

iMIND 2026 COLLABORATIVE PROJECT CALL

Support for Interdisciplinary Pilot Projects

As part of its scientific strategy to strengthen interdisciplinary collaborations and foster the emergence of competitive projects at the national and international levels, iMIND is launching an internal collaborative project call aimed at supporting innovative pilot projects.

This call seeks to stimulate synergies between teams, promote the emergence of new scientific themes, and generate preliminary data enabling the subsequent submission of competitive grant applications.

Eligible Teams and Structures

- Clinical Services
 - All FIND structures: 20 departments of the Hospices Civils de Lyon (HCL) and 13 expert centers
 - HU-ADIS Department of Le Vinatier
 - SUNRISE Department of Le Vinatier
 - CRA and associated units
 - CRTDAH
- Neuroscience Laboratories
 - All structures of the LabEx CORTEX (including ISC, CRNL, PGNM, MeLiS, SBRI, and GATE)
 - EMC Laboratory (Université Lumière Lyon 2)
 - RESHAPE Laboratory (Université Lumière Lyon 2)

1. Budget

To support projects with strong scientific potential while ensuring a competitive selection process, iMIND will dedicate a specific budget to this call. Funding is intended to initiate ambitious pilot projects capable of structuring new collaborations.

- Total budget allocated: €90,000
- Maximum number of funded projects: 3
- Maximum funding per project: approximately €30,000

2. Project duration

Funded projects must be designed as short-term pilot projects, with clearly defined objectives that can realistically be achieved within a limited timeframe.

- Minimum duration: 12 months
- Maximum duration: 18 months
- No extension will be granted except under duly justified exceptional circumstances.

3. Objectives of the Call

This call aims to encourage new collaborations among teams within the iMIND perimeter by supporting innovative and structuring projects capable of leading to competitive external funding.

Projects must:

- Foster collaborations within iMIND
- Generate preliminary data
- Open new scientific perspectives
- Prepare the submission of a competitive grant proposal

Mandatory Commitment

Applicants must commit to submitting:

- An ANR proposal, or
- A proposal to another national, European, or international funding organization

Submission deadline: between Autumn 2027 and Autumn 2028.

4. Eligibility Criteria

Projects must be based on a strong collaborative approach involving several structures within the iMIND perimeter. The scientific complementarity of the participating teams will be a key evaluation criterion.

Requirements:

- At least two teams belonging to two distinct units, centers, or hospital departments within the iMIND perimeter
- At least two principal investigators from different structures
- A pilot project that is innovative and structuring
- Demonstrated complementarity between participating teams

External Partners

Partners external to the iMIND consortium may participate in the project. However, at least two iMIND teams must be involved.

5. Priority Scientific Areas

Submitted projects must align with iMIND's scientific strategy and address at least one of the following priority areas:

- Axis 1: Brain Development and Neurodevelopmental Trajectories
- Axis 2: Social Cognition, Interaction, and Communication
- Axis 3: Neurobiological Mechanisms and Translational Models
- Axis 4: Transdiagnostic Approaches and Comorbidities
- Axis 5: Therapeutic Innovation, Precision Medicine, and Digital Technologies
- Axis 6: Ethics, Participation, and Inclusion

6. Eligible Expenses

Funding may be used flexibly to meet the specific needs of each project, subject to scientific justification.

Eligible expenses include:

- Personnel (fixed-term contracts, engineers, interns, etc.)
- Small equipment
- Recruitment of patients/participants
- Analyses (MRI, biological assays, genetic analyses, etc.)
- Operating costs
- Other justified expenses

Funding will be provided through a dedicated transfer agreement.

7. Format of the Scientific Proposal

To simplify the application process, teams must submit a concise and focused proposal (in English) highlighting the scientific and collaborative value of the project.

Maximum length: 2 pages (excluding budget section)

The proposal must include:

1. State of the art
2. Scientific objectives
3. Methodology
4. Positioning and originality
5. Added value of the participating teams
6. Expected results
7. Maximum of 5 bibliographic references
8. Budget

Applicants must also provide a short summary accessible to a broad audience, both in French and English (not included in the 2-page limit), of approximately 150 words.

8. Mandatory Deliverables

Funded projects must demonstrate their ability to generate a tangible scientific impact.

Required deliverables:

- Final scientific report
- Formal submission of an ANR proposal or equivalent funding application

9. Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be assessed according to scientific and strategic criteria designed to identify the most promising initiatives.

Evaluation criteria:

- Scientific originality
- Scientific robustness

- Integrative value
- Feasibility
- Potential scientific and/or clinical impact

10. Evaluation Procedure

The evaluation process is designed to ensure scientific excellence and impartiality.

- Evaluation by three independent national or international experts

Scoring Scale

- A — Outstanding
- B — Excellent
- C — Very Good
- D — Fair

Only projects rated A (Outstanding) or B (Excellent) will be submitted to the iMIND Scientific Steering Committee for final selection.

Project ranking will be determined during a Steering Committee meeting according to the following rules:

- By consensus whenever possible;
- Otherwise, by absolute majority vote (half of the quorum plus one vote) of members present or represented (maximum one proxy per member).

Each member has one vote.

The quorum is reached when at least half of the members are present or represented.

Timeline

The schedule of this call has been designed to allow rapid implementation of selected projects.

- Publication of the call: Wednesday 7th October, 2026
- Submission deadline: Sunday 3rd January, 2027
- Submission address: _soumission_recherche_imind@ch-le-vinatier.fr

Contacts:

For any inquiries regarding this call:

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