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Science and technology policies in Brazil lose 35 million Brazilian real

The Center for Community, University and Science Studies (SoU_Ciência) and the Serrapilheira Institute released this Thursday (7), on the eve of the National Science Day, a panel entitled “Financing of Science and Technology in Brazil”, with data on public support universities and research institutes, responsible for a large part of Brazilian science.

The survey shows that between 2010 and 2021, approximately R$35 billion of the R$64 billion raised by funding sources from the National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FNDC) are no longer allocated to science and technology policies in Brazil, in nominal terms, My pictures are just me, in name only. SoU_Ciência coordinator SoU_Ciência asks Soraya Smiley, “Given this fact, the path of research has become: Where will this resource that should have been directed to the scientific and technological development of Brazil?”.

The purpose of the survey, according to her, is to analyze the benefits, limitations and mistakes of the policy of expansion and financing of Brazilian higher education, science and technology, from the late 1980s to 2020, as well as to propose measures for a consistent new cycle of growth, committed to the needs of the democratic, sustainable and inclusive development of the country and its population.

She notes that after months of collecting data, the team of researchers at SoU_Ciência found that this balance was stuck in the national treasury account during the period until the enactment of Supplementary Law 177/2021, which would modernize the management of the National Development Fund. Scientific and Technological (FNDCT) will protect it from resource blockage by the public administration.

The researchers found that after the enactment of LC 177/2021, R$26.4 billion was deposited into the Financier of Innovation and Research (Finep) account. According to them, the amount refers to the balance accumulated between 2010 and 2020, which, according to calculations, is exactly 26,004,250,810.3375 Rls, added to the balance of the first months of 2021.

Soraya Smiley explained that this source was in Finep’s account for a short time until the 109/2021 Constitutional Amendment, which is in his art. 5, allowed the federal government to use the balances of all public funds, even with a specified destination, to amortize public debt for a period of two years.

“This, in practice, means that even with the approval of LC 177/2021, which transformed the FNDCT into a fiscal fund and blocked its contingency, the entire previous balance accumulated between 2010 and 2020, which exceeds the amount of R$26 billion that was deposited in Finep’s account, shortly after the activation of this letter of credit, was withdrawn from this account, explains the researcher, noting that the exception was about 3 billion Brazilian reals in reference to the collection of the contribution to the economic intervention (CIDE), which is subject to judiciary.

SoU_Ciência also notes that by publicly launching this symposium (last week the Center launched the Public Universities and Science Working Group in Defense of Life during the COVID-19 Pandemic), SoU_Ciência aims to contribute to the defense of science, universities and research institutes, and subsidize agendas and programs government under discussion in this presidential election year. The full survey of the Commission for the Financing of Science and Technology in Brazil can be found on the website Link.

Director of the President of the Instituto Serapelleira, Hugo Aguilanio, asserts that “Projects such as SoU_Ciência, which provide data and analyzes on the scientific production system, allow for a deeper understanding of the problems of this environment, providing a more accurate basis for actions in favor of science”.

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