Call for projects 2024

Guidelines

BeLEARN - the Future of Education in Focus

BeLEARN is the competence center for digitalization in education. The five founding universities (University of Bern, PHBern, Bern University of Applied Sciences, EPFL, EHB) receive funding from the Canton of Bern for cooperation projects in the areas of Digital Skills, Digital Tools, Data Science in Education, Digital Ethics, and Artificial Intelligence.

1 Project Funding

1.1 Barcamp

Until now, each founding university has conducted its own call for BeLEARN projects. Starting in 2025, there will no longer be individual project calls initiated by the universities.

Instead, researchers, startups, and further interested partners will be invited to a Barcamp. During this Barcamp, participants will collectively gather and discuss project ideas. The insights and discussion outcomes from the Barcamp will serve as a foundation for identifying potential project ideas. These ideas will then be further developed by teams, utilizing the expertise of participants to formulate detailed project proposals. Throughout the development of these concrete project proposals, the teams will be closely guided by the 'locomotives' and the administrative office of BeLEARN, who will assess not only the content quality but also the financial feasibility within the context of the available resources of their institutions.

The first Barcamp will be conducted in 2025 for projects starting in 2026. Further information about the Barcamp will follow.

1.2 Transition Phase for Project Funding 2025

For projects starting in 2025, there is a cross-university call 2024 for which this document specifies the conditions. In this project call, only projects that will be implemented in 2025 are eligible for funding. However, we would like to emphasize that multi-year projects are still welcome, even though the funding in this call is limited to 2025. For subsequent funding (2026-2028), projects must participate and successfully complete the Barcamp process.

2 Project Requirements[1]

2.1 Thematic Areas

Applications can be submitted if they fall into the following thematic areas related to digitalization in education:

- Digital Skills
- Digital Tools
- Data Science in Education
- Digital Ethics
- Artificial Intelligence

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[1] For the complete criteria, please check the appendix of this document.

2.2 Collaboration

Only cross-university projects are accepted. This means that at least two out of the five BeLEARN founding universities must cooperate and receive funding from their own university for this project. All universities involved must make a substantial contribution to the success of the project. This contribution must be clearly outlined in the project proposal. In addition to the founding universities, institutions of BeLEARN's associated partners can also participate in the project. The financing of an associated partner must be clarified in advance (associated partners are not financed via BeLEARN).

2.3 Further Requirements

BeLEARN funding is addressed to research projects: The projects should have an impact on the further development of education (i.e. they must not only focus on the development of teaching at the participating universities) and have a clear translational character. BeLEARN defines "translation" as the rapid implementation and utilization of research results in educational practice in the sense of building a bridge from research to practice and vice versa (e.g. scalability to other educational institutions, start-ups, etc.). Accordingly, a project should always include one or more approaches that focus on the rapid translation of the resulting research findings into educational practice (planning and implementation). The project results are public and will be communicated via the BeLEARN website.

3 Funding Amount

The amount available per founding university for this call for projects 2024 is as follows:

- University of Bern: CHF 460'000.-
- BFH: CHF 270'000.- (a maximum of CHF 40'000 can be requested per application. In exceptional cases, such as projects with particularly high complexity or large scope, higher amounts may also be possible)
- EHB: CHF 100'000.-
- EPFL: CHF 260'000.-
- PHBern: CHF 100'000.-

4 Conditions during the project duration

In case of funding, the following requirements from the Canton of Bern apply to the project staff:

- Regular work at the BeLEARN hub: At least 50 % of the BeLEARN-funded working hours must be completed at the BeLEARN hub.
- Regular reporting through defined milestones to the locomotive of the university (see chapter 8) and the administrative office of BeLEARN (specific information will be provided after the project starts)

5 Timeline

Call publication: 24 June 2024

Submission deadline: 10 September 2024

Communication of the funding decisions to the applicants: 30 September 2024

Please fill in one form per project and send it until the deadline in electronic form to the following address: info@belearn.swiss

6   Selection committee

The decision is taken by a cross-university selection committee consisting of one representative from each founding university and one representative from the BeLEARN office.

7   Language and Length of the Application

Applications can only be submitted in English. The maximum length of the application is 10 pages.

8   Contact

If you have any questions, please contact the "locomotive" of your university:

- BFH: Ioana Gatzka (ioana.gatzka@bfh.ch)
- EHB: Carmen Baumeler (carmen.baumeler@ehb.swiss)
- EPFL: Jessica Dehler Zufferey (jessica.dehlerzufferey@epfl.ch)
- PHBern: Martin Dobricki (martin.dobricki@phbern.ch)
- Uni Bern: Etna Krakenberger (etna.krakenberger@unibe.ch)

Appendix

List of criteria

Criteria	Mandatory criteria*	Rating
The project can be classified in the thematic areas of BeLEARN	x	fulfilled / not fulfilled
At least two of the five founding universities cooperate in the project	x	fulfilled / not fulfilled
Concrete advantage for the educational practice is visible	x	fulfilled / not fulfilled
The project foresees a rapid translation into educational practice	x	fulfilled / not fulfilled
Scientific relevance and quality as well as innovative character		4 points: completely fulfilled 3 points: mostly fulfilled 2 points: half fulfilled 1 point: mostly not fulfilled 0 points: not fulfilled or not apparent
Potential for further research		4 points: completely fulfilled 3 points: mostly fulfilled 2 points: half fulfilled 1 point: mostly not fulfilled 0 points: not fulfilled or not apparent
The project includes further cooperation with one or more partners (university, associated partner BeLEARN or practice partner)		fulfilled 3 pt. / not fulfilled 0 pt.
Goals/outcomes are clear and comprehensible		4 points: completely fulfilled 3 points: mostly fulfilled 2 points: half fulfilled 1 point: mostly not fulfilled 0 points: not fulfilled or not apparent
Comprehensible cost overview		4 points: completely fulfilled 3 points: mostly fulfilled 2 points: half fulfilled

		1 point: mostly not fulfilled
		0 points: not fulfilled or not apparent
Consideration of heterogeneity (diversity of school level, diversity of target group, biases, ethical aspects) as an aspect of teaching/learning settings		4 points: completely fulfilled
		3 points: mostly fulfilled
		2 points: half fulfilled
		1 point: mostly not fulfilled
		0 points: not fulfilled or not apparent

* Application is rejected if one of the mandatory criteria is not fulfilled