



CALL FOR INNOVATION PROPOSALS

I. CALL DESCRIPTION

1. Background and purpose of the call

According to its 2016-2025 Strategic Plan, University of Rwanda (UR) aspires to be an internationally recognized University that excels in research and innovation, teaching and learning as well as community engagement. One of the UR objectives is to increase the participation of UR staff and students in the society to benefit national and regional development, by using the expertise available to bring solutions to the needs expressed by the society. It is in this context that UR supported collaborative innovation projects through a call that was launched in 2018. In addition, UR organized a number of training sessions for students as part of creating a culture of innovation and equip them with entrepreneurship skills. These efforts led to a great number of innovative ideas that need to be taken forward. The present call is launched to address this demand.

2. Call for innovation proposals

The University of Rwanda through UR Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (UR-CIE) calls for innovation proposals, whether social or technological.

- (a) Expected innovation proposals should aim at co-developing and/or testing the **working prototype(s)** of innovations addressing challenges in relation to sustainable development; thus bring solutions to real problems faced by the communities.
- (b) Collaboration of the UR and key stakeholders from public and private sectors, and the beneficiaries is mandatory.
- (c) Areas of support also include provision of intellectual property (IP) services such as IP protection
- (d) The type of support to seek should not necessarily be financial; applicants can also seek one of the following supports as long as it is the only need they face: coaching/advisory or supervision role, working space, and any other non-financial need.





The applicant should clarify which area(s) s/he requests support (e.g. prototyping, testing or use, transfer of knowledge, and IP protection). Depending on the nature of the proposed innovation and the availability of the budget, UR-CIE reserves the rights to offer support to all requested areas, few of them or only one of the areas upon discussion with the applicants.

Basic definitions

In order to help applicants having a correct understanding of “what is innovation” and come up with expected innovations, the present call also includes the basic definitions (below). Correct understanding of “what is innovation” will be considered as an essential criterion during the selection process of the best proposals. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Oslo manual (<https://www.oecd.org/science/oslo-manual-2018-9789264304604-en.htm>);

- The general definition of an innovation is as follows:
An innovation is a new or improved product or process (or combination thereof) that differs significantly from the unit's previous products or processes and that has been made available to potential users (product) or brought into use by the unit (process).
- Social and Technological innovations:
 - *Social innovation is innovations defined by their social objectives to improve the welfare of individuals or communities.*
 - *Technology refers to the state of knowledge on how to convert resources into outputs. This includes the practical use and application to business processes or products of technical methods, systems, devices, skills and practices. Technological innovation falls under application of technology to develop or improve products, processes, and services.*
- The basic definitions of a product and business process innovation are as follows:
 - *A product innovation is a new or improved good or service that differs significantly from the firm's previous goods or services and that has been introduced on the market.*
 - *A business process innovation is a new or improved business process for one or more business functions that differs significantly from the firm's previous business processes and that has been brought into use by the firm.*

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3. Who should apply?

a) Students

The academic department where the student comes from should assign a Project Leader from the academic staff members to mentor the Student(s) and to be responsible for administrative and legal matters associated with the project. But the project should remain the student property.

b) UR academic staff members

3. Criteria for selection

The proposed innovation should meet the following general criteria:

- The project should contribute to the *country's priorities* (Relevance to the National Developmental Agenda);
- The project should describe clearly the innovation and how it will work;
- The project should respond/bring solutions to *identified problem(s)* in the Country/community/society;
- The proposed innovation project should demonstrate *sustainability* in terms of its completion, continuation and exit strategy (i.e. applicability).
- The project should be jointly developed and implemented with identified *partners* from the public and private sectors, civil society and NGOs to be able to identify/address a real life problem;
- The project should respond/bring solutions to *identified problem(s)* in the Country/community/society;
- The project should be supported by *evidence of actual or prospective demand*; and
- The proposal should clearly indicate the beneficiaries of the project outcomes; should *benefit* the stakeholders such as Industry, Policy Makers, Farmers, Community Groups and Private sector (i.e. justification of the innovative aspect of the proposed project) (benefit should not be restricted to the individual applicant, or his/her family);
- The proposal should demonstrate what resources it will use to make the proposed innovation and indicate the source of the inputs.

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In addition the proposed innovation project should demonstrate whether:

- The project team has the practical capability to deliver the project;
- The targets, indicators and milestones are realistic and measurable;
- The need for funding is clearly demonstrated;
- There is value for money (i.e. the balance of proposed costs and UR support vs the outcomes sought) (e.g. by comparison with other initiatives for example).
- The the proposed innovation project demonstrates high degree of local *appropriateness* in terms of its intervention and its delivery method;
- The intended innovation is “environmental friendly” (will positively affect the environment / will not negatively affect the environment).

4. Administrative and legal measures, and intellectual property

- Prior to allocation of any support, there will be signing of a contract between UR and the Innovation Project Leader, along with terms and conditions regarding the implementation of the project (implementation phases, partnership building, contract period, allocated amount and disbursement modalities, monitoring, evaluation and accountability provisions, dispute settling, among others).
- In case an innovation project comes from Student(s), his/her academic Department should assign a Project Leader to mentor the Student(s) and to be responsible for administrative and legal matters associated with the project. However, the Student(s) remain the project author, as outlined in the University policies.
- Any Intellectual Property created from supported innovation projects will be proteted and managed in accrdance with UR Intellectual Property Policy.

5. Submission of proposals, format and guidelines

To apply, open the link below:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfGftszPyInaJAeuCUslFVJgAtA0vMhTH8t9UHJ7Dg9yi7NpA/viewform>

6. Deadline for submission of proposals

The deadline for submission of proposals is 25 October 2019 by 5:00 pm CoB (see “Timeline” below).





7. Selection process

A pre-selection based on formal requirements and adherence to the template will be conducted at the UR-CIE. At the next stage, the UR Management will put in place a selection Committee. Selected innovation proposals will be announced, and get seed funding after contract signing for project implementation.

8. Timeline

#	Event	Date/Period
1	Submission of proposals deadline	25 October 2019
2	Pre-selection	28 Oct – 01 Nov 2019
3	Selection Committee (SC) meeting	11 November 2019
4	Evaluation of Proposals (SC)	11 – 15 Nov 2019
5	Announcement of evaluation results, written feedbacks to applicants (+ Offer letters)	20 November 2019
6	Discussions on and improvement of implementation roadmaps & budget, for proposals recommended for funding	25 – 29 Nov 2019
7	Contracts signing between UR and Innovators	
8	Bank account open for Innovators	02 – 06 Dec 2019
9	Preliminary coaching workshop, and initiation of implementation phases	16 – 20 Dec 2019

9. Additional information

Additional information should be sought from the Director of the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Dr. Emile Bienvenu; ebienvenu3@gmail.com).


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Cc:

- The Vice-Chancellor
 - The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (All)
 - The Coordinator, UR-Sweeden Program
- University of Rwanda**