



The National Innovation Challenge

Guidelines to Applicants

August 2025
Issue: 1 Rev: 0

PRIVACY STATEMENT

The information requested on these application forms is solicited by the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council. It will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals and may be disclosed to qualified experts and the staff of the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council as part of the review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards. To perform its contractual obligations, the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council ("MRIC") collects, processes, and stores personal data (including sensitive personal data) of its data subjects. MRIC treats these personal data collected as private and confidential. The MRIC abides by all data protection laws as may be applicable, including the Mauritian Data Protection Act 2017 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR"). We have implemented organisational, physical and technical safeguards thus ensuring protection (of personal data collected) from: unauthorized access, misuse and/or unauthorized disclosure. We are also committed to being transparent about how personal data of our data subjects are collected and used. For more information, please refer to the MRIC Privacy Statement on our website: www.mric.mu

Note:

Proposals not meeting the proposal content requirements which are listed and explained in this solicitation will **not** be considered.

By submitting an application, the applicant accepts to be ***filmed and featured in the National Innovation Challenge TV series.***

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES	1
3. CATEGORIES	1
4. EVALUATION	2
5. PROCESS	2
Stage 1 – Application	2
Stage 2 – Administrative Screening	2
Stage 3 – Pre-selection	2
Stage 4 – Selection/Audition Phase	2
Stage 5 – The Innovation Sprint	2
Stage 6 – Final	2
6. SEED FUNDING AND DURATION	2
7. ALLOWABLE AND NON-ALLOWABLE FOR SEED MONEY	3
Allowable Expenses	3
Non-Allowable Expenses	3
8. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS	3
8.1 Budget Reallocation	3
9. PRIZE	3
10. DISCLAIMER	3
11. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION	3
12. CONTACT US	4

1. INTRODUCTION

The **Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC)**, formerly known as the Mauritius Research Council, is a corporate body set up on the 1st of September 2019 through the proclamation of the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council Act 2019. The activities of the Council are focused on the main objective of promoting, coordinating and exploiting research with a view to sharpening the competitive edge of industries for sustainable economic and social growth. To that end, the Council operates a number of Research and Innovation Grant Schemes.

Under this Call for Ideas, the MRIC, under the aegis of the **Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research**, invites the general public to participate in this competition.

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The National Innovation Challenge (NIC) aims at uncovering and fostering local and professional innovations created by Mauritians working in a variety of fields from Academia, Private sector, Start-up and Micro Companies, SMEs, Communities to local schools and backyard sheds/ home inventions.

The aim of this challenge is to inculcate and nurture an innovation culture amongst the Mauritian population whilst finding practical innovative solutions to common life problems.

3. CATEGORIES

This edition of the National Innovation Challenge will feature **three** distinct categories:

General Category

Open to any individual (General Public), Small and Medium Enterprise, Association, group or Non-Governmental Organization from Mauritius.

Rodrigues and Outer Islands Innovation Challenge

Open to any individual (General Public), Small and Medium Enterprise, Association, group or Non-Governmental Organization from Rodrigues and Outer Islands.

Junior Innovation Challenge

This category is dedicated to inspiring the next generation of innovators and is open to students across Mauritius, Rodrigues and the Outer Islands. The Junior Innovation Challenge will be further divided into two sub-categories:

1. Junior Innovation Challenge: Young Innovator Category (aged 6 to 11 years)
2. Junior Innovation Challenge: Rising Innovator Category (aged 12 to 18 years)

Click [here](#) for guidelines of the Junior Innovation Challenge

Applications can be submitted individually or in groups.

Application in Group

The group should consist of a maximum of 5 members including a group leader.

How to participate?

Participants are required to propose an innovative solution to a national problem or to an issue faced in their region (locality, village, ward, town or district). The proposed solution should be viable and address a specific issue related to the problem area.

Participants should also outline how they intend to further improve their ideas or come with a prototype in the three months provided in the Idea Acceleration phase. A budget for this phase should be provided.

The application form should be filled in online on the website www.mric.mu. All applications must be submitted before the deadline.

Video Applications

Video applications of a maximum duration of five (5) minutes are also accepted provided they outline:

- The problem addressed
- The solution
- Its advantages and disadvantages
- The potential impact
- Further idea development

Submission of video applications can be done on the online application form or by forwarding the video link to us by email on nic@mric.mu and clearly indicating your full name and contact details.

4. EVALUATION

The ideas will be evaluated based on:

- Innovativeness
- Practicality
- Relevance
- Scalability
- Potential impact
- Feasibility

5. PROCESS

Stage 1 – Application

Prospective participants will be allocated **2 months** for submission of their online application. No application will be accepted past the deadline.

Stage 2 – Administrative Screening

Administrative screening will be conducted to assess completeness of applications. Candidates whose ideas satisfy the specified criteria will proceed to the Pre-selection stage.

Stage 3 – Pre-selection

In this stage, applications having met all specified criteria will be screened for the innovative merit of their applications. The pre-selected candidates would then proceed to the selection/audition phase.

Stage 4 – Selection/Audition Phase

Pre-selected applicants will be given the opportunity to present their ideas to the jury. The evaluation during the auditions will be conducted by a two-tiered judging system: a jury panel and live audience. Participants may choose their preferred format for presenting their ideas, which could include a PowerPoint presentation, oral presentation, demonstration, or other appropriate means.

Out of this process, the best ideas will be selected for the Innovation Sprint phase.

Stage 5 – The Innovation Sprint

The finalists will be provided with a seed money of up to Rs 40,000 (as required per their budget estimates) to further consolidate their ideas and come up with a realizable plan/prototype or concept within a given time scale of 3 months.

Participants will have to commit in coming up with a refined plan/prototype/concept in these three months. Regular monitoring will be conducted by MRC officials.

A one-day intensive workshop may be held for each category, led by expert mentors who will provide hands-on coaching and technical guidance.

Stage 6 – Final

After the Innovation Sprint, the finalists will have to present their final concept/prototype/plan or minimum viable product to the jury. The jury will then proceed to select the winners.

6. SEED FUNDING AND DURATION

The MRC will provide a seed money of a maximum of **Rs. 40,000 (Forty Thousand Rupees)** per selected idea.

A maximum of 25 ideas will be selected under the current call for ideas.

The maximum duration for funding of the project is **two (2) months** following the date of signature of contract.

The expected outcome is an innovative prototype which has significant potential to solve the stated problems.

Important Note:

- Applicants must be prepared and committed to leading their idea into the Innovation Sprint phase.
- The various phases of this competition will be video recorded and may be televised and broadcasted on online platforms.
- Public voting may be included as from the Innovation Sprint Phase.

7. ALLOWABLE AND NON-ALLOWABLE FOR SEED MONEY

Allowable Expenses

- Associated costs such as investment in new technologies, systems and software
- Associated capacity building expenses
- Aspects of experimental research and development to create new applications or prototypes
- Duly justified consultancy fees
- Publications, books

Non-Allowable Expenses

- Paying off debts
- Covering of operational expenses
- Organisation of conferences, workshops or seminars
- Academic studies for self-qualification

8. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Funding will be disbursed upfront to the selected applicant. The payment will be released upon signing of the contractual agreements by all parties concerned to enable the grantee to initiate the project.

The selected applicants may have to submit a short report on a milestone basis, together with a statement of accounts and invoices, showing how the funds have been utilised.

No awards will be made to applicants who are already recipient of full project funding from other agencies (including the MRIC) for the same or any similar project.

8.1 Budget Reallocation

Any redefinition and reallocation in the agreed tasks and associated budget described in the Task Scheduling and Budget Chart can only be carried out in consultation with the MRIC which, if satisfied, will authorise the necessary amendments.

9. PRIZE

The best ideas will receive prize in the following structure for implementation of project:

General Category:

1st Prize

A cash prize of Rs 150,000, a Trophy and recognition certificate(s).

2nd Prize

A cash prize of Rs 100,000, a Trophy and recognition certificate(s).

3rd Prize

A cash prize of Rs 75,000, a Trophy and recognition certificate(s).

Rodrigues and Outer Islands Innovation Challenge:

Rs 100,000, a trophy and a recognition certificate

Junior Innovation Challenge:

Refer to the [Junior Innovation Challenge guidelines](#)

10. DISCLAIMER

- The MRIC reserves the right to seek further information and/or clarifications from the proposer(s) of an idea before reaching a final decision.
- The MRIC will support all meritorious projects to the extent of resources available. However, it is under no obligation to fund any idea or any number of specific ideas on a given topic.
- The MRIC will inform all proposers of the outcome of their proposals. A decision will normally be made within one month of the date limit for submission of ideas. However, there may be cases where, because of the complexity of a proposal, more time may be required for processing of the proposals.

11. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION

The Call for Ideas is open until the **28th of November 2025**. All applications will be treated on merit.

12. CONTACT US

For more information, please contact us:

**Mauritius Research and Innovation Council
Level 6, Ebene Heights,
34 Cybercity, Ebene, 72201
Mauritius**

Tel: (230) 465 1235

Fax: (230) 465 1239

E-mail: nic@mric.mu

Website: <http://www.mric.mu>

**The MRIC reserves the right to revise and amend
the terms and conditions laid down
in this solicitation as and whenever necessary.**

Mauritius Research and Innovation Council,
Level 6, Ebène Heights,
34 Cybercity,
Ebène

Tel: (230) 465 1235

Fax: (230) 465 1239

Email: contact@mrhc.mu

Website: <http://www.mrhc.mu>