

V Open Science Forum
of Latin America and the Caribbean
CILAC 2026
Transforming our Region



Science that Solves

November 24-26th, 2026
Brasilia, Brazil

PUBLIC CALL FOR PROPOSALS

BASES

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Thematic Sessions Side Events

The call is now open for proposals for Thematic Sessions and Side Events for the Fifth [Open Science Forum of Latin America and the Caribbean](#) – CILAC 2026, to be held in **November 24 – 26, 2026, in Brasilia, Brazil.**

Proposals must be submitted in PDF format to forocilac@unesco.org by June 15th, 2026. Results Will be communicated to selected applicants on July 20th, 2026. Forms are available in multiple languages:

- [Spanish](#)
- [Portuguese](#)
- [English](#)

Under the theme ***Transforming Our Region: Science that Solves***, the V edition of the Forum seeks to create a dynamic and inclusive space for governments, universities, businesses, researchers, civil society, and media to debate, plan, and monitor scientific-technological integration in the region, and the role of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) in sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

A confluence of factors is shaping a new global landscape. It is no longer solely new geopolitical conditions within a multipolar world that are dominantly defining the future, but rather a set of mega-trends that will impact governments and their citizens. According to various analyses, this set of global trends presents new opportunities and challenges for humanity. Among the most frequently mentioned are:

- ***Demographic evolution***, with growth by developing countries, a greater concentration in Asia, moving towards the “demographic dividend”, with greater access to education and health, longer lives and greater mobility of humanity for freedom and equality, with large migrations and an urban, rather than rural, future;
- ***Technological revolution and convergence***, highlighting the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs), with more efficient production processes that allow the reallocation of resources towards social services, the need to generate innovative dynamics and manage the “digital divide”;
- ***Accelerated globalization***, with greater scientific and technological interdependence, greater flows of trade and investment and the formation of new regionalisms and free trade agreements, partially overlapping, with a greater role played by the countries of the south and the BRICS.

Given that these are the main trends to consider for the future, it is also necessary to mention certain risks and uncertainties that remain: global inequality, the depletion of non-renewable

resources, global warming, and financial and food crises. The well-known crises and conflicts reflect these tensions.

To collaboratively consider the management of a sustainable territory that enables the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Forum will prioritize four thematic areas, which, while not excluding other issues, aim to guide the discussions:

1. University-Society Relationship

Towards a New Social Contract for Knowledge. The transition from the traditional model of "University Extension" to a paradigm of **Comprehensive Engagement** requires higher education to act as a central node in local innovation ecosystems. This axis focuses on democratizing access to knowledge and co-creating territorial solutions through applied research. The goal is to move beyond the ivory tower and consolidate a permeable university, capable of responding to emerging social demands and strengthening scientific citizenship through the dialogue of knowledge.

2. Green Innovation: Bioeconomy, Decarbonization, and Energy Transition

Sustainability as an Engine of Systemic Competitiveness. The climate emergency imposes a reconfiguration of production matrices toward **low-carbon growth models**. This axis promotes the bioeconomy as a platform for adding value to natural resources through biotechnology, along with the deployment of clean energy infrastructure. Science policy must act as a catalyst for technological missions that reduce dependence on fossil fuels, fostering energy sovereignty that is both environmentally responsible and economically resilient.

3. Regional Governance and Territorial Agendas in STI

Decentralization and Federalization of Scientific Capabilities. Faced with historical asymmetries in resource distribution, it is imperative to design multi-level governance models that recognize the **productive and cultural specificities of each territory**. This axis proposes strengthening regional science, technology, and innovation (STI) systems through situated agendas that bring together local governments, the private sector, and academia. The goal is to transform local comparative advantages into dynamic competitive advantages, ensuring that science policy is an engine of territorial cohesion and social equity.

4. The Impact of AI on R&D

Digital Transformation and the Frontiers of the Scientific Method. Artificial Intelligence represents not only a technical tool, but a paradigm shift in the **architecture of discovery**. In the field of R&D, AI exponentially accelerates data processing, the simulation of complex models, and the automation of experimental processes. However, this underscores the need for ethical frameworks of "Open Science" and algorithmic regulation that guarantee scientific integrity, transparency, and the mitigation of biases, ensuring that automation enhances—and does not replace—critical thinking and human creativity.

The discussions held during the various sessions are expected to converge on the development of a regional agenda that coordinates efforts and generates positive synergies.

CILAC Forum invites participation in the discussion of these key areas, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, based on four areas of intervention:

1. **Science Policy:** How to strengthen dialogue among scientists, policymakers, and society by exchanging knowledge to formulate better public policies.
2. **Universities for Development:** The role of higher education, knowledge production and research in addressing the global challenges of the 21st century.
3. **Science for Business Innovation:** The role of businesses as drivers of technological change for sustainable development.
4. **Cultivating Science and Citizenship:** The use of science as a mechanism for strengthening social transformation and integration through knowledge, the arts, and culture.

Modalities of Work

The Forum is a multi-stakeholder dialogue, featuring **Plenary Conferences** led by renowned specialists from the region and around the world, as well as **Thematic Sessions** and **Side Events**. These events bring together Ministers, university rectors, business leaders, scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs and innovators, representatives of international and non-governmental organizations, and other relevant civil society actors for open and constructive discussions.

In parallel with the Forum, **decentralized activities** will be held in **public spaces** throughout **Brasilia** to promote science and foster connections between science, culture, and society.

In this way, the Forum constitutes a **pluralistic, coherent, and interconnected gathering** of diverse activities for reflection and proposals from the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Call for Thematic Sessions and Side Events

This public call is for those interested in submitting proposals for **Thematic Sessions** and **Side Events**. These are described below, along with the submission, admission, and selection criteria. An inter-institutional Academic Committee will evaluate the proposals received and select those to be included in the Forum's Final Program.

a) Thematic Sessions

Thematic Sessions will be organized by an institution or consortium of institutions, focusing on topics that fall within one of the four thematic areas or related issues, addressed from one of the four areas of intervention convened for the Forum.

Those selected will be incorporated into the official Forum program and will take place at some point during the three days of the Forum, in a space designated by the organizers.

The Forum has a limited number of slots available for Thematic Sessions, which will be distributed among the four areas of intervention according to the strategic priority of each area and the number of proposals received for each.

Proposals submitted to the Forum organizers must adhere to the format established for this type of activity, both in terms of time commitment and working methodology. The maximum time allotted for each session is 75 minutes, and participants may choose one of the following formats:

- **Conversation:** This format will focus on dialogue, featuring horizontal participation among specialists—at least 2 and a maximum of 5—and audience participation, moderated dynamically in a journalistic style. This activity will have a strong participatory tone between specialists and the audience.
- **Commented Presentation:** This format will include an initial presentation (a maximum of 20 minutes) that will serve as a starting point for discussion. This presentation will be commented on by at least one specialist—a maximum of two could be considered—(with a total of 20 minutes for the presenter's comments and responses). The remaining time (30 minutes) will be dedicated to a plenary debate with the attendees, guided by active and participatory moderation, followed by a 5-minute summary by the moderator, recording the most relevant points of the expert contributions and the plenary discussion.
- **Network meetings:** This modality is designed so that networks or groups seeking to establish themselves as such, related to the themes of the CILAC Forum, can hold meetings of their members within the framework of the meeting to be held in Brasilia.

b) Side Events

This category includes special activities not framed within the formats of the Thematic Sessions, and which demonstrate their relevance to the objectives of the 5th CILAC Open Forum 2026. Proposals in this category are expected to have innovative formats and methodologies and may require a significant workload (up to a maximum of 12 hours), even spanning more than one working day.

Side Events do not necessarily have to occur during the 3 days of the Forum; they can take place during the week before or after November 24-26. Those who submit the Parallel Event proposal will be responsible for its organization—this includes all aspects related to logistics, promotion, and coordination of the event's dynamics, event participants, etc. The Forum organizers may provide support to the extent possible.

As an example, Parallel Events could include Training Workshops, Project Labs, Film Forum series, etc.

Submission information

Each proposal must include relevant information for the Committee responsible for selecting the applications received:

1. Type of activity: Thematic Session or Side Event
2. Title of the Thematic Session or Side Event
3. Thematic area and area of intervention
4. Organizing institution(s)
5. Responsible Party(ies)
6. Justification and rationale, including reference to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda (maximum: 400 words).
7. General objectives of the activity and expected results (maximum 100 words).
8. Selected work modality ¹
9. Target group / community
10. Expected number of participants and method of dissemination/invitation.

The organizers of the proposals and their presenters will be invited to the **CILAC Forum 2026**, with the right to attend all activities included in the Program. To do so, they will be required to register as participants through the Forum's website: <http://www.forocilac.org>.

The CILAC Forum organization does not cover travel and accommodation costs (hotel, transportation, and meals) related to the submitted proposal. Organizers, presenters, and participants are responsible for all costs associated with their participation in the CILAC Forum.

Submission and Selection of Proposals

Official proposal forms must be submitted in PDF format to forocilac@unesco.org by **June 15th, 2026**. The results of the evaluation will be communicated to the project leaders of the selected proposals on **July 20th, 2026**.

The Academic Committee will be composed of representatives from the organizing institutions, and their names will be announced in due course.

The evaluation criteria for proposals will include the following:

- Alignment of the activity with the objectives of the CILAC 2026 Forum.
- Alignment of the proposal with the selected thematic area and area of intervention
- Relevance of the topic addressed in relation to the regional and/or local context, as well as its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.
- Regional, sub-regional, or global scope of the panel of speakers.
- Quality of the justification and supporting arguments presented.
- Track record of the organizing institution(s) and the participating speakers.

¹ For Thematic Sessions, participants must choose between a Conversation, a Guided Presentation, or Networking. For Side Events, the methodology to be used must be specified in detail, including the required time commitment (up to a maximum of 12 hours).

Download the official forms here: <https://forocilac.org/convocatoria-2026/>

**We look forward to receiving your proposals.
Join us at the CILAC Forum 2026 in Brasilia!**

Contact:

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