Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator

APPLY BEFORE 1 MARCH 2023

An SDG Acceleration Programme by:

WFP World Food Programme | INNOVATION ACCELERATOR

Powered by:

LUXEMBOURG AID & DEVELOPMENT

Austrian Development Cooperation

Call for Applications

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) Innovation Accelerator sources, supports, and scales bold new solutions to disrupt global hunger and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

WFP is launching the *Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator Programme*, powered by the WFP Innovation Accelerator, the Government of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, and the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). We are in search of high-impact innovative solutions that strive to solve emergency and humanitarian challenges faced by vulnerable populations and humanitarian actors.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), in 2023, a record of 339 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection. This estimation implies a significant increase from the 274 million people in need at the beginning of 2022. The compounding challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing conflicts, and climate shocks, coupled with high inflation and rising operational costs and commodity prices, are increasing the needs in the humanitarian space.
The UN and partner organizations estimate that around US$51.5 billion will be required to assist 230 million people in need across 69 countries, which will still fall short of providing assistance to all those in need globally.

The *Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator Programme* aims to support **technology-powered solutions** addressing pressing global challenges faced in the humanitarian space. The programme will select ventures and solution providers who will receive financial, technical, and methodological support from the WFP Innovation Accelerator, and other partners. Together with the best and brightest minds globally, we will be able to ultimately improve the lives of vulnerable communities.

Application Deadline: 01 March 2023 11:59 pm (CET)

What We Offer

The *Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator Programme* has been designed to support ventures and solutions at different stages of development. As a result, in order to flexibly address and prioritize challenges being faced by applicants and their solutions, the Programme has *two workstreams: 1) Scaling and 2) Early Stage*. Based on the following solution maturity profiles, applicants will be able to classify themselves between the two workstreams and present any relevant evidence of progress:

Scaling Workstream

This workstream focuses on solutions that:

- Have already attained technology feasibility and are undergoing further optimizations according to the market interests.
- Have established users in one or more countries of the geographies of interest or a demonstrated proof of concept in a relevant context
- Are generating revenue.
- Have identified or implemented functional distribution models and enablers that can help them attain replicability in a viable manner.

Early Stage Workstream

This workstream focuses on solutions that:

- Are at least at a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) stage. Proof of concept is preferred.
- Have conducted pilot(s) or already established feasibility.
- Have identified revenue sources and, preferably, should be starting to generate revenue.

During the application review process, the applicable workstream will be confirmed based on the evidence presented by the applicants. *The WFP Innovation Accelerator reserves the right to reclassify applicants between workstreams.*

The selected ventures and solutions for both workstreams in the Programme will:

- Be invited to participate in a fully virtual WFP Innovation Bootcamp in early June 2023.
- Be invited to attend an in person pitch event in Luxembourg on June 29th, 2023.
- Be able to apply for the WFP Sprint Programme, which is a 6- to 12-month acceleration programme with access to:
    - Support from the WFP Innovation Accelerator and relevant partners through the duration of their Sprints.

- Mentorship and access to a global network of relevant stakeholders in the humanitarian space.
- Equity-free funding for the implementation of a proposed growth plan. Funding will depend on the corresponding workstream: up to US$500,000 in the Scaling workstream and up to US$130,000 in the Early Stage workstream.

Solutions that have proven their concepts, scale, and value for social impact may qualify for further funding and support.

The WFP Innovation Accelerator has a track record of organizing over 45 flagship innovation bootcamps to date, supporting over 395 teams to rapidly refine their innovations, field testing over 100 projects, and bringing disruptive innovations to scale. Join a high-impact network of over 300+ disruptive innovations that have positively impacted over 9 Million people in 2021.

What We Are Looking For

According to Global Humanitarian Overview, in 2023, a soaring 339 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection. Ongoing humanitarian conflicts and crises, ranging across the spectrum of violent conflicts, extreme weather conditions, forced displacements, and pandemics, have become more complex. These intersectional challenges require a shift from traditional humanitarian engagements to accommodate for new technologies, new approaches, and new partnerships. We believe that such advancements have the potential to transform the lives of vulnerable communities globally, address root causes of conflict and mitigate catastrophes.

The _Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator Programme_ aims to leverage the aforementioned advancements to improve and reduce risks in emergency management. Vulnerable communities affected by crises are at the core of the Programme's engagement and it is based on the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, independence, and impartiality. Through this first cohort, we are seeking innovations that enhance emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and prevention through use of the following technologies or approaches in humanitarian contexts:

- **Artificial Intelligence and Data Science:** Efficient data collection, management and engagement can provide humanitarian actors including governments, relief organizations, and the broader community with critical insights into needs and coordination of responses in a faster and more efficient manner. We are seeking solutions that use artificial intelligence and data science at various stages of the emergency management cycle. The use cases of the aforementioned methodologies can include, but are not limited to, data and information security, mobility data for risk

mapping, real time situational awareness dashboards, natural language processing based predictive analysis techniques, safety check platforms, fact checking systems and other interventions that can enhance response and decision making in humanitarian contexts.

- **Space/satellite Technology:** Humanitarian actors, including state and relief agencies, are increasingly relying on mitigating uncertainties through analytical tools with capabilities in predictive analysis, but also capabilities in other phases of the emergency management cycle. Satellite technology and satellite images have proved immensely useful in monitoring disasters, crises, and assessing human rights abuse and conflict. We are seeking solutions that utilize satellite, and geospatial technologies that can enhance any phase of the emergency management cycle. The use cases include, but are not limited to, Synthetic Aperture Radar, remote sensor based data collection and synthesis, and drones.

- **Healthtech**: Technology has been a key lever and equalizer in public health interventions to improve the health of people affected by humanitarian crises at various stages, including emergency care, healthcare for displaced populations, and healthcare for marginalized and vulnerable groups. We are seeking solutions that utilize any frontier technologies to address access to critical care, reduce emergency mortality, prevent and end gender based violence in conflict conditions. The use cases include, but are not limited to, electronic medical records for displaced populations, hotlines addressing gender based violence (including the LGBTQI+ community), prevention and control of pandemics, platforms for mental health and psycho-social support, provision of facilities and services for the maintenance of hygienic conditions, and the safe disposal of human waste.

- **Supply Chain and Logistics:** The design and management of supply chains and logistics are two critical aspects of the humanitarian aid impact and success**.** We are seeking solutions that leverage innovative practices, products or technologies and apply them for the enhancement of humanitarian supply chain and logistics. This can include functional areas such as coordination, relief measures, transportation and logistics, needs assessments, inventory management, warehousing, smart decision making, communication mechanisms in remote areas, systems to provide real-time supply chain information, among others. The use cases include, but are not limited to, innovative procurement platforms, cash based transfers, mobile wallets and money, drones, biometric solutions, solutions to greening the supply chain of the humanitarian response system through reducing packaging, CO2 emissions, etc.

We invite solutions, products, and/or business models that utilize the aforementioned technologies or functional domains to address "Saving Lives" in humanitarian settings with underlying challenges. We also encourage strong "wildcard ideas" solving challenges in humanitarian contexts to apply.

Geographies of Interest

Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Uganda, Mozambique, Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Kosovo, Albania, Moldova, Georgia, Laos, Niger, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iraq, Jordan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Armenia, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Mali, Senegal and Ukraine.

Eligibility Criteria

- Your organization must be an established legal entity (for-profit, non for profit, social business, NGO, INGO).
- The applicant organization should have a presence or willingness to build a presence in the country of implementation in the form of: a country office or other permanent presence, subsidiary, long-term operations or partnerships in the country, specifically with the relevant humanitarian actors.
- Your innovation clearly addresses one or more of the priority innovation areas related to pressing global challenges faced in the humanitarian space.
- Your innovation should match with the solution maturity profile for either the Scaling or Early Stage workstream in the programme.
- Your innovation should have a clear pathway to scale and a potential plan to implement during the 6- to 12-month Sprint with the available funding.
- Applicants are expected to have strong intentions to collaborate with relevant humanitarian stakeholders, build up soft links with the Luxembourgish and/or the Austrian economic sector, and connect with the innovation ecosystem of Luxembourg and Austria.
- Applications from and cooperations with NGOs are highly encouraged.

In accordance with the above mentioned requirements, your application will be evaluated according to the following criteria*:

- **Impact & Scalability:** Applicants should have a defined vision, an identified target group, and be able to demonstrate the potential to solve the posed challenge(s).
- **Team:** Applicants should be able to demonstrate having a diverse, non-discriminatory, and inclusive organization with demonstrated leadership and entrepreneurial mindset.
- **Novelty:** Applicants should be able to show how their solution and business model are innovative while being technically suitable, and viable.
- **Traction:** Applicants should be able to present evidence of feasibility and adoption by the target group.
- **Business Model:** Applicants should demonstrate the viability of their business model, how they intend to achieve a sustainable business, pricing, and financial model.

We reserve the right to adjust eligibility criteria based on the changing context as new information becomes available.

Application Process

1. To submit your application, please fill in the **Application Form** before **01 March 2023 11:59 pm (CET)**.
2. Or, if you know a relevant venture or solution for us to consider for this programme, please let us know by filling out **this Referral Submission Form**.
3. We will review and select successful applications to participate in a fully virtual WFP Innovation Bootcamp in June 2023. While we value all applications, we are only able to contact shortlisted applicants.
4. Interested, but don't feel your idea is ready yet? Don't let this stop you! You can still send your application as we are creating a pool of solutions with a focus on solving emergency and humanitarian challenges. This pool of solutions could be invited for future programmes.
5. For more information, see the **Frequently Asked Questions**.

About the WFP Innovation Accelerator

The WFP Innovation Accelerator sources, supports and scales high-impact innovations to disrupt hunger and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Based in Munich, Germany, we provide WFP employees, entrepreneurs and startups with funding, hands-on support and access to WFP's global operations. Through the Innovation Accelerator, WFP is leveraging unprecedented advances in digital innovation — such as mobile technology, artificial intelligence, big data, robotics and blockchain — and new business models to transform the way we serve vulnerable communities across the world. Since 2015, the WFP Innovation Accelerator has supported more than 100 projects, with 16 innovations scaling up to achieve significant impact. These projects have impacted 9 million lives in 2021 alone and will continue to do so, in support of WFP's humanitarian field operations.

Find out more about us: **wfp.org/enablers** and **innovation.wfp.org**. Subscribe to our **e-newsletter**. Follow us on **Twitter** and **LinkedIn**, and watch our videos on **YouTube**.