



SOCIAL IMPACT AWARD Austria 2021 – Submission Guidelines

A fair and transparent selection process is of utmost importance for all of us at Social Impact Award Austria. With this detailed document, we aim to provide you with all necessary information to apply for Social Impact Award.

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In case you do not find the information needed, please contact us at austria@socialimpactaward.net.



Mission

Social Impact Award, founded in 2009, runs education and incubation programs in more than 15 countries in Europe, Africa, and Asia, supporting early-stage social entrepreneurs in developing and implementing innovative business solutions tackling crucial societal challenges. We do so by hosting events and organizing workshops to raise awareness for social entrepreneurship, teaching the necessary skills to navigate from vague intentions to promising ventures, providing access to networks and promoting the best teams with the Social Impact Award.

Social Impact Award addresses young social innovators eager to try solving current social or environmental problems in an innovative way by founding projects, initiatives, or organizations. Ventures can be rooted in different fields, such as poverty reduction, health, education, environment, energy, information and communication technologies, human rights, equal opportunities, care, and many others. Find an overview of the best ventures from previous years in our [Book of Inspiration](#).

Overall SIA Timeline

The **discovery phase** starts with a **kick-off event** online on March 5th and ends with the **submission deadline** on 16th of May 2021 at 6pm CET. In between, we run a broad range of **free events and workshops** to help you identify innovative ideas, develop them into feasible concepts, and build business models around them. Participation is especially recommended to applicants, but not a prerequisite to apply.

Applicants can submit their ideas during the whole discovery phase. If applicants wish to receive feedback, they may send their idea for feedback via our online platform until April 23, 2021. The SIA team will provide ideas with feedback so you can refine your entry up until the deadline to reflect the comments and recommendations received.

After the submission deadline has passed, the most promising 10 ideas are selected by the jury (details under “Selection of Finalists”) and announced at the **Finalist Announcement** online on June 10, 2021. Finalists are provided with a ticket to our **incubation phase**, during which they work on problem-solution-fit, business model, and operational framework with the intense support of our mentors and experts.

At the end of the incubation, the program enters the award **phase**, where the jury selects the best ventures from the incubated finalists (details under “Selection of Winners”) and provides them with **Jury Awards** at the **Award Ceremony** on September 28, 2021. During incubation, we also produce videos of all finalists that are made available on our website. The SIA community can vote for their favorite ventures from September 13 until September 24. The venture with the most votes receives the **Community Award**¹.

¹ It is not possible to win two Social Impact Awards. Should a venture win both the community voting and the jury voting it receives the award which is higher.



The winners from all countries where Social Impact Award is active, gather for the SIA **Summit**, which this year takes place online at the End of November 2021, where they connect with the international SIA community and work on their skills.

Eligibility

The applications for Social Impact Award 2021 must meet the following:

- All core team members must be born between January 1, 1991 and December 31, 2006;
- The applicant(s) did neither participate in SIA's incubation nor won SIA in previous years with **the same idea**²;
- The ideas submitted in previous years, except previous finalists or winning ventures can be resubmitted in 2021.
- Individuals/teams can apply with **new ideas** even if they were selected as finalists or winners in previous years.
- The idea has not been legally founded before January 1st, 2020.
- The idea has not received formalized monetary support by an external party exceeding 6.000€ (e.g. angel investment, grants, prize money etc.) before the submission date.
- Only those applications can be considered, which are complete and have been submitted through our website by May 16, 2021 at 6pm CET.

Please note, that ideas submitted in previous years, except previous finalist or winning ventures, can be resubmitted in 2021, if eligible. Individuals/teams can apply with new ideas, even if they were selected as finalists or winners in previous years.

Submission Process

All applications for Social Impact Award are submitted through the platform <https://apply.socialimpactaward.net/austria/>. For applications to be considered, they must be submitted by May 16, 2021 at 6pm CET.

Applicants must register on the website to be able to create a project. Applicants should fill out the information about their team members, idea core, potential impact, and feasibility & implementation capacity. Applicants can save the application and work on it later (until the submission deadline).

² This does not include attendance to SIA workshops or events during discovery phase in previous years; if you were e.g. at last year's kick-off, you are good to go.



Evaluation Criteria

The assessment and selection of finalists and winners is based on **three criteria: impact potential, degree of innovation, and feasibility & implementation capacity**. Each of the three criteria are valued **equally**. The following descriptions and guiding questions are used for clarification and as assistance to the jury and screening team.

Impact Potential

We seek ideas with **high societal relevance and strong impact**. The impact potential can be understood as the potential net effect of the venture's intended actions on its targeted beneficiary group or the environment.

- What is the impact the venture potentially generates for its beneficiaries and for society?
- How relevant are the venture's goals for the targeted beneficiary group?
- Does the applicant have a clear understanding of what kind of impact they want to achieve for whom?
- Is the concept scalable, i.e. is it capable of growing to address a large part of the target group, and/or capable of being transferred to other markets or target groups without losing efficiency or level of performance?

Degree of Innovation

We are looking for new ideas on how to solve and approach the problems of our times. We want **new, promising approaches** that can improve our common future on earth. Innovation can be different regarding its context and time.

- Are novel means and methods used to reach the venture's goals?
- Does the idea focus on a novel or disregarded problem?
- Are the deployed means suitable to solve the addressed problems and do they exceed current solutions?

Feasibility & Implementation Capacity

A potentially impactful and innovative idea is great. But the venture can only unfold its potential if it **succeeds to be implemented**.

- Does the venture seem to be realistically implementable?
- Are there precise goals and actions planned and are they comprehensible?
- Has the applicant/team thought about long-term perspectives and scaling?
- Has the applicant/team thought about mobilizing other persons, marketing, PR and cooperation with other organizations?
- Does the applicant/team have the necessary financial resources to implement the venture or do they have a plan on how to achieve them?



- Does the applicant/team have the necessary resources (know-how, skills, experience) to implement the venture or do they have a plan on how to achieve them?
- Does the applicant/team have the necessary motivation and dedication to push the venture's implementation?

Implications of COVID-19

Without a doubt, SIA 2021 remains a special edition as it takes place during a global pandemic. Besides the fact that SIA has adapted its program to these new realities by broad range of measures (e.g. shifting most of its program online), we want to highlight how our screening team and jury will evaluate the applications in light of COVID-19:

- **Is there a focus on ideas that tackle challenges caused by COVID-19?** No, SIA is still open to all sorts of ideas, addressing all sorts of challenges. Now and in the future, we need social innovation towards all SDGs and in all industries.
- **Are ideas still eligible that might have difficulties to operate in times of COVID-19 (e.g. no possibility to validate the impact model during a curfew)?** Yes, they are. We are confident that SIA can provide substantial value to such ideas during and beyond the incubation. Hence, we do not want to restrict them from taking part in SIA.
- **How should ideas be evaluated in times of COVID-19?** The three evaluation criteria (see above) and its sub-questions should provide enough guidance to evaluate all ideas. Of course, the foreseeable realities of business and society in a “post-COVID-19 era” (beyond the current situation in the midst of this pandemic) will be taken into account in evaluating the impact potential, the degree of innovation and the feasibility/implementation capacity of the idea. But this will rather be done with a long-term perspective, not focused on the immediate limitations COVID-19 might pose.

Selection of Finalists

In order to ensure the high level of fairness, the selection of finalists is conducted in a multi-step process:

Eligibility Check

Before any evaluation of the submitted ideas, the SIA team checks if all applications fulfill eligibility criteria. All applicants that do not fulfill eligibility will be notified, while those that do will move further to screening.



Screening

In the first evaluation step, a diverse screening team consisting of selected social innovation experts evaluates all submitted applications based on the evaluation criteria (see “Evaluation Criteria”), resulting in a shortlist of applications.

Decisions of the screening team are taken in closed sessions and are non-contestable.

- **Valentin Theodor Mayerhofer**, Initiative for Teaching Entrepreneurship (IFTE)
- **Fabian Scholda**, Social Entrepreneurship Center der WU Wien
- **Susan Üstün**, Social Entrepreneurship Center der WU Wien
- **Lukas Weissinger**, Social Entrepreneurship Center der WU Wien
- **Jakob Detering**, Social Impact Award International
- **Camilla Mittelberger**, Social Entrepreneurship Center der WU Wien
- **Rebekka Dober**, Founder YEP
- **Barbara Inmann**, Impact Hub Vienna
- **Shtefi Mladenovska**, Co-Founder StartHub Africa
- **Martin Mehrwald**, Social Entrepreneurship Center der WU Wien
- **Barbara Mehner**, Social Entrepreneurship Center der WU Wien
- **Ina Pervan-Al Soquauer**, Co-Founder & CEO Fremde werden Freunde
- **Lisa-Maria Sommer**, SIA Alumni
- **Michael Keinrath**, SIA Alumni
- **Laura Heym**, SIA Alumni

Note: This list is subject to change. Foreseeable changes will be reflected on the [website](#). In case of illness or other unforeseeable events, changes may not be accurately reflected.

Interviews

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a short telephone interview on May 7, 2021. The purpose of the interviews is to get to know the applicants better and to verify that applicants are aware of all the participation requirements.

Jury Assessment for Finalists' Selection

After the interviews, a group of final shortlisted applications will then be evaluated by the SIA jury based on the evaluation criteria. The 10 highest rated ideas will be promoted as Social Impact Award Finalist 2021, gaining access to SIA incubation.

Jury decisions are taken in closed sessions and are non-contestable. The finalists will be announced at the **Finalist Announcement** online on June 10, 2021.

The 2021 Social Impact Award Jury in Austria is made up of the following high-level experts with diverse backgrounds and vast experience in social innovation:



- **Daniela Unterholzner**, Neunerhaus
- **Florian Pomper**, Caritas
- **Franz-Karl Prüller**, ERSTE Stiftung
- **Gabriele Tatzberger**, Wirtschaftsagentur Wien
- **Judith Pühringer**, Arbeit plus
- **Lena Gansterer**, Impact Hub
- **Markus Raunig**, Austrian Start-ups
- **Michael Meyer**, WU
- **Peter Vandor**, WU
- **Roman Mesicek**, FH Krems
- **Susi Hillebrand**, Hil Foundation
- **Tanja Wehsely**, Volkshilfe
- **Karoline Berghuber**, aws
- **Barbara Coudenhove-Kalergi**, Industriellenvereinigung

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Selection of Winners

There are two types of awards that are given out at Social Impact Award at the end of the incubation - Jury Award and Community Award. For each, there is a different selection process.

Jury Assessment for Winners' Selection

The process of the selection of **Jury Award winners** goes as follows:

1. **Pitching**: Each finalist venture is invited to pitch in front of the jury addressing the problem they are trying to solve, their solution and progress during incubation.
2. **Jury session**: After all pitches, the jury gathers in a closed session to select the 4 winners of SIA Austria Jury Award 2021. The evaluation criteria are the same as for the finalists: impact potential, degree of innovation, and feasibility & implementation capacity. Pitches serve only as an additional source of information for the jury members to enrich their understanding of the evaluation criteria. Jury decisions are non-contestable.
3. **Award Ceremony**: The winners of the Jury Award (and of the Community Award, see "Community Voting") are announced at the Award Ceremony taking place online on September 28, 2021.



Community Voting

One additional award will be given based on an online Community Voting. Finalist ventures will be presented in short videos on the Social Impact Award website. During the voting period, the general public will be able to vote for their favorite ventures online. The venture that receives the most votes will be awarded the Community Award.

It is not possible to win two Social Impact Awards. Should a venture win both the community voting and the jury voting, it will be awarded with a Jury Award. In such a case, the Community Award will be awarded to the next ranking venture.

Furthermore, please consider that participants of the community voting as well as their supporters are obliged to use and communicate the voting in the intended, ethical way. Social Impact Award team reserves the right to disqualify ventures on suspicion of voting process manipulation.

Prizes and Further Support

Awards

There are two types of awards:

- **Jury Awards:** The 4 finalist ventures with the highest rating by the SIA jury are awarded with EUR 3.000,00.
- **Community Award:** One finalist venture is awarded with Community Award, in the amount of EUR 2.000,00. The decision is based on the results of the Community Voting.

Besides the awards, both finalists and winners will receive a free ticket to an online SIA Summit each incubated venture. SIA Summit is the gathering of all SIA finalists and winners from 2021 from all SIA countries. In 2021, it will take place online.

Overview of Key Dates

- Call for applications: March 5, 2021 until May 16, 2021 at 6pm CET
- Workshop period starts on March 5, 2021
- Interviews: May 7, 2021
- Finalist Announcement: June 10, 2021
- Incubation phase: July to September 2021
- Award Ceremony: September 28, 2021
- SIA Summit: end of November, 2021