



ULF Funding Line open_innovation Call for Proposals 2026

1. Objectives

The open_innovation funding line provides funding for teaching projects that pursue one of the following objectives:

- a. Trying out new and innovative educational concepts for courses/teaching formats.
- b. Innovative development and refinement of existing educational concepts and courses/teaching formats.
- c. Developing new teaching materials that can be used long-term.
- d. The further development of existing teaching materials that can be used long-term.

2. Key Dates

- a. Deadline for submission: **16.03.2026**
- b. Decision on approval of proposals and announcement: **End of May 2026**
- c. Earliest possible use of funding for approved projects: **01.09.2026**

3. Allocation Procedure

- a. All members of the UZH teaching staff are welcome to enter a proposal with their project ideas. To submit the application, the approval of the respective study program director is required, which thereby grants formal authorization for the application.
- b. Following the submission of the application, it will be reviewed with regard to its compliance with the formal criteria (incl. finances) and content-related criteria (for more information, please refer to item 5 "Award Criteria"). Applicants will be contacted if any further questions arise or changes concerning the formal criteria are required.
- c. Each proposal will then be reviewed by a team from the Educational Development office and awarded an overall grade with respect to the defined criteria.
- d. In a next step, all projects are presented to the Commission for Education and Student Affairs together with the reviews.
- e. The Commission reaches a final decision on the projects to be approved at the end of May. Applicants will be informed of the decision without delay.

4. How to Submit Proposals

- a. Proposals are submitted via our web tool (<https://form.ulf.uzh.ch/>). You can log in using your UZH short name.
- b. It is possible to save the form and edit it at a later point before submission.
- c. The person entering the application does not necessarily have to be the project leader. Multiple persons can assume the role of applicant or project leader.
(By applicants we mean all persons who are writing this application. Project leaders are the persons who implement the project. Junior researchers are explicitly eligible to apply for the open_innovation funding line. The submission of an application by a professor does not result in any advantage or disadvantage.)
- d. Before the final application is submitted to us, the study program director approves the application through an e-mail triggered by the system. ATTENTION: After this approval, applicants still need to perform the final submission.
- e. Please submit the complete application in the online form. The optional upload area is intended exclusively for uploading supplementary materials (e.g., graphics, offers, etc.), which will be attached to the application. Multiple files can be merged into one PDF.
- f. The information you need to submit the application is included in the form. It is highlighted in gray in the respective field and indicated in the form of help buttons.
- g. Be convincing by using concise key points and concrete descriptions. The character limitation should be interpreted as an upper limit - shorter arguments or descriptions are often sufficient to present your project in a meaningful way.

5. Award Criteria

The following award criteria are considered when proposals are reviewed:

Formal Criteria

Basics

- The application is formally complete and coherent in content.
- Everyone with current employment at UZH may enter an application, but the approval for submission is given by the study program directors, who are formally eligible to apply.
- The Vice Dean of Studies of the respective faculty is informed about the submitted projects and partakes in the decision about the proposals as member of the Commission for Education and Student Affairs.
- Projects can run for a maximum of four semesters.

Finances

- The maximum funding amount per project is CHF 30'000.
- The funding to be awarded is used exclusively in a purposeful manner.
- Should you request individual acquisitions (movable capital assets, software licenses, etc.) over CHF 10,000 you are requested to address these costs in the initial consultation before submitting the application and technically justify them in the proposal. Applications for operating funds must be proportionate to the

overall budget of the project. The approval must be accompanied by a comprehensive justification on why the requested funds are needed in addition to the existing funds of the institute/faculty.

- For the budgeting of funds for the production of teaching resources (e.g. videos, online self-learning paths, OLAT interfaces, etc.) we recommend consulting the service catalog of Central IT¹ early on. This catalog lists all UZH tools and services with their respective prices. If you are planning your own web application or app for mobile devices, please consult the IT security experts at Central IT² to assess which security standards you need to consider and whether there might be costs for security tests.
- Human resources: It is possible to employ UZH staff for open_innovation projects, provided they only work part-time outside the project, and the combined employment level does not exceed 100% FTE. The additional staff requirement must be justified.
- Equipment: The amount spent on equipment must be reasonable and in line with the objectives of the project.
- Expenses: A fixed expense sum of CHF 300 may be requested, especially for the project kick-off and for the project completion. If higher expenses are necessary for the successful implementation of the project, it must be justified how these expenses are necessary to ensure the sustainability of the project.

Content Criteria

Basics

- Since the open_innovation funding line is an instrument for teaching innovation, projects designed merely to develop or refine existing content will not be funded. Teaching projects should exceed the basic mandate of each faculty/institute.
- The didactic component of the planned project should be recognizable in the project title.
- It is possible to apply for funding for innovative new and further development for all module types, i.e. compulsory, core elective and elective modules. The development of teaching materials for these module types is likewise possible.
- Not all content criteria must be met, but the evaluation by the allocation committee is based on them.
- The projects adhere to the diversity and sustainability policy of UZH.
- The projects strive to make new courses and teaching materials as accessible as possible.³ Projects with an explicit focus on accessible teaching formats are particularly welcome.

Innovation

- The project tests and implements clearly recognizable innovative educational concepts and thereby adds value to overall teaching.
- In the case of courses, learning objectives, learning activities, and assessments must be closely aligned and coherently presented in the proposal.
- The project is relevant to the respective field of study.

¹ [Service Catalog of Central IT](#)

² [Contact IT Security Experts](#)

³ More information on accessibility can be found on the website of the Disability Office: <https://www.disabilityoffice.uzh.ch/en.html>. Information and support on the digital design of accessible teaching can be found on our Teaching Tools platform: <https://teachingtools.uzh.ch/en/tools/e-accessibility>. For further questions, we are happy to advise you. Please contact open@ulf.uzh.ch

Effectiveness

- The objectives of the project are clear and achievable.
- The project results are regularly discussed and evaluated.
- The use of digital technologies or the development of digital applications is realizable at UZH and the necessary clarifications regarding interfaces, data protection and support after the project duration have been made. Existing applications (e.g. OLAT, Microsoft 365) are used and not replaced by new applications with the same functions.
- The project is also accessible to students with disabilities.

Sustainability

- Once the start-up funding expires, it is possible to continue offering the course and provision is made for it to be continued and consolidated in regular teaching.
- The project promotes the development of the staff's teaching skills.
- The innovative spirit of the project is not tied to a specific instructor but is supported by the entire department or faculty and propagated in teaching.

Quality of Design and / or Broad Impact

- The educational concept can be transferred to other modules, programs, and faculties.
- The insights or some of the insights gained can be transferred within or beyond the faculty in question.
- The projects funded by the open_innovation funding line can be made accessible to a broader audience (visibility and transparency of teaching activities).

AND / OR

- The planned innovation will benefit many students from one or more study programs.
- The planned project provides a major benefit for large student cohorts.

Student Involvement

- Students are involved in the design, planning, and reflection of the teaching project.
- The perspective of the students is directly incorporated into the project.
- The project considers the heterogeneity of the students.
- The project is a clear benefit to student learning.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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