

February 4, 2025

## **Citi Foundation Announces 2025 Global Innovation Challenge for Nonprofits Accelerating Youth Employability**

*50 community organizations to receive a collective \$25 million in catalytic funding, building on over a decade of Citi Foundation investment in youth.*

NEW YORK – The Citi Foundation today issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for its [2025 Global Innovation Challenge](#), which provides philanthropic support for community organizations to pilot or scale solutions to social and economic issues around the world.

Despite recent progress, young people globally continue to experience challenges in their pursuit of employment, including the [skills mismatch](#) and gaining access to quality jobs. According to the International Labour Organization, [65 million](#) young people globally are unemployed. With this RFP, 50 community organizations will receive \$500,000 each in grant support for innovative employment solutions for low-income youth, from upskilling and reskilling efforts to entrepreneurship programming, financial education and more.

The 2025 Global Innovation Challenge builds on Citi and the Citi Foundation's long-standing investment in youth, including:

- The Citi Foundation invested more than \$300 million over the last decade alone in programs that supported over one million young people in expanding their skills, experience and networks through its [Pathways to Progress](#) initiative.
- Citi provides banking services for clients expanding access to high-quality education and youth entrepreneurship opportunities and invests in solutions for early career professionals. Citi has also financed and facilitated access to education in emerging markets through [social finance bonds](#) and other transactions.
- Citi employees volunteer year-round, lending their talent and expertise in support of youth employability, including engaging in financial education and career development workshops and mentoring and coaching youth.

“From skills training to job placement programming and more, Citi and the Citi Foundation have long invested in scalable solutions to accelerate youth employability. But it remains a persistent and urgent matter, and we know there is more work to be done,” said **Ed Skyler, Citi Head of Enterprise Services & Public Affairs and Chair of the Citi Foundation**. “Applying the Global Innovation Challenge model to this issue represents the next step in our funding journey and our continued investment in the young people poised to build thriving and resilient communities.”

“Bridging the skills gap is one of the biggest challenges for the next generation entering the workforce. In our region, too many young people leave the education system without the skills they need to succeed in today's fast-changing job market. The mismatch between education and employer expectations is real – and it's holding back both young talent and economic growth,” adds **Munir Nanji, Citi Central Europe Head**. “It's not just about technical skills.

Entrepreneurial thinking, innovation, problem-solving, and adaptability are just as critical. We need to foster a mindset that embraces challenges, creativity, and continuous learning.”

The deadline for eligible organizations to register to apply is **Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at 12:00 p.m. New York Time (Eastern Time)** and recipients will be announced later this year. For more information on this opportunity including eligibility requirements and target geographies, please visit [www.citifoundation.com/rfp](http://www.citifoundation.com/rfp).

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## **Citi Foundation**

The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. We invest in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth, and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant communities. The Citi Foundation's "More than Philanthropy" approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfill our mission and drive thought leadership and innovation. For more information, visit [www.citifoundation.com](http://www.citifoundation.com).

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