

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Start-Ups and Companies

WFP Innovation Challenge seeks to identify and support disruptive social innovations that address key challenges in the fight against hunger. We encourage all creative and passionate individuals, teams, and organisations to submit their innovative solutions that can help eliminate hunger, build resilience to shocks and stress, improve access to safe and nutritious food, advance equitable livelihoods and youth engagement, strengthen climate change adaptation in food systems, and enable greater resilience for vulnerable communities in an increasingly adverse and unpredictable environment.

Together, we can work towards achieving our goal of zero hunger and transform the lives of those who need our help the most.

### What's in it for me?

By submitting your solution, you might be selected to attend the next WFP Innovation Bootcamp to take part in a three to five days long **WFP Innovation Bootcamp** and a **Pitch Event**. In addition, your solution may be considered for the **WFP Sprint Programme**, with up to USD 100,000 in funding, and access to our support and insight.

### What is the WFP Innovation Bootcamp?

WFP Innovation Bootcamps help selected teams dive into challenges, ideate solutions and refine project plans over three to five days. The Bootcamps introduce participants to innovation techniques such as human-centred design and the Lean start-up method in order to create viable business models and solutions for the communities WFP serves. Each Innovation Bootcamp team will be able to present during the WFP Pitch Event—an opportunity to share the solutions with an audience of investors and industry leaders who can help scale their innovations.

However, participation in the Bootcamp does not guarantee any individual or team a place in the WFP Sprint Programme. To be eligible for the WFP Sprint Programme, all teams must submit a separate application, after completing the Bootcamp.

[Check out this video](#) for a glimpse into our latest Pitch Event!

### What is the WFP Sprint Programme?

Our Sprint Programme is an intensive six-month acceleration programme that helps projects and start-ups reach proof of concept, develop prototypes ready for implementation and/or scale. Projects in this programme will receive guidance and space to bring their idea to life from the Munich-based Accelerator, and access to WFP's global network of partners and resources.

Teams may also receive up to USD 100,000 per Sprint, with further funding dependent upon progress and measurable achievement of key targets.

### Am I eligible to participate?

Yes! Anyone from a start-up, NGO, academic institution or government agency, stationed anywhere in the world, is eligible to submit an application.

### Do I need to have a team?

Yes, your project should have a dedicated team that will manage its overall execution. If your application to the WFP Sprint Programme is successful, you will also be assigned a

part-time project manager from the Accelerator to assist with the management and implementation of the project.

### **What do I need to apply?**

Your start-up, NGO or institution must be incorporated or recognized as a legal entity, and operating as a non-profit or for profit, at the time of application.

### **What are the types of innovations that you support?**

You can find examples of projects that we selected and accelerated on our [website](#).

### **What are the selection criteria?**

We are looking for solutions that:

- are transformative, novel or innovative;
- can have a strong impact on hunger and are scalable, particularly in low- and middle-income countries and settings;
- can prove initial traction and are at the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) stage;
- have a financially sustainable business model and growth strategy; and,
- are carried by a strong and diverse team with the relevant expertise and strengths to scale the solution.

### **How will the winners be selected?**

Applications will be scored according to the list of criteria above. Final decisions on successful applicants are made by the WFP Innovation Accelerator management, with the support of an Innovation Advisory Board consisting of WFP experts, Country Directors, and senior management.

### **What will we not fund?**

We discourage proposals that:

- do not present a clear innovation, or solutions that reiterate conventional approaches without offering a novel aspect;
- are exclusively focused on food production such as traditional farms, even if they can have a strong impact at the local level;
- are incompatible with the operating model of the WFP Innovation Accelerator;
- fail to demonstrate a proof of concept even at a small scale (from an operational perspective);
- lack quantified and substantiated evidence of impact; and,
- do not clearly consider the current context of financial systems and infrastructure in the relevant geographic regions.

### **How do I submit my application?**

To submit your solution, visit our [Application Page](#) and fill out the **Application Form**.

Please be sure to check your eligibility and that you have answered all required questions to the best of your ability. You will not be able to go back and edit it once the application has been submitted. Answering these questions will take you around 30 minutes – 1 hour.

### **Will my solution be published?**

No, all applications are confidential. Applicants will be contacted before any submitted information is shared externally.

**Can I apply more than once?**

Yes, you are welcome to submit as many applications as you want, as long as they are independent solutions.

**I'm unsure if my idea falls under WFP's mandate. Can I still submit my idea?**

Yes. The Accelerator provides high-level strategic support to ensure submitted solutions align with WFP's mandate. It is advised that you review WFP's corporate strategy and Country Strategic Plan in the country or context you seek to operate in (more information can be found [here](#)). In addition, have a look at our [current portfolio](#) for examples of the types of ventures we typically fund.

**What is the closing date?**

Applications can be submitted year-round via our [application page](#) and will be automatically considered for the WFP flagship Innovation Challenge. With specific cohorts, the deadline will be announced on the website and you will have to submit through a dedicated link.

Have questions about a specific cohort? Email us at [global.innovation@wfp.org](mailto:global.innovation@wfp.org).

**If my application is unsuccessful, am I able to receive feedback?**

Kindly note that the selection of the winners is based on a competitive process, including in-depth reviews made against a set of criteria (detailed above). We place priority on proposals that are deemed to have high potential in the fight against hunger—regardless of their geographical origins. While we value all applications and the Accelerator aims to provide feedback to all applicants, we are only able to contact shortlisted applicants.

**It's time. #DisruptHunger with us!**

For all other enquiries, please contact [global.innovation@wfp.org](mailto:global.innovation@wfp.org).

**About the WFP Innovation Accelerator**

The WFP Innovation Accelerator was launched by the UN World Food Programme in 2015 to source new ideas, sprint pilot projects, and scale high-impact innovations by connecting them with WFP's global network of staff and field operations in over 120 countries and territories. From its base in Munich, Germany, the Innovation Accelerator has grown to become one of the world's leading social impact startup accelerators. In 2023 the Innovation Accelerator is running 16 programmes addressing a wide range of social impact and sustainability issues, including climate change, primary healthcare, gender equality, and emergency response. In 2022 alone, its portfolio of over 150 innovations reached 37 million people worldwide. Since launch, that Innovation Accelerator has maintained a 2X annual growth rate, and secured over USD 200 million in grants. Learn more about us [innovation.wfp.org](https://innovation.wfp.org).

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