



Tech Catalyst Call for Proposals

June 2026

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Overview

[IEEE Region 8](#) and the [IEEE Tech4Good](#) (T4G) are partnering to offer the 2026 Tech Catalyst program to provide funding to SIGHT Groups (and prospective SIGHT Groups) for grassroots IEEE member projects that implement technological solutions to sustainable development challenges.

The IEEE Region 8 Humanitarian Technology Activities Committee (R8 HTAC) takes a futurist approach to support the development of innovative technological solutions to foster social impact. The Tech Catalyst program provides project grants to SIGHT Groups in the Region with great initiatives and creative technological solutions for the local communities where their members live. Proposed solutions must have a sustainability plan in line with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) and take into account cost-effectiveness, environmental sustainability, trust-enhancement, relevance to users and community, community buy-in, and accessibility.

Projects must have a good connection to a Region 8 SIGHT Group and engage a significant number of IEEE members. *A Primary Applicant must have an IEEE Member grade or higher.* If there is a team of IEEE members from a Region 8 Section or Student Branch without a SIGHT Group, they may submit a proposal if they commit to forming one. Please note that this funding program is highly competitive. Not all eligible projects may be funded or may be offered lower funding than requested due to budget limitations and intention to fund as many projects as possible.

Technology Impact Categories

The local projects should include specific social impact goals to enhance and improve agricultural, clean water, educational, and/or energy technology. Applicants must select a focus area for their proposal to be considered.

- Agricultural Technology ([SDG 2: Zero Hunger](#))
- Technology to Support Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education ([SDG 4: Quality Education](#))
- Clean Energy and Sustainable Power ([SDG 7: Affordable & Clean Energy](#))
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Digital Connectivity ([SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure](#))



Funding Specifications

Amount of funding

Project grants will be between US\$1,000 and US\$5,000 per project.

Term of funding

Project implementation plans may be up to six months following the project start date.

Proposal Requirements

- Applicants clearly articulate how the project uses appropriate, [IEEE-relevant](#) technology to address a sustainable development challenge in their local community.
- Applicant teams must be existing or future SIGHT Groups in Region 8 and engage IEEE members **currently living** in the country where the project takes place.
- **Each SIGHT Group may only submit one proposal.**
- Team members have relevant technical and other expertise to credibly execute the project.
- The local community is actively involved in determining what is needed/desired and how a project is designed and executed. All project teams are required to collaborate with at least one local entity that represents the community of individuals that will directly benefit from the proposed solution. This entity must submit a letter of support that acknowledges their awareness of the project, outlines their involvement, and states that they will be responsible for the solution after its deployment.
- Proposals include a thorough sustainability plan to ensure that local communities can manage the deployed solution after the six months term of funding.
- Proposals clearly articulate the impact of the project and how it will be measured.

Proposals Not Considered

- Projects that do not directly relate to a challenge faced by a specific community, or that do not clearly articulate active community involvement.
- Projects that do not involve the implementation of appropriate, [IEEE-relevant](#) technology.
- Projects that are *primarily research or commercial in nature*.
- Projects that are *solely focused* on STEM education. Projects that have a STEM education *component* are encouraged to utilize the extensive resources on [TryEngineering](#).
- Projects without a clearly articulated plan for impact measurement.
- Projects that solely deal with immediate disaster relief. All projects related to disaster preparedness or recovery should focus on medium- and longer-term needs.
- Projects focused on developing medical devices or medical device prototypes.

Any proposal which:

- i. **is incomplete**
- ii. **does not align with the funding specifications**
- iii. **requests less than US\$1,000 or more than US\$5,000**

- iv. has applicants with an ongoing or incomplete project funded by Tech4Good
- v. does not include a completed Tech4Good Projects Budget (using the [template](#))

will *not* be evaluated. All proposals must disclose if an identical or similar proposal is currently under evaluation for funding elsewhere.

Legal, Compliance, and Risk

Humanitarian technology and sustainable development projects, due to their real world nature, may involve a certain amount of risk. It is imperative that potential risks are acknowledged and mitigated wherever possible. IEEE has taken steps to mitigate several of these risks. While not a comprehensive list of risks or mitigation strategies, please review the following carefully:

- Projects MUST comply with all national/federal, state/provincial, and local laws, guidelines, safety codes, and restrictions.
- IEEE is subject to the full range of U.S. economic sanctions and export control laws and as such IEEE may not be able to provide certain services to certain designated countries or entities or individuals from those countries or entities. Because U.S. economic sanctions and export controls are subject to frequent change, please review the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control's [sanctions list](#) if you have a question about whether or not your country can receive funding. A more detailed description of OFAC, economic sanctions, and embargoes applicable to IEEE can be found on [ieee.org](#).
- All projects that involve children must follow [IEEE Guidelines for Working with Children](#). Any project funding will be contingent on policy compliance.
- In the event the project collects, uses, processes, or otherwise involves the personal data of any individual, the grantee agrees that they shall, to the maximum extent possible, respect the privacy of those individuals. Grantee will comply with all applicable data privacy laws or regulations.
- Tech4Good funds may not be used for a) tests of medical equipment on people/animals or b) mass production and/or deployment of devices that require but have not yet undergone the appropriate regulation, such as government approvals. Medical device manufacturing and deployment are highly regulated fields and may require partnership with and approval by relevant national/federal, state, and/or local authorities.
- All projects considered for funding will be shared with the IEEE Office of Risk and Insurance Management Services (ORIMS), and potential project leaders will be vetted by the IEEE Legal & Compliance Department for their review prior to final decision.
- Projects must avoid any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. Project teams must abide by the [IEEE Principles of Business Conduct](#). For more information on what should be disclosed and how to avoid conflicts of interest, see the [IEEE Bylaws I-300.2](#).
- Projects selected must agree to the IEEE Humanitarian Technologies [Intellectual Property Policy](#) as a condition of funding.

- Legal agreements between IEEE and external entities must be vetted by IEEE Legal *prior* to signing.
- Tech4Good does not disburse funds to individuals or external organizations. All funds flow through a local IEEE OU - generally the local Section. Any funds that are not used according to the approved budget must be returned.
- Please note that, depending on the nature of a project, additional review may be required at any stage of the project.

Eligibility to Apply

- **The primary applicant must be an IEEE Professional Member from a Region 8 SIGHT Group in good standing. Student members may only be co-applicants.** All member numbers are checked during the intake process. If membership status of the primary applicant is in arrears, the submission cannot move forward.
- **Each team may submit only one proposal.**
- Project teams that received Tech4Good funding for a project in the past may only apply if the project has been successfully completed and all reporting requirements fulfilled.
- **The local IEEE Section must act as the fiscal agent. Applicants must discuss this with the OU Treasurer prior to proposal submission. Tech4Good cannot transfer funds to a Society Chapter, Student Branch, or individuals.** IEEE financial requirements for funding disbursements will apply. Please see [IEEE FOM](#) 2.E - IEEE Unit Reporting (Including, but not limited to, Societies, Technical Councils, Geographic Units, and Conferences).

Budget Considerations

Tech4Good Projects prioritizes *direct project costs*, including equipment, materials, supplies, and travel. Travel expenses must comply with [IEEE Travel and Expense Reimbursement Guidelines](#). Given that projects are local in nature, travel and associated costs such as accommodation and meals should be less than 20% of the total requested funds.

Ineligible project costs include:

- Reimbursement of volunteer salaries. **Any request for salary reimbursement or payment for work must be carefully justified, clearly explained, and be a *minor part of the overall budget*.**
- Honorariums
- Indirect costs, including but not limited to overhead expenses, competition or contest prizes, Facilities & Administrative (F&A) costs, and tuition.

Please discuss in advance with the IEEE OU that will be your fiscal intermediary (generally the local Section) if there are any **Section administration fees** that would be applied to a transfer of funds from Tech4Good. These fees may be included in the project budget, but the OU will be asked to confirm them.

Applicants are encouraged to **download** the [Tech4Good Projects Budget template](#) ahead of time, as this is a requirement to include with the online application.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Benefits to the local community are well articulated and show clear impact metric targets.
- Project scope is defined and meets technological and sustainable development requirements.
- Team composition demonstrates the strength of team and members' technical capacity.
- Potential risks have been assessed and the team has prepared a feasible mitigation plan.
- Involvement of local organizations and stakeholders in regards to long-term sustainability.
- Clear potential for social and environmental impact with attainable success metrics.
- Alignment with IEEE's mission of advancing technology for the benefit of humanity.

Timeframe to Use Funds, Assessment, & Reporting

- Funds must be spent within six (6) months from the approved project start date.
 - Extensions may be submitted when unforeseen challenges prevent the carrying out of a project's original work plan.
- A brief progress report must be submitted every month after the project's approved start date.
- A final report with a final accounting of expenses and evaluation and assessment information must be submitted within 60 days of the project's completion.
 - Please refer to the [Tech4Good Project Assessment Guide](#) for information on how applicants will be asked to describe their project's Primary and Secondary Impact Assessment.
- Reports on longer-term outcomes and impact of the project may be requested for up to three (3) years after the conclusion of the project's grant period.

Submission Details

An initial summary of the proposal, or "letter of intent," must be submitted using the [Online Funding Opportunities Portal](#) from 08 June - 13 July. Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposals as soon as they can as they will mostly be reviewed in order of submission.

Applicants with proposals that meet the eligibility criteria and are strong candidates for funding will be invited to submit a full proposal within two weeks of the first round of review for the further evaluation of their proposed solution.

Questions

Do you have any questions about the suitability of your proposal? If so, please write to humanitarian@ieee8.org before writing and submitting your proposal.