AgriTech4Uzbekistan Innovation Challenge

Terms of Reference

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(Last update on 5 July 2023)

Goal and Objectives

The AgriTech4Uzbekistan Innovation Challenge is powered by the CGIAR Accelerate for Impact Platform and co-designed with CGIAR centers ICARDA, IWMI, and the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT. The project is implemented in collaboration with IT Park, innoWIUT Entrepreneur's Lab of Westminster International University in Tashkent, the Agency of Innovative Development under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Agriculture of Uzbekistan through the AKIS Center, the United Nations Development Programme Uzbekistan, Indorama, and the Uzbekistan Venture Capital Association.

This project, organized as part of the CGIAR Regional Integrated Initiative, Fragility to Resilience in Central and West Asia and North Africa (F2R-CWANA), aims to scout, accelerate, and fund science-based agri-food and climate-tech innovations (i.e., products, services, technologies) that can make agriculture in Uzbekistan sustainable, more efficient, and resilient to climate change while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Timeline

Who Can Apply

- AgriTech4Uzbekistan is a global call for innovators (national and international) who are working to develop agri-food and climate-tech solutions that can be applied to agriculture in Uzbekistan and the Central Asian region.
- Applications are open to all maturity stages.
- **Only** early-stage innovations with a Minimum-Viable-Product (MVP) or Proof-of-Concept (POC) will be eligible for the bootcamp and acceleration program.
- Selected innovations at the growth stage and beyond with a sustainable business model will be invited to pitch their solutions to investors, industry experts, agribusinesses, scientists,

and the media at the final demo day. These teams will not compete for the AgriTech4Uzbekistan awards.

- A minimum of 2 slots are reserved for CGIAR-led innovations that are designed, implemented, or relevant to the Uzbek context, and whose teams have a demonstrated willingness to adopt an entrepreneurial approach to their innovations.

Priority Areas

Applications must address **at least one** of the priority areas that could likely contribute to make agriculture in Uzbekistan sustainable, efficient, and more resilient to climate change.

- **Digital agriculture and precision farming:** Solutions seeking to introduce and support the adoption of precision agriculture tools to modernize local farm systems and practices.
- **Capacity building:** Solutions seeking to increase the awareness level about digital technologies and innovations among farmers and value chain actors, by introducing solutions to modernize training modules on agricultural practices and inputs.
- **Water management and irrigation systems:** Solutions seeking to address water scarcity, security, and high salinity by optimizing water management to improve irrigation systems.
- **Financial services:** Solutions seeking to facilitate access to adequate financial services for stakeholders, especially for women entrepreneurs, to enhance lending and commercialization.
- **Supply chain management:** Solutions seeking to modernize supply chains to reduce inefficiencies, delays, and significant losses while improving the quality of food products for producers and consumers.

Solutions

AgriTech4Uzbekistan is looking for solutions, that include but are not limited to:

- Automation & Robotics
- Big Data, IoT, Remote Sensing & Precision Farming
- Smart Irrigation Technologies
- Novel Farming System, Indoor & Vertical Farming Technologies
- Biotechnology, Genetics, Crop Protection & Animal Welfare
- Circular Economy, Waste Management & Retreatment
- Farm Management Software, Advisory Services & Weather Data
- Educational Tech
- Trading Platforms & FinTech
- Supply Chain Technologies, Logistics Optimization & Storage Solutions
- Food Processing & Packaging
- New Sales Channels

Eligibility Criteria

- The solution addresses a real market need in Uzbekistan and falls under at least one of the priority areas.
- The applicant is a committed and purpose-driven entrepreneur or researcher (e.g., PhD, postdoctoral students, engineers, technicians, practitioners etc.).
- The solution aligns with/is relevant to one or more CGIAR's Impact Areas.
- The innovation has a Minimum-Viable-Product (MVP) or Proof-of-Concept (POC).
- The applicant is the sole inventor and copyright holder.

What We Offer

AgriTech4Uzbekistan offers a comprehensive range of resources and connections to help innovators thrive through business training, technical assistance, and financial support.
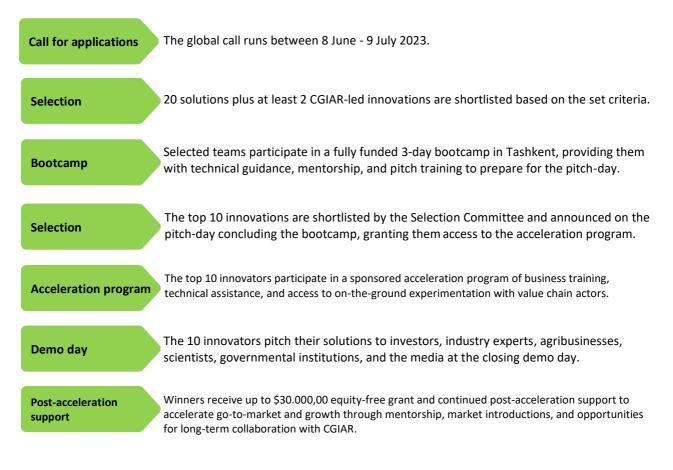
Selected teams will benefit from:

- Fully funded 3-day immersive bootcamp in Tashkent
- Sponsored acceleration program combining business training and technical assistance
- On-the-ground experimentation and pilot testing in Uzbekistan
- Networking and technical assistance from CGIAR scientists
- Up to $30.000,00 equity-free grant for winners with a sustainable business model and scaling plan
- Exposure to potential investors, opening doors to funding opportunities and commercial partnerships
- Access to dedicated co-working spaces and incubation facilities
- Access to a community of likeminded innovators, fostering peer-to-peer learning
- Post-acceleration support to accelerate go-to-market and growth

How to Apply

Candidates must submit their applications at,
https://venturespace.cgiar.org/application/new?program=agritech4uzbekistan-innovation-challenge

Applicants are required to register, build out their profile, and fill in the application form by **9 July 2023 at 23:59 CET.**

What is the Selection Process

Call for applications — The global call runs between 8 June - 9 July 2023.

Selection — 20 solutions plus at least 2 CGIAR-led innovations are shortlisted based on the set criteria.

Bootcamp — Selected teams participate in a fully funded 3-day bootcamp in Tashkent, providing them with technical guidance, mentorship, and pitch training to prepare for the pitch-day.

Selection — The top 10 innovations are shortlisted by the Selection Committee and announced on the pitch-day concluding the bootcamp, granting them access to the acceleration program.

Acceleration program — The top 10 innovators participate in a sponsored acceleration program of business training, technical assistance, and access to on-the-ground experimentation with value chain actors.

Demo day — The 10 innovators pitch their solutions to investors, industry experts, agribusinesses, scientists, governmental institutions, and the media at the closing demo day.

Post-acceleration support — Winners receive up to $30.000,00 equity-free grant and continued post-acceleration support to accelerate go-to-market and growth through mentorship, market introductions, and opportunities for long-term collaboration with CGIAR.

How Do We Select

Applications are assessed by the Selection Committee, which includes CGIAR and external experts from the public and private sectors, research institutions, the agri-food industry, and investors. Evaluations are based on specific criteria, rated on a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent).

- **Level of innovation/innovativeness:** The solution is novel, innovative, and has a strong impact on the agriculture and food sectors.
- **Relevance to the context of Uzbekistan:** The solution addresses at least one of the priority areas, is suitable to the Uzbek context, and provides concrete solutions to end-users/target beneficiaries.
- **Sustainability and scalability of the solution:** The solution presents a clear business model and sustainable revenue model.
- **Scientific relevance:** The solution has a proven scientific methodology to address the problem and has a clear link with CGIAR's Impact Areas and/or research activities.
- **Quality of the team:** Proven competence, technical coherence, commitment, motivation, entrepreneurial mindset, diverse and inclusive team.

For any questions or additional information regarding applying for AgriTech4Uzbekistan, contact info@agritechchallenge.org or send a message to the Telegram group https://t.me/+dQAgkgBEOLVkNzky