



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2020: YOUTH LEARNING ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

The Asfari Foundation is a British grant-making charity set up by Ayman and Sawsan Asfari in 2006. Our vision is for a just world where people have equal opportunities to transform their lives, invest in their communities, and shape the future of their countries. Our mission is to invest in the development of a resilient and empowered civil society infrastructure; and in innovative youth, who can collectively lead transformational change in their communities and countries. More information about our programmes can be found on our [website](#).

THE FOUNDATION'S KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. To enable the development of a resilient, effective and accountable civil society by developing the sustainability, productivity and scalable impact of high potential civil society organisations (CSOs).
2. To create non-traditional learning and economic opportunities by providing innovative support to young entrepreneurs to help them build sustainable enterprises and tackle social challenges.
3. To empower partners to transform their organisations, increase their impact, and strengthen learning and collaboration - locally, regionally and globally - through community-led, localised knowledge-sharing.

THE ORGANISATIONS WE SUPPORT:

- Share our values and are aligned with our objectives.
- Have strong track records in implementation.
- Demonstrate clear purpose and strategy linked to a specific constituency/target group.
- Actively seek to become more effective, accountable and sustainable.
- Actively seek to transform and grow their organisation, and the ecosystem in which they operate, including the professional development of their staff.
- Adopt innovative approaches to programming.
- Address systemic weaknesses in our thematic areas.
- Are committed to transparency, active partnership, and sharing learning and insight.

YOUTH LEARNING, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION PROGRAMME (YLEAP):

This programme responds to challenges faced by young entrepreneurs in the Levant, including, but not limited to, access to entrepreneurship programming outside major cities; to finance and markets; and to mentorship. The programme does this by extending funding and wider support to organisations which support young entrepreneurs, from ideation to impact investment, as they innovate solutions to the challenges of their communities. We believe that by strengthening the entrepreneurship ecosystem in which they operate, we can help young entrepreneurs to access the opportunities they need to succeed, and in turn, to drive inclusive, sustainable growth in our region.

YLEAP goes beyond grant-making. It applauds curiosity, and enthusiastically supports innovative solutions to 'wicked' problems. The programme connects players from across the entrepreneurship ecosystem - local, regional and global - who share a vision for the region, promoting learning, knowledge-sharing and mentorship support. YLEAP seeks to build a

global community of practice dedicated to social and economic change in our region, guided by evidence and experience, and led by innovative youth.

In 2020, in addition to funding support, YLEAP will pilot the Asfari Challenge for Social Innovation: an online accelerator programme that invites young entrepreneurs innovating to solve social and economic challenges faced by their communities with intense training and mentorship support, financial support (between £2,500 and £15,000), and connections to other supporters and opportunities to maximize impact.

Please visit our [website](#) for more information.

IN 2020, YLEAP OFFERS:

- **Flexible grants of up to £75,000 for a maximum of one year initially.** As this is a pilot programme, up to two further grants may be offered to the organisation from 2021 onwards (e.g. where innovations show promise).
- Early-stage access to online learning, knowledge-sharing tools, and a new community of practice via the Asfari Portal (piloting in 2020).
- Access to networking and collaboration opportunities in leading social change.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Applicant organisations:

- May be located anywhere in the world.
- Must be **registered with the appropriate local authorities** (and able to provide proof of registration).
- Must address social impact.
- Must serve Lebanese, Syrian and/or Palestinian communities in Lebanon.
- May be:
 - Local not-for profit organisations (e.g. civil society, community-based, and Non-governmental organisations); or
 - Social enterprises and/or stakeholders from global entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems; or
 - Private companies with a clear social impact business model.
- Concept notes must address at least one of the following areas:
 - **Ecosystem building in Lebanon; e.g.**
 - Innovating to strengthen collaboration between existing ecosystem stakeholders to help achieve impact at scale.
 - Improving the pipeline supporting young entrepreneurs and innovators, from ideation to impact investment.
 - Democratising access to knowledge and information for young entrepreneurs.
 - **Solutions to challenges; e.g.**
 - Innovating solutions to challenges shared by young entrepreneurs and their supporting ecosystem in Lebanon and the Levant.



- Contextualising and applying global innovations and solutions to fit ecosystems in Lebanon and the Levant.
 - Innovating to solve issues restricting young entrepreneurs in Lebanon from growing their enterprises and achieving impact at scale.
 - De-risking youth to become investment-ready, increasing their access to finance and markets.
- **Building on the Asfari Challenge for Social Innovation (ACSI)**
- Pitchworthy, in partnership with the Asfari Foundation, are running a pilot accelerator/challenge prize in Lebanon for young entrepreneurs. The structure of this pilot will follow accelerator programming and will be done primarily online.
 - Pitchworthy is an innovative organisation working to overcome the barriers of geographies and limited mobility that excludes many from entrepreneurship and innovation programming. Their online platform is packed with innovations that is based on praxis - learning by doing, maximising one's strengths, growth mindset and more.
 - Applications to YLEAP are welcome to build on the Asfari Challenge for Social Innovation pilot, offering opportunities and pathways to graduates of the programme.
 - For more information please visit this [link](#).

*******YLEAP UPDATE: 13 February 2020*******

Clarification for Youth Learning, Entrepreneurship & Innovation Programme (YLEAP) applicants:

We have received some questions asking for clarification of the types of application suitable for this programme:

- **We encourage all those with questions who are interested in applying to attend the YLEAP webinar** – joining instructions above!
- Below are some hypothetical examples of applications that could align with the three themes set out in our eligibility criteria.

Please note: these examples are NOT intended to be a prescriptive or exhaustive list, just an aid to your thinking. We encourage you to be creative!

Ecosystem building in Lebanon

- Lebanese entrepreneurship organisation innovating a model that brings together various actors in the ecosystem to support strengthen the entrepreneurship pipeline (grant would be to test the model).
- Four Lebanon ecosystem players (and maybe another INGO or global entrepreneurship player) come together to create an entrepreneurship programme from ideation to impact investment in Lebanon over three years (grant would be to fund the coordination not programmatic delivery).

Solutions to challenges



- A Lebanon based enterprise innovating a technology or a model utilising AI and blockchain to reduce cost of running entrepreneurship programmes and improve system efficiencies (grant would be offered to test the innovation).
- A global entrepreneurship ecosystem player/private company with a validated innovation that offers a solution to access to finance (or any other challenge faced by entrepreneurs and their supporting ecosystem) that could be replicated in Lebanon (grant would be to pilot replicate the innovation).
- A Lebanon based network working to standardise requirements of each stage of support on the entrepreneurship spectrum to facilitate seamless exits from programmes and entrance in others (grant would be to research the standards and buy in).

Building on the Asfari Challenge for Social Innovation (ACSI)

- An ecosystem player (anywhere) offering to accelerate a graduate of ACSI (grant would be to support with operational costs).
- A fabrication lab to support with developing new prototypes for a graduate of ACSI.
- A mentoring network to support five graduating teams for two years.

FUNDING DETAILS:

All applicants may apply for YLEAP grants:

- To **cover costs of innovation; and/or project testing; and/or existing project costs** where projects are relevant to this call.
- As **co-investment with other donors** to address the areas described above.

In addition, please note:

- **Social enterprises and not-for-profits whose annual budget in 2019 was £100,000 - £750,000** (applicable for Lebanon-based organisations):
 - May apply to use **part of the grant to cover core costs**.
 - **Must utilise at least 25% of the grant for organisational development**.

HOW TO APPLY:

- Concept notes **must be submitted using the online form** located on the Asfari Foundation website [here](#).
- Applications must be submitted in English. Unfortunately, **we cannot accept applications in Arabic** at this time. We will endeavour to enable this for future calls.
- For more information about the application process:
 - See our **Frequently Asked Questions document** [here](#).
 - Attend our **Webinar - Asfari Foundation Youth Learning, Entrepreneurship & Innovation 2020 Call and Concept Note Q&A**:



- Date: **20 February 2020, 1300 - 1500 UK time (provisional)**. Keep an eye on our website [here](#) for any updates.
- To access the webinar (hosted on Zoom) use the details below:
 - [Link to webinar](#).
 - **Meeting ID: 742 623 982 / Password: 032179**
- If you would prefer to join the webinar via mobile/landline telephone call, please contact us ahead of time and separate joining instructions can be shared with you.
- **Submit your questions in advance via email before 17 February 2020 to: programmes@asfarifoundation.org.uk (please specify in the email subject heading which programme your question relates to).**
- The webinar will be recorded and posted on our website, along with the submitted questions, after the event.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

Concept notes **must be received by 0900 UK time on 20 March 2020**. Late submissions will not be considered.

APPLICATION TIMELINE:

23 January 2020	Stage One: Concept Note applications open (online).
20 February 2020 (provisional)	Stage One: Webinar: applicants Q&A with Programme Manager (PM). - Please keep an eye on the website for any change of details/date. - Submit questions by 17 February 2020 to: programmes@asfarifoundation.org.uk
20 March 2020	Stage One: Deadline for Concept Note submission.
1 April 2020	Stage Two: Applicants informed of outcome by email. Shortlisted applicants invited to complete Proposal Application (online).
20 April 2020	Stage Two: Webinar: applicants Q&A with PM. - Please keep an eye on the website for any change of details/date.
10 May 2020	Stage Two: Deadline for Proposal submission.
By end of May 2020	Stage Three: Unsuccessful applicants informed of outcome by email. PM visits shortlisted applicants for face to face assessments.
By mid-June 2020	Stage Three: Face to face assessments completed.
30 June 2020	Stage Three: Shortlist reviewed by Asfari Foundation (AF) Board of Trustees.
31 July 2020	Decision: AF Board chooses a selection of applicants for funding. Applicants will be notified by the PM of the Board's decision.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

For more information about the Foundation, the application process, or our strategic priorities, please visit our website [here](#) or email us at programmes@asfarifoundation.org.uk.