

INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR PROJECTS AUF COVID-19.2

Terms of reference

I. Context and issues

In the spring of 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), true to its values of solidarity and sharing, has put in place a vast and ambitious [action plan](#) for its member institutions and partners.

As part of this plan, the Agency launched from April 10 to May 5, 2020 a first international call for projects, to support initiatives by students, engineering students and young researchers related to the pandemic within its member institutions.

In response to the success of the call, the AUF doubled its initial grant and released more than one million euros to fund 92 projects from 87 member institutions in 44 countries.

The variety and quality of the selected projects demonstrated the agility and creativity of the students and young researchers to respond in an innovative and rapid way to the many challenges facing society.

One year later, this pandemic is still raging and seems to be taking hold for a long time. Its endemic nature has a lasting impact not only on health systems but also on all aspects of ecosystems, particularly education systems.

This health crisis has also amplified psycho-social phenomena, the effects of which have not yet been fully measured. What coping mechanisms promote the resilience of individuals and communities?

The AUF, attentive and sensitive to the evolution of this situation, launches a **new international call "AUF-COVID-19.2"** by opening up the typology of eligible projects.

This new call will also be able to finance research actions, surveys and/or studies dedicated to the analysis of the consequences of the health crisis which propose innovative solutions whether in the fields of health, science and technology but also in the human, economic and social sciences.

The call prioritizes:

1. **Teams of young researchers carrying out projects for the benefit of Global South countries**
2. **Consortia proposing projects with national, regional or international impact. The involvement of the ministries concerned is encouraged and valued.**

PLAN AUF SPÉCIAL PANDÉMIE COVID-19



II. Objectives

General objective: to enhance the contribution of higher education and research institutions members of the AUF to the development of solutions with technological and/or social impact to address the challenges caused by the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic.

Specific objective: to develop innovative, frugal initiatives adapted to the ecosystem to support societies weakened by the consequences of a long-term health crisis.

III. Beneficiaries

- **Final beneficiaries:** educational structures, health structures, structures caring for sick, vulnerable or isolated people, structures fighting against violence or discrimination based on gender, disability or belonging to marginalized environments.
- **Direct beneficiaries of the funding:** higher education institutions members of the AUF for the benefit of students, associations or clubs of students, student-engineers, young researchers, laboratories or research centers integrating young researchers, animators of Fablabs or incubators.

IV. Eligibility Criteria

- Projects may be submitted by higher education institutions or research structures that are **members of the AUF, alone or in consortium**, as well as by university networks that are members of the AUF.
https://www.auf.org/les_membres/nos-membres/
- The call emphasizes the investment of student communities in the fight against the pandemic. However, the project coordinator must be a permanent faculty member or researcher at one of these institutions.
- **Please note that projects from higher education institutions in high-income countries are eligible if and only if:**
 - **They involve institutions from low- and middle-income countries**
 - **They are deployed for the benefit of low and middle income countries***World Bank country classification:* https://www.auf.org/les_membres/devenir-membre/bareme-de-cotisation/
- Each institution may submit only one **project as a lead partner**. It may participate in other projects as part of a **consortium**. The Ministries concerned can be part of the consortium.
Please note that if more than one project is submitted by an institution as a leader, only the first project submitted will be evaluated.

PLAN AUF SPÉCIAL PANDÉMIE COVID-19



- The call aims to support:
 1. New projects to be carried out **within 12 months**.
 2. The deployment of regional or international projects that are already mature, to promote local adaptation or scientific/technological transfer.
 3. The deployment of projects or synergies between projects supported by the AUF's international call "COVID 19.1" at the national, regional or international level.
- Civil society organizations (CSOs) may apply as part of a **consortium 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 ecosystem.

V. Domains

Only projects that integrate an **inclusive and responsible dimension** in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Agenda 2030 will be selected. Any initiative with a technological, economic and/or social impact that can be evaluated in the short or medium term is eligible.

It can be:

1. **An assistance or support system** (non-exhaustive list):
 - Production of materials essential for care, protection or prevention of health risks
 - Public health actions
 - App development
 - Development of decision-making, communication and health risk awareness tools
 - Actions to help vulnerable or isolated people
 - Actions for the prevention of psychological or socio-economic consequences of the health crisis
 - Fight against violence against women and children
2. The call may also finance **research actions, surveys and/or studies** dedicated to the consequences of the health crisis and proposing innovative solutions in the following areas (non-exhaustive list):
 - Governance of education systems in times of crisis and post crisis
 - University governance in times of crisis and post-crisis
 - Educational continuity
 - Training offers and pedagogical innovation
 - Hybrid curriculum

PLAN AUF SPÉCIAL PANDÉMIE COVID-19



- Remote assessment and certification
- Psycho-social and economic consequences of the pandemic on student and campus life, or more broadly on target social groups
- Alternatives to international mobility
- Impact of the pandemic on the formal and informal ecosystem labor market

VI. Expected results

The results of the projects will have to have an impact for the beneficiaries in the short or medium term in response to the prolongation of the health crisis and its consequences.

VII. Budget

In view of the needs, the AUF is devoting an exceptional fund of 1,000,000 euros to this new international call "AUF-COVID-19.2".

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

- **Category A projects** (projects with a rapid technological, economic and/or social impact) :
The AUF grant is a maximum of 20,000 euros and can cover up to 90% of the overall budget.
- **Category B projects** (exceptional project with high impact or particularly innovative, with a national, inter-regional or international dimension):
The AUF grant is a maximum of 50,000 euros and can cover up to 80% of the overall project budget.

Co-financing, public or private, must be specified in the submitted budget. Valuation of work times (research, production or management) is eligible for co-financing.

Eligible expenses :

- Purchase of raw material and transport costs
- Purchase or rental of equipment, consumables and shipping costs
- Costs of compliance or certification tests or possible homologation
- Communication, Internet and telecommunication costs
- Development costs for applications or digital tools (service provision)
- Missions and travel (national or between the countries of the consortium), subject to the health regulations in force by the governments concerned
- Allowances calculated on the basis of local parametric costs for trainers from outside the institution or for data collection and surveys (students)

In the framework of this call, **management fees are not eligible.**

PLAN AUF SPÉCIAL PANDÉMIE COVID-19



The budget may be paid to the institution to which the project leader belongs or it may be managed directly by the AUF regional office concerned. The most efficient and quickest solution to implement will be preferred.

VIII. Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by **committees of international experts convened by the AUF regional office where the project will be deployed.**

The AUF gives priority to the following criteria:

- Usefulness, innovation and speed of implementation of the project within 12 months
- Projects proposing realistic and sustainable solutions
- Project developed in a collaborative manner between universities and civil society
- Technological, economic or psycho-social impact assessable in the short term (six months maximum)
- Prototype in conformity with national regulations (tested, approved, homologated or in progress...)
- Project valuing open source solutions (open source code, open hardware, openly licensed deliverables...)
- Project can be replicated in other areas, with or without adjustments
- Projects coordinated by women

IX. Calendar

- Date of publication of the call: Wednesday, May 26, 2021
- **Deadline for submission of online forms on the platform: Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. (Paris time)**
- Date of publication of results: from October 20, 2021
- Project duration: 12 months from the date of signature of the agreement

X. Formalities

The AUF is sensitive to the multilingualism of its members. The terms of reference are therefore published in **several languages**. See the specific sites of the regional directions of the AUF.

However, for technical reasons, the response form must be filled out in French as a priority. It can be filled out in English but the project summary must be written in French.

Projects can only be submitted via the submission platform: <https://formulaire.auf.org> (prior account creation).

PLAN AUF SPÉCIAL PANDÉMIE COVID-19



It is requested that you include with your application:

- the institutional commitment of the AUF member institution (*mandatory*),
- the detailed project description form (*mandatory, download form below*),
- the provisional budget with schedule of activities and expected deliverables (*mandatory, see template below*)
- For partnership projects, letters of support from partners (in addition to the lead institution) are required.

Download the detailed description form : [HERE](#)

Download a budget template with activity calendar: [HERE](#)

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last days before the closing date to submit your project. The AUF would in no case be held responsible in the event of technical difficulties preventing the project submission due to the crowds on the submission website.

XI. Contacts

Requests for clarification can be sent to the AUF until July ¹, 2021 at 12:00 noon (Paris time):
appel-covid19@auf.org

No individual response will be sent to the applicant.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page accessible [HERE](#) will be regularly updated until July 5, 2021 at 12:00 pm (Paris time).

An information webinar in French will be held on July 7, 2021 from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. (Paris time)