

# Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator

Apply by **30 September 2025**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Start-Ups and Companies

Shocks and stresses such as droughts, heatwaves, storms and floods are increasingly putting lives and livelihoods at risk, affecting the functioning of global food systems at all levels - from production to consumption and eroding development.

To address these growing crises, the World Food Programme, in partnership with the Adaptation Fund, launched the [Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator \(AFCIA\)](#) programme. This initiative aims to identify, support and scale high-impact innovations that enhance climate adaptation in vulnerable regions.

The food system value chain, encompassing natural resources, production, transformation, distribution and consumption, plays a crucial role in climate adaptation. Each stage of this chain faces unique challenges due to climate change. The programme addresses every link by promoting innovative solutions that enhance resilience and adaptability.

We call on innovators, entrepreneurs and changemakers to bring forward groundbreaking solutions to drive resilience, enhance climate adaptability and promote sustainable development in affected communities. The programme aims to support high-potential ventures with funding, mentorship, and hands-on support, preparing them for successful scaling. The accelerator programme aims to foster local and global collaborations, increase knowledge and evidence for climate adaptation, and promote successful climate innovations. By strengthening local capacities and fostering partnerships, we strive to enhance climate resilience and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 2: 'Zero Hunger' and SDG 13: 'Climate Action'.

**Join us in innovating, adapting, and building a more resilient future for communities on the front lines of climate change.**

# Programme Information

## What's in it for me?

Selected ventures will gain access to tailored support, including:

### Phase 1:

- **Innovation Bootcamp** in Munich with 4 days of tailored innovation coaching.
- **Visibility** across WFP social media channels and other platforms.
- **Mentorship** from a diverse pool of business and technical experts.

### Phase 2:

- Opportunity to apply and participate in the **Sprint Programme**, a 9-month acceleration journey with access to WFP's field operation for implementation, dedicated innovation support, innovation community and ecosystem events
- Over US\$ 1 million in **equity-free funding** for 10 to 12 ventures selected through a competitive process after the Innovation Bootcamp. Funding amounts depend on solution maturity and pilot proposal:
  - **up to US\$ 120,000** per seed-stage solution.
  - **up to US\$ 200,000** per growth or expansion-stage solution.
- Exposure to funders through an online pitch event at the end of the programme.

## What is the Innovation Bootcamp?

The Bootcamp is an intensive four-day workshop where selected teams refine their ideas, explore challenges, and develop practical project plans. Participants are introduced to innovation tools such as human-centered design and lean start-up methods.

⚠ *Please note: acceptance into the Bootcamp does not guarantee funding or acceptance to the Sprint programme.* ⚠

## What is the Sprint Programme?

The Sprint Programme is a nine-month acceleration journey for the most promising Bootcamp teams. It provides funding, mentorship, innovation ecosystem activities and operational support to help projects scale.

⚠ *Please note: only selected Bootcamp participants who have passed through further internal review will be invited to join the Sprint Programme.* ⚠

# Eligibility

## Who can apply?

Applicants must meet the following minimum criteria:

- Your organization must be a legally registered entity (for-profit, non-profit, social

business, NGO, or INGO).

- Your organization should have a presence or willingness to build a presence in one of the three targeted countries of this cohort - Nepal, Pakistan, or The Philippines. It could be an in-country office, subsidiary, pilot or formal partnerships.
- Your innovation addresses at least one of the priority areas in climate adaptation outlined in the [Call for Applications](#).
- Your innovation must be at **seed stage or beyond**. Idea and pre-seed solutions are not eligible.
- Your proposal must present a clear pathway to scale, with adequate resources and a realistic 9-month implementation plan for the Sprint Programme.
- Your proposal should demonstrate willingness to collaborate with humanitarian actors and innovation ecosystems.
- Your innovation must align with WFP's Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework. Any potential interventions classified as Category A, which indicate a high risk of irreversible negative impacts, are not eligible. Please refer to [WFP's Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework](#) (page 8) for more information on the risk categories.

### Which stage best describes my solution?

- Research and ideation stage: Early idea development; not yet tested with users. *Please note: innovation at this stage is not eligible.*
- Early pre-seed stage: Early testing with a small user group. You are beginning to gather evidence of its impact. *Please note: innovation at this stage is not eligible.*
- Seed stage: Market-ready product with initial evidence of qualitative or quantitative impact.
- Growth stage: You have evidence of impact and experience delivering the solution.
- Expansion stage: Large-scale implementation across multiple geographies with strong evidence of impact.

### Do I need to have a team?

Yes. A dedicated team is required to manage implementation. If selected, WFP will also assign an innovation consultant to oversee, support and guide the pilot execution.

## Funding

### What funding is available?

- Up to USD 120,000 per team for seed-stage solutions.
- Up to USD 200,000 per team for growth and expansion-stage solutions.

Funding is equity-free, meaning WFP will not take any share in your organization. The final amount will be determined based on agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the scope of the pilot, which are defined during the Bootcamp.

### If I am accepted into the bootcamp, will I receive the equity-free funding?

No. Bootcamp participation does not guarantee funding. It is considered as part of the

evaluation stage. Only those selected and confirmed for the Sprint Programme will receive support, and the disbursement of funding is contingent on the venture passing through further WFP internal review, including but not limited to operational and financial due diligence (more information in the next section).

## Selection

### What are the criteria for selection?

- Level of innovation/innovativeness: The solution is novel, innovative and has a strong climate adaptation regarding the mentioned themes.
- Relevance to the context: The solution addresses at least one of the above-mentioned priority areas, is suitable for at least one of the three country contexts, and provides concrete solutions to end-users or the ecosystem.
- Financial sustainability and scalability: The solution showcases a clear business model and a robust sustainable revenue model relative to its maturity stage.
- Team expertise and capabilities: Proven competence, technical coherence, commitment, motivation, entrepreneurial mindset and a diverse and inclusive team.
- Climate adaptation: The solution effectively enhances resilience to climate impacts, promotes sustainable practices, improves resource efficiency, and facilitates adaptive measures to address climate-related challenges.
- Level of Impact: Evidence of tangible historical and projected impact towards solving a defined challenge related to climate adaptation, demonstrating long-term, sustainable change beyond the grant period.
- Environmental and social sustainability: The solution adheres to the environmental and social principles of the Adaptation Fund.
- Gender and Inclusion: Solutions must address diverse user needs, enable inclusive participation and decision-making, and use disaggregated data and feedback to inform design and impact.

### Who will be selecting the winners?

Applications are reviewed and scored based on the criteria above. Final decisions are made jointly by a panel from WFP Innovation Accelerator and representatives from country offices.

### What will not be funded?

We will not be able to fund ventures:

- that lack innovativeness or replicate conventional approaches.
- that focused solely on traditional food production, even if they can have a strong impact on the local systems.
- that are at idea, research or early pre-seed stage.
- that cannot demonstrate measurable impact.
- that do not align with the call's priority topics or lack presence in targeted countries (Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines).
- that is classified as Category A based on [WFP's environmental and social sustainability framework](#) (page 8), indicating a high risk of irreversible negative impacts.

- that appears on the UN Security Council sanctions list or violates UN rules, policies and guidelines.
- that failed to pass the WFP's internal review, including but not limited to operational and financial due diligence.

### **What is the purpose of the due diligence process?**

All potential WFP partners, vendors, or grantees undergo a thorough due diligence process prior to entering into any formal agreement. This review includes, but is not limited to, operational and financial assessments to safeguard WFP's integrity, ensuring compliance and protecting WFP's ability to deliver assistance without political or reputational risk. As a United Nations agency, all partnership engagements with WFP follow the UN-wide guidelines that reflect the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. These standards ensure that any agreements with partners, vendors and grantees do not violate UN or WFP rules, policies, and guidelines. None of WFP's partners, vendors or grantees should appear on the UN Security Council sanctions list - the only sanctions regime that WFP is mandated to follow.

## **Application Process**

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

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

- Review eligibility before applying.
- Answer all required questions carefully (approx. 60 minutes to complete).
- Note that once submitted, applications cannot be edited.

### **What is the closing date?**

The innovation challenge is accepting applications until **30 September 2025, 11:59 pm (CEST)**.

### **Can I apply after 30 September 2025?**

No, the application portal will be closed.

### **Will my idea 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 or problems.

### **Will I receive a copy of my application?**

No. Due to system limitations, you will not receive an automatic copy. Please do save your responses before submitting.

### **How long will I hear back?**

Teams that passed through initial screenings will be contacted for interviews between October to November 2025. Final results will be shared by early 2026.

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

While we value all applications, unfortunately, we are only able to contact winning applicants due to limited capacity. We will not be able to provide feedback to every team. Kindly note that selection is highly competitive and based on rigorous evaluation criteria.

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

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

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

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

## About the WFP Innovation Accelerator

The WFP Innovation Accelerator was established by the United Nations (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 and field operations in over 120 countries and territories. From its base in Germany, the WFP Innovation Accelerator has grown to become one of the world's leading social impact startup accelerators.

In 2024, the WFP Innovation Accelerator ran 18 programmes addressing a wide range of social impact and sustainability issues, including climate change, primary healthcare, gender equality and emergency response with the support of WFP regional innovation hubs and country office innovation teams, portfolio ventures and its partners. Its portfolio, comprising over 86 innovations, reached 61 million individuals across 90 countries and territories in 2024. Since its launch, innovations supported by the WFP Innovation Accelerator have secured over US\$323 million in grant funding. The WFP Innovation Accelerator has been named as one of the 'Best Workplaces for Innovators' (2020, 2030, 2024), Most Innovative Companies (2017 and 2030) and 'Innovation Team of the Year' (2020) by Fast Company, for ongoing work in sourcing, nurturing, and scaling innovative start-ups focused on reducing global hunger.

WFP is a four-time winner of the Anthem Awards in 2022 and 2023. The award recognizes social impact work worldwide. The WFP Innovation Accelerator was named in Fast Company's lists of Innovation Team of the Year 2020, Best Workplaces for Innovators (2020, 2030, 2024) and Most Innovative Companies (Not-For-Profit) (2017 and 2030) and Innovation Leader of the Year finalist 2023. WFP's Share the Meal App won Best Apps of 2020 by Google and Apple.

Learn more about us at [innovation.wfp.org](https://innovation.wfp.org).