

Call for Innovation

The *Digital Green Innovation Acceleration Programme (DGIx)* is a programme by the WFP Innovation Accelerator and the Smart Development Fund (#SDF), and powered by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union (EU). DGIx is in search of high-impact digital ventures and projects solving some of the most pressing environmental challenges in selected countries.

Digital transformation can play a major role in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss in low- and middle-income countries. A "twin transition" approach recognises this large and untapped role of technology and data to drive sustainability: instead of thinking about digitalization (using technology) and sustainability (taking care of the planet) separately, a twin transition strategy believes that these two changes can work together. It states that the technologies that help the environment and the ones that enable digital transformation, can both help us create stronger, more flexible, and better economies.

The DGIx aims to support technology-powered solutions addressing pressing environmental challenges. The programme will select ventures, solution providers and consortiums who will receive financial, technical, and methodological support from the WFP Innovation Accelerator, #SDF, and other partners. Together with the best and brightest minds globally, we will be able to leverage the digital-green synergies to ultimately improve the lives of vulnerable communities.

Application deadline extended:

1 October 2023 11:59 pm (CET)

What We Offer

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 120 projects, and bringing disruptive innovations to scale. Join a high-impact network of disruptive innovations that have reached over 37 Million people in 2022 alone.

The Smart Development Fund #SDF has so far refined, supported, and scaled 8 digital solutions from the global south expanding their impact in 32 countries, partnering with more than 360 institutions from the public, private, and social sector, directly benefiting 1.5 million persons and reaching more than 13 million individuals.

With a wealth of experience and profound expertise, the WFP Innovation Accelerator and the GIZ programme's Smart Development Fund #SDF, join their efforts to support digital innovations accelerate their growth and expand their impact globally.

The selected ventures and solutions will be:

- invited to participate in a fully virtual 4-day WFP Innovation Bootcamp in early December 2023.
- invited to attend an in-person pitch event in Kigali, Rwanda, on 31st January - 1st February 2024.
- be able to apply for the WFP Sprint Programme, which is a 12-month acceleration programme with access to:
    - support from the WFP Innovation Accelerator, GIZ and relevant partners through the duration of their Sprints,
    - mentorship and access to a global network of relevant stakeholders, and
    - equity-free funding of up to US$230,000 for the implementation of a proposed growth plan for ventures (funding amount for consortium applications will be determined on a case-by-case basis).
- given a chance to scale. Once they have proven their concepts, and value for social impact, the solutions could qualify for further funding and support in future programs or events within our alumni community.

What We Are Looking For

DGIx aims to leverage the aforementioned interconnectedness between digitalisation and climate change by utilising the potential of ventures and consortiums developing digital tools for climate action in the following areas:

1. **Adaptation: reducing potential damages and vulnerability associated with climate change.**

Integrating information and communication technologies/digital infrastructure for real time data and predictive analytics can reduce the loss and damages associated with climate change. We are looking for ventures and consortiums that are developing solutions for climate adaptation, ideally but not limited to one of the following functional areas:

- **Early warning systems and forecasting**: innovations that provide decision makers and communities with accurate and timely information, enabling them to design and implement proactive measures to mitigate risks and enhance preparedness for extreme weather events.
- **Biodiversity and wildlife protection and monitoring**: data-driven innovations that aid conservationists in making informed decisions, combat habitat loss, and counter illegal activities.
- **Sustainable and productive forestry**: innovations that enhance tree health monitoring, optimize timber harvesting, and promote reforestation efforts.
- **Improved livelihoods**: innovations that enable communities to effectively address climate-related challenges threatening the quality of their livelihoods, including lack of quality air or water.

The **use cases** include but are not limited to: flood mapping, SMS-based disaster management, flood alerts through messaging platforms and apps, Earth observation machine learning solutions for biodiversity protection, real-time air and water quality monitoring for communities, etc.

2. **Mitigation: curbing and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.**

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions requires reshaping our living, consumption patterns, and our economy. We are looking for ventures and consortiums that are developing solutions for climate change mitigation, ideally but not limited to one of the following functional areas:

- **Resilient transport infrastructure**: innovations that can dramatically optimize traffic flow, reduce congestion, promote regenerative modes of transport, enable intermodal mobility concepts, and minimize greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Urban planning and building design**: innovations used to inform the development of climate-responsive infrastructure, such as flood-resistant buildings, green spaces, and climate-sensitive urban layouts.
- **Sustainable supply chain**: innovations that enable real-time tracking of goods, routes optimisation, improving transparency and accountability in reducing carbon emissions, etc.
- **Green ICT**: innovations that can optimize energy consumption in data centers, encourage eco-friendly digital services, and empower users to manage their energy usage.

- **Circular economy initiatives**: innovations that help closing the material loops by providing/using accurate real-time data on the availability, location and condition of products, help minimise waste, promote longer life for products, reduce landfill dependency, etc.

The **use cases** of the aforementioned functional areas can include but are not limited to: traffic pattern analysing applications, integrated mobility apps, electric vehicle charging stations, waste management tracking through drones for municipalities, Internet of Things (IoT) sensors and blockchain provide real-time tracking of goods, etc.

3. **Resilience: anticipating, preparing, and recovering while incurring minimal damages.**

According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), climate-resilient pathways are development trajectories of combined mitigation and adaptation to help avoid "dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system". To be truly resilient, we need to embrace a comprehensive approach to enhance societal preparedness and adaptability of societies to climate uncertainties. We are looking for ventures and consortiums that are developing solutions for climate change resilience, ideally but not limited to one of the following functional areas:

- **Soil conservation**: innovations that aid farmers to make informed decisions through real-time insights and guidance into moisture, nutrients, and erosion.
- **Capacity building for farmers**: innovations that equip farmers with the skills needed to adopt innovative techniques, enhance productivity, and access to the market.
- **Agricultural water management**: innovations that help farmers achieve precise water delivery to the crops and ensure crop hydration based on their needs.
- **Community preparedness and capacity building**: innovations that ensure and strengthen community readiness and cohesion, enabling swift and effective responses in times of crisis at a community level.

The **use cases** of the aforementioned functional areas can include but need not be limited to: soil monitoring apps, e-learning modules and market linkage apps for farmers, Internet of Things (IoT) solutions for irrigation, open source street mapping, disaster preparedness hotlines, etc. We also encourage other green farming innovations that can tackle the negative impact of climate challenges to apply.

Geographies of Interest

Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, and Togo.

Eligibility Criteria

Please take the following factors into consideration before submitting your application to our programme:

- Your organization must have a presence (e.g., in the form of a country office or other permanent presence, subsidiary, long-term operations, etc.) and be locally rooted in the country of implementation.
- Your organization must be an established legal entity (for-profit, non for profit, social enterprise) for at least 2 years.
- Your innovation must be at least at the validated prototype stage, ideally with proof of traction, and a verified potential commercial value and impact.
- Your innovation should clearly address one or more of the priority innovation areas.
- Your innovation should have a clear pathway to scale (capacity to be adapted, expanded, replicated or scaled) along with a well defined implementation plan ready to be executed during the 12-month accelerator period using the available funding.
- Applications from consortiums and cooperations with local NGOs are highly encouraged.
- Solutions using open formats and approaches (Open Data, Open Hardware, Free and Open-Source Software, collaborative mapping and crowd-sensing) are encouraged.
- At least one of the team members must be fluent in English.
- We prioritize ventures that focus on promoting gender equality and empowering women, either through their beneficiaries, job creation, or by having a high representation of women in leadership positions.
- We also encourage applications from youth-led ventures.

Evaluation Criteria

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 **1 October 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. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us global.innovation@wfp.org (please indicate "DGIx-related inquiry" in the email heading), or feel free to attend the information session.

3. We will review and select successful applications to participate in a fully virtual WFP Innovation Bootcamp in December 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 123 projects, with 22 innovations scaling up to achieve significant impact. These projects have reached 37 million people across 88 countries in 2022 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**.

About the Smart Development Fund

The #SmartDevelopmentFund (#SDF) is a programme of the German Development Cooperation GIZ, under the patronage of the BMZ, EC, and "Team Europe" partners from other European Union Member States. With the primary goal of scaling digital innovations globally, the #SDF is committed to supporting innovators in accelerating their digital initiatives, including tech start-ups, digital entrepreneurs, NGOs, and social businesses, with particular emphasis on youth and women empowerment.

The impact of the #SDF has been significant, having already supported 9 digital innovations, scaling their solutions in 32 countries, reaching and engaging more than 13 million individuals worldwide.

Building upon these achievements, the #SDF is now launching its Digital & Green Innovation Challenge (DGIx) to support digital innovations of the global south in addressing climate challenges in their countries and beyond. By scaling existing local innovations, the #SDF aims to contribute to ensuring a just and inclusive digital green transition, where no one is left behind.

Find out more about us: On our official website https://sdf.d4dhub.eu/ and on BMZ Digital Global Driving innovation to counter global challenges | BMZ Digital.Global (bmz-digital.global)