

Request for Applications: President's Global Innovation Fund

RFA issue date: October 15, 2024

Deadline for submissions: January 20, 2025 at 11:59pm EDT

Purpose

[Columbia Global](#) is seeking applications from Columbia University faculty and researchers interested in pursuing one- to three-year projects, to be designed and undertaken in collaboration with one or more of the Columbia Global Centers. The purpose of this program is to support projects that advance collaborative initiatives that will generate new knowledge, enhance global research partnerships, and foster meaningful student engagement.

Theme: Just and Collaborative Societies

This year, the President's Global Innovation Fund (PGIF) will support projects that advance understanding of the building blocks of just and collaborative societies, as well as innovative ideas to take practical action to support them.

There is no one understanding of the concept of just and collaborative societies that is accepted across all cultures, and there are ongoing debates about how ideology and culture shape these understandings. Yet such societies are often characterized by higher degrees of **social trust**; **resilience to violence** of all kinds (including political, interpersonal, and gender-based violence); **trustworthy and inclusive local and national institutions** to manage emerging conflicts; opportunities for **participation, dialogue, and communication**; and the **fair and equal treatment** of citizens; among many other factors.

For this PGIF request for applications, examples of issues of focus include, but are not limited to:

- Youth-led and intergenerational approaches
- Dialogue, communication, and people-to-people initiatives
- Digital spaces, cybersecurity, and emerging technologies (including artificial intelligence)
- Arts and culture
- History, memory, and archives
- Mediation and conflict resolution
- Civic engagement and social movements (including indigenous peoples' movements)
- Local and global institutions and governance
- Justice (including climate justice)
- Media and the public sphere
- Economics, labor, and private sector roles
- Health and health inequities

Types of Awards

PGIF awards are available at two funding levels:

1. **Early Concept Awards** will support projects that aim to host novel convenings to advance the discourse or build productive partnerships for pursuing collaborative efforts. Available funding for early concept awards is **\$10,000 - \$25,000** (per award) over a period of **1 - 2 years** (beginning June 2, 2025). Up to eight awards are anticipated.
2. **Innovation Awards** will support projects that show significant promise for building toward a fundable, larger-scale initiative. Projects may include basic, applied, translational, humanities, and/or social science research. The maximum award amount is **\$100,000** (per award) over a period of **2 - 3 years** (beginning June 2, 2025). Up to four awards are anticipated.

Eligibility Criteria

- Proposal lead(s) must be full-time faculty or researcher(s) at Columbia University.
- At least one proposal lead must be eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator (PI), per [Columbia University guidelines](#). To request a PI waiver, please refer to [these Columbia Global guidelines](#).
- Proposals must include collaboration across disciplines, schools, institutes, or centers.
- Proposals must engage one or more Columbia Global Center. Eligible Centers are located in: [Amman, Jordan](#); [Athens, Greece](#); [Beijing, China](#); [Istanbul, Turkey](#); [Mumbai, India](#); [Nairobi, Kenya](#); [Paris, France](#); [Rio de Janeiro, Brazil](#); [Santiago, Chile](#); and [Tunis, Tunisia](#).
- **Prior to submission of the proposal**, applicants are **required to consult** with the Director of the relevant Global Center(s). This consultation is to discuss the proposed project, including its feasibility, potential partnerships, and the role of the Global Center(s).

Note: Proposal lead(s) are **not required** to have prior experience in the geographic region(s) where they propose to work.

Application Process and Deadlines

Eligible faculty and researchers are requested to submit proposals via the Submittable Platform, which can be accessed [here](#).

Applications are due January 20, 2025 at 11:59pm EDT. Award announcements are anticipated in April 2025.

Key Proposal Elements

For Early Concept Awards (\$10,000-25,000 over 1-2 years)

- **Executive summary**
- **Proposal narrative** that includes:
 - A statement of the problem/challenge that the project aims to address
 - Project goal, key activities, and anticipated results
 - Overview of the proposal team (including CV of proposal lead)
 - Proposed collaborations with local and/or regional entities
 - Summary of plans to engage Columbia University students
 - Summary of the role of the collaborating Columbia Global Center(s)
 - Summary of how the project will lay the foundation for subsequent work
- **Budget** (please use [this template](#))
- **CV** of proposal lead

For Innovation Awards (up to \$100,000 over 2-3 years)

- **Executive summary**
- **Proposal narrative** that includes:
 - A statement of the problem/challenge that the project aims to address
 - Project goal, key activities, and anticipated results
 - Overview of the proposal team (including CV of proposal lead)
 - Project summary
 - Proposed collaborations with local and/or regional entities
 - Summary of plans to engage Columbia University students
 - Summary of the role of the collaborating Columbia Global Center(s)
 - Summary of how the project will lay the foundation for a fundable, large-scale initiative
- **Project work plan** that lists key project activities and their timing (please use [this template](#))
- **Budget and budget narrative** (please use: [budget template](#), [budget narrative template](#))
- **Letter(s) of support** from relevant school dean(s) and/or institute/center director(s)
 - Note: A letter of support from a Columbia Global Center is not required

Resources for Applicants

- Columbia Global is currently offering six unique funding opportunities for faculty and researchers. Find out if this is the right one for you [here](#).
- For background about PGIF and the Global Centers, see Annex 1 below.
- Columbia Global Center [annual reports](#)
- [A Guide to Columbia Global Center Spaces](#)
- [Columbia Impact Exchange](#)

Questions

A virtual informational session will be held to answer questions about this and other Columbia Global faculty award opportunities on **November 13th at 3pm EDT**. Please register [here](#).

If you have other questions about this call for applications, please contact Christine Hunt at ch3326@columbia.com using the following subject line: "PGIF RFA question."

Annex 1: Background

The **President's Global Innovation Fund (PGIF)** was launched in 2013 to support innovative projects enriched by the infrastructure, expertise, and connections of the Columbia Global Centers. The 123 grants awarded to date have fostered new, interdisciplinary collaborations among Columbia faculty/researchers and schools; have accelerated innovation through collaborative research and global knowledge exchange; and have provided rich new learning opportunities for students at all levels. Read more about PGIF [here](#).

The **Columbia Global Centers** are the University's physical and intellectual gateway to the world. Located in 11 cities across four continents, the Global Centers serve as regional hubs for research, education, training, collaboration, and social impact programming. With staff who have deep connections in their respective countries and regions, the Global Centers drive transformative connections between the University and the world, advancing knowledge exchange, deepening global dialogue, and building local partnership networks to advance innovation and impact.

