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.

The WFP Innovation Accelerator is launching the second edition of Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator (HIA), powered by the Government of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. HIA aims to support technology-powered solutions addressing pressing challenges faced by vulnerable populations and humanitarian actors. The platform supports selected ventures and solution providers with financial, technical, and methodological support from the WFP Innovation Accelerator and its partner ecosystem.

What we offer

- Participation in a co-creation experience and learning experience to activate your path to scale.
- Opportunity to pitch your solution on a global stage at the Luxembourg Humanitarian Days.
- Participation in ecosystem events and networking opportunities.
- Opportunity to apply for the WFP Sprint Programme, for up to 12 months of acceleration support and access to:
    - Support from the WFP Innovation Accelerator and relevant partners through the duration of the sprint.
    - Mentorship and access to a global network of relevant stakeholders in the humanitarian space.
    - Equity-free funding up to USD $150,000 for the implementation of a proposed scaling plan.

What we are looking for

As climate-induced disasters, conflict, and displacement escalate, humanitarian needs continue to grow, outpacing available resources. Addressing these complex and

interconnected challenges requires a shift from traditional humanitarian approaches to more adaptive, technology-driven solutions and strategic partnerships. Technological advancements have the potential to mitigate disasters, enhance emergency response efficiency, and transform the lives of vulnerable communities worldwide. HIA seeks proven, innovative, technology-driven solutions that enable crisis-affected communities to have access to information, financial resources, and essential infrastructure. Additionally, HIA seeks innovations that strengthen humanitarian organizations' crisis management and coordination capabilities.

We welcome applications from established startups, companies, NGOs, and organizations ready to scale impactful solutions for global humanitarian challenges to showcase their innovations that fit under one of themes below. We also welcome "wildcard" entries, including cutting-edge technologies that currently operate in other sectors but have strong potential to be adapted for humanitarian and emergency settings.

1. Bridging Information Gaps

Preparedness and emergency response efforts frequently fail to reach marginalized and last-mile communities due to language barriers, low connectivity, or lack of response mechanisms. Additionally, communities often struggle to distinguish between credible alerts and false information, leading to confusion, inaction, or misguided decisions. We are looking for solutions that enable humanitarian actors and affected communities to better access, interpret and act on relevant information, including, but not limited to:

- Technologies that help translate early warnings into anticipatory action to prepare communities, including language technology to improve communication, data quality and engagement; platform-agnostic systems to manage mis/disinformation during crises and ensure the dissemination of accurate information to affected communities; computer vision and natural language processing tools to identify misinformation on online platforms; crowdsourced credibility scoring tools for crisis information.

2. Enabling Financial Inclusion

Traditional funding mechanisms for humanitarian emergencies are often slow, reactive, and insufficient to meet the scale of crises, delaying response efforts and prolonging recovery. We are seeking innovations that empower affected communities by providing access to financial resources and reducing aid dependency. Potential solutions include:

- Microinsurance products tailored via dynamic risk assessment using AI/ML; blockchain-based or digital ID-verified mobile wallets that enable fast, secure, and transparent cash transfer especially in remote or underserved areas; peer to peer lending; AI-driven credit scoring models for displaced people; community-driven lending circles with tech enablement models.

3. **Strengthening Essential Infrastructure**

In humanitarian emergencies, critical infrastructure for energy, water, sanitation, waste management, and telecommunications are often destroyed or unavailable, worsening public health risks, limiting access to information and delaying recovery efforts. Technology is a key lever in critical utility systems interventions to improve the recovery of affected communities. We are seeking solutions that utilize technologies to address access to critical infrastructure including:

- Innovative emergency energy solutions; such as decentralized solar microgrids; portable renewable energy generators, and energy storage systems; can ensure access to electricity for affected populations.
- Rapid deployment WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) solutions; including mobile water purification units; IoT-enabled off-grid desalination systems; modular sanitation facilities; composting toilets; solutions that provide access to safe drinking water and improve hygiene in communities such as cloud-based tools using AI to optimize safe water
- Sustainable waste management in crisis settings; such as debris management aided by drone mapping and machine learning to identify and clear high-risk areas; waste-to-energy technologies; and eco-friendly disposal systems with sensor based sorting that can prevent disease outbreaks and reduce environmental hazards; circular economy approaches to humanitarian waste that can support sustainable rebuilding efforts.
- Connectivity in crisis settings such as; low-earth orbit satellite internet, satellite-based communication systems, and resilient network infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted connectivity.

4. **Enhancing Humanitarian Response Through Data and Technology**

Access to timely, accurate, and actionable data is crucial for crisis response, enabling frontline humanitarian actors to allocate resources efficiently, reduce duplication of efforts, and deliver aid effectively. However, fragmented data systems and poor communication channels often prevent responders from coordinating responses, delaying help and

increasing risks for affected communities. We seek solutions that enhance the capacity of humanitarian responders to coordinate efforts, allocate resources effectively, and improve crisis response outcomes. Solutions may include:

- Secure, user-friendly data-sharing platforms; biometric verification tools; mobile-friendly and offline-compatible data collection; voice-based entry systems; satellite data for crisis mapping; GIS resource tracking for improved logistics; demand forecasting tools; and needs aggregation tools or platforms to enable effective matching of demand and supply in preparedness and response efforts on the ground.

Geographies of interest

We strongly encourage applications from organizations implementing solutions in the following regions:

Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Laos, Libya, Lebanon, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar Niger, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen

* Applications outside these regions will still be considered if they demonstrate alignment with the call for applications and eligibility criteria.

Eligibility criteria

- Your organization must be an established legal entity (for-profit, non for profit, social business, NGO, INGO) for at least 2 years.
- Your organization either already has a presence in the country of implementation, has built partnerships or has evidence of interest from potential partners and stakeholders, specifically with relevant humanitarian actors.
- Your innovation should have a clear pathway to scale and a potential plan to implement during the 12-month Sprint with the available funding.
- Your solution must be beyond the prototype/pilot phase, with demonstrated evidence of user adoption, operational feasibility, and readiness to scale impact.
- Applicants are expected to build connections with the innovation ecosystem of Luxembourg

 * Key Considerations:

- We prioritize organizations that focus on empowering women, either through their beneficiaries, job creation, or by having a high representation of women in leadership positions.
- The organization pays attention to environmental protection, as well as social inclusion and cohesion.

Evaluation criteria

In accordance with the above, applications 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 they have a diverse, non-discriminatory, gender-balanced organization with demonstrated leadership and entrepreneurial mindset.
- **Novelty:** Applicants should be able to show how their solution is innovative and competitive while being technically suitable, and viable.
- **Traction:** Applicants should be able to present evidence of feasibility and adoption by the target group and strong engagement with relevant stakeholders.
- **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 **April 27, 11:59 pm (CEST)**
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 invite to HIA. While we value all applications, we are only able to contact shortlisted applicants.
4. For more information, see the **Frequently Asked Questions.**

Data Protection

No part of the information provided during the application will be made public nor used for any other purposes outside the Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator without the consent of the applicants.

The Government of Luxembourg's Commitment to Innovation

In a world facing multiple, overlapping crises, delivering timely and effective humanitarian assistance is becoming increasingly complex — with the most vulnerable communities often carrying the greatest burden. In this context, Luxembourg firmly believes that innovation and technology-driven solutions can play a key role in reshaping our approaches and transforming the way the humanitarian community responds to crises — in ways that are more inclusive, adaptive, and grounded in the realities on the ground. As a strong advocate for innovation in development cooperation and humanitarian action, Luxembourg is committed to advancing the use of innovative technologies while strengthening the capacities of local actors and systems — all in line with the fundamental principle of *"do no harm"*.

Building on the success of the first edition of the Humanitarian Innovation Accelerator, Luxembourg is pleased to join forces with WFP in launching the second edition of the HIA.

About the WFP Innovation Accelerator

The WFP Innovation Accelerator, launched in 2015, is a pioneering model in the United Nations system dedicated to source, support and scale high-impact innovations to end hunger and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Based in Munich, Germany, it provides WFP employees, entrepreneurs, and startups with funding, hands-on technical assistance, and access to WFP's global operations and network. Through the Accelerator, WFP is leveraging unprecedented advances in technology and new business models to transform the way it serves vulnerable communities across the world. In 2023, the innovations supported by the WFP Innovation Accelerator and WFP innovation network reached 60.7 million people across 70 countries and territories.

Aligned with WFP's commitment to the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development, the SDGx Acceleration unit was created in 2019 to respond to an increasing demand from humanitarian and development actors to adopt more innovative approaches. SDGx works in co-creation with startups, organizations, and coalitions to discover and scale innovations in a sustainable way.

Find out more about us: wfp.org/enablers and innovation.wfp.org. Subscribe to our [e-newsletter](). Follow us on [X]() and [LinkedIn](), and watch our videos on [YouTube]().