

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MINCIENCIAS) was created by Law 1951 of 2019 as the governing body of the Science, Technology and Innovation System – ST&I. Its main purpose is to ensure that the knowledge generated from national research and technological development has a greater impact on the production system, and that it contributes to the solution of the problems of Colombian society. Some of its functions are listed below.

First, with respect to strategies and programs, the Ministry has the responsibility of designing, formulating, coordinating, and promoting and evaluating their implementation. This includes public policy, plans, programs, and strategies aimed at promoting and strengthening science, technology and innovation, in order to consolidate a society based on knowledge. In particular, the Ministry must be in charge of designing and executing the “National Plan for Science, Technology and Innovation;” direct and coordinate the “National System of Science, Technology and Innovation;” and to promote both human training in science and international cooperation, and the social appropriation of ST&I. All this in order to promote scientific, technological and innovation development in the country.

Second, with respect to the social integration of scientific and technological development, the Ministry has the responsibility of promoting the necessary conditions for scientific, technological and innovation developments to be related to the productive and social sectors. This in order to improve the living conditions of citizens: equity, productivity, competitiveness, entrepreneurship, and employment. For this reason, it must establish links with other administrative systems aimed at the advancement of science, technology and innovation. In other words, it must guide the creation of spaces and mechanisms to promote coordination, strengthening, and mutual cooperation of the entities that make up the National System of Science, Technology and Innovation (NSSTI).

Third, due to its nature as a governing body, the Ministry must establish the guidelines to be adopted

by both public and private entities for the development of activities in Science, Technology and Innovation. This includes defining the areas of knowledge (composition, organization, functioning), thematic lines, focus, and missions that guide the actions. Additionally, it must promote the creation and strengthening of financial institutions and instruments (from different sources) for the development of science, technology and innovation in the country.

Fourth, due to its interaction with the academy, it must consolidate the relationships between University, Business, State, and Society, in order to generate knowledge, technological development, innovation, and the transfer of knowledge between them. In this way, it promotes the strengthening of regional capacities in science, technological development and innovation to achieve the objectives and public policies defined by itself. Its functions also include promoting inter-institutional, interregional, and international cooperation among SNCTI actors, which is achieved through policies, plans, programs, projects, and activities designed and executed by the Ministry.

Finally, its responsibilities also include managing the National Fund for Financing Science, Technology and Innovation, the “Francisco José de Caldas Fund.”

In order to fulfill these responsibilities, a series of strategies and actions have been implemented and have two main objectives. On the one hand, to bring the productive sector closer to the national and international scientific system; on the other, to bring researchers and the institutions responsible for the production, application, and appropriation of knowledge closer to the concerns and needs of the company and society in general.

In addition to emphasizing the generation of results for society, the Law 1286 created a series of conditions so that the development of knowledge can be extended to all regions of the country. In this way, the research and development capacities that are located today in centers of greater growth use knowledge and innovation to help close the gaps that limit the possibility of responding to social and economic problems.

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