



Open Call

# nexBio Amazonia

## **Swiss-Brazilian Sustainable Innovation Program for the Bioeconomy**

Powered by Swissnex, the Swiss Leading House Latin America (University of St.Gallen), and the Brazilian National Council of State Funding Agencies (CONFAP), the nexBio Amazonia returns for its third edition as the Swiss-Brazilian Sustainable Innovation Program for the Bioeconomy.

### **Purpose of the Call**

The nexBio Amazonia bilateral program aims to initiate sustainable innovation projects in the Amazon region. It shall act as a platform and catalyst for new international partnerships between Switzerland and Brazil to develop and implement projects and solutions contributing to a sustainable, inclusive, and efficient bioeconomy. In response to the immediate threats of climate change and the loss of biodiversity, the main goal of this call is to jointly develop and implement innovative solutions with a positive impact on the socio-bioeconomy in the Amazon region.

The focus of the nexBio Amazonia program is to solve specific problems endemic to the region that were carefully defined through the consultation of local stakeholders and existing research. The program aims to provide the participants with connections, knowledge, and the required skills to navigate the ecosystem of the Amazon region.

The nexBio Amazonia program is a crucial first step to kickstart inclusive, lasting, and sustainable pilot projects with local context impact and thereby prepares participants to initiate location-specific partnerships and/or research collaboration.

The program is open to the participation of researchers and startups from Switzerland and Brazil, inviting them to contribute with their expertise to developing impactful solutions in the region.

## Services & Support

The nexBio Amazonia program is designed to substantially accelerate the implementation process of sustainable technologies and organizational/social processes, while also driving socio-bioeconomy research in the region.

To achieve this, the program offers:

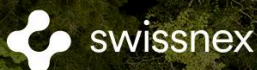
- Introduction to the Amazon Region's Innovation, Academia, and Research Environment: A tailored program designed to connect participants with the innovation and research communities in the Amazon region, providing valuable insights into local challenges, opportunities, and ongoing research efforts. This initiative fosters collaborations with local players, enabling participants to align their projects with region-specific needs.
- Immersion in the local innovation and research ecosystem and culture through workshops, mentoring, networking events, and field trips to local production sites in the Amazon.
- Encounters with potential partners and local stakeholders from industry, academia, government, and civil society.
- Connection with complementing local and international startup programs, accelerators, and funding mechanisms for the potential continuation of the project implementation.
- Training and support for the development and testing of a region-specific, sustainable business model.
- Support for the preparation of a thorough market validation in the Amazon region.
- Valuable exchanges with international peers within the nexBio cohort.
- Logistic and administrative support.

**The costs for travel and accommodation during the duration of the program, as well as for on-site trips, transportation, events, and meals will be fully covered by the program funding agencies. The nexBio Amazonia program will take place over two weeks in**

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**August 2026 in Manaus, Brazilian state of Amazonas, and Macapá, Brazilian state of Amapá.**

## **Focus Areas: startups**

The startups must contribute to the development of ready to market solutions for products, technology-based services, or methods, which have a significant market potential to bring sustainable change to existing production chains in the Amazon.

These solutions should adopt a bioeconomy perspective, promoting nature for innovation and using biological resources to generate food, energy, materials, and knowledge in a way that is integrated with nature's cycles. By incorporating scientific knowledge, technological innovation, and local expertise, the solution should promote sustainable production models and recognize dynamics that already operate using renewable resources, with a lower environmental impact in areas such as biotechnology, agriculture and green chemistry, among others. Plants, microorganisms, agricultural waste, and biodiversity itself are part of production systems that have been linking science, technology, and local knowledge for generations. Positive impact in these areas is the main criteria and the type of technology is only secondary.

### **Startup eligibility**

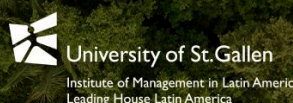
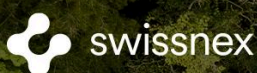
All applications must meet the following general eligibility criteria to be qualified for evaluation:

- The startup must demonstrate a strong case on how their solution will contribute to the sustainable development of the local socio-bioeconomy
- The project must be aligned with and strive for the SDGs
- The startup has a ready-to-market solution that, with the right partners, can be implemented in the short-term (minimum TRL 5, Ideal TRL 7 or higher)
- The solution should be a science-based innovation and add value to the bilateral cooperation in both countries

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For Swiss startups:

- The startup must have a Swiss University, University of Applied Sciences, or Federal Institute of Technology affiliation
- The startup does not necessarily have to be registered, grounded or have an official spin-off label

Only fully-filled proposals meeting all eligibility criteria will be considered for further evaluation.

## Brazilian startups:

Please note that only participants from states where the State Funding Agency – FAP - is a participant in the agreement to fund this program will be accepted. These are:

- State Funding Agency of Paraná - Fundação Araucária
- State Funding Agency of Amazonas - FAPEAM
- State Funding Agency of Amapá - FAPEAP
- State Funding Agency of São Paulo - FAPESP

Each FAP has its own guidelines associated with this call. Interested parties are advised to consult their supporting FAP before preparing a proposal.

## Focus Areas: research

The nexBio Amazonia program invites researchers from Brazilian and Swiss institutions to develop innovative and sustainable solutions to address the key challenges faced by the Amazon region. The program encourages research into technologies, methods, or products that can bring about meaningful and lasting change for local industries and ecosystems, while recognizing traditional knowledge and local production systems.

The researcher must be aligned with the areas of sociobioeconomics and contribute to the sustainable development of the local ecosystem. Potential areas are:

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- Biodiversity
- Food Systems
- Climate Change
- Social Sciences and Economy

The nexBio Amazonia program supports scientific research across a variety of key areas, with a focus on developing sustainable solutions for the Amazon region. These research areas are designed to foster interdisciplinary approaches that combine scientific innovation with local knowledge, addressing complex challenges faced by the Amazon region, while promoting sustainable development and environmental preservation. The specific research areas will be identified after careful consultation with the local academic environment and its priorities.

## Researcher eligibility

All applications must meet the following eligibility criteria to be qualified for evaluation:

- Researchers entitled to apply must be affiliated with a Brazilian or a Swiss research institution in any scientific discipline or field of study.
- The researcher must demonstrate a clear and strong research interest that contributes to the sustainable development of the local economy and ecosystem.
- The research axes must be aligned with and strive for the SDGs.
- The research topic should be science-driven and offer innovative contributions that add value to the bilateral cooperation in both countries.

Only fully-filled proposals meeting all eligibility criteria will be considered for evaluation.

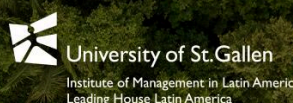
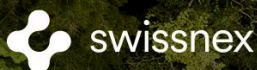
## Brazilian Researchers

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- State Funding Agency of São Paulo - FAPESP

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## Application

Applications shall be submitted in electronic format only through the online application form by midnight (GMT-3, Brazilian time) on Monday, May 18. Please submit the complete application on the Swissnex website according to the instructions, which will also require uploading your CV. Here you can find the link to the [application form for researchers](#) and the [application form for startups](#). The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the formal requirements are fulfilled, and that the content is accurate and complete. Otherwise, the application cannot be considered. All information provided in the administrative part and all uploaded documents must be written in English.

For Swiss participants: the responsibility for securing the necessary visa to enter Brazil rests solely with the applicant. It is the applicant's duty to ensure they meet all the requirements and complete the application process in accordance with Brazilian immigration regulations.

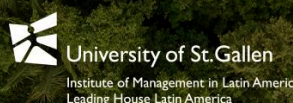
## Evaluation and Selection

The eligible applications will be evaluated by Swissnex in Brazil and the nexBio Amazonia program partners: the Swiss Leading House Latin America (University of St.Gallen), and the Brazilian National Council of State Funding Agencies (CONFAP), who will jointly select a cohort of startups and researchers from Switzerland and Brazil. The principal guiding criteria is the alignment of the application with the purpose of the call. To ensure the match of the technological solutions with the local challenges and context of the Amazon region, the evaluation process will be conducted with the consultation of local experts from academia, industry, government, and civil society. Pre-selected applicants will be invited for an online interview where they will pitch their startup (3 minutes) or research interests (3 minutes), followed by a Q&A (3 minutes). If accepted, the participants will be asked to sign a commitment form and will be required to submit a 5-page final report to

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Swissnex, the Swiss Leading House Latin America (University of St.Gallen) and CONFAP after the program.

For all Brazilian candidates, either startups and researchers, the participating FAPs are responsible to carry out an eligibility check before the online interview. Only candidates deemed eligible by the FAPs will be invited to an interview.

## Timeline

08 April	Launch of Joint Call for Brazilian (Startups) and Swiss applications (Researchers + Startups) Online
May 18	Application Deadline
	Announcement of pre-selection & invitation for interviews
	Interviews with pre-selected candidates: Pitch (3min) + Q&A (3min)
	Announcement of selected candidates
29 June	Online Kick-Off Meeting
3 August - 14 August	nexBio Amazonia program in the Amazon
30 September	Follow-up meeting and deadline for the 5-page final report

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## Contact Information

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