

SocialChallenges.eu

Call for grants

2nd Cut-off date



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Introduction

Social Challenges Innovation Platform is an online environment where Public, Private and Third Sector Stakeholders can upload social and environmental challenges to receive innovative solutions from European innovators, start-ups and SMEs. For a selection of 81 solution providers, SocialChallenges.eu offers each of them 30000€ grant and a light mentoring scheme.

We are looking for scalable solutions able to meet these challenges and needs, and with the potential to access new markets by the end of the grant and mentoring programme.

SocialChallenges.eu will invest 2.4 million euros through Open Calls to select 81 impactful solution providers. A second and a third call might take place if more challenges are presented and if budget is still available.

The call is structured as follows:

- Overview about SocialChallenges.eu and call objective
- Value proposition for Challenge Owners, Solution providers
- Call Application and Selection process (overview about the process + proposal stage + evaluation and selection stage)
- Eligibility Criteria (eligible applicants, eligible activities and eligible costs)
- Call Award Criteria (criteria and scoring)
- Financial planning (80% + 20%)
- Intellectual Property Rights
- SocialChallenges.eu Contact Point
- Application form (Annex)

SocialChallenges.eu – call for grants

Overview

About SocialChallenges.eu

The Social Challenges Innovation Platform is a **far-reaching European online ecosystem encouraging the interaction between social innovators and SMEs** for the co-development and take up of sustainable and marketable innovations with a clear social impact.

The platform aims to be a **social innovation marketplace**, where Public Authorities, Private Companies or Third Sector Organizations can post and give visibility to social and environmental challenges they want to solve. At the same time, social innovators and entrepreneurs from across Europe will be invited to propose innovative solutions.

Social Challenges.eu is therefore a twofold tool for social innovation, serving both its demand and supply side at the same time, and help them meet and work together on the definition and implementation of the best solution to a given social need.

Therefore, we

support European stakeholders bearing interests about hard-to-solve, high-impact social problems in defining and prioritising social and societal challenges

encourage broad participation of social innovators, social entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs to identify, co-develop and test concrete solutions to these needs

provide **grants and support**, focused on the translation of challenges into practical and marketable solutions

SocialChallenges.eu aims to be the European go-to-platform where social issues meet innovative solutions and funds for it.

SocialChallenges.eu is

- 1 go-to platform, a smart environment at your service
- 20 strategic nodes supporting challenge owners and solution providers across Europe
- 27+ challenges supported and sponsored by a EU grant mechanism scheme
- 81 selected solution providers (max 3 per challenge)
- 2.430.000€ total grant (30000€ per selected solution provider)

Call focus

The platform has been designed to address social challenges through innovative solutions with a clear social impact.

The focus is therefore social innovation, as this initiative aims at untapping the potential European startups and SMEs may have in generating both economic and social impact therefore meeting pressing social needs and creating new collaborations.

We propose below the definition DG Grow proposes of social innovation:

“Social innovations are new ideas that meet social needs, create social relationships and form new collaborations. These innovations can be products, services or models addressing unmet needs more effectively. The European Commission’s objective is to encourage market uptake of innovative solutions and stimulate employment”.

Social innovation is therefore characterised by¹:

Inclusive processes, inclusive outcomes: As well as meeting social needs, social innovation should improve ‘capabilities and relationships’. This might mean involving target beneficiaries in developing and running initiatives, or in ownership or governance.

Entrepreneurship and beyond: ‘New solutions’ can come from anywhere. The scope of this specific action is to encourage market uptake of innovative solutions, and stimulate the participation of European entrepreneurs to the definition of solution to social needs and challenges.

Broad interpretation of ‘social need’: we adopted a multi-level, multi stakeholder and multi sector approach, therefore aiming at attracting challenges coming from different sectors (environment, energy, health, education, smart cities, migration, transport, tourism, etc) and involving different actors (public authorities, private companies, NGOs).

Value proposition for challenge owners and solution providers

SocialChallenges.eu is a matchmaking platform where all players can gain something from using it.

The platform aims to provide visibility to social challenges afflicting different actors and regions in Europe.

Through this Call, SocialChallenges.eu will select ambitious and impactful SMEs, Startups and entrepreneurs to participate in the funding support and mentoring programme.

While the SocialChallenges.eu Call process targets both

- SMEs, Start-Ups & Entrepreneurs (The Solution Providers) and
- Public Authorities, Private sector and third sector (The Challenge Owners),

only Solution Providers are eligible for call funding.

Thus, the SocialChallenges.eu value proposition comprises two components:

1. The value proposition for Solution providers (SMEs, Start-Ups & Web-developers) and
2. The value proposition for Challenge Owners

By posting these challenges and needs onto SocialChallenges.eu public, private and third sector players can reach out a wide community of entrepreneurs, social innovators, startups and SMEs in

¹ See more about social innovation definition and practices in [“Social Innovation Incubation – Approaches and tools for supporting early-stage social innovators: an output of TRANSITION project”](#)

Europe that might have the right solution for them, therefore finding a potential new market and customer.

By participating on the platform the Challenge Owners can benefit from:	By posting their solutions on the platform the solution providers can benefit from:
<p>A European wider reach for getting more impactful and viable solutions increased visibility as key actors engaging in solving the challenges they propose impact consulting support in order to properly identify and define the challenge they commit to solve (provided by the strategic nodes) Europe wide positioning as drivers of social innovation opportunity to attract additional resources to solving the issue (by enabling solution providers for their challenge to receive prototype funding) increased multi stakeholder collaboration for the defined issue</p>	<p>European wide visibility for their value proposition with the defined challenge Europe wide positioning as social innovators consulting support in order to properly define and present their challenge on the platform opportunity to attract additional funding (30000€) for the prototype phase (participating in the grant mechanism of the platform initial phase) possibility to be contracted by challenge owners to partner for the implementation of the solution increased multi stakeholder collaboration</p>

In order to better support both “challenge owners” and “solution providers”, SocialChallenges.eu will rely in addition to the consortium partners (Meta Group, EBN, IHUB) on a network of strategic nodes spread across Europe that will provide onsite support to potential platform users and stakeholders. Check the full list of nodes on the platform and get in touch with the one in your region for further support.

Call Application and Selection process

SocialChallenges.eu will disburse its grant fund of €2.400.000 through an open call for proposals. Applications may only be submitted via the Social Challenges Innovation Platform (<http://www.socialchallenges.eu>). Please note applications must be submitted in English.

A grant of EUR 30,000 will be allocated to each of the 81 successful grant applications.

The 2nd cut-off date goes from January 15th 2018 to April 15th 2018.

At that time, the solutions that have been proposed for those challenges that have been online for at least 90 days and have received at least 3 solutions will be evaluated.

The key dates for the proposals evaluation have been listed below.

Cut-off 2: 15 April 2018
Calls launch: 15 January 2018
Submission deadline: 15 April 2018, 23.59CET
Notification to selected solution providers: 15 June 2018
Start of the grant: within 3 months from the selection [duration 6 months]

Each Challenge that will receive at least 3 solutions is eligible to get financed solutions. This criteria refers to the *market traction* of the proposed challenge.

Preparation stage

Provided that all challenges will be scrutinised by SocialChallenges.eu consortium partners before being uploaded to the platform, so to ensure the commitment of the challenge owner to follow the whole process (from challenge definition to solution selection), solution providers can apply to any of the challenges available on the platform.

Before applying, SMEs, startups, entrepreneurs and other applicants have to create their own profile onto the platform.

Proposal stage

Once Solution Providers have created their profile they can submit their proposal to the challenge that they believe they can fix. The application needs to be filled in and submitted through the platform itself. The following information are requested:

1. Applicant Information
2. Solution description
3. Innovation dimension
4. Impact
5. Scalability
6. Implementation and Sustainability
7. Elevator Pitch

Proposal Evaluation and Selection

All proposals submitted before the deadline for each step will be submitted to an eligibility check (see eligibility criteria). Proposals passing the eligibility check will be assessed through a transparent evaluation process that will be managed by Meta Group and led by internal and external experts and approved by the Executive Agency for SMEs in accordance with DG GROW.

If a solution scores high enough in the criteria assessment, reaching the minimum threshold, it is eligible for funding.

This means that:

1. Challenges that at the cut-off date have 3 solutions will be evaluated.
2. Solutions of these challenges will be scored by the jury.
3. Based on the average of Jury members' scores, we shortlist only the solutions that reach the threshold
4. We rank them based on the scores they received and we fund the best ones (up to a maximum of 81 solutions). Although not realistic, in principle the 81 funded solutions could be ALL selected at the first cut-off date, setting to zero the need for the other two cut off dates.
5. Each social challenge can have a maximum of 3 solutions funded.

Selected Solution Providers, engage with META for the contracting phase. Although not requested by the project we do suggest to sign a Memorandum of Understanding among Social Challenges and Solutions Providers.

Communication between the SocialChallenges.eu team and applicants during the application assessment process will be carried out primarily via email and helpdesk. It is therefore recommended that applicants notify SocialChallenges.eu if they change the email address they apply with during the applications process.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility Criteria –Solution providers

In order to be eligible for funding Solution Providers must satisfy the following criteria:

- Be an SME, startup company or a foundation that is a legal entity (legal person) such as a private law company, association or foundation, that is fully registered under the laws of a European Union Member State, or an H2020 associated country.
- Be fully compliant with the tax and social security obligations of their respective jurisdiction.
- Not be in any situation of legal or financial irregularity with respect to national or regional authorities in the applicant's place of legal jurisdiction.
- Solution Providers may take part individually or in a partnership with a maximum of 3 other organisations - For applications with at least two organisations the appointment of a Coordinator is required. The Coordinator will act as the single point of contact with the SocialChallenges.eu Consortium and the sole point of contractual relationship with SocialChallenges.eu.
- Solution Providers are not prohibited from submitting multiple proposals to SocialChallenges.eu, provided each proposal address different challenges and provides a different solution to social problems. However, the applicant will only be offered one funding grant.

Eligible actions/activities

Eligible activities under SocialChallenges.eu grants comprise the design, development, testing, deployment and market uptake of the proposed solution in collaboration with the Challenge Owner and relevant stakeholders (where and when needed).

The grant needs to be used by Solution Providers to develop the MVP and achieve the targets as set in the application form. Solution Providers should also note that part of the grant should be used to ensure participation in relevant SocialChallenges.eu events and mentoring activities (see Section SocialChallenges.eu Support and Contact Point).

Call Award Criteria (criteria and scoring)

SocialChallenges.eu builds on three overarching criteria for the evaluation and selection of the 81 solutions: excellence, impact and quality.

The Call grants award is based on the following criteria and scoring:

1. **Applicant Information**
2. **Solution description** > This criterion will assess the proposed solution in terms of how it will address the proposed challenge, on how it will implement the proposed solution, its feasibility and the involvement of stakeholders. (20 points)
3. **Innovation dimension** > This criterion assesses the innovation capacity of the proposed solution. (10 points)
4. **Impact** > This criterion assesses how the solution is going to generate social impact (15 points)
5. **Scalability** > This criterion assesses the scalability of the proposed solution, considering both the scaling up trajectory of an already existing product/service, and the scalability of a new solution. (10 points)
6. **Implementation and Sustainability** > This criterion assesses the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed solution and its implementation plan. (30 points)
7. **Elevator Pitch** > This criterion assesses the elevator pitch submitted by the solution provider - 120 seconds. (10 points)

95/95 is the max scoring. The minimum threshold for funding is 60/95 (scoring at least 50% in each section).

Financial planning (80% + 20%)

SocialChallenges.eu will disburse grant funding to the contracted grantees in phased amounts (tranches):

- 80% upfront (within a month of signing contract),
- 20% at the end of the grant period (1 month after the 6-month period is completed and reported).

Throughout the solution development and deployment phases grantees will be subject to light rolling reviews (brief updates every 2 months online). These reviews should be used by grantees as a tool to ensure their application is on course to effective deployment and while also using these reviews to make sure they have considered the marketing and commercialisation opportunities for their projects.

Intellectual Property Rights

The following Intellectual Property Rights conditions should be followed:

1. The proposals submitted should be solely based on original works by the applicants and their foreseen developments are free from third party rights, or they are clearly stated. Any issues derived from third party claims that may arise as a result of the sub-granted projects are the sole responsibility of the sub-granted parties.
2. All IPR created by the applicants via the SocialChallenges.eu funding will remain with the Grantee, who will be the sole owner of the technologies that it has created within the framework of their subgranted projects.
3. There are no IPR obligations towards the EC. Yet, any communication or publication by the funded applicants shall clearly indicate that the project has received funding from the European Union, displaying the EU logo and H2020 reference on all printed and digital material, including websites and press releases.
4. Parts of the projects selected for funding (including the publishable summary of the proposal) will be requested to be public for SocialChallenges.eu dissemination purposes.
5. All mentors and jury experts will sign an NDA to ensure confidentiality of information provided at application stage and later stages (if selected).

SocialChallenges.eu Support and Contact Point

The SocialChallenges.eu partners and nodes will support both Challenge Owners and Solution providers during the call period, when submitting a proposal, and in the development and deployment phase of a granted project. These activities aim to disseminate critical information to ensure the applicant has the capacity and resources to submit a high-quality proposal, during the call stage, and to effectively develop and deploy a high impact application, post the call phase. The activities listed below are indicative of what successful applicants may expect and are subject to change depending on the focus and locations of proposals which are selected for funding.

During the Call Application Stage

During the Call stage, SocialChallenges.eu will provide potential applicants with the following support:

- a. Information Sessions: During the call period SocialChallenges.eu will promote through the platform itself, social media and the network of nodes the challenges available on the platform and will provide info on how to apply
- b. Helpdesk service: The Helpdesk will assist applicants with common technical queries or general queries relating to the call, the challenges or the application process

Activities during the Grantee Cycle / Implementation Phase

Once selected for funding SocialChallenges.eu will provide the following for grantees:

- a. Mentoring scheme with a local node: 2 face-2-face meetings together with the node and the challenge owner, and regular online support.

- b. SI Camps: SocialChallenges.eu will organise 2 SI Camps (one in June 2018 and one in May 2019) to provide grantees with coaching, training and networking opportunities.
- c. Partnerships & Networking: facilitated by SocialChallenges.eu partners and nodes, grantees will be introduced to different stakeholders to facilitate connections and collaboration with various stakeholders.
- d. Webinars: Whether partners will spot common needs and relevant opportunities for all grantees, webinars will be organised (i.e. impact measurement; thematic focus; etc).
- e. Final event: grantees will be invited to the final event of socialChallenges.eu. The most successful solutions will be showcased in this occasion.

Contacts

Key contact addresses for challenge owners and solution providers are set out below:

- General Questions: info@socialchallenges.eu



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