

International Geneva AI Innovation Program (IGAIP)

Call for End User Applied AI Innovation Projects (2026)

1. Background ICAIN / IGAIP

Artificial Intelligence is advancing rapidly, yet many international and humanitarian organisations lack access to sovereign compute, applied AI research capability, and reusable digital components.

Anchored within the International Computation and AI Network (ICAIN) and Switzerland's scientific ecosystem, the International Geneva AI Innovation Program (IGAIP), addresses this gap by connecting advanced compute, scientific expertise and mission aligned applied AI to co-develop solutions that strengthen early warning, crisis analysis, multilingual access, decision support and workflow optimization across International Geneva.

ICAIN (International Computation and AI Network) is a strategic initiative to develop trusted, sovereign and mission aligned AI by connecting world class compute (Swiss National Supercomputing Centre, CSCS), leading research institutions (ETH Zurich – Leading House, EPFL), and international partners ([NTU Singapore](#), [Data Science Africa](#), [CSC Finland](#), and [ELLIS](#)) into a collaborative platform for public good AI. It lowers barriers to advanced resources such as compute, models, data, and expertise, so that governments, international organisations, and researchers can build and operate AI systems on their own terms, with transparency and interoperability at the core.

In the context of its wider engagement with international organizations, particularly [the UN-ETH Partnership](#), ETH Zurich hosts the ICAIN office which coordinates the IGAIP call.

2. Purpose

IGAIP supports applied AI projects that help UN organisations and other International Organisations based in Geneva deliver their mandates more effectively. Projects may include for instance early warning systems, multilingual LLM applications, operational workflow tools, and more. IGAIP projects should produce reusable components (APIs, models, and toolkits) with a clear pathway for scaling across other organisations of the multilateral system.

The program particularly encourages proposals involving cross-agency collaborations and addressing critical aspects such as interoperability of public and proprietary data, fairness, transparency, and security.

3. Who can apply

- Applications must be submitted by a team consisting of at least **one main applicant from an ICAIN member institution who holds a PhD and at least a 50% position** for the intended duration of the project (=Principle Investigator, PI), and at least **one partner from an eligible UN entity or International Organisation (IO)** based in Geneva. A full list of eligible institutions and organisations can be found in Annex 1. The collaboration between research and practice is intended to ensure co-development and adoption. The team must demonstrate that they have the relevant qualifications and clearly articulate the added value of the collaboration in terms of complementarity, synergy and impact.
- Individual applicants **should not submit more than one proposal** in a call.
- For potential applicants from ICAIN member institutions, UN entities, or international organisations who do not yet have a collaborator, the **ICAIN office offers matchmaking attempts** (see section five below, “Pre-Application and Support”).
- **Cross-agency collaborations** (i.e. between several UN entities and/or IOs) are particularly encouraged.
- Teams must show the capability to deliver and to access the required data/workflows. Teams should try to be gender-balanced.

4. Funding:

The IGAIP call will support a **total of 2–5 projects with a total budget of 1.1M CHF**. Further calls are yet to be confirmed.

4.1. Budget and duration

- Budget per project: 150k – 350k CHF. Costs must be justified in the proposal.
- Funding can be used for:
 - Personnel directly related to the project, such as doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers, scientific assistants I/II, established researchers and interns at ICAIN

member institutions. The salaries of the applicant and the co-applicants are not eligible for funding. Standard salary rates are applicable.

- Project-related equipment costs. Price quotations for expensive material and services (>15 kCHF) should be included if such items are requested.
 - Travel expenses (if needed for the project)
 - Costs for compute and storage
 - Costs for additional project-related mandates (standard procurement procedures and regulations of the project partners apply)
 - Costs for outreach, communication and publication
- Projects may have a maximum duration of 18 months. The timeline should include testing and planned implementation.
 - Matching funds from research groups and/or implementation partners are welcome, but not mandatory. Contribution of resources by the partners should be indicated.

4.2. Access to compute and storage

Applicants must budget compute and storage costs in the project proposal and agree to use these resources efficiently.

- Compute resource needs are formulated in node-hours over a time period (for example: 30'000 node-hours over 9 months). This will be allocated in equal quarterly quotas (10'000 node-hours per quarter in the example).
 - The cost of a **node-hour is CHF 2.69** (budgeted with CHF 80'700 in the above example).
 - Please consult the NVIDIA Grace Hopper node specs [here](#). Each node has 4 GPUs.
 - Applicants will run their workflows in CSCS' Machine Learning Platform (<https://docs.cscs.ch/platforms/mlp/>) on ALPS. A small allocation for benchmarking can be requested before the submission.
- Storage resources needs are formulated in **Terabytes (TB)**, which will be made available over the duration of the compute resources.
 - This storage can be used to keep project's data such as input data or results, and cost **65 CHF per TB, per year**. (e.g. 100 TB over 9 months need to be budgeted with CHF 4'875).
 - Temporary storage available to run simulation and/or analysis is free of charge and is subject to a cleaning policy.
 - Details regarding the policies of these file systems can be found [here](#).

5. Pre-application support & matchmaking

- **General questions:** A Q&A webinar will be offered to answer questions regarding the program application process on:
 - **Tuesday, 24 March, 2026, 14h00 – 15h00 CEST** ([registration link](#))
- **Matchmaking between UN/IOs and researchers:** For potential applicants from ICAIN member institutions, UN entities, or international organisations who do not yet have a collaborator, the ICAIN office offers matchmaking attempts.
 - **Project idea and expertise database:** Short 250 word summaries of project ideas, available data, and/or research interests from potential applicants can be uploaded using the relevant template on the [IGAIP Google Drive](#). Submissions are shared with the program's network of potentially interested collaborators, including IOs, UN entities, and researchers at ICAIN member organisations. The IGAIP office will attempt to link submissions to potential collaborators.
 - **Two online matchmaking workshops:** potential applicants can propose project ideas to interested researchers, IOs, and UN entities in 3 minute pitches on the following dates:
 - **Friday, 27 March, 2026, 10h00 – 12h00 CEST** ([registration link](#))
 - **Thursday, 9 April, 2026, 10h30 – 12h30 CEST** ([registration link](#))
- A technical officer from the ICAIN office will be available to help support in translating practical project ideas from UN entities and IOs to research questions for academic collaborators, and vice-versa. **Please contact the IGAIP program manager** (Francis Baranyk, francis.baranyk@nadel.ethz.ch) to get in touch.

6. Project submission

- A joint application must be submitted electronically through the online application form on the [call webpage](#) until the deadline (17th May 2026 23:59 CEST). All documents must be written in English. The application must include the following elements:
 - **Completed electronic application form, including** a concise summary (abstract) with key details on the objectives of the proposed research project and the significance of the anticipated results (max. 400 words).
 - Completed **application template** (max. 4 pages) including the research plan with goals, methods and expected outputs, a description of the role of each partner and the added value by the planned collaboration, sustainability and scaling aspects a risk mitigation plan.

If applicable, relevant ethical, legal, and social considerations should be included in the proposal.

- **Annex documents**, to be uploaded as **one pdf document together with the application template in the following order**
 - i. Work packages and milestones shown in a **Gantt chart**
 - ii. **CVs** of all involved team members (2 pages max. per partner)
 - iii. **Letter(s) of support** from the UN or IO project partner(s), showcasing how the organisation(s) intend to use the project results. The letter(s) should clearly articulate the goal of the project, its relevance to the organisation, and the contributions (staff time and/or financial, if applicable) the partner is willing to make to the project. The letter should be signed by a staff person at the highest appropriate level of the organisation.
 - iv. If the main applicant is not a professor: a **letter of commitment** by the applicant's host professor, Doctoral supervisor and/or head of the unit, including any financial or in-kind contribution to the project, must accompany the proposal.
 - v. Links to relevant **datasets**, if applicable
 - vi. **Literature list** of relevant references to academic literature, including any publications by the PI and co-applicants. References to gray literature material (e.g. unpublished reports, papers in obscure or difficult-to-access journals) are discouraged unless sufficient relevant information from them (e.g. figures) is included in the application.

- Budget (using the budget template) as a separate file. A template for the budget is provided and should be complemented by a description and justification of the requested resources.

7. Evaluation and selection:

Based on the selection criteria listed below, all proposals will undergo a three-step scientific and technical review process. Each project proposal will be reviewed by two members of a **Scientific Committee composed of 2 external experts** per project application. The reviewers will make their assessment to the attention of an **Evaluation Committee, chaired by Prof. Siddhartha Mishra**, that will deliberate on the proposals and the external reviews and recommend a shortlist of projects. In the last step, a three-member **Selection Committee** will make the final funding decision. Chaired by **Prof. Uwe Sauer**, Chair of the ETH Research Commission, the Selection Committee includes a representative of a second ICAIN member organisation, and a representative from the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), which provides the financial support for the IGAIP programme.

Members of the Evaluation Committee are:

Name	Institution / Affiliation	Role / Expertise
Prof. Sid Mishra	ETH	President SC III, ETH Research Commission
Prof. Melanie Zeilinger	ETH	Member SC I
Prof. Konrad Schindler	ETH	Dep. Civil, Environmental, Geomatic Engineering
Dr. Klaus Schönenberger	EPFL	Co-Lead Engineering for Humanitarian Action EHA Program (ICRC, ETH, EPFL)
Katharina Frey	ICAIN Office	Non-voting a
Francis Baranyk	ICAIN Office, IGAIP program manager	Non-voting

Members of Selection Committee

Name	Institution	Role
Prof. Uwe Sauer	ETH	Chair
Member of Swiss Mission to UN in Geneva	Swiss FDFA	Donor Representative
Dr. Maria Grazia Giuffreda	CSCS	ICAIN member rep.
Katharina Frey	ICAIN Office	Non-voting a
Francis Baranyk	ICAIN Office, IGAIP program manager	Non-voting

The committee chairs will ensure conflicts of interest are properly managed. Applications not complying with the eligibility criteria and the proposal requirements (points 3 and 6) will be rejected on formal grounds.

The evaluation criteria are as follows:

1. **Innovation, scientific quality and feasibility:** the project implies uniqueness and innovation and is embedded in a broader perspective. It is well conceived and the research results have the potential to challenge the status quo and to be published in high-level international peer-reviewed journals. It is realistic to carry out the study and to deliver it in the given timeframe and with the requested resources. The work package(s) and milestones are well defined and realistic.

2. **Strength and complementarity of the team:** the team members have relevant qualifications and experiences. The combination of expertise shows a clear added value with respect to the combined contributions from the partners. Ethical and gender/diversity aspects are being considered. Any in-kind or cash contribution to the project will also be considered in this criterium.
3. **Fit with the objectives of the call and expected operational impact:** the application demonstrates relevance to the IGAIP call objectives. The results will be used by the partnering UN entity or IO to deliver their organizational mandate more effectively. The project has a realistic long-term implementation plan and measurable goals. The applicants are explicit about how the UN entity or IO will make use of the project results.
4. **Reusability & UN-system scaling potential / Cross-agency collaboration:** the results have the potential to be re-usable by other UN entities or IOs, including interoperability and documentation/licensing. The program particularly encourages proposals involving cross-agency collaborations.

Applicants will be notified by the program office of the funding decision in mid-June 2026. Selected projects **must start at the beginning of July 2026.**

8. Responsible AI & Ethical Research

- Components should be designed for reuse and pooling with clear licensing.
- The proposed research must comply with the existing ethics regulations and adhere to the principles of research integrity valid at the participating institutions.
- Recipients of a grant whose research includes human subjects must receive approval from the relevant ethical commission at the applicant's institution. Grantees must submit the approval documents as soon as they receive approval and before starting field work (note: this only applies once projects have been selected for funding).
- Applicants who plan to involve humans as research subjects (e.g., end-users, patients, or survey respondents) must consider gender roles in experimental design, data collection and analysis, and outcome interpretation. If they do not consider the gender dimension, they must briefly explain why. If applicable, relevant ethical, legal and social considerations must be included in the proposal. The proposed research must adhere to the principles of research integrity valid at ETH Zurich.
- Please note that ETH Zurich strives to promote gender equality in scientific research. Gender must be consistently taken into account from the proposal development to the research and dissemination phase.
- The use of generative AI tools such as large language models, chatbots, and image creators in the preparation of an ETH Grant proposal is permitted in principle, but at the applicant's own risk. It

must be disclosed by providing detailed information about which generative AI tools were used, for what purpose, and to what extent, whether in writing the proposal, creating illustrations, or collecting and analyzing data. Applicants must ensure that all sources are cited appropriately and correctly, and that the documents do not contain factually incorrect, misleading, falsified, plagiarized, or fabricated information.

- Whenever possible, Open Access should be granted to publications resulting from the project. The program must be mentioned in publications, e.g., in the form “This work was supported by the International Geneva AI Innovation Program (IGAIP)”.

9. Deliverables & Reporting

Grantees must submit a scientific and financial final report no later than one month after completing the project to the ICAIN office. This report must include an overview of all expenses and receipts and should compare the original goals with the actual outcomes, describe the nature of the collaboration and list all publications and other research outputs that resulted from the project. The grantees should in addition present their project upon request by ICAIN office to an event, for instance AI4Good Summit or the Geneva AI Summit 2027.

10. Timeline and Deadlines

Date	Milestone
Mid-March	Official launch of call
24 March, 14h00 – 15h00 CEST	Q&A webinar for general questions regarding the call
27 March, 10h00 – 12h00 CEST & 9 April, 10h30 – 12h30 CEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matchmaking / Pitching Sessions - <i>Optional</i> 30' individual feedback with ICAIN Tech Team
17 May	Proposal deadline (23:59 CEST)
Mid-May – Mid-June	Formal check of the applications
	Evaluation through the Scientific Selection Committee. External reviews may be solicited.
Mid-June	Decision notifications

Beginning of July	Contracting; engineering resource planning; data/legal setup
	Projects need to start
Max. Dec. 2027	Project end date (up to 18 months maximum project duration)
January 2028	Submission of final report

11. Terms of collaboration between partners of granted projects

Data exchanged within IGAIP is generally not considered confidential information. A non-disclosure agreement should be signed before exchanging confidential data. An agreement between all project partners must be signed before the start of the project. Such an agreement will define the rights and obligations of all parties. It may allow the partners to use the results of the project for commercial and non-commercial purposes and will specify the relevant conditions. Grantees' institutions are responsible for creating such an agreement prior to the start of the project.

If personally identifying information is used, exchanged, or collected in the framework of the research, the involved partners shall comply with applicable data protection laws and regulations, and shall establish a data management plan, including a data protection concept and appropriate data protection agreements in writing.

All collaborations must follow the Code of conduct for scientific cooperation of ETH Zurich (RSETHZ 416) and the Guidelines concerning Contracts in the Field of Research at ETH Zurich (RSETHZ 440.31)

12. Financial administration

Upon receipt of the notification letter, selected projects will receive further information on how the funds will be transferred to the project PI (researcher from ICAIN member institution). Funds will be allocated at the start of the project for the entire duration of the project.

13. Contact

IGAIP Office (ICAIN – ETH Zurich): Francis Baranyk, francis.baranyk@nadel.ethz.ch

Annex 1: List of eligible International Organisations (IOs) and ICAIN member institutions

International Geneva Organisations	
ACI	Conseil International des Aéroports ; Internationaler Rat der Flughäfen ; Airports Council International
ACICI / AITIC	Agence de coopération et d'information pour le commerce international ; Agentur für Internationale Handelsinformation und –Kooperation ; Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation
AELE / EFTA	Association européenne de libre-échange ; Europäische Freihandels-Assoziaton ; European Free Trade Association
ALIPH	Alliance internationale pour la protection du patrimoine dans les zones en conflit ; Internationale Allianz zum Schutz des Kulturerbes in Konfliktgebieten ; Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas
AMA/WADA Bureau européen	Agence mondiale antidopage ; Anti-Doping-Weltagentur ; World Anti-doping Agency
APEF	Association des pays exportateurs de minerai de fer ; Vereinigung Eisenerz exportierender Staaten ; Association of Iron Ore Exporting Countries
ATT	Secrétariat du Traité sur le commerce des armes; Sekretariat des Vertrages über den Waffenhandel; Secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty
BIE / UNESCO IBE / UNESCO	Bureau international d'éducation / Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture ; Internationales Erziehungsamt / Organisation der Vereinten Nationen für Erziehung, Wissenschaft und Kultur ; International Bureau of Education / United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

BRI / BIZ / BIS	Banque des Règlements Internationaux ; Bank für Internationalen Zahlungsausgleich ; Bank for International Settlements
CEI / IEC	Commission électrotechnique internationale ; Internationale Elektrotechnische Kommission ; International Electrotechnical Commission
Centre consultatif	Centre consultatif sur la législation de l'OMC ; Beratungszentrum für WTO-Recht ; Advisory Centre on WTO Law
CENTRE SUD	Centre Sud ; Süd Zentrum ; South Center
CERN	Organisation européenne pour la recherche nucléaire ; Europäische Organisation für Kernphysikalische Forschung ; European Organisation for Nuclear Research
CICR / IKRK / ICRC	Comité international de la Croix-Rouge ; Internationales Komitee vom Roten Kreuz ; International Committee of the Red Cross
CIO / IOK / IOC	Comité International Olympique ; Internationales Olympisches Komitee ; International Olympic Committee
COUR OSCE	Cour de conciliation et d'arbitrage au sein de l'OSCE ; Vergleichs- und Schiedsgerichtshof innerhalb der OSZE ; Court of Conciliation and Arbitration within the OSCE
DNDi	Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative
FIND	Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics
FISCR	Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge ; Internationale Föderation der nationalen Rotkreuz- und Rothalbmondgesellschaften ; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fund for the Afghan People	Fund for the Afghan People
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GARDP	Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership
GAVI	GAVI Alliance (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization)

GCERF	Fonds mondial pour l'Engagement de la Communauté et la Résilience; Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund
GFATM	Fonds mondial de lutte contre le sida, la tuberculose et le paludisme ; Globaler Fonds zur Bekämpfung von Aids, Tuberculose und Malaria ; Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GICHD	Centre International de Déminage Humanitaire ; Genfer Internationales Zentrum für Humanitäre Minenräumung; Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
HD Centre	Centre pour le Dialogue humanitaire; Zentrum für humanitären Dialog; Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
IATA	Association du transport aérien international ; Internationaler Luftverkehrsverband ; International Air Transport Association
ICoCA	Association du Code de conduite international des entreprises de sécurité privées ; Vereinigung des internationalen Verhaltenskodex für private Sicherheitsdienstleister ; Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers' Association
IFFEd	International Finance Facility for Education
INTERPEACE	Interpeace
ISO	Organisation internationale de normalisation ; Internationale Organisation für Normung ; International Organisation for Standardization
JRR	Justice Rapid Response
MMV	Medicines for Malaria Venture
MPP	Medicines Patent Pool
OIM/IOM	Organisation internationale pour les migrations ; Internationale Organisation für Migrationen ; International Organisation for Migration

OIPC / ICDO	Organisation internationale de protection civile ; Internationale Organisation für Zivilschutz ; International Civil Defence Organisation
OIT (BIT) / IAO / ILO	Organisation internationale du travail (Bureau international du travail) ; Internationale Arbeitsorganisation ; International Labour Organisation
OMC / WTO	Organisation mondiale du commerce ; Welthandelsorganisation ; World Trade Organisation
OMM / WMO	Organisation météorologique mondiale ; Weltorganisation für Meteorologie ; World Meteorological Organisation
OMPI / WIPO	Organisation mondiale de la propriété intellectuelle ; Weltorganisation für geistiges Eigentum ; World Intellectual Property Organisation
OMS / WHO	Organisation mondiale de la santé ; Weltgesundheitsorganisation ; World Health Organisation
ONU / UNO	Organisation des Nations Unies (pour l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève) ; Organisation der Vereinten Nationen (für Büro der Vereinten Nationen in Genf) ; United Nations Organisation (for United Nations Office in Geneva)
OTAN / NATO	Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord (pour le Bureau de l'OTAN à Genève) ; Nordatlantikvertrags-Organisation (für das NATO-Büro in Genf) ; North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (for NATO Office in Geneva)
OTIF	Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires ; Zwischenstaatliche Organisation für den Internationalen Eisenbahnverkehr ; Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail
UICN / IUCN	Union internationale pour la conservation de la nature et de ses ressources ; Internationale Union zur Erhaltung der Natur und der natürlichen Lebensräume ; International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
UIP / IPU	Union interparlementaire ; Interparlamentarische Union ; Inter-Parliamentary Union
UIT / ITU	Union internationale des télécommunications ; Internationaler Fernmeldeverein ; International Telecommunications Union
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UPOV	Union internationale pour la protection des obtentions végétales ; Internationaler Verband zum Schutz von Pflanzenzüchtungen ; International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants
UPU	Union postale universelle ; Weltpostverein ; Universal Postal Union
WEF	World Economic Forum

ICAIN Member Institutions
CSC - IT Center for Science, Finland
Data Science Africa
EPFL
ETH Zurich and Swiss National Supercomputing Centre (CSCS)
European Laboratory for Learning and Intelligent Systems (ELLIS)
Nanyang Technological University Singapore