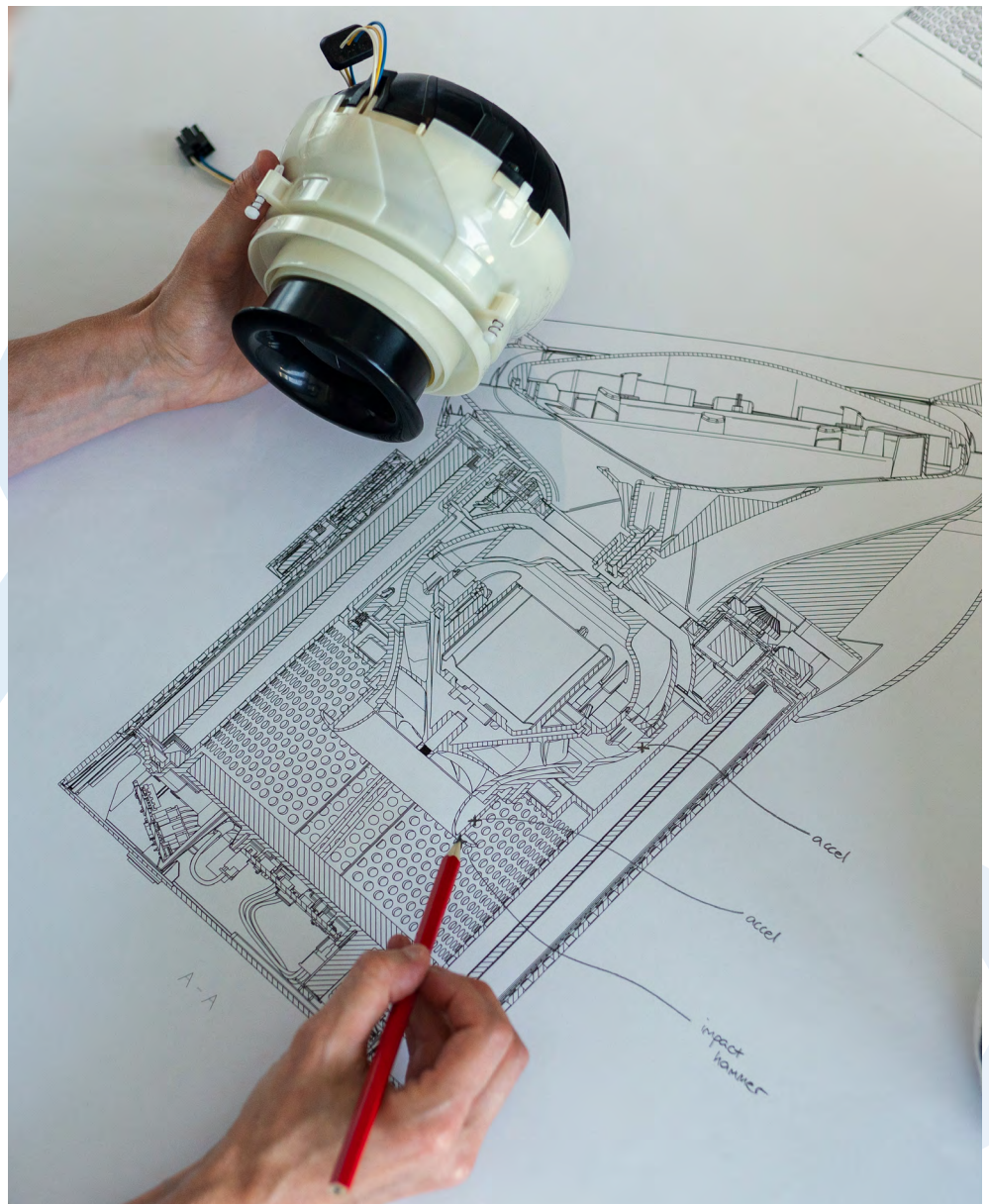
In some cases, foreign funding agency requires changes or correction in the proposal. If this is the case, make sure to discuss these requests with the EMBRAP II Unit in due time. If the proposal is not funded on the foreign partner's side, then you cannot get funding either. In this case, you can look for another international partner or wait for the next call to submit the proposal considering the feedbacks you have received.



Step 7: Execution

If your project is funded, the EMBRAP II Unit acts as the Brazilian coordinator of the project, who is responsible for the quality and timely delivery of the work. You shall on your side act like the “partner” of the EMBRAP II Unit, participating to regular management meetings, validating all the products and their quality, and of course testing the results of these R&D&I products in your company, so that you can approve the results.

You will always be required to approve the deliverables of the project, before making the payments of your 1/3 part of the overall budget. Therefore, remember that the payments will not be required at the beginning of the project, but always after the delivery of R&D&I results/products.



Step 8: Project Evaluation

EMBRAPII very closely and carefully evaluates the project progress. If the project does not reach its target, EMBRAPII may require to return all, or part, of the 1/3 subvention. Keeping the project on track, at least from the BR side, is the responsibility of the Unit.

Once the project is 100% finished, you will also need to approve the overall project, and fill in an EMBRAPII satisfaction Questionnaire as quality and good management of the projects is highly important within the EMBRAPII's scheme. This tool is used to evaluate the Unit's performance, which will be considered as an input to define whether a Unit shall remain among the homologated R&D&I Institute and continue to use the EMBRAPII's subvention and programs or not. Therefore, it is important to provide good, solid feedback in this Questionnaire.



Close and recurrent contact with your international project partner and with the EMBRAPII Unit is a key for successful collaboration. Organize weekly-biweekly meetings to discuss the progress and risks. In case of a major change in the scope, renegotiate the products and deadline as soon as possible, so that the EMBRAPII Unit can inform EMBRAPII about the changes. During the life of a research project, change may occur in scope or deliverables that may have a major effect on the project budget, staff, and time plan. It is important to manage the change properly and on time, inform the funders on both sides about this change, and get their approvals.



Suggestions for European Companies

Even though this Guide focuses on the Brazilian side of the collaboration via EMBRAPA's instruments, European companies can also take advantage of the following recommendations.

1. Do not wait for a call announcement

Calls always attract more interest as funding is involved. However, once the call is announced, there is usually very limited time to engage in a new collaboration, get to know your potential partner and his research and innovation capacities, and discuss the proposal thoroughly. Therefore, it is suggested to engage in “get to know each other” phase through various platforms without waiting for a Call to be opened. In that sense, please register to the international platforms such as EU-LAC Matchmaking Platform or [EEN Platform](#) and screen the companies and identify the most interesting ones in advance for your project idea. Alternatively, you can contact intermediary organizations such as ENRICH in LAC and the European member state representations in Brazil to identify the most suitable contacts for you. It is always better to get local support.



2. Do not hesitate to make the first contact

After you receive the Call information via various Platforms that we have mentioned, contact your existing or potential Brazilian partners immediately. The process takes longer on the Brazilian side as your (future) partner must engage in collaboration with an EMBRAPA Unit and secure partial funding for the proposal. This is usually not the case for European companies as the funding agencies in Europe do not require a financial contribution from companies. However, depending on the funding regulations, a certain percentage of an in-kind contribution is usually demanded.

3. Clear communication & coordination

You will have two partners from the Brazilian side: a Brazilian company and the EMBRAPA Unit, which will act as coordinator on the BR side. Therefore, make sure that your communication and coordination actions involve both organizations.

4. Preparing a win-win proposal

The proposal should create added value for all participating organizations as well as countries. Therefore, it is recommended to consider the priorities and success criteria of your national and the Brazilian funding authority's in the proposal. If only one funding authority approves the proposal, the project will not be funded.

5. Ask support

If you need support in finding a Brazilian partner, understanding, or overcoming some issues, do not hesitate to ask support from the ENRICH in LAC. Both European and Brazilian experts in the [ENRICH in LAC Network](#) would be willing to help you go through the challenges and establish sustainable collaboration.





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