

AUF COVID-19 PANDEMIC SPECIAL PLAN

INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR PROJECTS

Terms of Reference

I. Context and issues

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic facing the world, the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), true to its values of solidarity and sharing, has put in place a vast **action plan for** its member institutions and partners. See (in english and french) : <https://www.auf.org/nouvelles/actualites/plan-dactions-de-lauf-special-pandemie-covid-19/>

Among the programmed actions (Axis IV - Action 10), the AUF proposes **an exceptional international call for projects with an accelerated and simplified submission, evaluation and selection process**, designed to support the numerous initiatives linked to the pandemic that are emerging in the highly responsive, ingenious and responsible higher education space. This space particularly relies on creative and innovative collaborative networks of students, teachers and researchers.

II. Objectives

General objective: to value the contribution of AUF member institutions to the development of solutions with immediate technological and/or social impact, in order to help health systems and populations to face the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specific objective: to support the development of innovative and frugal initiatives, adapted to their ecosystem and with immediate impact.

III. Beneficiaries

- **Final beneficiaries:** Health structures. Structures caring for sick, vulnerable or isolated people. Structures fighting against gender-based violence (increasing in periods of lockdown).
- **Direct beneficiaries of the funding:** higher education institutions that are members of the AUF for the benefit of : students, student associations or clubs, student-engineers, young researchers, laboratories or research centres with young researchers, fablabs or incubators leaders and makers.

IV. Eligibility Criteria

Projects may be submitted by higher education institutions or research structures that are **members of the AUF**, as well as academic networks that are members of the AUF. See : https://www.auf.org/les_membres/nos-membres/

The call prioritizes projects from student communities in the fight against COVID-19. However, the project coordinator must be a permanent teacher or researcher from one of these institutions.

Projects from countries with advanced and well-funded university structures will be selected if they involve higher education institutions from countries with intermediate or emerging structures.

The call will mainly finance small projects to be carried out quickly but may exceptionally support the deployment of international projects, already mature, to promote local adaptation or scientific/technological transfer.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) will be eligible to apply in a **partnership led by** an AUF member institution.

Projects that rely on **public-private collaborations** will also be **valued**, particularly companies that wish to invest in the university system, for the benefit of the health ecosystem.

V. Domains :

Any initiative with a technological, economic and/or social impact that can be assessed in the very short term is eligible.

It can be an aid or support solution, as well as a manufactured product. For example (non-exhaustive list): production of essential equipment for care, protection or prevention of health risks (masks, gloves, disinfectants, respirators, swabs, etc.), public health actions, development of applications, development of decision-making tools, communication and awareness-raising on the prevention of health risks, assistance to vulnerable or isolated people, prevention of the psychological or socio-economic impacts of the health crisis, combating violence against women and children in periods of lockdown.

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VI. Expected results

The results of the project must have an impact in the very short term, in response to the health crisis.

VII. Budget :

In view of the urgency and the immense needs, the AUF is dedicating an exceptional fund of 500,000 euros to this call.

Budgetarily, the projects to be submitted are divided into 2 categories:

- **Category A projects** (projects with an immediate technological, economic and/or social impact) :
 - A1- project budget is less than 10,000 euros
 - A2- project budget is between 10,000 and 20,000 euros
- **Category B projects** (exceptional, high-impact or particularly innovative projects with an inter-regional or international dimension):
 - B- project budget is up to 50,000 euros

Eligible expenditure :

- Purchase of raw materials and transport costs
- Purchase of equipment, consumables and transport costs
- Rental of equipment
- Costs of compliance or certification tests, or of possible homologation
- Communication costs
- Missions and travels, subject to the rules in force adopted by the Governments concerned
- Internet and telecommunications

Due to the exceptional nature of this call, the selected institution will not be able to receive **either management or personnel costs.**

Projects offering **co-financing, public or private**, will be particularly welcome.

The budget may be paid to the institution on which the project leader depends or managed directly by the AUF regional branch concerned. The most efficient and quickest solution will be preferred.

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VIII. Evaluation :

The projects will be evaluated by **international experts committees, brought together by the AUF Regional Branch where the project will be deployed.**

The AUF will give priority to the following criteria:

- Usefulness, innovation and speed of project implementation
- Project developed in a collaborative manner between universities and civil society
- Project completed in the very short term (three months maximum)
- Technological, economic or social impact that can be assessed in the very short term (six months maximum)
- Prototype in compliance with national regulations (tested, approved, certified or in progress...)
- Project promoting open solutions (open source code, open hardware, deliverables under free license ...)
- Project reproducible to other areas, with or without adjustment
- Special attention to women-led projects

IX. Calendar :

- Call publication date: Friday, April 10, 2020
- Deadline for submission of forms on the platform: Sunday 3 May 2020 at 24:00 midnight (Paris time)
- Date of publication of results: Friday, May 15, 2020
- Duration of the project (excluding evaluation): from 1 June 2020 to 31 August 2020 (with the possibility of an extension of 1 or 2 months if necessary, depending on the evolution of the health situation)

X. Formalities :

Download the response form to the call for projects : **[HERE \(French\)](#)**

Link to the deposit platform: <https://formulaire.auf.org> (free prior registration)

XI. Contacts :

Any request for clarification may be sent to the following address until Tuesday, April 28 at 12:00 noon (Paris time): appel-covid19@auf.org.