

# Impact Collaboration Programme 2021

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## Overview

The Geneva ecosystem gathers a rich variety of International Organizations, NGOs, foundations, networks, academic institutions and private sector actors that, together, have the potential to design impactful solutions to some of the most complex challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The [Geneva Science-Policy Interface](#) supports this work by facilitating opportunities for collaboration and partnership between Geneva-based international policy actors and scientific institutions in Switzerland and beyond.

We know that time and resources to initiate or boost purposeful collaborations early on can make a difference to successful and sustainable collaborations in the long run. The Impact Collaboration Program (ICP) provides seed funding and in-kind support to build and boost science-policy partnerships so that they can create a foundation of trust, aligned interests and cooperation to deliver real impact.

### What does the ICP offer?

Maximum 40,000 CHF per project (120,000 CHF total for projects selected in 2021) and in-kind support as needed.

### Who is eligible?

The call supports projects that stem from **collaborations** that involve **at least** one actor from an **academic** institution (no geographical limitation), and one actor from the **International Geneva ecosystem** carrying policy work or implementation work (e.g. international organisations, programmes, funds, NGOs). The ICP supports collaborative projects which explicitly bridge science, policy and/or implementation both in terms of aims and actors involved. Individuals (with affiliations), institutions and consortia can apply to the programme. See 'eligibility criteria' for more information

### What is the 2021 theme?

*'Bridging science and policy to foster systemic resilience'*

### When does the call open and close?

The ICP has two rounds:

- Pre-proposal: opens on 18 November 2020 and closes on 17 January 2021 (23:59 CET)
- Full proposal: opens on 1st February 2020 and closes on 21st March 2021 (23:59 CET)

### How to apply?

1. Send your 1000-word application through this [platform](#).
2. Submit a full proposal if your project is pre-selected.

See below for more information.

### Contact

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# What is the ICP

## Goals

The Impact Collaboration Programme is an annual call for projects by the Geneva Science-Policy Interface with the support of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (the Swiss DFA is however not involved in the selection of projects). It is aimed at promoting opportunities of collaboration between science, policy and implementation actors in order to enhance the relevance and impact of global governance and international cooperation efforts of actors based in Geneva.

The aim of the ICP is threefold:

1. Enhance opportunities for collaborations at the interface of science, policy and practice that are relevant to the International Geneva ecosystem;
2. Contribute to nurture a culture of science-policy collaboration and evidence-based policy-making and programming within the International Geneva ecosystem; and
3. Build knowledge and capacity in the field of science-policy collaboration brokering in the context of International Geneva

## What does the ICP provide?

### Grant

Projects can apply for a maximum of 40,000 CHF. The global amount of the ICP is 120,000 CHF in 2021.

The ICP grants provide seed money that can cover costs related to personnel or activity (see ICP rules and regulations to find out what types of cost are eligible). 85% of the grant amount is transferred upon signature of the ICP Agreement Letter and 15% after submission of the final report.

### Support

The ICP can bring tailored support to the project holders to strengthen the project's strategic approach and maximise its impact potential. The services provided are adapted to the specific needs and context of each project. They fit within the limit of the GSPI's available resources and can relate to:

- Science-policy engagement and impact strategy
- Strategic planning and project design
- Multi-stakeholder engagement, neutral convening and networking
- Communication and dissemination of results
- Scaling and long-term sustainability beyond the ICP framework
- Capacity-building and learning

# What type of projects?

## Overall aim of projects

The 2021 ICP scheme will provide support to collaboration projects which explicitly:

- Bridge science, policy and/or implementation both in terms of aims and actors involved; and
- Support policy and programmes that foster systemic resilience (see description of 2021 focus theme below)

## Project duration

The work plan of the projects supported by the Impact Collaboration Program must be completed within 12 months.

Projects start at the latest on 2nd August 2021.

## Types of outcomes

The ICP supports projects with a clear framework for impact, linking activities, outputs, immediate outcomes and long-term impact.

Examples of project outcomes:

- New entity created
- Relevant evidence has been integrated into a policy process
- New tool/skills available
- New science-policy mechanism established
- Further funding opportunities
- Policy relevant research or pilot study co-designed or co-implemented
- Long-term partnership defined / consortium established
- Evidence-based policy framework designed

Example of long-term outcomes (impact):

- Decision-makers are better equipped to make decisions under uncertainty in complex contexts.
- Policy discussions are based on evidence accessible in an appropriate format.
- Programs are more effective according to the science-based methods for framing problems, designing solutions and assessing impact.
- Sustainable collaborations between scientists and decision-makers on producing and using knowledge are guiding important decisions.

## Types of collaboration

The ICP supports formal collaboration between academic institutions on one side and policy/implementation institutions from the Geneva ecosystem on the other side. Collaborations involve at least two parties and can include as many parties as relevant to the

purpose of the collaboration. (See description of collaborations in the eligibility criteria section)

Collaboration projects that can fall within either of these three categories.

1. The beginning	2. Chicken & egg	3. The last stretch
A collaboration is about to start and needs resources to build trust, set objectives, plan activities and deliver a proof of concept.	A collaboration already is in place but needs resources to produce impactful outputs that will allow the collaboration to prove its value and scale.	A collaboration already delivered important outputs and needs resources to enhance the impact of such outputs.

## Theme 2021: Bridging science and policy to foster systemic resilience

The 2021 annual theme ‘*Bridging science and policy to foster systemic resilience*’ dedicates attention to how science, policy and implementation actors can leverage their respective contribution to effective policy-making under uncertainty and complexity with the aim to foster the overall resilience of systems to rapid changes, shocks and crisis.

Resilience is the ability of systems - physical, ecological or social - to respond to harmful stresses, by preventing them, mitigating their consequences, recovering from them and adapting or transforming over time<sup>12</sup>. Contemporary developments on a global scale carry the potential for acute changes and shocks that are able to profoundly unsettle existing ecological and sociopolitical systems. Fast-paced technological innovations, global health challenges such as the current pandemic, evolving migration patterns, climate change, rapid urbanisation are just some of the main phenomena likely to generate stresses, changes and potential shocks to human societies in the decades to come.

When confronted with crises, policy and implementation actors need to design policies and interventions that account for uncertainty and nonlinearity. Over the past decades, resilience has become increasingly adopted as a concept to underpin policies and projects, particularly in international development contexts<sup>3</sup>. Its value lies in, amongst others, its account of systemic effects, its realism (how to manage unpreventable shocks?), and suitability for interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral approaches. Resilience can thus serve as a useful framework to strengthen complex systems, break silos between organizations, and cultivate a systemic understanding of societal challenges.

Science can contribute to resilience approaches in at least three ways:

- *Prevention/prediction*: scientific evidence and analyses can allow the anticipation of risks and the evaluation of societies’ preparedness. Forecasting analysis, predictive

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<sup>1</sup> Hosseini, Seyedmohsen, Kash Barker, and Jose E. Ramirez-Marquez. 2016. ‘A Review of Definitions and Measures of System Resilience’. *Reliability Engineering & System Safety* 145 (January): 47–61.

<sup>2</sup> Grafton, R. Quentin, Luc Doyen, Christophe Béné, Edoardo Borgomeo, Kate Brooks, Long Chu, Graeme S. Cumming, et al. 2019. ‘Realizing Resilience for Decision-Making’. *Nature Sustainability* 2 (10): 907–13.

<sup>3</sup> Linkov, Igor, and Benjamin D Trump. 2019. *The Science and Practice of Resilience*. Springer.

modelling and system analyses among others have the potential to contribute to the prevention of harmful shocks.

- *Mitigation & recovery*: scientific impact evaluation and scenario planning can support policy and practice actors in the design of effective policies that reduce the consequences of shocks and foster recovery. Science can help shed light on leverage points, system weaknesses and guide policy-making in emergency and uncertain contexts.
- *Adaptation and learning*: scientific analyses collect data and learn from crises in a systematic way. The analysis of shocks' patterns and policies' effects can feed back into an in-depth understanding of societal dynamics and how to shape them.

For science to be an effective asset in resilience-building, however, more effective connections need to be built between policy actors and research institutions.

In 2021, the Impact Collaboration Programme aims to support excellent science-policy/implementation collaborations that contribute effectively to strengthen the resilience capacities of systems, at the local, national, regional or global level. The ICP will not fund research that aims to define resilience and will rather seek projects that are able to deliver actionable outputs.

*\* Please note that if you think that your project loosely relates to the 2021 thematic focus on resilience but strongly bridges science, policy and practice and has potential for evidence-based impact, **we still encourage you to apply.***

## Application process

The collaboration partners are invited to apply through an online platform. They designate a **main applicant** which will be the applying institution, responsible for the grant administration in case of selection. The ICP 2021 application process is divided into two stages:

### Pre-proposals

The pre-proposal stage is a light-weight process to enable applicants to submit project ideas. The pre-proposal stage is used to assess the eligibility of submitted projects (see eligibility criteria below).

This initial evaluation is done quantitatively by the GSPI team.

### Full-proposals

The full-proposal stage is a process that enables applicants to describe their projects in a detailed manner to allow the GSPI and the evaluation committee to select the best projects (see selection criteria below).

Full proposals are assessed by an evaluation committee composed of the GSPI and independent reviewers with specific expertise on science-policy-implementation engagement mechanisms. Expertise of the specific subject covered by the project might be sought on a case-by-case basis. Experts formally agree to disclose conflicts of interest and to evaluate the proposals based on the formal evaluation criteria provided by the GSPI as impartially and objectively as possible. The assessment process is anonymous (i.e. reviewers do not receive the applicant's names), non-archival (i.e. the GSPI does not keep a public database of the

submissions) and based on the selection criteria specified below. Reviewers are anonymous during the process.

Selected and rejected full proposals are notified at the end of the evaluation (5-6 weeks after the end of the submission deadline).

## Criteria

### Eligibility criteria

The proposed collaboration must involve at least one actor from an **academic** institution (no geographical limitation), and one actor **from the International Geneva ecosystem** carrying **policy work or implementation work** with global reach (e.g. international organisations, programmes, funds, international NGOs). The collaboration may also involve actors from civil society organisations and the private sector. Individuals (with affiliation), institutions and consortia can apply to the programme.

More specifically:

1. We define 'collaboration' as a group of people who found a goal alignment and make distinct contributions to a project that aims to fulfil their goal.
2. Eligible actors from academic institutions hold PhD and work as researchers or equivalent in a recognised institution.
3. We define 'policy and implementation actors' as people who work for international organizations, programmes, funds, NGOs, diplomatic missions and delegations, or Member-States. They may carry activities related to policy advice, formulation, adoption and implementation or be active in a field of practice of relevance to international policy formulation. At least one policy or implementation actor must be part of the international Geneva ecosystem. To be considered part of the international Geneva ecosystem, organizations must be [in this list](#). If your organization is not in this list, please reach out to us so that we can assess whether you are eligible or not.

The eligibility evaluation is based on a collaboration criterion, a fit criterion and an initial value criterion. The third criterion is used to generate a preliminary ranking.

1. **Collaboration criterion** is divided into:
  - 1.1. Is the project a collaboration?
  - 1.2. Is there an academic party and does it satisfy our definition?
  - 1.3. Is there a policy/implementation party and does it satisfy our definition?
  - 1.4. Is the collaboration explicitly relevant for international Geneva?
2. **Fit criterion** is divided into:
  - 2.1. Does the project aim to overcome science-policy/implementation barriers or does it use best practices in science-policy interaction?
  - 2.2. Does the project tackle a global complex challenge?
  - 2.3. Does the project make a relevant contribution to the annual theme?
3. **Initial value criterion**
  - 3.1. Does the project offer a convincing case for its expected impact?

### Selection criteria

In the second stage, projects are evaluated qualitatively by an evaluation committee according to the five criteria below to assess their impact potential.

### **1. Project fit**

A project must propose activities with goals that fit under both of the following categories :

- Fit the annual theme
- Foster an evidence-based approach to policy (or policies/programmes or decision processes)

### **2. Science-policy-practice collaboration excellence**

A project must show the extent to which they satisfy the following criteria:

- *Collaboration*: the project must be based on a relevant operational collaboration set-up with the effective capacity to yield the planned results.
- *Need-driven*: the project must be based on a clear problem statement and designed to respond to a practical current or emerging need from a clearly-defined stakeholder.
- *Actionable solution*: the project must aim to deliver actionable outputs that can be used easily and quickly for a clearly intended purpose.
- *Timely*: the project must show its relevance to decision processes (ongoing or forthcoming) that can leverage the value of its outputs, noting the major milestones and timing of that process.
- *Impactful*: the project must present a clear impact pathway (stakeholder analysis, theory of change and corresponding action plan), including how the project will sustain in the future.

### **3. Subject relevance**

A project must focus on a subject that:

- Is *globally important*: it is relevant across multiple countries and affects large populations.
- Is *urgent*: it requires solutions rapidly.
- Is *clearly a science-policy issue*: an interaction between science, policy and/or implementation actors is recognized as being part of the solution-finding process.

### **4. Applicant competences**

Applicants must be able to undertake all project activities, including technical work and operational aspects. The applicants who represent the scientific part of the project must have a PhD.

### **5. Co-financing**

Applying institutions (and/or their partners) are expected to contribute financial and/or in-kind resources to the realisation of the activity (financial/in-kind inputs do not have to proportionally match the ICP amount). If the subsequent stages of the activity extend beyond the ICP grant, projects must have identified possible fundraising opportunities.



## Monitoring, reporting and learning

### Learning approach

The GSPI seeks to understand what contribution the Impact Collaboration Programme (ICP) has been able to make to develop and improve collaboration dynamics between science, policy and implementation actors within International Geneva. The GSPI is also committed to learning from the projects it supports. We want to engage with grant holders to understand how and why change happens and how we can best support that. Additionally, the GSPI believes that reporting to fosters reflections among project holders which in turn can help them refine their project, counter weaknesses and maximise the chances of achieving the intended impact.

### Monitoring and reporting

Project holders will be required to provide short updates to the GSPI every three months. In addition, project holders will submit an intermediary report after six months and a final report two weeks after the end of the project.

Project holders are also expected to participate in a learning workshop together with the other grantees two months after the end of the project.

The table below summarises the three Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning axes components and deliverables (baseline, mid-term report, final report).

	<b>Project</b>	<b>Collaboration</b>	<b>ICP support</b>
<b>Baseline (inception meeting)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Problem statement</li><li>● Impact framework (impact, outcome, output, activities)</li><li>● Stakeholder mapping</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Initial assessment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Needs analysis</li></ul>
<b>Mid-term report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Implementation of activities</li><li>● Progress towards the objectives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Evolution of the collaboration</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Relevance of and gaps in of the support</li></ul>
<b>Final report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Outputs</li><li>● Outcomes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Contribution to outcomes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Contribution to outcomes</li></ul>
<b>Learning workshop</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Experience-sharing between ICP project holders</li></ul>		

- Identification of challenges and best practices in science-policy-implementation collaborations