

ILRI Call for Proposals: CGIAR CapSha Accelerator Innovative Pilots

Call issued	1 July 2026
Submission deadline	COB 21 July 2026 17:00 EAT
Total available budget	Up to USD 75,000
Number of awards	Up to three pilot proposals will be selected by ILRI
Indicative award size	USD 10,000 to 25,000 per pilot
Partner allocation	At least 14% of each pilot budget should go directly to non-CGIAR partner(s)
Final spend deadline	15 December 2026

Overview

ILRI invites proposals for innovative small, strategic pilot activities that strengthen capacity sharing and align with the CGIAR Capacity Sharing (CapSha) Accelerator. The 2026 pilot fund is intended to generate practical learning on what works in capacity sharing, with a focus on equitable partner engagement, South-South and triangular cooperation, gender and inclusion, and scalable approaches that can inform wider CGIAR capacity sharing practice.

Purpose of the pilot fund

The fund will support pilot activities that add a clear learning component to existing or planned work. Proposals should not simply request support for additional training events. They should test, document or compare approaches that help Centers and partners understand what works, for whom, under what conditions, and why.

What can be funded

- Co-design or testing of new training tools, mentoring models, learning content or capacity sharing methods/models.
- Strengthening, translating, contextualizing or digitalizing existing capacity materials, where this includes a clear learning or evaluation component.
- Peer learning, South-South or triangular cooperation activities that document lessons for wider use.
- Partner-led or co-led activities that strengthen NARES, universities, private sector, community or other non-CGIAR capacity sharing systems.
- Small pilots that generate learning, content or processes that can be adapted or scaled by the Center and wider CGIAR.

Required alignment

All proposals should align with at least one CapSha Area of Work (AoW):

- AoW1 Innovation Lab, new tools, methods, standards or approaches.
- AoW2 Marketplace, matching demand and supply for learning and capacity sharing.
- AoW3 South-South and triangular cooperation, equitable partnerships and mutual learning across contexts

Refer to the Capacity Sharing Annual Report 2025 for context

<https://cgspace.cgiar.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/4b0eebdb-2784-4d46-917a-939da18a7c68/content>

Core eligibility and selection criteria

Criterion	What reviewers will look for
Additionality and learning	The pilot adds a specific learning component to existing or planned activities. The expected output is evidence on what works, not only the number of people trained.
Partner engagement	At least 14% of the pilot budget goes directly to non-CGIAR partner(s), with a meaningful technical role for those partners.
ECR leadership	Proposals led by Early Career Researchers will be prioritized, where feasible.
Cross-Center collaboration	Multi-Center proposals or activities with clear potential for cross-Center learning will be prioritized.
Gender and social inclusion	Each pilot should include one or two learning questions related to gender and social inclusion and should document relevant findings. For the CapSha targeting institutional capacities, this includes considering gender-based constraints for female scientists, supporting female and male early career scientists and reaching out under-represented countries.

Process

- Each Center will run an internal competitive call using this shared CapSha pilot proposal template.
- Applicants should submit a concise proposal of no more than 4 pages, plus the budget table.
- Up to three pilot proposals will be selected from the available USD 75,000 envelope.
- Proposals will be reviewed against the criteria above, with priority given to additionality, partner engagement, ECR leadership and cross-Center collaboration.
- Selected pilots will be implemented from August to November 2026, with final spending completed by 15 December 2026.
- Each pilot will provide a brief final learning note, including evidence on what worked and recommendations for future capacity sharing activities. A final financial report will also be submitted.

Indicative timeline

Milestone	Indicative date
Call issued	1 July 2026
Submission deadline	COP 15 July 2026 or earlier
Review and selection	Late June 2026
Implementation period	August to November 2026
Final spend deadline	15 December 2026
Final Report due	December 31 2026

Submission

Proposals should be mailed to [Capacity Sharing Accelerator Innovative Pilot Project](#), to the contacts below.

Contact

For support or further information, contact Nasser Yao (N.Yao@cgiar.org) or Leah Symekher (L.symekher@cgiar.org).