

2026 PIRALAD THEMATIC CALL FOR PROJECTS

Research on illicit supply and drug traffics

The present call for projects aims to allocate funding for research on illicit drug supply and drug traffics in France.

A. Context

Launched in March 2022, the Interministerial Program of Research Applied to the Fight against Drugs (PIRALAD) aims to promote applied research on illicit supply and drug traffics. This program is led by the Interministerial Mission for the Fight against Drugs and Addictive Behaviours (MILDECA), in partnership with the National Police and National Gendarmerie, the Ministry of Justice, the Directorate-General of Customs and indirect taxes (DGDDI), the National Mission for precursor chemicals control (MNCP), the French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT), the Ministry of Internal Affairs' Statistical Office (SSMSI).

In this regard, PIRALAD is launching a call for projects 2026 in order to fund research on illicit supply affecting France. In order to meet the needs for knowledge expressed by the administrations and State services involved in the fight against drugs, using a partnership approach, this call for projects will allow the research community to tackle this issue while benefiting from the support (in terms of funding and access to knowledge and diffusible information) of the administrations and services partnering with PIRALAD.

B. Goals

The PIRALAD 2026 Call for projects aims to support academic research and produce scientific knowledge about illicit supply and drug traffics in France, departments and Outre-mer regions included. The eligible research projects will cover the whole of the illegal supply spectrum: from production to retail, including financial and technological components as well as societal effects. They can focus on evolutions of the illicit supply's criminal phenomena, traffic actors (organizations and occupations), the modus operandi, methods, routes, etc. The call for projects covers the whole of illicit drugs without any distinction. Particular attention may be devoted to supply and traffics of products presenting the highest threat levels, current or predictable, in volume or in value.

In regards to the transnational aspect of drug trafficking, an international focal length may be included if it represents substantial benefit, particularly through providing prospective elements that could be useful to the analysis of issues involving or likely to involve national territory.

In 2026, priority will be given to research projects addressing the following themes:

- the production, processing, and trafficking of synthetic drugs (MDMA, cathinones, cannabinoids);
- the use of new technologies (social networks, e-commerce, online platforms, the darknet,

- encrypted phone networks, cryptocurrencies, etc.) in drug trafficking;
- economic approaches to drug trafficking;
- drug trafficking in airport environments.

Projects focusing on other themes will also be eligible, in particular those concerning:

- the actors, historical dynamics, and organizational developments of drug trafficking, including in the digital age;
- methods for laundering proceeds from drug trafficking and their evolution, particularly through the use of crypto-assets, compensation mechanisms, and other emerging arrangements;
- drug routes: actors and value chains from production to distribution;
- the socioeconomic consequences of illicit drug trafficking on the local and national (formal and informal) economy, both for residents and for businesses, commercial activities, and employment. These topics may usefully include issues related to violence and corruption, whether active or passive;
- representations related to trafficking revenues and, more broadly, to its financial aspects, as well as research aimed at deconstructing them;
- the production and processing of illicit drugs, including issues related to the flows and diversion of chemical precursors, as well as changes in routes, actors, and operating methods.

This PIRALAD 2026 Call for projects resolutely aims to inform the actors of public policies and promote scientifically based decision taking. Good knowledge about the institutional and juridical environment will represent a significant asset. Thus, the goals for this research are to objectivize evolutions of the phenomena and actors, to draw out market dynamics as well as current and future stakes for public action. Consideration of means, modes of action of the repressive services and juridical institutions (national, European or international) will be expected. It may include a comparative approach in order to identify public response put forward by European and foreign countries to suggest areas of improvement to the French public administration that is in charge of reducing illicit drug offer.

C. Organisation and selection process

PIRALAD's 2026 Call for projects will have the ability to fund research projects for a maximum of 36 months, with a maximum amount of 200 000 euros per project.

In regards to the transnational aspect of the themes studied for the PIRALAD 2026 call for projects, research projects from French and international teams will be eligible. Partnerships between French and foreign research teams will nevertheless be privileged during the selection. A translation of the summary of the results into French will be requested.

Access to the administrations collaborating with PIRALAD as well as part of their data and information will be implemented in connection with the services involved. Access to non-public data, may only be granted to research entities based in France.

Any research project funded by PIRALAD will have to follow specific and controlled procedures for their diffusion. Thus, the research teams will agree to confidentiality terms. The PIRALAD executive committee will be in charge of validating the terms of diffusion of the funded research projects and will arbitrate between the necessary confidentiality of some elements of the research and the publishing goals, notably in scientific journals, of the selected projects' research teams.

D. Selection and monitoring of the funded projects

The scientific committee in charge of the selection

A scientific committee designated by the PIRALAD executive committee will be in charge of selecting

the submitted projects. It will be composed of the executive committee members as well as external experts from both institutional and scientific spheres.

Expectations

The present call for projects will give particular attention to the projects' methodological quality. The projects are expected to clearly present the concepts they mobilize, justify their relevance for the analysis and present the variables and methods used to measure them empirically. The methods and scientific approaches will be described and referenced with academic work.

The research teams

Particular attention will be given to the constitution of the research team carrying out the project. Teamwork methods as well as commitments, responsibilities and investments for each member will have to be clarified in the submitted research projects. Recognized experience in the field illicit drug supply analysis and public response will represent a significant asset. A transnational approach will be welcomed insofar as it sheds light on problematics affecting France's situation.

Project conduct

The duration of the project must not exceed 36 months between the research convention signing date and the submission of the expected deliverables.

The project leaders will have to present a research calendar that matches the maximum delay mentioned above and to prepare to presentations of intermediate results to the scientific committee. The calendar must take into account the delays associated to access to data.

Selection procedure

The research teams are welcome to present their propositions, with a maximum of 10 pages. The document must include three distinct parts:

- a) A first part will describe the objectives, research hypotheses, methods employed and scientific sources as well as needs for public statistical data.
- b) A second part will be dedicated to the detailed description of the research teams and the tasks and functions of each member as well as the provisional calendar.
- c) A third part will specify the budget enquired by the applicant teams.

The scientific committee in charge of the projects selection, will reunite to examine the propositions according to the following criteria : scientific interest and accordance with the project's objectives ; quality of the approach and method, including its comparability with prior and international research, adequacy of the project's calendar with the duration of the contract, applicant research teams' profile.

Dossier submission

Deadline for electronic dossier submission:
May, the 13th 2026

To the following email address:
david.weinberger@pm.gouv.fr

The subject line must include:
Candidature_AAP_PIRALAD_2026_TITRE DU PROJET
Applications must be sent in PDF format.

Publication of the results June, the 30th -2026