

SSH Concept Fonds - Pathway to Impact

With the *SSH Concept Fund*, the UvA encourages scientists in the Social Sciences & Humanities (SSH) to develop research-based concepts and insights into socially valuable products or services, and bring them to the market through a start-up or social venture.

With a contribution from this fund, you finance activities to achieve sustainable social impact through a venture. These activities involve further conceptualising, elaborating and validating your idea for a product or service. The IXA-UvA team will advise and help you during this process.

The aim is for a start-up to be able to pay back the amount initially made available plus 10% annual interest to the IXA-UvA SSH Concept Fund within three years. This allows IXA to financially support other entrepreneurial scientists.

For whom?

Researchers, including PhD's and Post Docs, from the Faculties Economics and Business, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Amsterdam Law School.

Amounts and modules - Make it visible, Make it work, Make it happen

You can apply for up to € 95,000 depending on what your project needs, made up of the below three modules. You can apply per module or for several modules at once. The budget is often made available in tranches depending on milestones to be achieved.

Conceptualisation with MAKE IT VISIBLE - € 1,000 to € 5,000

For example, for developing and (further) building a (simple) online platform to get in touch with potential customers or users.

- Result: a website, presentation, course material, etc., with which to reach potential customers/users.

Conceptualisation with MAKE IT WORK - € 5,000 to € 45,000

Intended, for example, for the (further) development of an app, prototype or test setup.

- Result: a prototype or minimal version of your service or product with which to pilot/test with potential customers/users.

After this phase of conceptualisation, you can apply for grants to validate and further develop your project. For instance, you could apply for the [NWO Take-off Grant](#). The IXA-UvA team can assist you with the application.

Validating with MAKE IT HAPPEN - € 5,000 to € 45,000

To conduct a pilot and test your product or service with potential user groups, and make adjustments based on these tests if necessary. Resulting in:

- A service or product that meets the needs and wants of potential buyers/users;
- It is clear whether a market exists for your service or product;
- You have one or more paying customers;
- You know whether you want to run your own business alongside your academic career - one does not exclude the other because you often run a business together with others.

For PhDs or postdocs with entrepreneurial ambitions - SSH Innovator

If, after obtaining your PhD or as a postdoc, you want to pursue your career as an entrepreneur, you can work as an *SSH Innovator*. This gives you the opportunity to work full-time for 3 to 6 months on your research-based concept (appointment up to a maximum of €50,000, including 20% overhead). For this, you need the support of your department and/or research institute. If your (social) enterprise is promising and the viability seems plausible, you can also apply for the *SSH Impact Fund* of UvA Ventures Holding, see below for more information.

How to apply: steps and procedure

Step 1 Intake

Make an appointment with an [IXA-UvA Business Developer](#) serving your specific Faculty, to discuss your concept. One or more meetings will be held to determine whether your concept idea is eligible for a contribution from the fund and which options for valorisation and/or exploitation best suit your idea.

After the intake interview, the Business Developer will ask you to fill in a [Business Model Canvas](#) for your idea. This will give you an overview of all the important business aspects of your future (social) business and their interrelationships, and thus an impression of the viability of your idea.

Step 2 Application

Discuss your plans for the valorisation of your concept with your supervisor and record the agreements. For applications up to €15,000, approval by your supervisor is sufficient. For applications above €15,000, the approval of your institute's director is also required (an e-mail is sufficient). Then send the application form, including the approval(s), to the Business Developer you spoke to at the intake. IXA can help you complete the application form if you wish.

Step 3 Evaluation and justification

Applications up to €25,000 are reviewed by the IXA-UvA team. If necessary, IXA will be advised by third parties. When assessing applications above €25,000 an external review panel is always set up. If the reviewers have questions you will have the opportunity to answer them by e-mail. Decisions by IXA-UvA on whether or not to grant the application cannot be appealed.

If your application is assessed positively on all criteria - see below box - and granted, an agreement will be drawn up and signed by the dean of your faculty, your supervisor, IXA-UvA and yourself. You are not privately liable as an applicant.

Review criteria

Impact: the extent to which your concept plays a key role in creating positive social impact. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations serve as a guideline here.

Need and added value: the idea is promising, is expected to be feasible, meets a market/user need and offers an innovative/ meaningful solution to that need.

Team and ownership: the project team has the potential to bring the project to fruition, implement, operate and further develop the concept.

Quality of the plan: the elaborated project plan is well thought-out, including a realistic budget that demonstrates the financial viability of the (social) enterprise. It provides insight from which year the IXA-UvA SSH Concept Fund contribution can realistically be repaid.

Step 4 Reporting and accountability

You will report to the IXA-UvA Business Developer every six months, or as often as agreed, using a standard reporting form. In addition, you will have regular contact for advice and to discuss the progress of your project.

The IXA SSH Concept Fund has a maximum of €250,000 available per year.

Grow your start-up with follow-up funding - SSH Impact Fund of UvA Ventures Holding (UVH)

If you have your first paying customers, an initial turnover, and a team in place that can further grow the start-up or social venture then follow-up funding is available.

The SSH Impact Fund of UVH invests between €50,000 and € 100,000 through loans and convertible loans which can be used for example for marketing, expanding your team to improve or expand your service or product. Additionally, UVH can assist your start-up in setting up its financial administration.

For more information send an E-mail to info@uvaventures.nl