



Directorate of Innovation, Technology Transfer &
Commercialisation

Unisa Innovation Challenge (IC)

**The Forge-Insimbi ilola insimbi
"Iron sharpens Iron"**

2023 Call for Applications



Do **YOU** have what it takes to solve a **SOCIETAL CHALLENGE**? If yes, Students are invited to pitch their innovative ideas to a panel of judges at various Regions and stand a chance to WIN great prizes!

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WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE:

- **ALL** Unisa students currently registered in 2023 (1st and 2nd Semester), irrespective of the qualification registered for or duration or level of study.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO NOTE

- The idea/concept/product must be *innovative* and targeted at addressing a *Societal Challenge*.
- An idea is considered *innovative* if it is new and has not been implemented before to solve the identified societal challenge or is an improvement over existing solutions wherein the improvement provides a significant benefit to the target audience or market.
- *Societal Challenges* in this context refers to the problems that our society is grappling to resolve. These may be national and include cross-cutting such as poverty, food security, access to health, achieving inclusive and equitable quality education, achieving gender parity, sluggish economic growth, unemployment, access to health care, access to cheap reliable source of energy or portable water, etc.

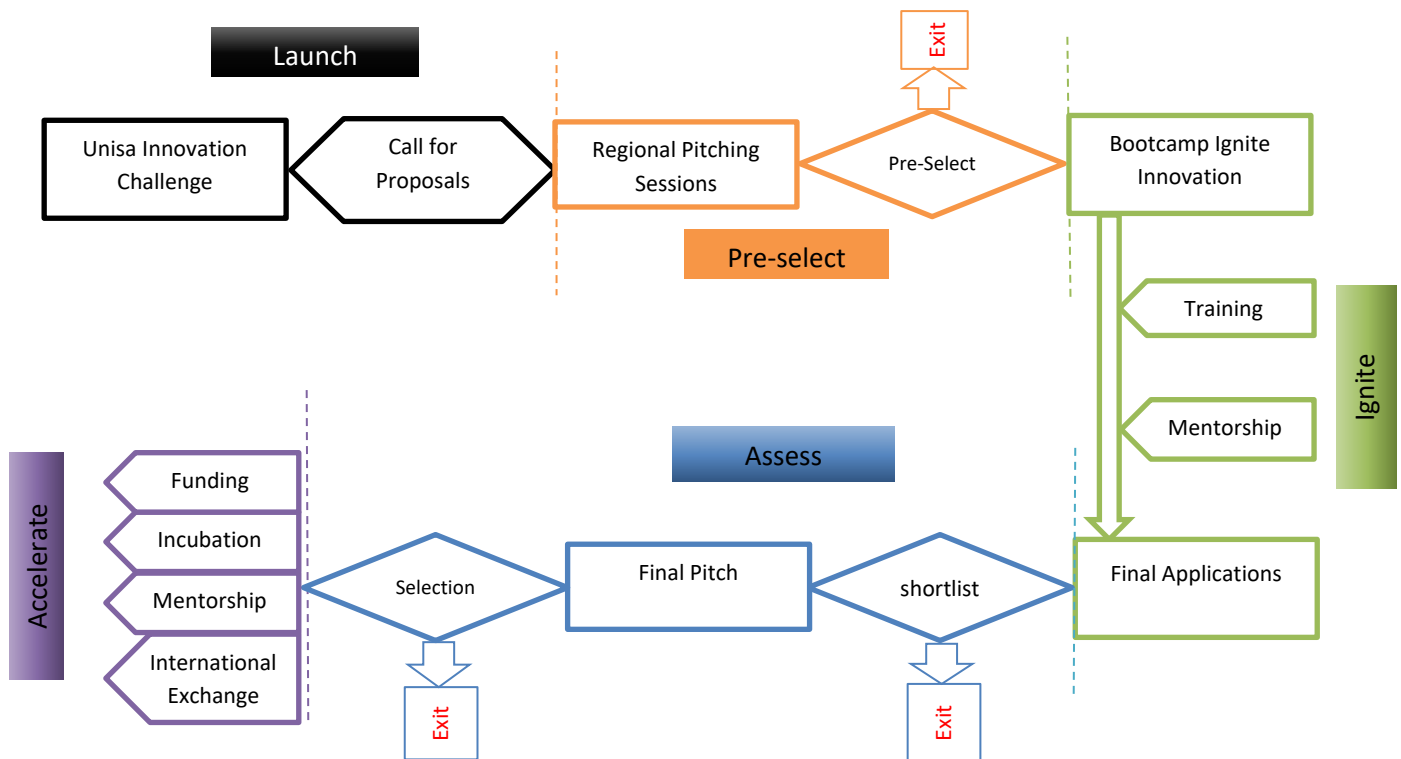
[HTTP://WWW.STATSSA.GOV.ZA/MDG/SDGs_COUNTRY_REPORT_2019_SOUTH_AFRICA.PDF](http://www.statssa.gov.za/MDG/SDGs_COUNTRY_REPORT_2019_SOUTH_AFRICA.PDF)

<https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/Executive%20Summary-NDP%202030%20-%20Our%20future%20-%20make%20it%20work.pdf>

Some may be local affecting only a particular sector or group of people. For more examples of some of the challenges: <http://openix.co.za/openix/inter-university-innovation-challenge>



Application and Assessment Process





Launch

- The call for proposals will go out at the end of February each year.

Preselect

- All interested students or groups of students wishing to enter their innovative idea/business concept as part of the Unisa Innovation Challenge are required to pitch their innovative idea/business concept before a panel of experts.
- Pitching sessions will be organised in most of the Unisa centres. For a pitching session near you, check the notice boards.
- Students wishing to pitch an idea/concept must RSVP to innovation@unisa.ac.za by and include the following: Name, title of pitch, your cellphone number and Unisa office near you;
- Prepare a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation
- The Pitching Panel will score all pitches based on the following criteria:

Problem definition (20%):	The extent to which the challenge being resolved has been clearly identified and defined.
Innovativeness of the proposed solution (50%):	The extent to which the solution is new or is a significant improvement over existing solution.
Feasibility of the proposed solution (20%):	The extent to which the proposed solution is feasible having regard to the technical aspects of the project, timelines, team, partnerships, financial resources, etc.
Potential Impact of the proposed solution (10%):	The extent to which the proposed solution will impact positively on the identified challenge.

Ignite Boot Camp

- The best ideas/concepts will proceed to the next phase.
- All students whose ideas/concepts have been selected will be required to attend up to 5 day Boot Camp on Innovation.
- At the end of the Boot Camp, it is envisaged that students will leave with an advanced draft of their Unisa Innovation Challenge proposal.



- Students may be allocated a mentor.
- Students will be given deadlines to submit their final applications during the boot camp sessions. No late applications will be accepted.

Assessment

- All complete applications received will be reviewed by an Innovation Challenge Selection Committee.
- The mandate of the committee is to review all applications and shortlist those applications it thinks have merit.
- Complete applications will be assessed by the IC Selection Committee using the following criteria:

Problem definition (5%):	The extent to which the applicant has a clear understanding of the challenge identified.
Customer/user definition (5%):	The extent to which the applicant has identified the appropriate customers and users. The extent to which the applicant has undertaken customer discovery.
Innovation (35%):	The extent to which the proposed solution is innovative and differs from existing solutions.
Feasibility (15%):	The extent to which the proposed solution is feasible having regard to the technical aspects of the project, timelines, partnerships, financial resources, etc
Capabilities (15%):	The extent to which the team has the requisite expertise to develop and/or implement the proposed solution. In the case of an individual applicant, this refers to the extent to which the individual has the requisite expertise to develop and/or implement the proposed solution.
Sustainability (10%):	The extent to which the team has developed a sustainability plan for their proposed solution.
Potential impact (10%):	The extent to which the proposed solution will make an impact to society.
Quality of the submission/presentation (5%)	



- A maximum of 20 ideas/concepts can be shortlisted.
- Students whose ideas/concepts have been shortlisted will be invited to present to an external panel of judges for a final assessment. The final presentation will take place during the Innovation Festival in December 2023
- The winners will be selected and announced during the Awards Ceremony at the end of the Innovation Festival.

Accelerate

- A maximum of 10 projects can be supported.
- Each project will receive the following financial and non-financial support:
 - R 100 000 per project which will be used towards the development of the concept or idea. Additional funding may be made available depending on progress and compliance with all conditions of grant. The funding will be dispensed in tranches based on progress.
 - Access to a dedicated mentor to assist with development and implementation of the idea/concept.
 - Access to incubation services where available
 - Access to a commercialisation specialist, IP specialist and product design professional.
 - Assistance with marketing the idea/concept
 - Opportunity to participate in an international student exchange.

Regional pitching sessions and workshop

The DITTC is organising pitching sessions in various regions. Kindly consult the schedule of regional visits at the service center closest to you.

Enquiries may be directed to:

Ms. Hlumela Kunene: kunendq@unisa.ac.za (012 429 8549)

Ms. Ntanganedzeni Muanalo: muanan@unisa.ac.za (012 429 3767)



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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2023 Innovation Challenge Visits March and April 2023						
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Pietermaritzburg	8 Richards bay Agency	9	10	11	12
13	14 Ekurhuleni	15 Middleburg	16 George Nelspruit Hub	17 Vaal Agency Cape Town Campus	18 Cape Town Campus	19
20	21 Human Rights Day	22	23 Mafikeng Agency	24 Durban Hub x2	25	26
27	28 Polokwane	29 Makhado Potchefstroom	30 Giyani Kimberly Agency	31 Bloemfontein		
APRIL						
					1	2
3	4 Mthatha New Castle Agency Rustenburg Hub	5 East London Hub	6	7 Good Friday	8	9
10 Family day	11	12 Wild Coast Port Elizabeth Agency	13	14 Sunnyside Campus	15	16

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17 Science Campus	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Ethiopia	25 Ethiopia	26 Ethiopia	27 Freedom Day Ethiopia	28 Ethiopia	29 Ethiopia	30