COLUMBIA
WORLD
PROJECTS

+Thinking
Doing
**Columbia
Global**

# Request for Applications

# CWP Social Impact Awards:
# Building Inclusive Cities

**RFA Issue Date:** October 15, 2024
**Deadline for Submission:** December 13, 2024
**RFA Updated:** November 4, 2024

## Purpose

Columbia World Projects (CWP) at Columbia Global is seeking proposals for the next round of CWP Social Impact Awards. CWP Social Impact Awards support faculty and researchers from across Columbia University who seek to address pressing societal challenges with innovative approaches and the potential to transform thinking and inform actions to address these challenges.

## Thematic Focus

CWP works to catalyze innovations and accelerate impact in the US and around the world with a focus across four themes: Supporting Generations, Renewing Democracy, Building Inclusive Cities, and Enabling Thriving Communities. For the 2025 Social Impact Awards, we seek proposals with bold ideas to advance inclusive cities.

Cities are densely settled areas of prosperity and, simultaneously, immense inequality. They also are locations of experimentation to build opportunity, drive community growth, and innovate policy. CWP has worked in this domain since it's inception – assembling networks of faculty, practitioners, and policymakers – tackling issues ranging from rebuilding Beirut following the 2020 port explosion, to supporting work using big data to assess correlations between urban mobility and opportunity, to scholarly efforts that prompt new thinking on prospects for developing green infrastructure in cities.

We invite proposals that seek to mobilize university capacities to examine and address the challenges faced by cities around the world. Proposals on this theme may focus on a range of disciplines, topics and strategies. Examples include but are not limited to:
- Public Art and Cultural Heritage in Urban Spaces
- Cultural Preservation and Development in Urban Communities
- Sustainable Green Infrastructure in Cities
- Technology for Urban Mobility and Accessibility
- Equitable Healthcare Access/Infrastructure in Urban Areas
- Education Equity and Opportunity
- Data-Driven Urban Policy Solutions for Reducing Inequalities
- Inclusive Economic Development and Social Entrepreneurship in Cities

- Innovative Urban Governance for Participation and Social Justice
- Affordable Housing and Equitable Land Use Law
- Urban Resilience and Climate Adaptation
- Digital Equity and Smart Cities
- Urban Design Innovations

# Award Categories

Social Impact awards will be made in the following two categories: **Seed Awards** and **Impact Awards**.

- **Seed Award** (between 3-5 awards; $10,000 - $20,000 each; over one year): These awards provide funding to support faculty and researchers in the pursuit of novel ideas for addressing urban challenges, advancing strategies and policies through support for scholarly pursuits, convenings, or small projects that examine and advance solutions.
- **Impact Award Category A** (between 2-3 awards; $150,000 - $250,000 each; over two to three years): These awards aim to support projects that build on early-stage work by piloting and implementing innovative interventions to critical urban issues. These awards may fund pilot projects, testing interventions in diverse settings and expanding successful prototypes.
- **Impact Award Category B** (up to one $500,000 award; over two to three years): These awards will support larger-scale projects aiming to address priority urban challenges through innovative, practical solutions or change in policy.

# Proposal Requirements

CWP will consider proposals that meet the following criteria:

- Inclusion of at least two full-time faculty or researcher(s) from distinct Columbia University units (i.e., schools, departments, institutes, or centers) as part of the project leadership.
    - At least one proposal lead must be eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator per Columbia University guidelines. To request a PI waiver, please refer to these Columbia Global guidelines.
- Partnership with entities outside Columbia University (e.g., government agencies, bilateral agencies, civil society organizations, private sector partners, and academic institutions).
- Demonstration of the interdisciplinary engagement in project design, development, and implementation.
- Articulation of how the work will advance scholarship and derive evidence for solutions.
- Inclusion of measurable outputs and outcomes.
- Demonstration of engagement with relevant communities.
- Engagement of Columbia University undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or postdocs.
- Commitment to advancing gender equity and racial justice.

CWP will **not** consider proposals that:
- Do not align with the thematic focus of "Building Inclusive Cities"
- Aim to sustain ongoing projects or activities
- Consist exclusively of training activities

# Other Considerations

**International Proposals**: CWP strongly encourages proposal teams to engage with and utilize the

platforms of the Columbia [Global Centers](#) or [ICAP offices](#). These entities can offer operational and administrative platforms for conducting global research and social impact programmatic activities.

Eligible **Global 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](#)

Eligible **ICAP offices** are located in: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar (Burma), Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Ukraine, and Zambia.

## Award Requirements

Awardees are required to submit progress reports and project indicator data to CWP (semi-annually and quarterly for Seed Awards and Impact Awards, respectively). Awardees are asked to present project progress and/or final results via virtual and/or in-person meetings. Awardees will also provide information to Columbia Global communications on a periodic basis to assist in disseminating information to internal and external audiences.

## Process and Timeline

**Seed Awards**

The review and selection of Seed Award Concept Notes follows a single-step submission process. Concept Notes are due via Submittable by **December 13, 2024**. Award decisions will be communicated via email in March 2025.

| Seed Awards | |
|---|---|
| **Concept Notes Due** | December 13, 2024 |
| **Project Launch (estimated)** | April 2025 |

The [Seed Award Concept Note form](#) and a [budget template](#) are linked here as a reference for applicants.

**Impact Awards**

The review and selection of Impact Award proposals follows a two-step submission process. Expressions of Interest are due via Submittable by **December 13, 2024**. Applicants with successful applications will be invited to submit Full Proposals in late-January, due via Submittable by **March 21, 2025**. Award decisions will be communicated via email in April.

| Impact Awards | |
|---|---|
| **Expressions of Interest Due** | December 13, 2024 |
| **Invitation for Full Proposals Released** | January 24, 2025 |
| **Full Proposals Due** | March 21, 2025 |
| **Project Launch (estimated)** | June 2025 |

The [Impact Award Expressions of Interest form](#) is linked here as a reference for applicants.

**Virtual Informational Session**

We strongly encourage individuals considering this opportunity to attend an informational session on November 13 at 3PM ET. The session will address questions about the application process and required documentation for all Columbia Global funding opportunities being released. Interested individuals are invited to register here. Participation in the informational session is not a requirement for proposal submission.

Interested applicants are also invited to submit questions to Christine Hunt at (ch3326@adcu.columbia.edu).

## Submission Instructions

Seed Award Concept Notes, Impact Award Expressions of Interest, and Full Proposals must be submitted via the Submittable platform, which can be accessed here.

## Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation of each application will be conducted by CWP and faculty experts from various fields. The evaluation criteria are as below:
- Alignment with the thematic focus of "Building Inclusive Cities"
- Feasibility of design and resource requirements
- Innovation and originality
- Interdisciplinary collaboration and partnerships
- Student engagement
- Potential for tangible outcomes
- Community engagement and inclusivity
- Appropriateness of proposed budget

## Feedback for Unsuccessful Applicants

While we value each submission and the effort involved, it is not feasible to provide individualized feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

## Resources for Applicants

- This season, Columbia Global is offering six unique opportunities for faculty and researchers. Find out if this is the right one for you by referring here.
- Find partners and colleagues working in the same area of social impact via the Columbia Impact Exchange