



mastercard  
foundation

Scholars Program

In partnership with



## Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at University of Rwanda

---

### Call for Applications

#### **Innovation Grants under the Scholars Entrepreneurship Fund (SEF 2.0) – Phase Two (2025–2026)**

#### **Background**

The Scholars Entrepreneurship Fund (SEF 2.0) is an initiative of the Mastercard Foundation, implemented under the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at the University of Rwanda in partnership with BAG Technologies. The Fund is designed to nurture and scale innovative, entrepreneurial, impactful, and scalable student-led solutions that respond to pressing community and national development challenges.

SEF 2.0 provides a structured, competitive pathway through which Scholars and non-Scholars collaboratively conceptualize, validate, and refine innovative business and social enterprise ideas that respond to pressing community, national, and global development challenges. Through a rigorous application, screening, and selection process, SEF 2.0 identifies promising teams and connects them to intensive entrepreneurship training, mentorship, and hands-on learning opportunities. The HATANA Innovation Bootcamp constitutes the core experiential learning platform, where shortlisted teams refine their ventures, develop compelling pitches, and competitively win grant funding to advance prototype development and venture implementation.

Building on the achievements of Phase One, SEF 2.0 Phase Two (2025–2026) seeks to identify high-potential undergraduate-led ventures that demonstrate strong alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), and Vision 2050.

Shortlisted teams will be invited to participate in the HATANA Innovation Bootcamp, scheduled for 23–28 March 2026 at the Kigali Conference & Exhibition Village (KCEV) in Kigali. During the bootcamp, teams will receive intensive entrepreneurship training, mentorship, and pitch development support, and will competitively be awarded grant funding of up to USD 5,000 to support the implementation and scaling of their ventures.

#### **Eligibility requirements**

To be considered for SEF 2.0 Phase Two, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Applicants must be undergraduate students at the University of Rwanda.
- Applications must be submitted by teams, not individuals.
- Each team must consist of a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of five (5) members.
- Each team must include at least one (1) Mastercard Foundation Scholar enrolled at the University of Rwanda.

---

*'360° Knowledge Accelerator towards dignifying work for young Africans'*



mastercard  
foundation

In partnership with



Scholars Program

## Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at University of Rwanda

---

- At least 70% of the team members must be female, in line with the Mastercard Foundation's gender inclusion principles.
- Team composition should reflect inclusivity, where applicable, including youth with disabilities, refugees, and international students.
- Teams may apply with or without a legally registered innovation/business idea.
- Each proposed business idea or project must address at least one Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) and demonstrate clear alignment with Rwanda's NST2 and/or Vision 2050 priorities.
- Proposed ideas must be innovative, original, and demonstrate clear potential for prototype development, scalability, and impact.
- Teams are encouraged to demonstrate a multidisciplinary approach in their project design and team composition.
- Teams must demonstrate full available and commitment to participate in the HATANA Innovation Bootcamp (23–28 March 2026) if selected.

### Key Dates and Timeline

- All eligible applications must be submitted **no later than 06 March 2026 at 23:59 (CAT)**. Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered.
- Pre-selection and shortlisting period: **07–22 March 2026**
- Notification of shortlisted teams: **By 22 March 2026**
- HATANA Innovation Bootcamp: **23–28 March 2026**
- Final pitching and grant award decisions: **28 March 2026**

### Application Procedure

The application and selection process for SEF 2.0 Phase Two will follow a structured and transparent approach:

- Interested teams review the eligibility requirements and prepare the required information.
- The designated team leader completes and submits the official online application form through the provided application link below by the deadline.
- Each application must clearly describe the problem statement, proposed solution, innovation model, target beneficiaries, and expected social and/or economic impact.
- Teams must provide full and accurate details of all team members, including roles and responsibilities.

Eligible teams must submit their applications through the official application link provided below:

<https://forms.gle/Fo8gh1isuAqmjLJC7>

**Note:** This application form must be completed by the team leader (designated contact person). Full and accurate details of all team members are mandatory.

---

*'360° Knowledge Accelerator towards dignifying work for young Africans'*



In partnership with



## Scholars Program

# Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at University of Rwanda

---

## Selection Process

The selection process for SEF 2.0 Phase Two will be conducted in three stages and will follow a structured and transparent approach:

1. Pre-selection of eligible applications
  - Submitted applications undergo an administrative and eligibility compliance screening.
2. Selection of shortlisted teams for participation in the HATANA Innovation Bootcamp
  - Eligible applications are subjected to a technical evaluation assessing innovation, feasibility, scalability, inclusivity, and alignment with SDGs, NST2, and Vision 2050.
  - Shortlisted teams are selected and formally invited to participate in the HATANA Innovation Bootcamp.
  - Selected teams receive official notifications and preparatory guidelines for bootcamp participation and final pitching.
3. Final selection and award of innovation grants to winning teams

Only teams that successfully complete all stages will be considered for grant funding.

## Support and Inquiries

For clarifications, technical support, or assistance in connecting with Mastercard Foundation Scholars for team formation, please contact: **Dr. Alphonse Nshimiyimana** (Placement, Transition & Partnerships) at [a.nshimiyimana1@ur.ac.rw](mailto:a.nshimiyimana1@ur.ac.rw)

Done at Kigali, on ...../...../2026

**Assoc. Prof. KAYIHURA Muganga Didas**  
Acting Vice Chancellor  
University of Rwanda