RISE Awards

U21
UNIVERSITAS 21

RISE Showcase and Awards Handbook

Information for Universities, Students, and Supporters

October 2022

Overview

RISE is U21's international showcase of student achievement in sustainability and social innovation, designed to accelerate the scale and impact of student-led projects by connecting them with a network of experts in academia and industry. Each U21 member institution is invited to nominate up to 4 student-led projects based on an aspect of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Why take part?

RISE gives student-led projects access to a global audience of potential supporters and experts. U21 will ensure that each project will receive international exposure, working to attract pledges of support for the different projects from U21's global partners in industry and academia.

Each project will also be entered into the RISE Awards, offering winning teams seed funding of $2000 (USD) to continue to develop their project.

RISE Showcase

Following submission of a video pitch, each RISE entry will be hosted on the U21 website and shared with our network of academic and industry partners. We will work to gain pledges of support for the projects in the form of mentoring, advice, and potential development opportunities. Every nominated finalist will also be given the opportunity to take part in a development programme tailored to enhance their project and aspirations.

RISE Awards

The culmination of the showcase will be the RISE Awards, where a panel of experts will review all the video entries and award prizes across four categories: Most Impactful, Most Potential, Most Innovative and Most Collaborative. Winning teams will receive a prize of $2,000 (USD) funding and ongoing networking and promotional support.

Eligibilty

Any student-led project which directly addresses at least one of the UN SDGs, is eligible for RISE.

Entries may be submitted in any language but all must include English subtitles (including English submissions).

Each institution can nominate up to 2 projects led by students solely from their university and 2 joint nominations involving students from 2+ member universities. Each member university therefore may sponsor a maximum of 4 nominated projects.

The project team must be led by a current student(s) or recent graduates (two years or less) who started the project whilst at the host university. Where students have or will graduate during the course of RISE, the university takes responsibility for their submissions and agrees to remain associated with the project and the students for the duration of RISE. All students in the project team must be current or former students of a U21 member university.

Projects may have already applied, or be in receipt of other funding or awards, but these must be disclosed upon entering RISE. The video submission to RISE must be an original piece of work that is not publicly available elsewhere.

Projects may be individual or group led. Where there has been a large student group participating (e.g. from a student society), a leadership group of up to 7 students should be identified as the main entrants.

Deadline

May 25 2023 is the deadline for final videos to be submitted but please be aware your institution may have their own deadline that you need to be aware of. The winners will be announced in June 2023.

Further details

RISE Showcase

The RISE Showcase is the chance for all participants to reach a global audience and attract pledges of support from industry and academic experts across the world. The showcase will launch after the video submission .

- When U21 receives the video submissions via the named contact, they will be shared on our website and via our social media channels. We will promote the videos broadly within the U21 network, encouraging support from our member universities, and directly approach external partners who may have an interest in a particular project, to invite them to visit the website and view the videos.
- We also encourage students and institutions to share the link to the U21 website as widely as they can through their own networks to build support.
- The RISE Showcase website includes a Pledges form, allowing members of the U21 network and within industry to pledge support to individual projects.
- U21 will review these pledges to determine as far as possible that the offer is practical, genuine and ethical, before sharing this information with the student(s) and institution.
- Student(s) will be responsible for following up on these offers once U21 has made the connection. No student details will be shared directly with supporters without permission.
- Individual entries will not be judged by the number of pledges they attract.

RISE Awards

The RISE Awards recognise outstanding achievement from across the RISE Showcase submissions. All videos received will be entered into the RISE Awards.

- A panel of judges from within U21 and our expert partners will review all the submissions and select winners for four prize categories: Most Innovative, Most Impactful, Most Potential and Most Collaborative.
- During the judging the video pitches will remain on the website, and members of the public can continue to pledge support as above.
- Videos will not be judged on the amount of pledges or support they have received, but only on the criteria below.

Criteria (equally weighted)
•The issue: Why is this initiative needed? Which of the UN Sustainable Development Goals are being addressed?
•The idea: How well does this initiative respond to the outlined issue? How original is the idea?
•The impact: What measurable difference has this project already had on the lives of the target population or on the natural environment?
•The potential: How scaleable is this initiative? What is the future business plan and how would the project team make use of future investment?

All prize winners will receive a will receive a commendation from the Provost of U21. All participants can receive a certificate of achievement.

Rules for submission

- RISE is a global challenge and entries may be submitted in any language. The development programme offered by U21 will be in English. All videos must include English subtitles. This includes videos submitted in English, as it is important for accessibility.
- Each institution can nominate up to 4 projects. Joint nominations involving students from 2+ member universities may be submitted in addition to the two single institution nominations. Each member university may sponsor a maximum of 4 nominated projects.
- The project team must consist of a current student or student(s), or recent graduates (two years or less) who were students when they started the project. Where students have already graduated or will graduate during the course of RISE, the university takes responsibility for their submissions and agrees to remain associated with the project and the students for the duration of RISE.
- Projects may have already applied, or be in receipt of development funding or other awards, but these must be disclosed upon entering RISE. The video submission to RISE must be an original piece of work that is not publicly available elsewhere.
- Video submissions must be the students' own work, however we support institutions making audio visual equipment available for the video production.
- Video presentations are recommended to be within 3-5 mins' duration. Videos of more than 5 mins will not be accepted. File format must be MP4 or .MOV.
- Projects may be individual or group led. Where there has been a large student group participating (e.g.from a student society), a leadership group of up to 7 students should be identified as the main entrants.
- The decision of the RISE Awards judging panel is final.
- All participants will be expected to share with U21 the developments that have arisen as a result of their entry into RISE.

Intellectual Property

- By submitting an entry to RISE, students and institutions are acknowledging that their ideas and enterprises will be made publicly accessible and shared with industry professionals. Videos will be uploaded to Vimeo and disseminated through the U21 website and social media platforms and the media channels of our member universities. Student videos will be shared with U21's external networks, by linking them to the U21 website. Students will be fully informed of such actions. Judges, reviewers, staff and the audience will not be asked to sign non-disclosure statements.

- Where U21's academic and industry contacts pledge support to the student projects, this will be reviewed by U21 to determine as far as possible that the offer is practical, genuine and ethical. However, students, with the support of their institutions, will be responsible for ensuring their IP is adequately protected in any resulting relationship.

- The RISE showcase will include the name of the project and the home institution; no other information will be shared beyond what students include in their video. Where pledges are received from other U21 universities or industry partners, no student details will be shared with these partners without the consent of the students in each case.

- U21 may take stills, video and/or audio clips of the videos, or copy material prepared for use in the presentation, for promotional purposes. Anyone appearing in a student video must give their consent to be filmed and for the film to be shared as outlined above.

- If the students' presentation draws on work/research that is being/has been conducted under contract with an outside sponsor, they are advised to discuss the related contractual terms of confidentiality and intellectual property with these bodies before participating in this competition. U21 has the right to ask a student to withdraw from the competition if these conditions are not met.

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Information for Universities

Register your Institution

You will need to register your institution in order to take part. Following registration you will obtain access to marketing material (including U21's branding collateral and guidelines) to help promote the competition, along with other advice and support needed.

This registration process will ask you to identify named contacts with whom U21 will communicate. This contact will be responsible for submitting the nominated video to U21. The named contact will be kept informed of all developments relating to the students' projects.

Please note that you do not need to have identified your nominated projects at the time of registration.

How to select your nominated project

After registering, each institution will manage its own process for selecting the nominations, enabling them to align with existing student challenges or projects which may be suitable for RISE. Institutions may nominate projects with which they are already working or may choose to launch a specific call/competition focused on RISE.

Once your entry is selected, the nominated contact will submit the video through U21's online submission form. You will be asked to identify which of the SDGs the project is aligned with.

The institution is responsible for ensuring that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding IP, and any codes of conduct within their home institution, before submitting this video. When submitting the video institutions agree to remain associated with the student group for the duration of their involvement with RISE.

Running a 'first round' competition in your institution

We welcome universities running their own internal 'first round' of the RISE awards to select the nomination.

• Share the 'information for students' and make use of the branding collateral provided by U21. Consider collaboration with student societies, employability/skills teams, and academic departments.
• Decide on the selection process. It is recommended that either video or live pitches (either in person or online) are used to enable students to practice presenting their project.
• Select a judging panel:
  • Include three to five judges on your panel.
  • Ensure that your judges follow the RISE Awards judging criteria on page 3.
  • Consider a balance of Careers/Employability Professionals, External Partnerships, and Academic colleagues.
• Consider offering skills-focused training workshops or feedback sessions to ensure a wider student reach.

U21 can offer advice and peer-to-peer support on how our member universities have previously encouraged student participation in our other competitions, the U21/PwC Innovation Challenge and the Three Minute Thesis®.

Information for Universities

How to support your nominated project

U21 has asked for support at the most senior levels of our member institutions, to champion this opportunity and support the nominations process. We strongly encourage you to share your selected entry with your staff, students, alumni and friends of the university and encourage them to pledge their support via the U21 website. Not only can your university community support your own entry, but they can pledge support to as many projects as they choose.

The greater publicity we can get for our students' work, the greater the impact of their work on local and international communities.

Approaching potential supporters

When approaching potential RISE supporters from within your university community, it may be helpful to share the information included in 'Pledging Your Support' on page 9.

If you have any questions or need advice with any aspect of the competition, please contact studentexperience@universitas21.com

Information for Students

How to take part

You will enter your project to RISE by video submission. Entries are submitted by universities, not by individuals. If you are a student who wishes to enter their project, please your RISE contact. You can find a list of the contacts here.

Is my project eligible?

If you have a voluntary, social enterprise or environmental project that you would like to scale up, develop, and build, then RISE is for you.

If you are a current student or recent graduate (2 years or less)* who started your project whilst at university, then you can participate. You must have started to implement your project in some way (it cannot be just an idea), but it can still be at very early stages of development. If you have an idea that is not yet started, you may want to use the resources on the U21 Aspire Hub to help you progress.

The project must directly address at least one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These aren't just about environmental action, they cover almost every aspect of environmental and societal development. In practice most non-profit and social innovation projects will already be addressing at least one goal, even if you didn't realise it! To see examples of the types of projects eligible for RISE, visit the RISE website.

Projects may be individual or group led. Where there is a large student group (e.g. a student society), a leadership group of up to 7 students should be identified as the main entrants.

You can still enter if you have already received or applied for other development funding and awards. However, all current or pending applications or awards must be declared when you enter RISE, so that we can establish there is no conflict of interest.

Guidelines for submitting the video

- **Your video pitch is your chance to make a great first impression and attract potential supporters and pledges. Plan your pitch carefully so it stands out and really represents you and your project.**
- **Your video can be recorded in any language; however, it must have English subtitles (even if it is recorded in English).**

This will help to reach a global audience and will also improve the accessibility of your pitch.

- Your video must be no longer than 5 minutes long. We recommend 3-5 minutes: enough time to clearly pitch your work, whilst remaining concise and engaging.
- Whilst you may incorporate existing content, your 3-5 minute video must be an original piece of work that is not available publicly anywhere else.
- Your video should demonstrate:
  - What your project is and why it is important
  - Which of the Sustainable Development Goals you are addressing
  - What you have achieved so far
  - What your future plans are and how you aim to achieve them
- You can explain this information in a number of ways, for example:
  - Present directly to camera
  - Interview people involved with the project
  - Film one of your events or activities
  - Create an animation or infographic explaining your work

*Your home institution may make this opportunity open only to current students in line with their own policies.

Information for Students

Getting pledges

Once your video is live, U21 will work to connect you with potential supporters across our global network. But you can also use your own networks to build support. We recommend that you highlight your participation in RISE through your social media using the hashtag #u21RISE and encourage your contacts to make a pledge via the U21 website. Pledges do not form part of the judging for the RISE awards; their purpose is to broaden your support network and introduce you to expert advisers.

When U21 receives a pledge, it will first be reviewed by us to ensure, as far as possible, that the offer is genuine, practical, and ethical. We will then contact the RISE project group in question with details of the pledge, before we make contact. We will never share your details with a pledger without your consent.

RISE Awards

- Once entry to the showcase has closed, all videos received will be entered into the RISE Awards. Judging will take place while the showcase is live during which time videos will remain on the website, and members of the public can continue to pledge support as above.
- Videos will not be judged on the amount of pledges or support they have received, but only on the criteria below.
- There are four prize categories: Most Impactful, Most Innovative, Most Potential and Most Collaborative. The winners of each of these categories will receive $2000 seed funding to further develop their project.
- Winners will be notified by U21 within two weeks of the judging process. Note that the winners will be required to put together a short report of their experience.

Judging Criteria

- The issue: Why is this initiative needed? Which of the UN Sustainable Development Goals are being addressed?
- The idea: How well does this initiative respond to the outlined issue? How original is the idea?
- The impact: What measurable difference has this project already had on the lives of the target population or on the natural environment?
- The potential: How scaleableis this initiative? What is the future business plan and how would the project team make use of future investment?

If you have any questions or need advice with any aspect of the competition, please contact studentexperience@universitas21.com

Pledging Support

Across U21, our students have been motivated to launch their own social innovation and sustainable development ventures, to address the needs they have found in their own communities and further afield.

Through the U21 RISE Showcase, the best projects across the global U21 network are all pitching for your support. This could be an offer of mentoring, some expert advice, or even some hands-on support. Whether you can offer an hour over Skype to share your expertise, or you are inspired to get involved with their work yourself, your support could make all the difference.

How can I make a pledge?
You can watch the students' short video pitches and pledge your support at the RISE Virtual Showcase (universitas21.com/RISE). You'll just need to complete a very brief form to get started. All your details will be stored securely in line with our Privacy Policy.

What can I pledge?
The short answer: whatever you can offer! We have some suggested categories: Give Advice, Be a Mentor, and Get Involved. There's room for you introduce yourself to the team and explain your pledge in a little more detail.

Can I make a financial contribution to a project?
Through our pledging form, we aren't accepting any financial contributions, but you can select the 'Other' pledge and let us know that you're interested. Please outline whether you are planning to make a donation, investment, or other financial contribution.
Please note: U21 will not be involved in the direct transfer of funds, which would be arranged between the project team and yourself. U21 accepts no responsibility for the management or spending of funds that are transferred to a project team.

I don't have much time –can I still make a pledge?
Absolutely. Our pledges system is designed for you to offer whatever time you have. What might be a quick job for you could make a huge difference to these students. For example...

• 5 minutes –Make a virtual connection for a project team to someone in your network who might be able to work with them.
• 15-30 minutes –Offer feedback on their business case or marketing material
• 30-60 minutes –Offer to skype the team and share some expertise

What happens next?
Your pledge will be sent directly to U21 who will review it, to ensure it meets our guidelines, and pass onto the student teams. They will then make contact with you directly, but U21 and their home institutions will be on hand to make sure everything goes smoothly.

Pledge guidelines
- Please only make an offer that you are committed to delivering, although we understand that unforeseen barriers may arise, or circumstances change.
- While these student teams will be very excited to start working with new partners, it is important to note that they may face practical barriers, particularly financial, in engaging with certain opportunities (eg requiring travel).
- These student projects are all focused on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and pledges received should maintain the ethos of sustainable development.

FAQ's

How many awards are there?
There are four prizes valued at over $2000 each. A panel of experts will review all video entries and award prizes across four categories: Most Impactful, Most Potential, Most Innovative and Most Collaborative.

How do I know if I'm eligible?
Any student-led project which directly addresses at least one of the UN SDG's, is eligible for RISE. However, you must be from a U21 Member University.

Each institution can nominate up to 2 projects led by students solely from their university and 2 joint nominations involving students from 2+ member universities. Each member university therefore may sponsor a maximum of 4 nominated projects.

Who can I contact if I am interested in taking part in RISE?
You can find a link to the contacts for your university here.

What are the deadlines I need to be aware of?
May 25 2023 is the deadline for final videos to be submitted but please be aware your institution may have their own deadline that you need to be aware of.