



## CALL FOR STARTUPS & CALL FOR IDEAS 2025-2026 FAQs

### 1. Who can apply?

The following applicants can propose a business project in the **“Call for Ideas - Emerging Ideas”** category or a startup in the **“Call for Startup - Established Startups”** category:

- Students enrolled in a first or second cycle degree programme at the Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna;
- Students enrolled in a professional programme (first-level or second-level master’s programme) at the Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna;
- Students enrolled at a specialisation school at the Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna (excluding medical doctors in Specialist training pursuant to Italian Legislative Decree 368/99);
- Graduates from the Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna who obtained their degree less than 3 years prior to the publication of the Call for applications (i.e. those who graduated from 2 December 2022 onwards);
- Students enrolled at the Bologna Business School with exclusive reference to the Graduate Masters of the Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna coordinated by the BBS;
- Graduates from the Bologna Business School (with exclusive reference to the Graduate Masters of the Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna coordinated by the BBS) who obtained their degree less than 3 years prior to the publication of the Call for applications (i.e. those who graduated after 2 December 2022).

Startups that have been established as legal entities for no more than 2 years can apply in the **“Call for Startup - Established Startups”** category. Sole proprietorships are excluded.

To apply, applicants will need to use their Unibo credentials (email and password). If you have forgotten your credentials, you can ask us to reactivate them upon submitting your application.

The **requirements** above refer to **the applicant only**. Team members can be natural or legal persons, both from inside and outside the University of Bologna.

In addition to the above-mentioned applicants, a project team can include any other natural or legal person. For lecturers, PhD students, researchers, CELs and technical-administrative staff who assume roles as team members, in the event of reaching the formalization of an appointment within a startup and/or receipt of emoluments, the rules set out in the Regulations governing external appointments shall apply. In the event of any doubts, interested parties are invited to contact the competent offices to ascertain compatibility with the positions held in the University.

### 2. I do not meet the requirements right now, but I expect to meet them later on. Can I still apply?

No, you must meet the requirements at the time of submitting your application, that is, before the application deadline.



- 3. Can anyone enrolled at or who has graduated from the Bologna Business School in the last 3 years apply?**  
No, only those who are enrolled at or have graduated in the last 3 years from the Graduate Masters of the University of Bologna coordinated by the Bologna Business School can apply. They need to be in possession of the Unibo credentials, which are essential for logging into the portal and submitting an application. Only those who are in possession of those credentials can apply.
- 4. How many applications can I submit?**  
The limit of one application only applies to the role of applicant and within the same category of the Call (“Call for Ideas - Emerging Ideas” or “Call for Startup - Established Startups”). This means that an applicant cannot submit more than one project, or the same project, in more than one sub-category within the “Call for Ideas - Emerging Ideas” category. However, the same person can be an applicant for a team and a member of other teams at the same time. It is also possible to act as the applicant for both a team applying in the “Call for Ideas - Emerging Ideas” category and a team presenting its business in the “Call for Startup - Established Startups” category.  
To sum up, the only limitation is that you cannot submit two or more applications as an applicant within the same category of the Call.
- 5. Can I submit my business project in the “Call for Ideas - Emerging Ideas” category even if I don't have a team?**  
Yes, you can submit your project even if you are the only member of your business team. Although having a team is an advantage during the evaluation process, your project may still be selected. During the programme – in particular through Call for Players – we will help you expand your team.
- 6. How do I choose the right sub-category for my emerging idea?**  
The four sub-categories within the “Call for Ideas - Emerging Ideas” category focus on specific themes, as detailed in the call for applications and annexes. A business idea can fall within more than one sub-category – for instance, it could concern the energy transition (“Call for Ideas – Environmental Sustainability, Energy and Circular Economy” sub-category) and exploit emerging technologies (“Call for Ideas – Technological, Digital and Industrial Innovation” sub-category) at the same time. In that case, the applicant will select the sub-category and theme considered more relevant to their business project. At the proposal of the offices in charge, if the Evaluation Committee considers that a project submitted under a certain sub-category is not relevant to that sub-category, it will be entitled to move it to a different one, without the project being excluded and without penalty in the evaluation.
- 7. I am a PhD student. Can I apply?**  
No, you can't submit your idea as an applicant in this Call, but you can participate in other business development initiatives promoted by the University; see <https://site.unibo.it/idea/en/our-idea/timeline-for-spin-of>.
- 8. How do I retrieve my Unibo credentials?**  
Visit the website <https://ricercatm.unibo.it/startupday/index.aspx>.



**9. At what level of development does my business idea need to be?**

The business idea submitted in the “Call for Ideas – Emerging Ideas” category can be at any stage of development: from a simple, very early-stage idea to a more defined project that already has a structured team and/or a prototype/product.

**10. How do I know if my idea has been selected?**

The winners will be published on the website <https://site.unibo.it/idea/en/our-idea/activities-and-initiatives/call-for-start-up> no later than 06 March 2026. Proposers of selected projects will be contacted via their institutional mailbox, used at the application stage.

**11. Can someone copy my idea?**

The information contained in the applications will be used by the University of Bologna exclusively for the purposes of this Call and will not be disclosed or made accessible to third parties unless expressly authorised to do so by the applicant(s), without prejudice to any third parties who need to access the information for the purposes of this Call (including team support through the Call for Players).

**12. If at the end of this entrepreneurial development programme I decide to create a startup, will I still be able to rely on the support of the University of Bologna?**

The Student Entrepreneurship Cycle, developed by the University of Bologna, is a pre-incubation programme that supports you from the initial business idea to the potential creation of a startup. However, we continue to stand by your side over the following phases as well: we facilitate connections with Almacube, the University’s incubator, which offers its services to established startups. Moreover, the University provides a range of opportunities and services, either free of charge or at reduced rates, for businesses that register as Unibo startups.

- a brand mark especially designed for those startup companies registered by UNIBO;
- the use of workshops for prototyping to validate your idea, at subsidised rates (Almalabor);
- inclusion of the company in the showcase of the UNIBO portal (<https://site.unibo.it/idea/it/le-nostre-imprese-innovative-start-up-e-spin-off>);
- inclusion in initiatives (events, workshop, seminars, training sessions);
- info to access calls for tender and financing;
- Almacube srl incubation services.