

WFP INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2022

Do you have an innovation with the potential to tackle the climate crisis?

Apply to the WFP Innovation Accelerator to receive up to USD 100,000 in equity-free funding, mentorship from industry experts and access to the world's largest humanitarian organization.

Deadline extended to 30 June 2022



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 (SDGs).

We've launched the **WFP Innovation Challenge 2022** in search of game-changing innovations to tackle the **climate crisis**.

Climate change is a risk multiplier for hunger. In a world that is 2°C warmer than pre-industrial times, at least 189 million more people are at risk of becoming food insecure. The global average temperature has risen by 1.1°C since the late nineteenth century, with most of this warming occurring in the past 35 years. Based on current emissions reduction policies, the world is on track to reach 1.5 °C of warming in the next decade, and 2.7°C by the end of the century.

The most food insecure people who are also most affected by the climate crisis live in fragile contexts. In these settings, the climate crisis compounds social tensions and economic instability, plunging millions of people into poverty and a struggle for survival. African countries are experiencing a more rapid warming trend than many other world regions, such as across the Sahel, where temperatures rise 1.5 times faster than the global average.

As a result of global warming, weather-related shocks such as drought, storms, and floods are increasing in number and frequency, causing growing losses and damages to food systems. In developing countries, the number of extreme weather events has more than doubled since the early 1990s.

Eradicating hunger requires bold efforts to improve communities' resilience to external shocks and local and national institutions' capacities to adapt to the impacts of climate change. This year's WFP Innovation Challenge seeks disruptive innovations that strengthen climate change adaptation in food systems and enable greater community resilience.

New application deadline: 30 June 2022 11:59 pm (CEST)

What We Offer

- Selected teams will be invited to participate in an intensive week-long WFP Innovation Bootcamp in Autumn 2022.
- Selected projects will be able to apply for the WFP Sprint Programme, a six-month acceleration programme providing up to US\$ 100,000 in equity-free funding, mentorship, and access to WFP's global network of partners and field operations across 120 countries and territories.
- Scaling innovations that have proven their concepts and value for social impact may qualify for further funding and support.
- The WFP Innovation Accelerator has a track record of organizing 41 flagship innovation bootcamps, supporting over 390 teams to rapidly refine their innovations, piloting over 100 projects within WFP operations, and bringing 16 disruptive innovations to scale. Projects supported by the WFP Innovation Accelerator positively impacted the lives of 9 million people in 2021 alone.

What We Are Looking For

WFP's current innovation priorities are listed here. We also encourage strong "wildcard ideas" to apply. Together with the brightest and best minds globally, we will be able to end hunger.

1. **RESTORE: Nature-based solutions and climate-resilient infrastructures**

WFP works with food insecure communities in degraded landscapes to restore livelihoods and ecosystems. In these settings, reversing environmental degradation and strengthening natural capital is a crucial step towards greater resilience. We are seeking innovative solutions that enable individuals and communities to better absorb and adapt to the effects of climate change and other shocks and stressors, allowing them to thrive in the long term. Specifically, we are looking for:

- *Data-driven solutions to identify the most effective actions that can support climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts in a specific country or location.*
- *Solutions to identify the most suitable alternatives to enhance soil fertility, water retention and soil structure for a given area, using locally available resources and reducing expenditure and reliance on chemical inputs.*
- *Solutions to improve the efficiency of farming methods and practices at a low cost, leading to savings and environmental benefits (e.g. fertilizer/compost use, water use, etc.).*
- *Solutions around restoring degraded ecosystems and farmland as natural buffers against climate shocks.*
- *Solutions to identify and scale up climate-resilient crops (including ancestral plants) and farming practices (including traditional knowledge) in a specific location.*
- *Solutions for monitoring and analyzing climate change trends in a specific area to identify livelihood alternatives that are more diversified and resilient to future climate scenarios (e.g.*

(shifts from fish farming to land farming resulting from changing climate conditions).

- *Solutions to increase and/or measure soil carbon sequestration potential.*
- *Rapid and affordable soil testing solutions (NPK, pH, etc.) that can be deployed at scale and inform targeted agricultural best practices.*
- *Innovative training approaches to support young people to develop agriculture skills (e.g. training on the maintenance of solar water pumps, soil analysis, compost making, etc.).*

2. ANTICIPATE: Pre-positioned finance and preventive action before disasters strike

WFP uses its expertise in risk analysis, early warning systems, and emergency preparedness to trigger forecast-based, anticipatory action at the community level before humanitarian crises materialize. To support WFP's work in this area, we are looking for:

- *Impact-based assessments to examine the cost-benefit relationship of acting (or not acting) ahead of a predicted extreme weather event.*
- *Skillful weather forecasting in coordination with national and regional centers to enable improved weather/seasonal forecasts to include people living in rural and hard-to-reach areas (e.g. using Cloud Computing, artificial intelligence post-processing, global ensemble models, etc.).*
- *Skillful early warnings for extreme (outlier) events for all types of floods (e.g. coastal flooding, river flooding, flash flooding), tropical cyclones, especially for Small Island Developing States (e.g. Fiji, Haiti, the Caribbean), heat waves, and other perils that impact food security, lives and livelihoods.*
- *Solutions that can be incorporated into governments' safety net programmes to help identify and locate populations that may be affected by an imminent weather hazard.*
- *Solutions to deliver early warning messaging to populations identified as being vulnerable to an imminent extreme weather event.*
- *Solutions enabling governments to use catastrophe bonds (CAT) or other financing mechanisms to enable pre-arranged financing to be triggered when an extreme weather event is forecast to occur.*

3. PROTECT: Climate risk insurance as safety nets for food insecure populations

WFP is a leading UN agency making climate risk insurance work for food insecure populations. In 2021, 2.6 million people were protected with climate risk insurance products that were developed or supported by WFP. To continue expanding and mainstreaming climate risk insurance solutions into WFP's operations, we are looking for:

- *Innovative solutions to bridge the protection gap between insured losses from climate-related disasters and actual losses and damages in vulnerable communities.*
- *Solutions to hindcast or backtest past yield data in specific locations and provide granular historical climate data at the village level.*
- *Solutions strengthening insurance products in the Global South:*
 - *Blockchain-based insurance products for more efficient and faster payouts.*
 - *Index-based insurance products for increasingly prevalent risks such as river floods or*

- tropical cyclones, specifically aimed at Small Island Developing States.*
 - Picture-based climate insurance solutions.
- Monitoring systems for insurance products and indexes to increase transparency of the end-to-end process for all stakeholders.
- Remote-sensing solutions to seasonal monitoring for micro- and macro-insurance products.

4. **ENERGIZE: Promote sustainable energy solutions in schools and communities**

WFP promotes clean cooking for its food assistance programmes in humanitarian settings and schools, as well as a transition to renewable energy to power agricultural activities of smallholder farmers. Under this priority area, we are looking for:

- *Highly scalable delivery models to provide affordable clean cooking (e.g. electric pressure cookers) and irrigation solutions to the people WFP serves.*
- *Solutions incentivizing the shift from diesel to solar-powered agricultural equipment for smallholder farmers and farmer cooperatives.*
- *Platforms for implementing and monitoring clean cooking in schools to generate and sell carbon credits from the prevented emissions from cooking.*
- *Affordable desalination solutions for agriculture.*
- *Easy to scale and affordable refrigeration solutions to prevent post-harvest losses in schools and agricultural value chains.*

Eligibility Criteria

Applications will be scored according to a standard set of criteria* set by the WFP Innovation Accelerator, including:

- Alignment with WFP operational priorities and the impact towards the Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger.
- The level of innovation the solution brings to WFP and the humanitarian sector at large.
- Indicators that the solution can be feasibly integrated and financed in the long-term, including the team qualifications.

*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 **30 June 2022 11:59 pm (CEST)**.
2. Or, if you know a relevant project that you would recommend for this innovation challenge, please let us know by completing **this Referral Submission Form**.
3. We will review and match successful applications with one of our WFP Innovation Bootcamps in the next six months. The next WFP Innovation Bootcamp will be held in

Autumn 2022. 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! We accept applications on a rolling basis throughout the year, and applications received past this deadline may still be considered for future programmes in 2023.
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. 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 and explore our portfolio of innovations in the [WFP Innovation Accelerator Year In Review 2021](#).

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](#).