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Fab Labs Call for Projects

1. Context

Universcience is a French public institution created in 2010 and comprising the Palais de la d couverte and the Cit  des sciences et de l'industrie, two large science centers in Paris. It aims to promote engagement with modern science and disseminate scientific and technical culture. Universcience proposes to guide each citizen, whatever their age and level of knowledge, in their understanding of the world. It facilitates the understanding of the major scientific principles and technological developments and provides the right benchmarks so that each person can be fully engaged and responsible for their choices.

The Carrefour Num rique² of Universcience, whose mission is to experiment with and use digital technologies, has hosted a Fab Lab ("Fabrication Laboratory") since 2013. It welcomes 25,000 users each year. Building on this experience, the Carrefour Num rique² has contributed to the emergence of a French Fab Labs network and has helped implement various tools at the national or international levels.

Universcience participates in the Africa2020 Season organised by the Institut fran ais and held throughout France from December 2020 to September 2021. This exceptional cultural season aims to invite the general French public to look at and understand the world from an African perspective. It also aims to foster a high educational and mediation value for all its audiences, including young people. This is made possible through the multidisciplinary and festive dimension of the projects designed for the general public. The sanitary crisis, which delayed Africa2020 by six months, has placed the scientific culture back at the heart of the cultures and concerns of societies. In particular, it has brought to light African scientific research and the creativity of the technological innovations of the continent.

The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) joins Universcience in the implementation of the projects under the banner of Africa2020 and their extensions in Africa through the French Solidarity Fund for Innovative Projects, Civil Societies, la Francophonie and Human Development (FSPI). This Fund, part of which is allotted to Universcience, encourages networking opportunities for innovative initiatives to enhance and promote African scientific and technical culture.

Universcience organised the Sustainable Development Goals Hackathon with the participation of 12 African Fab Labs on 11, 12 and 13 December 2020. This event was held under the banner of Africa2020. As an extension to the hackathon and the Africa2020 Season and within the FSPI framework, Universcience offers a project supporting the creation of Fab Labs in Africa by the Carrefour Num rique². This is the subject of the present call for projects.

French Embassies in Africa are the main national relays of this call on the African continent and key contact points before the submission of the projects to Universcience.

2. Four purposes and goals

- The project aims to contribute to the emergence and support the development of a Fab Labs network in Africa by collaborating on joint projects. The call has two components: the provision of equipment and capacity building through training (related to the equipment, organisational and pedagogical aspects, project management) allowing the venue to be autonomous in terms of daily operation and maintenance.
- It aims to support the territorial dynamics that are in line with a global approach and based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) aiming to transform the world.
- Regarding the development of scientific, technical, and industrial culture, the aim is to build capacity in acting locally on one's environment by acquiring methodologies and tools (encouraging the "Do It Yourself" and "Do It Together" cultures).
- Finally, it strives to enhance, document, capitalise on and disseminate local know-how implemented in various projects, locations, institutions, communities, agencies, and networks.

3. How to participate:

Applications are eligible for the following institutions:

- Any identified institution such as university, school, library, association, cooperative, agency, foundation, company engaged in the social field, etc.
- Any user group in the process of setting up a legal entity having a project to be carried out in the near future.

Applications are eligible for the following projects:

- Creation of makerspaces, or third places for manufacturing (e.g., Fab Lab, MakerSpace, Repair Café, etc.)
- Diversification or expansion of the existing third place activity
- Consolidating, scaling up/ scaling down and gauging the existing makerspaces

Applications are eligible for the following operations:

- Purchase of new equipment (increase of the amount of the existing machinery or its acquisition) and consumables (within the limit of 10,000 € excluding tax)
- Professional training, skills development (e.g., technical, pedagogical, design, methodological skills, etc.):
 - Via group sessions, which will be adjusted according to the submissions in response to this call for projects
 - Via personalised and specific training modules and feedback that will be given to the successful candidates according to the submitted project

Types of support requests:

- In terms of investment budget:

- For the technical equipment (maximum amount of the proposed budget is 8,000 € excluding tax)
- In terms of operational budget:
 - For the provision of consumables for 3D printers, vinyl cutters, electronic cards, etc. (maximum amount of the proposed budget is 2,000 € excluding tax)
- In terms of training and specific support:
 - Training, support, and follow-up should concern the handling of the equipment, pedagogical and methodological approaches, scientific mediation, and documentation.
 - The support requested for the submitted project can be fine-tuned depending on the overall feedback from the successful candidates in order to develop synergies wherever possible but above all to achieve the objectives of this call for projects. The support and training program will be co-designed with the successful candidates after the submissions for this Call have been evaluated.
 - In addition, some applicants who are not eligible for equipment aid may be offered the opportunity to participate in certain shared training sessions, if relevant. (budget for one day of training is 1,500 € excluding tax)

The total amount of equipment and training support may not exceed €15,000 excluding tax per application. Each project leader may submit only one project.

Training delivery methods (hybrid, face-to-face and online) will depend on the evolution of the local sanitary measures in force in each country.

If travel is possible, new arrangements allowing to deliver the introductory modules in the core curriculum will be proposed first.

In a second phase, one or several more personalised modules considering the local environment, context and needs will be organised.

4. Timeline

- Launch of Call: early May (week 18)
- Identification of the first applications: end of May (Week 21)
- Closing date of the Call: 11 June (week 23)
- Evaluation panel and selection of selected projects: 21 June (week 24)
- Project adjustment and consolidation of the equipment and training/support to be provided (implementation of a training/support program and timeline): from mid-June to the end of June (week 25 and 26).
- Order and delivery of equipment and consumables: July/August
- Implementation of the training / support program: to be staggered between September and November 2021
- Closure of expenditure commitments and FSPI: December 2021

5. Eligibility criteria

- Be led by an institution or an identified entity able to provide the registration of their upcoming project
- Provide the official identification of the location where the project will be set up
- Be an embryo of the existing community
- Be willing to open up and go beyond the boundaries of the initial core community
- Run a project at the territorial level
- Be willing to be part of networks (local or global)
- Have a compelling need for the equipment that is clearly identified and consistent with the project's goals in order to launch the submitted project
- Work towards one or more of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals when consolidating the project and/or the objectives to reach
- Be particularly attentive to the participation in other projects at the local and/or global level (possible co-financing opportunities)
- Have an interest for Universcience in building medium- and long-term links with the country and the institution
- Quality of the application
- The project's feasibility potential
- Assistance in customs clearance and transport operations carried out according to the DDP Incoterm
- Respect of the application timeline

6. Obligations and counterparties:

- Obligation to promote Universcience and the funder (MEAE, etc.):
 - Compulsory mention: "This project is implemented by Universcience with the support of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs"
 - Logos (Universcience and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs)
 - Mention of support from French Embassies in Africa (modalities to be confirmed)
- Commitment to use the equipment within the framework of the eligible project in the domain pertaining to the sphere of this call for projects
- Responsibility for the equipment use lies with the project leader
- Authorisation given to Universcience to liaise with stakeholders on the support to be given to the project leader (in compliance with the intellectual property of the winner)
- Commitment to regular reporting, at least once a quarter, which includes the drafting of an annual report for a period of 3 years after the equipment is provided. The objective is to monitor the benefits and quality of the allocated support in the medium term.
 - Use of equipment (e.g., type of operations, audiences reached)
 - Implementation of training
 - Documentation, communication, and publication of project achievements

7. Support modalities:

- The investment and operating expenses relating to the equipment and consumables will be covered directly by Universcience, and the materials purchased will then be dispatched immediately to the selected projects.
- Concerning the support, it will depend to a large extent on the selected project leaders, and it will focus on technical, organisational, and pedagogical issues.
- The training modalities will also depend on the selected project leaders and the evolution of the sanitary situation. They may take the form of:
 - Distance learning delivered by Universcience
 - On-site training by a local partner if necessary
 - Distance learning delivered by a partner
- Provision of resources (technical guides, tutorials, educational scenarios, etc.)

8. Submission modalities

- In English or French
- The submissions for this Call must be made through the duly completed and signed application form outlining the objectives of the project and the required resources.
- The application document must be downloaded online and sent to the following address: fabafrika@universcience.fr (copy in the French Embassy of the African country concerned).
- Official status of the organisation leading the project or the status of its project's registration.
- Any other document illustrating the project outline.
- Reminder: the closing date of the Call for Projects is 11 June

9. Selection modalities

- The submissions will be evaluated by the teams of Universcience and the French Embassies in Africa, in collaboration with the Fab Labs that participated in the hackathon SDG Challenge for Africa2020. If applicable, this will be done in order to evaluate the relevance of the projects with regard to the criteria as well as the most relevant support modalities.
- Online interviews can be held if there is a need for clarification.
- The eligible candidates and selected projects will be notified on Monday, 21 June.

10. How to apply:

The application form is available at the following address:

https://www.cite-sciences.fr/fileadmin/fileadmin_CSI/fichiers/au-programme/lieux-ressources/carrefour-numerique/documents/Application_Form_Call_for_Projects_Fab_Lab.docx

Fill in and send the electronic form to the following e-mail address:

fabafrika@universcience.fr

Any question relating to the application process can be submitted to fabafrika@universcience.fr before 11 June.

We would appreciate and would be very grateful if you could help promote the above call for projects among the institutions in your networks!