GIZ Innovation Fund: Information for External Partners

What is the GIZ Innovation Fund?

The GIZ Innovation Fund is a company-wide Call for Ideas and Accelerator Programme open to all GIZ employees who can team up with external partners. It was created with the aim of promoting innovative ideas that have the potential to enhance the effectiveness of GIZ projects. In addition, the GIZ Innovation Fund nurtures a culture of experimentation and agile ways of working within GIZ. It is organised and implemented by the Methods, Digital Transformation and Innovation division in GIZ's Sectoral Department since 2017. To get an impression from the previous rounds, have a look at the videos from our bootcamp 2020 and the final pitch 2018.

Who can take part?

GIZ staff members, development workers and integrated experts can submit ideas. They can team up with external parties (ministries, start-ups, NGOs, students, freelancers…) or target groups and form a team of three up to six persons.

Please note: External partners cannot participate alone without the support of GIZ employees. At least two team members must work in GIZ projects (max. one intern). Furthermore, we highly recommend forming diverse teams, e.g. regarding gender, cultural background, expertise and skill set. As the whole programme will be in English, all team members should have a good command of English. Please ensure that all team members will stay on board throughout the entire process.

Why should I join?

The GIZ Innovation Fund offers you the opportunity to join a GIZ team to develop and implement an innovative idea that tackles an existing challenge or need in our partner countries. Each team that makes it to the 6-months Accelerator Programme receives:

- invitation to a virtual bootcamp,
- support & training in Human Centered Design by a professional coach,
- up to €20,000 in financial support to cover the team's costs for developing a Minimum Viable Product,
- administrative support from the GIZ Innovation Fund secretariat,
- invitation to a virtual mid-term workshop (29. - 30. September 2020) and final pitch event (25. November 2020),
- the chance to get continued support and funding as one of the two teams that make it to the Maturation phase

As an external partner, you can enrich your team's work with your unique expertise, skills and networks. If you are representing a specific target group within your team, your perspective is especially important to ensure that the right problem is getting tackled and the solution is creating the desired impact. Furthermore, participating in the Accelerator Programme helps you building a valuable network regarding potential future cooperation with GIZ and its partner systems.

How much funding do we get?

Each team that makes it to the Accelerator Programme receives up to €20,000 in funding to cover costs for developing and testing their solution. The GIZ Innovation Fund is however not seed money for financing the growth of external start-ups.

What kind of ideas are we looking for?

The GIZ Innovation Fund 2020 challenge question is: **10x more by 2030: What´s your idea to boost the impact and sustainability of our projects?** - We are looking for ideas that push development and GIZ services

substantially forward by thinking differently, boldly and creatively in all directions: this may be through new tools or apps, alternative approaches or solutions, new products or services, new partnerships, or other modes of delivery.

Ideas may engage in future relevant subjects and paradigms, such as Circular Economy or Smart Cities, or take in technological trends into account, such as Open Technologies or Artificial Intelligence. There are no boundaries, as long as the idea boosts the impact of GIZ's work in the partnering countries.

We want to take part! What do we do?
The application for the third round closed on April 29, 2020. The next Call for Ideas will be kicked off in early 2021.

To submit your idea, your team has to answer the following six questions (max 250 words each, in English language):
1. What is the underlying problem or need from a user's or beneficiary's perspective?
2. What is your unique approach for addressing the need and how is this need currently being addressed?
3. What would you do differently than others?
4. Who might be interested in collaborating with you and why?
5. Who might be interested in investing in or buying your solution and why?
6. Who is in your team and what are your backgrounds?

In addition, teams have the chance to upload a photo or short clip to provide more background about the team and their idea. Your team members from GIZ can upload your application during the submission phase on a GIZ internal platform.

How is the selection process working?
After the Call for Ideas, there are six teams proceeding to the Accelerator. Two ideas were selected by the community voting on an GIZ internal platform (4 May – 8 May 2020) and four by an expert jury. The jury is composed of two GIZ internal and three external experts who selected four ideas from a shortlist. The six winning teams that made it to Accelerator Programme were announced in mid of May.

How does the process of the Accelerator look like?

From all teams that applied during the Call for Ideas, six teams get selected by the community and jury for the six-months Accelerator Programme. Accompanied by professional coaches and endowed with a budget of EUR 20.000, each team iteratively develops and tests their idea using human-centered design approaches, such as Design Thinking. The Accelerator Programme kicks off with the bootcamp in mid of June 2020 where all six teams

come together in a new and exciting online format. They will get an introduction to human-centered design, work together with their coaches on their ideas, and learn about the journey ahead. Towards the end of the Accelerator Programme, the teams will come together again for a 2-day workshop to prepare their pitches. Right afterwards, the teams present their Minimum Viable Products (MVP) to the jury, the GIZ management board, and interested staff at the grande finale – the Final Pitch Event. The Final Pitch will take place on November 25, 2020. Due to the global health crisis, both the workshop and pitch it will be in 2020 in an online setting. The two teams with the most promising concepts get selected for the consecutive Maturation Phase where they receive further support and funding.

What is the timeline of the GIZ Innovation Fund 2020?
- Idea submission: 5 March – 29 April 2020
- Community voting: 5 – 8 May
- Jury Evaluation: 11 – 18 May
- Announcement of all winners: Mid of May
- Virtual Bootcamp: Mid of June
- Accelerator: June to November
- Virtual Mid-Term Workshop: 29. - 30. September 2020
- Virtual Final Workshop & Pitch: 23 - 25. November 2020
- Maturation Phase: 2021

How much time will I need to participate in the Accelerator Programme?
The time for development and testing highly depends on the ideas. The teams from the last two rounds reported that they needed up to one day per week on average. On November 25, 2020, the teams will present their ideas in a virtual event to the jury, GIZ's Management Board and interested staff.

What about Intellectual Property?
GIZ's General Terms & Conditions (§1.7) apply. This means that if the external party contributes to the co-creation process, the ownership rights for the newly created work must be transferred to GIZ where possible or published under a Creative Common License. The GIZ needs to hold the rights to the developed solutions in order to make their implementation in GIZ projects possible. If the transfer of the ownership rights is not possible, there is the possibility for a special written agreement. However, this must be approved by the legal department. It is not permitted to deviate from this without further ado. The rights of use are held by all participants, which is recorded in writing at the beginning of the Accelerator Programme in the form of an NDA.

In accordance with the nine Principles for Digital Development Cooperation (Digital Principles) signed by GIZ, we want to encourage the teams and their partners to license the results of their work under Creative Commons licenses wherever possible. This supports scaling of the solution through continuous development or unrestricted use by other parties. We kindly offer to advise you on choosing the right Creative Common license.

Contact & further information:
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