

## **FAQs – UNHCR Innovation Fellowship**

### **What happens during the Fellowship?**

The Fellowship involves a full curriculum of real-life assignments, online workshops, webinars, open-house calls, peer-support group sessions, and engagement with alumni (e.g. Innovation Hours) to support Fellows as they work on their independent projects. To advance these projects, Fellows follow a loosely scripted approach, working their way through several tasks that guide them through the different stages of innovation. This process begins with a collaborative approach to narrowing down problems Fellows have identified and possible solutions to those problems. Then, each Fellow rapidly tests their ideas, before honing in on a particularly promising solution. Fellows aren't expected to produce a perfect final product from this journey; instead, they're expected to go through a process that evidences their learning and that they can continue with once the Fellowship is over.

### **Is the Fellowship delivered online or in person?**

The Fellowship is delivered fully online, with hands-on assignments stemming from practical challenges and opportunities for innovating in UNHCR. Although the programme involves plenty of workshops and opportunities for Fellows to interact, we unfortunately do not have any in-person modalities at present.

### **If I'm successful, how much time will I need to dedicate to the Fellowship?**

Innovation doesn't happen without time and dedication. We ask Fellows to spend roughly 10% of their work week on innovation throughout the duration of the Fellowship. This time can be allocated in many ways – whether you set aside one day per week or an hour or so each day. Time management can be discussed during the programme.

**Is the Fellowship about technology?**

Absolutely not! Fellows learn how to address operational challenges using an array of innovation methodologies (such as experimentation and testing). These methodologies can involve high-tech, low-tech, and even zero-tech solutions. Innovation is an approach and a mindset that is accessible to everyone, regardless of the technology available to you.

**How does having an Innovation Fellow on the team benefit operations?**

Having an Innovation Fellow on board is an awesome opportunity for any country operation or division. Fellows go through intensive innovation training, and they're supported to facilitate innovation with their colleagues, partners, and displaced communities. The skills and mindsets they bring to the wider team will lead to innovative solutions and positive change. Managers play a crucial role in innovation, by investing in their team and enabling them to take the time and space they need to facilitate creative approaches.

**How can I get buy-in from my supervisor?**

Innovation takes time! It's very challenging to make that time if you don't have permission to innovate in your daily work. So, it's important to get buy-in from your supervisor, and to ensure they understand that the operation as a whole will benefit from your participation. Additionally, together with colleagues from GLDC's MLES, we are happy to speak with your supervisor and provide them with information to help them help you. We will also host information sessions during the application process, to which you can invite your supervisor.

**Can I send a joint application with a colleague?**

Collaboration is key to innovation, so it's wonderful that you want to work together! However, each applicant must submit an independent application, and each application will be reviewed individually. You can, however, let us know about your plans to collaborate in your application.

**I have an innovative idea and I need funding to implement it. Can the Fellowship fund it?**

So great to hear that you already have a fully fledged idea! Innovation is about so much more than great ideas, though – and the Fellowship is designed to help colleagues learn how to tackle operational challenges using innovation methodologies.

However, you should check out the four Innovation Funds run by the UNHCR Innovation. They are: the Digital Innovation Fund; the Refugee-led Innovation Fund; the Environment and Climate Action Innovation Fund; and the Data Innovation Fund.

**I want to attend a conference/event. Can the Fellowship fund this?**

The Fellowship does not sponsor travel to individual conferences and events.

**I love workshops! Can I join yours without being part of the Fellowship? Or become a Fellow just to come to them?**

We love your enthusiasm for learning – but unfortunately non-Fellows aren't able to join Fellowship workshops. And, if you do join the Fellowship, you are committing to the entire programme of learning, not just the workshops. The core learning opportunities that the Fellowship offers lie in the independent innovation work that Fellows conduct in their own operations/divisions. The workshops are conducted to support that work.

If you're excited about innovation and learning but aren't able to join the Fellowship, we have good news for you: we're working on an open innovation webinar series! Be the first to hear about upcoming events by leaving us your email address [here](#).