



SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION SW OLTENIA
(EDUCOL) CRAIOVA, ROMANIA 2024

INTRODUCTION

At Ford and at Educol we understand that to be a truly sustainable organization, we must play an active role in the larger community, helping address a wide range of vital issues from education to safety to mobility.

The Ford Resource and Engagement Centre (FREC) in Craiova is designed to act as a social entrepreneurship incubator space where students and recent graduates from the University of Craiova can design and launch innovative and sustainable social enterprises to help accelerate the pace of development of the region. Social enterprises are classified as businesses with a social/community purpose. The aim is to help drive social mobility to positively impact economic and job growth and quality of life.

The main thematic areas that will be the subject of social entrepreneurship projects include education, culture, tourism and tradition, agriculture, environment, engineering, health/well-being and smart mobility. These will be defined by the students/graduates of the University of Craiova and selected through open competition by Educol.

Social entrepreneurship is an entrepreneurial activity whose main purpose is to solve social problems to the benefit of the community, to create a supportive environment and a complementary framework for sustaining and developing the entrepreneurial spirit of students from all cycles of study, including among their own graduates.

The main goal of social entrepreneurs is not to get money, but to build ethical, sustainable businesses that have a positive social impact. Among the principles of social entrepreneurship are management autonomy, democratic decision-making process, adherence through volunteering, and the fact that in the income distribution process, priority is given to individuals and labor before capital. The social entrepreneur is a member of the civil society that addresses an important social problem in a particularly efficient or innovative way and solves it so as to have a social impact.



The FREC Craiova social entrepreneurship program requests proposals for community-based projects that must address, in a fresh and creative way, a tangible, unmet social need among the following topic(s)

- Building Sustainable Communities (areas: Education, Culture/Tourism/Tradition, Agriculture, Environment, Engineering, Health/Well-being),
- Driving Social Mobility
- Changing the Way People Move Through Smart Mobility

Through this social entrepreneurship program, we support the Craiova University as they work with students to design and develop programs and initiatives that address critical community needs in new ways, with a focus on helping the community become a more sustainable place to work and live. It is our hope that participating students will find their creativity and resourcefulness engaged in meaningful and unexpected ways.

The project proposals must, at a minimum:

- 1. Identify and describe the community need that the social enterprise will seek to address**
- 2. Describe an innovative approach/proposal to addressing the community need**
- 3. Demonstrate the involvement of students/graduates in a leadership role**
- 4. Seek to address the unmet community need in a relevant, tangible and feasible way**
- 5. Involve community-based partners as relevant to ensure relevance and sustainability**
- 6. Involve the relevant university faculties**

In 2024, around 5-7 project proposals will be selected to take part in the social entrepreneurship program which includes:

- Ongoing access to office incubator facilities at the Ford Resource and Engagement Centre located at 154A Calea București Street, Craiova
- Best practice examples and tips - two-day meetings, designed to help to prepare students for role in the creation of a social enterprise.
- A “seed” grant ranging from \$5,000 to \$30,000 (exceptionally, in the case of highly complex and impactful projects, the amount can reach \$50,000) to support implementation of the proposal. The agreed amount will be based on the project proposal, project complexity and detailed budget breakdown.
- Ongoing mentoring from Educol in collaboration with the University of Craiova - INCESA.

Each of these areas will be expanded in the RFP over the coming pages.

This RFP does not commit Educol to accept proposals or contracts for service or pay the cost incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP.

Students and student organizations responding to this RFP must work with their university and INCESA management to gain their agreement to apply for this program.



PROGRAM SUMMARY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- **Objectives:** The social entrepreneurship program run by Educol in Craiova is a special initiative to support young people to develop social enterprises for the good of the region. Its purpose is to challenge university students to partner with their local communities to design innovative, student-led projects that address critical community needs, and in doing so build sustainable businesses.

PROGRAM SPECIFICS

- **Summary:** Participating graduates and undergraduate teams will work with their local communities to create innovative proposals utilizing the university's resources and capacity to address a need in the community in a fresh, creative, tangible way focusing on priorities of a) Building Sustainable Communities (areas: Education, Culture/Tourism/Tradition, Agriculture, Environment, Engineering, Health/Well-being), b) Driving Social Mobility and c) Changing the Way People Move Through Smart Mobility. Around 5-7 project proposals will be selected to implement their business proposals in 2024/2025.
- **The Social Enterprise Challenge.** In this challenge, proposals must address three broad areas including Building Sustainable Communities, Driving Social Mobility and Changing the Way People Move Through Smart Mobility. Please note "Mobility" is not restricted to vehicles and/or transportation and a "sustainable community" is a term we are using to describe healthy, liveable communities that are poised to thrive in a global economy.
- For your convenience, downloadable application form and budget template are available on the Educol website <http://www.educol.ro/>. First proposals must be received on or before **10th May, 2024, by 5pm**. Final proposals must be received on or before **24th May, 2024, by 5pm**. Each student team should complete the proposal application form, and ensure that there is a detailed budget overview included. **Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.** Please submit all required documents to educol@incesa.ro. ***Once these proposals are received they will be reviewed and feedback will be provided, such that necessary revisions can be made ahead of the final proposal being submitted.***
- **Note: The project must be consistent with charitable purposes.** Given this initiative is supported by with charity dollars, any proposed project must be consistent with a charitable purpose. These purposes include, but are not limited to, combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency; lessening neighborhood tensions; reducing unemployment and underemployment; engaging in related activities in relief of the poor, the distressed or the underprivileged; or any other charitable purpose.
- **Criteria. Project proposals must meet the following criteria for consideration:**
 1. **The project must identify and describe the community need that the social enterprise will seek to address.**
 2. **The project must describe an innovative approach.** The Social Entrepreneurship Program is looking for college students to create interesting, unique, and ingenious approaches to defining



tangible ways to make lives better in their communities. This should include an explanation of the opportunity, vision and innovative strategy. Each team should outline a project which addresses one of these 3 priority topics – Building Sustainable Communities, Driving Social Mobility and Changing the way the world moves through smart mobility. Some examples of potential topic areas as outlined below

1) **Building a Sustainable Community**

a) **Education**

In an increasingly global economy, human capital is perhaps the most important ingredient to a community's ability to survive and thrive.

Ideas may include those that:

- Looks to develop new Education and training initiatives/programs that support sustainable employment and social inclusion
- Seek to bridge the gap between employment and business
- Include involve volunteer partnering with local non-profits in new ways

b) **Culture/Tradition/Tourism**

Culture, tradition and customs play an important role for a civilization and character of its citizens and society. It helps in striking the balance with Mother Nature, conservation of natural resources and respecting each other.

Ideas may include those that:

- Help to protect and nurture local traditions to support freedom, integrity, personal responsibility, respect, strong work ethic and to celebrate community
- Help to develop and grow local tourism, capitalizing on natural heritage and cultural and historical heritage
- Help to protect and promote local trade and industry

c) **Agriculture**

Agriculture plays a strategic role in the process of economic development of a country from food production to cultivation; it not only provides food and raw material but also employment opportunities to a very large proportion of population.

Ideas may include those that:

- Support sustainable rural development and modernization of agriculture and fisheries
- New environmentally friendly farming methods

d) **Environment**

Clean water and air are critical to the overall health and wellbeing of a community. How do individuals and organizations in a community learn to become more environmentally conscious and sustainable?

Ideas may include those that:

- Creative approaches to the conservation, or use, of water
- Encourage and support environmental protection
- Increase energy efficiency



- Make the communities we live in a healthier place to be – clean air, clean water, sanitation, recycled materials

e) Engineering

Engineering is important in terms of prosperity, security, health, and well-being. It is also a driver of technologic innovation that integrates scientific principles with practically orientated research, systems and processes.

Ideas may include those that:

- Encourage young people to choose a career in Engineering
- Improving skills within the varying engineering fields
- Explore, develop new technical innovations to help strengthen and protect the community/environment and the people within it

f) Health/Well-being

When we talk of health, it is not just about a healthy body but also about sound mental health. It is vital for proper growth and development. A healthy community also does not drain on economic resources but rather support economic growth.

Ideas may include those that:

- Help reduce vulnerability
- Improve the lives of those who are less fortunate e.g. disabled
- Greater access to medical care/advice
- Supporting personal development of young people
- Malformations screening for new-borns.

2) Driving Social Mobility

What tool or project for individuals, households or people will aid movement within the layers of social strata?

Ideas may include those that

- Address tools or methods to improve economic empowerment, such as engaging youth to participate in STEAM fields/activities, helping first-generation college students succeed in school
- Provide social assistance
- Increasing the economic competitiveness of the region
- Teaching new life skills e.g. food sustainability and urban gardening to an economically challenged community
- Reducing the migration rate of young people from Oltenia region

3) Changing the Way the World Moves Through Smart Mobility

How are affordable, clean, and safe transportation systems for the 21st Century designed and implemented? How are lives improved by the way we move? How can you help make your city/region a better place to by connecting communities in a smarter way?

Ideas may include those that:

- Creating ride share apps
- Replacing old models of transportation – this includes any type of and any combination



- of mobility/transportation including cycling



- Journey/route planning for different audiences – the hard of hearing/blind/children
 - Enabling people and goods to move freely, easily and safely
 - Improving connectivity and access - anything that helps people connect and helps them to get access to much needed resources – from free wifi spots to mobile service apps to community areas/hubs that help local people connect with one another
 - Reduce logistics costs/support community loyalty
 - Sustainable urban design that connects communities
 - Tech solutions that make the journey easier e.g. solar smart benches that provide free of charge wifi as you sit
3. **The project must involve students in a leadership role.** University students must be involved in a leadership role in the project, and in all aspects of the project from design to implementation. Successful proposals will demonstrate this involvement in detail.
4. **The project must seek to address an urgent and unmet community need in a relevant, tangible and feasible way.** The social entrepreneurship program is **not** looking for research studies or reports. Successful proposals will describe a project touching the community in meaningful ways, and makes an improvement with the local community. While research/study can and should be a part of any project, meaningful and demonstrable action is required. The teams should explain what tangible outcomes might be and how they plan to measure this.
5. **The project should look to involve a community-based organization(s) as a partner.** Winning proposals will demonstrate an active and meaningful partnership with a local community-based organization. The term "community-based organization" is not used as a legal term, but rather to describe any organization that plays a role in the life of the local community (e.g. schools, social service agencies, businesses, government entities).
6. **It is preferred that relevant university faculties are involved in some way.**

Project Resources and Strategies. Additional consideration will be given to proposals that:

1. Leverage additional community resources, monetary or human, to support the proposed project;
 2. Use "seed" grant efficiently to extend the life of the project;
 3. Create initiatives that can be sustained after the "seed grant" has been incorporated into the project.
- **Communication and Publicity.** Proposals should include a brief section addressing how the university/student team would plan to communicate and/or publicize the project through various outlets (e.g. press release, web, local television and print, video, social media URLs, etc.)

BUDGET

For budgeting purposes, proposals should assume a **one-time** grant ranging from \$5,000 to \$30,000 (exceptionally, for projects with high complexity and significant impact, the amount can reach \$50,000). This will be dependent on specific detail within the project proposal overview and team should clearly identify how the budget would be spent and estimated impact.

ROLLOUT

- The process of soliciting proposals from students will be a standard "Request for Proposal" (RFP) application process. This RFP provides all the requirements of the Challenge, and specifies the proposal format and issues to be addressed.



- Selection is based on how well proposals meet the **six** criteria outlined in this RFP
- The Proposal Review Committee will be made up of representatives from Educol, Ford Motor Company and Ford Fund, City Hall Craiova. The Proposal Review Team will score the proposals based on a prepared RFP scoring sheet, discuss the rankings and invite the shortlisted teams to make a short presentation, following which a final decision will be made.
- Winning student teams will be presented with their awards from Educol and will then have a set amount of time (normally over a year) within which to implement their projects.

TIMELINE

- **May 2024** - Application form distributed; proposal and budget template available
- **May 10th 2024** - **First Proposals due from students**
- **May 17th 2024** - Feedback on first proposals
- **May 24th 2024** - **Revised proposal due (final form)**
- **June 3rd 2024** - Shortlisted applicants invited to present their proposals
- **June 12th 2024** - **Winners' announcement**

The exact timing of the project implementation period will be negotiated with Educol on an individual project basis.

PROPOSAL SPECIFICS

The Competition Application

Proposals will be accepted from all qualified applicants (as described in this RFP). These initial proposals should utilize the templates provided by Educol. Proposals should address the following areas:

- 1. Introduction and Project Summary**
- 2. Description of How Project Meets The Social Entrepreneurship Criteria**
 - a. The project must describe an innovative approach in one of three broad categories: Building Sustainable Communities (Education, Culture/Tourism/Tradition, Agriculture, Environment, Engineering, Health/Well-being), Driving Social Mobility, Changing the Way People Move through Smart Mobility.
 - b. The team must clearly identify the community need to be addressed
 - c. The project must involve students in a leadership role
 - d. The project must seek to address an urgent and unmet community need in a tangible way
 - e. The project must involve a community-based organization as a partner
 - f. The project must involve a relevant university faculty as appropriate to the project
- 3. Project Resources and Strategies**
 - a. Will the project be sustainable after "seed" monies are completed?
 - b. Can additional resources be identified and leveraged?
 - c. Are there any strategies for extending the life of the initiative?
- 4. Budget**
- 5. Timeline**



FURTHER ROLLOUT DETAILS

PARTICIPANTS' PERSONAL INFORMATION

Participants' Personal Information collected is subject to the Privacy Statement located on the Educol website www.educol.ro. By participating in the Social Entrepreneurship Program, you expressly agree to the terms of the Privacy Statement.

QUESTIONS

Please contact name at educol@incesa.ro or **+40251414548** if you have any questions.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

First proposals must be received on or before the close of business **10th May, 2024 by 5pm**. The final proposals must be received on or before the close of business **24th May, 2024 by 5pm**.

Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. Please submit all required documents to

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