



## Call for Applications FRIDA Program 2022

### 1. Background

FRIDA is a program by the Internet Addresses Registry for Latin America (LACNIC) that supports Latin American and Caribbean projects, initiatives, and solutions that contribute to the consolidation of a global, open, stable, and secure Internet.

FRIDA was created in 2004 with the support of two Canadian government entities: the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA) and the International Development Research Center (IDRC). Since its creation, this program has received contributions from LACNIC, the IDRC, the Internet Society, and the Swedish Cooperation Agency (SIDA). FRIDA is currently developed, coordinated, and funded exclusively by LACNIC.

FRIDA has provided grants to 114 projects and 7 scale-ups. The program has also presented 47 awards.

Projects, initiatives, and solutions are selected through annual, open public calls for applications coordinated by LACNIC under the guidance of an external selection committee comprised of regional experts in the categories and thematic axes defined for each call.

### 2. Purpose

The main purpose of the FRIDA program is to support projects, initiatives or solutions that contribute to the consolidation of a global, open, stable, and secure Internet. Two formats are available:

#### Grants

**FRIDA Grants** provide non-reimbursable funds and technical support to projects, initiatives, or solutions with a **maximum duration of 12 months**.

#### Awards

**FRIDA Awards** offer economic recognition and highlight projects, initiatives, or solutions with proven, concrete impact.



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### 3. Beneficiaries

For both formats (**Grants** or **Awards**), applicants must be based in and conduct their activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, specifically in territories that are part of the LACNIC service region<sup>1</sup>. Proposals should also focus on these territories.

In all cases, the following groups may apply to the FRIDA Program:

- Operators, IXPs, NOGs, or other actors in the technical community
- Universities, research centers, or working groups/experts
- Associations, cooperatives, and other civil society organizations
- Public and/or government agencies
- Private entities and/or companies

### 4. Non-reimbursable financial support and technical follow-up

#### Grants

Projects, initiatives, or solutions selected under the **Grants** format may each request financial support from US\$10,000 to US\$40,000. Any project carried out with the support of FRIDA must use open-source software and/or open-source hardware.

In addition to financial support, the FRIDA Program follows the execution of the project and provides opportunities for the dissemination of its results and the knowledge generated.

#### Awards

Projects, initiatives, or solutions selected under the **Awards** format will each receive a recognition from LACNIC, US\$10,000 in financial support, as well as a full fellowship (including travel and accommodation) to participate in the awards ceremony at the face-to-face LACNIC event closest to FRIDA's annual call for proposals.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the countries that make up the LACNIC service region, go to <https://www.lacnic.net/493/1/lacnic/area-de-cobertura>



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## 5. Categories and thematic axes

The categories, subcategories, and thematic axes defined for the FRIDA 2022 call for applications are listed below.

### 1. Internet Stability and Security

#### **Purpose:**

The Internet is under permanent construction. Ensuring Internet stability and security is essential to strengthen user trust and foster Internet growth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This line of funding focuses on four key themes or thematic axes and a subcategory related to the use and application of Blockchain technology for Internet stability and security.

#### **Themes:**

1. **Cybersecurity**
2. **Resilience**
3. **Interconnection**
4. **Network operation**

#### **Subcategory:**

#### **Use and Application of Blockchain Technology for Internet Stability and Security**

#### **Purpose:**

Projects presented in this category should focus on the use and application of Blockchain technology in relation to one of the four main thematic axes included in the **Internet Stability and Security** category, more specifically, Cybersecurity, Resilience, Interconnection, and Network Operation, and/or in relation to one or more specific subtopics.

In this subcategory, applicants may present research projects, case studies, and/or proofs of concept and/or prototypes designed to achieve practical goals and specific original results related to the use and application of Blockchain technology for Internet Stability and Security.

Since this is a recent area of study and practical application, projects should seek to obtain results that will contribute to practical and concrete solutions and/or to generate knowledge that may be useful to expand and promote the topic in our region.



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## 2. Internet Access and Connectivity

### **Purpose:**

With this category, FRIDA seeks to support projects, initiatives, or solutions to promote connectivity, quality of access, and the strengthening of regional Internet service providers. The category focuses on three themes:

### **Themes:**

#### **1. Internet Connectivity**

The goal of this theme is to provide funding for projects, initiatives, or solutions that seek to provide Internet connectivity to currently unconnected populations across Latin America and the Caribbean, rural areas and/or urban areas with poor Internet coverage.

This thematic axis focuses both on alternative access models through intranets, community-managed networks, and/or the installation of small and medium-sized ISPs, as well as on the development of affordable connectivity technologies (such as routers, tablets, processors, and others) and/or free software that will simplify the deployment of networks and reduce cost barriers to connection.

#### **2. Internet Access for a Quality Service**

The purpose of this theme is to support projects, initiatives, or solutions that focus on providing a quality service, either by increasing the quality of existing connectivity in terms of connection speed, coverage, network capacity, or based on the measurement and assessment of community access needs, as well as other related initiatives.

#### **3. Strategies for Strengthening ISPs**

With this thematic axis, FRIDA seeks to fund projects, initiatives, or solutions that focus on the challenges faced daily by regional internet service providers operating in a specific department or state, often in areas with access issues, via wireless technology and/or last-mile fiber optics, which serve an average of 2,000 mostly residential subscribers, and in many cases become leaders within their local communities due to their proximity and identification with their clients.

Proposals under this theme may focus on purchasing infrastructure and/or equipment, developing business strategies



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and/or internal training, improving interconnection, or meeting other needs to help promote the development of ISPs across Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **3. Open and Free Internet**

#### **Purpose:**

This category seeks to support projects, initiatives, or solutions that address the current challenges faced by Latin America and the Caribbean in relation to the Internet and human rights, as well as digital inclusion at the regional level.

#### **Themes:**

##### **1. The Internet and Human Rights**

The goal of this theme is to support projects, initiatives, or solutions that focus on the protection, promotion, and/or solution of challenges or needs related to human rights in areas such as freedom of expression, the right to privacy and data protection, human rights and the digital environment, the role of emerging technologies, and their impact on the Internet and human rights.

##### **2. Digital Inclusion**

With this theme, FRIDA seeks to support projects, initiatives, or solutions that address digital inclusion with a multidimensional approach, providing responses to challenges or needs related to the digital divide in terms of the digital skills and competences required by the future of education and employment, the barriers preventing access to the Internet, and the affordability gap (cost of access and devices).

### **6. Application process**

Before applying, it is important for applicants to identify the thematic area and type of support (grant, award) for which they will apply. Once these two aspects have been defined, applications must be submitted by completing an online application form.

All projects must be submitted through [FRIDA's Application Platform](#). Proposals will be accepted until Tuesday 31 May at 23:59 Uruguay time (UTC-3).

The application, evaluation, and selection process (for both grants and awards) **includes two stages:**



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Stage 1: Submission of a simplified application based on which the proposals that best meet the general requirements and criteria will be shortlisted. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit their full project.

Stage 2: Shortlisted proposals that submit the complete project will be technically evaluated.

In both stages of the process, proposals will be assessed based on the criteria listed below.

## **7. Requirements and evaluation criteria for shortlisting and selection**

### **General requirements**

1. The proposal must be in line with the goal of the FRIDA Program
2. The proposal must be submitted by a member of one of the **Beneficiary** categories
3. The beneficiaries must be based in Latin America and the Caribbean, specifically in the territories that are part of the LACNIC service region, which will also be the focus of the proposal and where the proposed activities will be conducted.
4. The proposal must apply to one of the thematic categories (Internet Stability and Security / Internet Access and Connectivity / Open and Free Internet) and relate to one of the program's thematic axes or subcategories (in the case of Stability and Security).
5. The proposal must meet the specific requirements defined for each category in terms of duration, funding, and open and free development.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation phase consists of determining whether the proposals meet the criteria above. Both during stage 1 (shortlisting) and stage 2 (final selection), proposals will be evaluated based on their relation to the criteria detailed below.

### **Primary Criteria:**

#### **1. RELEVANCE AND APPLICABILITY**

- 1.1. Regional needs and challenges
- 1.2. Knowledge and advances in the selected thematic category/axis
- 1.3. Consistency between objectives, methodology, proposed activities, and budget





1.4. Ability of the technical team and the proposing institution

## **2. EXPECTED OR ACHIEVED RESULTS AND IMPACT**

***Proposals will be scored considering the following specific criteria. However, not every proposal is expected to include and/or respond to all of them.***

2.1. Geographic area/population benefited by the project and/or coverage achieved

2.2. Technical developments (hardware/software/prototypes or others) and/or material results at a technological level

2.3. Strengthening/improvement of services provided

2.4. Development of knowledge at a practical and/or academic level (guides, methodologies, papers, academic publications and/or presentations at conferences) among others.

## **3. CONTINUITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND REPLICABILITY**

3.1. Potential for the project's continuity

3.2. Potential for the use/application of the results in other contexts/geographic areas or populations other than the regional target

3.3. Alliances with other institutions that may be generated/identified and/or developed

### **Secondary Criteria**

**Proposals related to the following criteria will be positively valued:**

1. Proposals that are innovative in terms of their methodological approach, proposed solution, and/or expected results
2. Proposals that include the gender perspective (proposals that address issues related to gender equality in the Internet ecosystem)
3. Proposals related to Sustainable Development Goals

## **8. Selection Committee (responsible for shortlisting and final selection)**

Members of the Selection Committee responsible for assessing the projects:

- Andrés Lombana Bermúdez
- Antonio Moreiras
- Arturo Servín
- Carolina Aguerre
- Carolina Cofré
- Elgeline Martis
- Ilán Meléndez



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## 9. Important Dates

- Call for applications opens: Wednesday, 27 April 2022
- Deadline for submitting project summaries: Tuesday, 31 May 2022 at 23:59 (UTC-3)
- Announcement of shortlisted projects: Thursday, 30 June 2022
- Submission of detailed proposals for shortlisted projects: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July to Friday 15 July 2022
- Announcement of results: Monday 15 August 2022

We recommend you read our frequently asked questions before submitting your proposal. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at: [frida@lacnic.net](mailto:frida@lacnic.net)



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