



EDITORIAL

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In an interconnected world, innovation and knowledge know no borders. Today, more than ever, the Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD) reaffirms its commitment to strengthening institutional capacities, fostering organizational learning, and developing human talent to address challenges and drive social transformation in territories. This mission takes on new strength as UNAD joins WAITRO, the global network that brings together research institutions, universities, and technology centers from more than 70 countries.

Belonging to WAITRO represents much more than bringing UNAD's name into the international research arena. It is an opportunity to reinforce the strategy already underway through strategic alliances, joint research projects, identification of funding opportunities, and academic mobility that benefits our entire community—students, faculty, and researchers—as outlined in the Institutional Development Plan 2023–2034 UNAD 5.0 – More UNAD, More Equity.

Through this partnership, every member of the UNAD community can play a leading role in building innovative solutions to global challenges, participating in initiatives aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, and sharing the knowledge generated with the world.

Our goal with WAITRO is to build alternatives for eco-sustainable futures through participatory knowledge management, solidarity-based social entrepreneurship with a glocal (global ideas or strategies are adapted to the realities, needs, and particularities of the local context) and multidimensional vision, and the execution of social transformation projects for innovation that generate positive impact in the territories where UNAD is present. For us, being part of a global network is also a call to dream big, act collectively, and leave a meaningful mark on the future.

ABOUT US

WAITRO Executive Meeting 2025

As part of the network's annual planning activities, the WAITRO Executive Meeting 2025 will bring together the Secretariat, Regional Representatives, and Focal Points to discuss strategic and development priorities for the 2025–2026 period.

Date: Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 October 2025

Location: Fraunhofer Chile Offices, Santiago de Chile, Chile

WAITRO invites to the LAC Regional Strategy Workshop in Santiago de Chile

On **October 29, 2025**, WAITRO members from Latin America and the Caribbean will gather in **Santiago de Chile** for the **WAITRO Regional Strategy Workshop**.

The workshop aims to align members around WAITRO's five focus areas, map potential collaborative initiatives, and strengthen regional commitment. The agenda includes member presentations, networking opportunities, and collaborative sessions to design joint strategies.

Following the workshop, from November 2025 to January 2026, complementary activities will take place to consolidate the outcomes and advance the development of regional strategies.



Insights from the WAITRO LAC Round Table

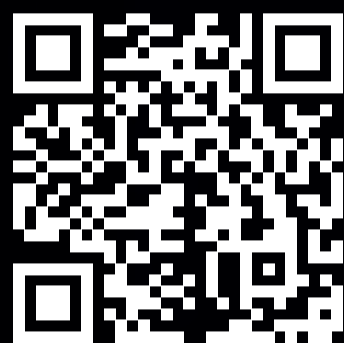
On September 30, the first Round Table WAITRO LAC took place, serving as a key preparatory step for the upcoming Regional Workshop in Santiago de Chile on October 29.

The session presented WAITRO's strategic focus areas and shared the results of a survey conducted among members, which highlighted common interests in fields such as international research collaboration, capacity development, technology transfer, innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as policy advocacy.

Priority thematic clusters for the region were also emphasized: health and biosciences; renewable energy and circular economy; nanotechnology and advanced materials; innovation and digital transformation; and environment and biodiversity.

The session concluded with an invitation for members to prepare their pitches and posters, which will be central inputs for the strategic discussions in Chile.

If you would like to revisit this session, access it here:

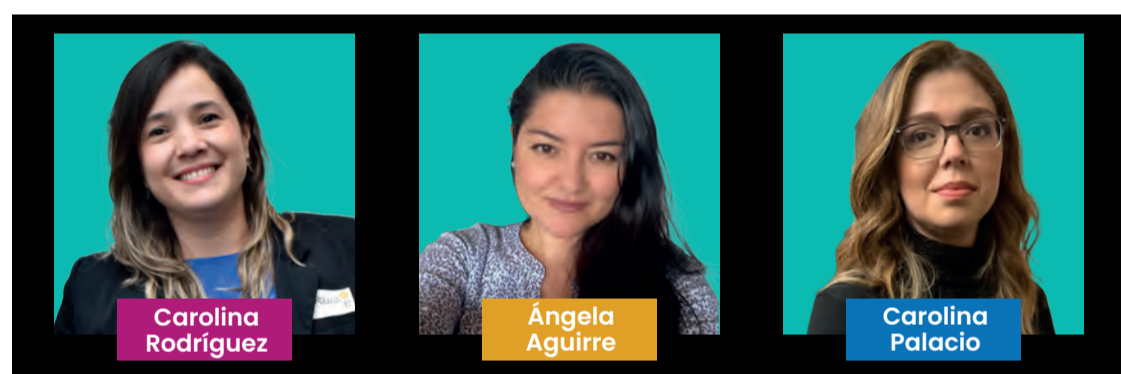


Lessons learned in project development with strategic partners

On August 14, we held the webinar "Project Development with Strategic Partners: Lessons Learned from CTA", a space where we shared real experiences of participating in international projects such as **Horizon Europe, Triangular Cooperation, Adelante2, and the Inter-American Development Bank.**

During the session, CTA's portfolio managers highlighted the importance of trust, transparent communication, clear roles, and cultural adaptation as key factors for the success of international partnerships. Best practices in project management were also presented, along with the main challenges faced in building consortia and administrative frameworks.

We invite you to watch the webinar and explore practical tools that we hope will inspire you to continue building high-impact projects in science, technology, and innovation.



CONNECT WITH THE WAITRO LAC NETWORK

Would you like to stay informed about the latest news, activities, and collaboration opportunities across Latin America and the Caribbean? Visit our microsite cta.org.co/waitro-rfp-web.

There you'll find updated information on projects, events, and success stories driving innovation and sustainable development in the region.

NEWS IN THE NETWORK

REGIONAL FOCUS SESSION: Understanding Horizon Europe

Capacity Development Initiative (CDI)

Regional Focus Session: Accessing and Navigating Horizon Europe



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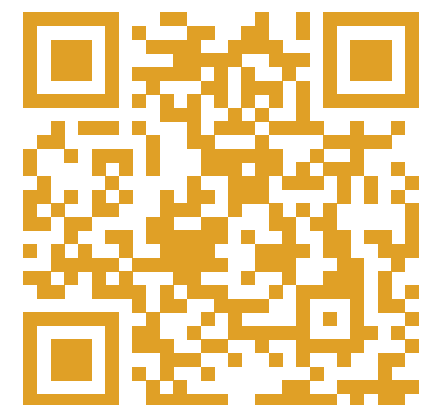
Simon Schmidt
Head of Department Fraunhofer IBP

Ilka Henze
Senior Project Manager Fraunhofer IZI

Erencan Bal
EIC/EIE/EIT National Contact Point TÜBİTAK

On **September 24, 2025**, the **WAITRO Regional Focus Session: Understanding Horizon Europe**, brought together experts, National Contact Points (NCPs), and WAITRO members to share experiences, strategies, and lessons learned about engaging with the European Union's flagship research and innovation program.

The session provided participants with practical insights into the structure of **Horizon Europe**, its funding instruments, and how to align proposals with EU priorities. Key topics included accessing and organizing information, identifying funding opportunities, interpreting calls, and success strategies for non-EU applicants.



All presentations and materials will soon be available on the **CDI Cloud**, supporting WAITRO members in strengthening their capacities for international collaboration.

PROTECTING CHILDREN'S VISION AND PSYCHOMOTOR SKILLS IN ANTIOQUIA

Air pollution not only impacts the lungs and heart, but it can also damage visual health and affect children's psychomotor abilities. During childhood, healthy vision is essential for learning, playing, and thriving. Recognizing this challenge, CES University in Antioquia has launched a new research program that brings together science, community engagement, and social knowledge sharing to strengthen territorial capacities for environmental risk management.

The program, titled "Integrated Territorial Surveillance of Environmental Risk in Visual and Psychomotor Health," will take place in Medellín, Salgar, and Tamesis, combining three key strategies:

1. Science to understand the problem: laboratory studies to reveal how air pollutants affect the cornea, retina, and other ocular in vitro tissues.



2. School-based evaluations: advanced optometry and physiotherapy tools to detect early visual and psychomotor issues in children.

3. Education and prevention: a replicable training model and care pathways designed to promote eye health and strengthen community responses.

The program will also implement a monitoring system to measure impact and ensure long-term benefits for local communities.

With this initiative, Antioquia takes a significant step toward protecting children's visual health and building cleaner, healthier environments for all.

iExplore
the new WAITRO
website!

WAITRO has launched its new and improved website – a more dynamic and user-friendly platform designed to keep members connected and informed. Discover the latest news, collaboration opportunities, events, and resources available for our global innovation community.

Visit waitro.org

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE WITH THE WAITRO NETWORK?

Send us your events, news, courses, certifications, or updates on joint projects with other members.

Be part of our upcoming newsletters – we'd love to hear from you!



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