

Frequently Asked Questions

What is it?

The Zurich Innovation Championship is a competition for us to find startups and entrepreneurs with groundbreaking ideas to collaborate with us in bringing compelling products or services to our retail and commercial customers.

Why should startups enter?

This is a unique opportunity for startups from all over the world to work with a global leader to bring their products or services to a wider market. Zurich can help you achieve your ambitions and bring a new generation of compelling digital services to insurance customers. With our extensive customer base, global scale and industry expertise, Zurich can help give your innovations the success they deserve.

Who can enter?

Startups with an existing and differentiated product or service that can help us create a social impact. Our main category for this year's instalment is resilience and sustainability. If your startup offers innovative solutions in other areas and you think your solution can help us create a difference otherwise, we also welcome you to enter using the 'wildcard' category.

When can I apply?

Now – literally! We recommend you sign up straightaway to have the opportunity to receive a free coaching session by Zurich to help you with your application. This is for earlybirds only and available for all applications we receive before 25 October, 00:01am CET. Please visit the applications tab on our dedicated webpage to sign up.

How do I apply?

Applying couldn't be easier. All we need is your team name, a brief introduction to your products or services and an upload of an existing business plan, proposal or any other content that can help us understand your business.

When do applications close?

11:00 p.m. CET on December 17, 2019

How many rounds are there?

There are three rounds: country, regional and global. The overall winners of the country-level competitions will be selected in January 2020 and will go on to our regional rounds in Asia Pacific, North America, Latin America and Europe and Middle East. The overall winners of the regional round, to be selected in June 2020, will then take part in a final, global round, taking place in August 2020.

What will I need to do in each round?

You will to present your product or service that we could pilot in one of our participating countries. In the country round we want you to demonstrate how relevant your product or service is to the local market, and how you differentiate from competitors. In the regional round we would like you to further demonstrate business impact to the region and the value to customers. In the group round, we will be looking for evidence that the idea could scale globally and sustainably.

Who picks the winners?

Winners will be chosen by juries of Zurich subject matter experts, innovation leaders, and senior business executives. In regional and global round external experts may be invited to join the jury.

When will the winners be announced?

The global round winners will be announced by the end of August 2020. Winners are subject to due diligence.

What are the prizes?

You will be benefitting from working with a global leader with millions of customers in several ways: The gold, silver and bronze winners of the global round will receive significant financial and other resources to implement pilots in the country of their choice, exposure through our various communications channels and recognition from the Zurich Group Leadership Team. Country and Regional round winners will receive prizes determined by each respective country or region.

Can I enter more than one idea?

If you have several products or services that are significantly differentiated from each other, you may submit a business proposal for each of them.

Which country should I apply in?

Startups can submit up to three countries they would like to start pilots with. We encourage startups to apply to countries where they are capable to delivering service to. Applications for each country will need to be made separately; you will pick the country by selecting it during the application process.

I am already a vendor for Zurich, can I apply?

No. This competition is aimed at discovering new startups that can help Zurich better serve its customers.

I already partner with another insurance company, can I apply?

If there is no exclusivity agreement with another insurer, you are welcome to apply.

Who will pay my travel costs during the competition?

Zurich covers flight (economy class) and accommodation for up to two external people per startup.

Can I apply in a language other than English?

The application portal is in English, and please fill in basic information in English. You will be asked to upload a standard one-pager document, which can be in the language of your choice. For the evaluation days at the country round, you may use the language of the country if other than English. For the regional and global rounds, we expect the materials and presentations to be in English.

Who will own the intellectual property around the pilot submission?

Startups will retain the IP for the own products and services. If the startup later collaborates with Zurich to co-develop new products or services with Zurich resources, a separate discussion around IP will take place.

What will happen to my business plan submission?

Confidentiality agreements will be established between Zurich and startups that enter the competition. After the competition, Zurich will retain the submissions from startups as a pipeline of innovation, and may contact startups for future collaboration opportunities, regardless of whether they win the global final prize.

How do you define 'pilot'?

A pilot is the implementation of a small-scale program with predefined hypothesis. The aim is to validate that the products or services offered by startups can add value to Zurich customers. Pilots are a precursor to the official launch of new products or services and their potential rollout regionally or globally.