

Development Impact Grants (DI grants)

Why Development Impact Grants?

The annual Development Impact Grants competition challenges students to identify and develop innovative solutions for real-world social and environmental problems. The competition will be launched by CODEV in March 2018 and currently offers grants of CHF 5'000 - 10'000 for project proposals submitted by EPFL Bachelor, Master or PhD students. CODEV will provide guidance, mentorship and networking opportunities to the teams in collaboration with external partners.

This is an opportunity for EPFL students to get entrepreneurship experience and reinforce transversal project management, interdisciplinary team work, communication, fundraising and networking skills. Most importantly, students get a chance to test an idea that aims to have a real and positive impact in the global South by contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Who can apply?

The Cooperation and Development Center invites EPFL Bachelor, Master and PhD students to apply for Development Impact Grants. Development Impact Grants are intended to support the piloting or advancement of a technological innovation supporting the implementation of the SDGs. The innovation may be an intervention (a new technology-driven product or service that responds to a specific development challenge) or a measurement tool (an innovation which improves the capture of development outcomes).

Selection criteria

Eligible applications will be reviewed by CODEV staff and invited external experts. Successful applications will contribute to the emerging field of Development Engineering by combining insights from social science with advances in engineering and the natural sciences. CODEV will not fund projects that focus exclusively on technology design, prototyping, or modeling without consideration for the social, economic, and institutional factors that affect technology adoption. At the same time, proposals that lack a technological innovation will not be funded either.

Applications will be scored according to the following criteria:

Significance of Project: The project will focus on a social, economic or environmental pressing challenge that directly affects sustainable development. The authors provide empirical evidence, theory, or model predictions suggesting that a) the proposed solution will address the identified development challenge, and b) the solution is superior to existing approaches, and c) there is likely to be adequate demand or take-up of the solution.

Approach and Feasibility: The specific questions to be answered during the grant period are well defined, and it is clear how the results will inform future work. The entrepreneurship idea integrates different disciplinary perspectives—including social or economic aspects—as required for successful implementation. The project team, activities, timelines, milestones and resources are realistic and relevant.

Long-term Vision for Scale: The entrepreneurship idea has a compelling long-term vision. Successful applications will demonstrate reasonable plans for carrying the project forward beyond the life of the grant, and will present a vision for how the proposed project will eventually transition out of EPFL (e.g. external take-up or scale-up).

Deadlines

The deadline to apply is April 30, 2018. If awarded, work may begin as early as June 1, 2018 and must be completed by May 31, 2019. Apply by filling out the application template to:

corinne.waridel@epfl.ch If possible include a support letter from a person (internal or external to EPFL) stating how he or she will supervise/support this project.

About CODEV

CODEV promotes innovative technologies for social and economic development in the Global South. It implements its missions through research and education programs. Its team is interdisciplinary.

<http://cooperation.epfl.ch>