



Arkathon Program 2020/21  
**GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS**

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The Guide for applicants contains the basic information needed to guide you in preparing a proposal for the first Arkathon Program Open Call. It provides instruction on how to submit your proposal, the criteria on which it will be evaluated and how the selected projects will be managed.

## 1 ABOUT ARKATHON PROGRAM

The Arkathon Program is a new concept where companies, healthcare organisations and technological institutes work closely together to co-develop health solutions, with the economic support of regional public funds.

Arkathon Program aims to support innovative solutions that bring a perfect response to users' needs through the guidance of hand-picked experts, as well as business support services.

Based on a specific challenge, the Arkathon Program invites entrepreneurs to evaluate, test and validate their solution with end users to obtain immediate feedback on market needs.

Because nothing is worse than developing a solution that nobody wants, experimentation is the key to success if it is conducted carefully, iteratively with clear metrics and objectives.

## 2 CHALLENGE TO TACKLE

The first Open Call is open to innovative health solutions and seeks to address the following challenge:

### HOW TO EASE THE BURDEN OF PAIN?

Understanding, treating and managing pain is one of the biggest challenges facing healthcare today.

Solutions should address a specific problem in the area of acute or chronic pain on all levels of intervention in the health sector: primary prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, maintaining quality of life, pain management and humane care for the dying (palliative medicine). Pain can include both physiological and psychological factors.

#### 2.1 What is pain?

There are several origins and types of pain:

- psychological and/or psychosomatic pain, which can result in a variety of bodily symptoms;
- acute pain, which can occur as a result of trauma or surgery and is mainly treated with medication;
- chronic pain, which is more complex to treat, as it can be accompanied by numerous side effects such as sleep disturbances, depression, social isolation, etc. Pain is chronic when it persists for a period lasting longer than three months;
- neuropathic pain, which is caused by damage to nerve fibers, e.g., due to viral infections or the consequences of diabetes. This type of pain tends to lead to changes in the nerve tissue and to become chronic.

The perception of pain is very individual and is influenced by various factors, such as gender, age, ethnic origin and education.

## **2.2 What is the incidence?**

Pain is the main reason for consulting general practitioners (60% of cases). Approximately 20% of the population suffers from chronic pain, both in Switzerland and in Europe. This proportion is expected to increase in the coming years due to the ageing of the population. Pain can have many causes (physical or emotional injuries, surgery, unknown, neurological, muscular, etc.) and has an impact on many areas (social, hobbies, daily life, professional, etc.) of the lives of those who suffer from it.

## **2.3 Who is concerned?**

Pain hits men and women alike and requires a multidisciplinary approach involving, among others, specialists in analgesia, neurologists, neurosurgeons, radiologists, etc. Its main causes: osteoarthritis, back pain, cancer (with its treatment-related injuries), trauma (following accidents), surgery (post-operative sequelae), migraines.

## **2.4 What are the current ways of relieving pain?**

In addition to medicine, a proper diet, exercise, removal of environmental triggers, social-emotional support and alternative therapies (hypnosis, acupuncture, meditation, etc.) are important to relieve symptoms.

## **2.5 What are the challenges to diagnosing and treating pain?**

- Complex to explain, difficult to understand by those around you and sometimes by health professionals, it can have a strong psychological and social impact on the person who is suffering.
- An accurate diagnosis is difficult and leads to frustration and anxiety.
- Depression and anxiety, along with challenging physical symptoms, make it difficult for patients to participate in the management of their pain.
- Some therapies include significant side effects.
- Information and guidance about managing symptoms can be hard to find.

## **2.6 Where are the opportunities for innovation?**

Prevention, diagnosis, management and care of pain is still a fairly new frontier, with many opportunities to provide methods and tools to patients and caregivers to improve their quality of life. Computer-based algorithms, machine learning, a better understanding of mental health, Internet, telemedicine, relevant innovations from other diseases, research consortiums and new interest from major industry players bring endless possibilities entrepreneurs and seasoned companies alike.

# **3 WHO CAN APPLY?**

Healthcare innovators from Switzerland or abroad - i.e., entrepreneurs, startups, intrapreneurs willing to co-develop their project outside of their corporate environment - who would like to test, co-develop and validate an innovative solution or new functionalities of a product under development, at least at the demonstrator or prototype stage.

Selected applicants undertake to attend the full program and be present in Sion, Switzerland during the Bootcamp phase (25-26 March 2021), as well as during the Immersion Program according to a personalized agenda to take full advantage of the Arkathon Program and its network.

## 4 WHAT TYPES OF SOLUTIONS IS THIS PROGRAM SEEKING?

Novel health solutions, new product features and devices that are under development, at least at the demonstrator or prototype stage, and have a significant impact on patient experience, care delivery and/or clinical outcomes. Please note that drug development projects are not eligible for this program.

## 5 OPEN CALL (STEP 1)

### 5.1 How to apply to the open call? Application process

Information and the exact schedule of the Arkathon program are available on the website [www.arkathon.ch](http://www.arkathon.ch).

Application for registration takes place on the external application software [platform FS6](#), at the latest until **November 30, 2020**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Your application step-by-step:

- create your profile by using a social media account or simply an email and password. You can log in with your profile if you already have one;
- click on "Select Team" and create your company. If you are an intrapreneur, simply use your project name as the "Startup/Team's name";
- the "Questions" section makes up the application form for the Arkathon Program. These are non-public information but will be shared with the Selection Committee.
- applications must be completed in English or French;
- a 2-minute pitch video must be attached to the application, as well as any relevant documents such as a presentation slideshow (10 slides max.), a demo of your solution (max. file size 30MB.), a business plan, etc.;
- only hit the "submit button" when you are sure no further changes are needed. By submitting your application form, you confirm that you have read and accepted the **Conditions of Application** and **Guide for applicants**, and the answers will be locked.

Ten maximum projects will be selected by a Selection Committee to participate in the Bootcamp.

Any requests for information or questions regarding this call can only be sent by email at [info@arkathon.ch](mailto:info@arkathon.ch).

### 5.2 Evaluation process & criteria

Applicants will be screened and evaluated by a Selection Committee who will score and rank each proposal according to a grid based on the following evaluation criteria:

- **Innovation and pertinence.** The solution fits with the Arkathon challenge and meets the users' and beneficiaries' needs and expectations, innovative approach
- **Feasibility.** Technical, medical, ethical and economic viability, efficient use of resources, robustness and experience of the team (technical, professional and entrepreneurial skills)
- **Impact & commercial perspectives.** Medical, economic and social impact in the medium and long term, clear benefits for users, sustainability of the business model, go-to-market strategy and commercial perspectives

- **General assessment.** Personal and subjective perception of the project as a whole.

The Open Call evaluation process is structured as follows:

1. **Eligibility check.** A first review of submitted applications will be performed by the organizers, based on call and evaluation criteria, prior to sending them to the Selection Committee for evaluation. The application form should be completed in all respects, with all the required information and all the necessary supporting documents. Incomplete applications will not be processed for admission.
2. **Written proposal and oral pitch evaluation.** Eligible applications will be assessed by an independent team of experts, called the “Selection Committee” (see 5.3 section) who will evaluate all eligible proposals by filling an evaluation grid (see 5.2 section). Selection Committee is not allowed to contact the applicants at any stage of the evaluation.
3. **Proposals selection.** The Open Call evaluation will be completed within a maximum period of two months. The list of teams selected for the Bootcamp (step 2) will be published on the Arkathon Program website and the representative of each team will be personally notified by email.

### 5.3 Selection Committee

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of experts, called the “Selection Committee”.

It is formed by

- at least two representatives of healthcare organisations;
- at least two representatives from technology institutes;
- at least two representatives of a regional economic development foundation.

The decisions of the Selection Committee are confidential and cannot be appealed.

## 6 BOOTCAMP (STEP 2)

The Bootcamp consists of a 2-day on-site event to be held on **25–26 March 2021**.

A Welcome Night will be organized the evening before to welcome all participants and to exchange in an informal setting.

The next two days, selected teams will be invited to present their solution during face-to-face sessions with qualified medical, technology and business experts. They will challenge the solutions and mentor the teams.

Bootcamp is a specific but flexible tool to obtain a proof of concept or feasibility of the solution and to validate the business model with experts, end users and specialists. It consists of three phases:

- **Medical validation:** validation of the clinical need and the solution-market fit
- **Technological, regulatory & IP validation:** validation of the technological readiness level and the appropriate regulatory and IP pathways
- **Business model validation:** validation of the business model and roadmap. Assessment of market potential, competition, positioning, etc.

A program of activities will enrich these two days, including visits of research institutes and partner institutions, as well as focused presentations on the Swiss healthcare system, regional and national ecosystems, current regulations, funding opportunities, etc.

At the end of these two days, the jury will select the winning teams to take part in the Immersion Program.

The representative of each team will be personally notified by email.

## 7 IMMERSION PROGRAM (STEP 3)

The Immersion Program will last a maximum of 6 months, from May 2021 to November 2021, and is a non-residential program. The content of the Immersion Program is personalized for each selected team based on the outcomes and discussions during the Bootcamp (step 2).

During the on-site days, the program holds workshops, field observations, coaching and testing sessions. Off-site, teams will have a workload to fulfill based on a co-validated roadmap.

Immersion Program will help selected teams:

- to understand health issues through field observations and interactions at the heart of health professionals and patients' activities,
- to master digital technologies through collaborations with technology institutes to implement a solution to a problem,
- to help them find new business models and optimize their existing ones.

We will provide each selected team with a set of physical infrastructure (care institutions, technology institutes), as well as people (health professionals, specialists, patients, ...) all from the Arkathon network and partners who contribute to innovation in healthcare.

The selected teams will be invited to define and sign a co-development agreement with the supporting partners. Attention will be paid to establishing the milestones that each team commits to achieving the proposal, to ensure alignment of deliverables and milestones.

A coach will be assigned and guide the team through the whole Immersion Program, to align the service package with the specific needs of the team and carefully monitoring the project status.

Teams will benefit from a 2-part program:



### I. Co-development, test & validation

Solutions are co-developed, tested and validated within healthcare institutions

- Definition of the framework, objectives and expected results
- Definition of interaction types, deliverables and timelines
- Assignment of key interlocutors and test fields, co-developments and experimentations
- Recruitment of participants (patients, health professionals, etc.)
- Support through clinical, academic and technological expertise
- When a milestone is reached, an assessment takes place and corrective measures are implemented, if necessary



### II. Business acceleration support

Selected teams benefit from a more global support according to their needs to accelerate their development

- Selected teams benefit from a more global support according to their needs to accelerate their development.
- Individual coaching and, if necessary, connection with experienced experts in funding, IP, business development, marketing, industrialization...
- Targeted meetings program with potential partners and local experts (companies, laboratories, research centers, institutions, industrialists, financiers...)
- Networking sessions with key local players in the sector and in the field of innovation
- Support for local establishment

The **co-development, test & validation part** (I. in the figure) will be managed between awarded teams and the healthcare organisations and technology institutes.

The planned steps are the following:

1. **Kick-off meeting** with the assigned coach and supporting partners to lay the foundation for a collaborative co-development of the solution (framework definition, work plan, calendar, meetings, deliverables and key users needed)
2. **Signature of the agreement** by all parties involved
3. **Co-development, test and validation phase** during which the team interacts with supporting partners and key users from health organizations and technological institutes to receive valuable feedback.

In parallel, teams will benefit from a global **business acceleration support** (II. in the figure) according to their needs. This includes individual coaching, targeted meetings program with potential partners and local stakeholders, business modeling support, networking sessions and support for a local establishment.

Our vocation is to help you find new business models and optimize your existing ones.

## 8 PRIZE MONEY

At the end of the Bootcamp, teams selected for the Immersion Program will have the chance to:

- co-develop and validate their solution with clinical and tech supporting partners within healthcare and R&D institutions;
- take advantage of immediate feedback from users for a better understanding of market needs;
- benefit from workplaces within the partner institutions;
- receive economic support up to CHF 15,000.— in a cash prize;
- get personalized business support to validate their business model and go-to-market, ultimately improving their commercial traction;
- benefit from exposure through our media partnerships, specialised health network and our social media channels as part of the communication campaign.

Arkathon program is an equity-free program and does not invest in startups. No commission on funds raised is taken from the startup to facilitate investor relations.

The Bootcamp Jury of experts reserves itself the right to decide the number of winning teams during the final selection depending on the quality of the projects.

## 9 APPLICANTS' COMMITMENT

Applicants undertake to guarantee the sincerity and truthfulness of the information they submit. Any inaccuracies or omissions that may lead to an erroneous evaluation will result in the cancellation of the application.

Selected teams undertake to participate in the Bootcamp (step 2) according to instructions they will be given. The unjustified absence of the team leader of a selected project will result in the disqualification of its project.

The participants authorize the organizers to refer to their names and projects, as well as to use photos of them taken during the Bootcamp (step 2) or Immersion program (step 3) for public relations and communication purposes.

## **10 PARTICIPATION FEES AND EXPENSES POLICY**

Participation in the Arkathon Program is free of charge for selected candidates/teams. Application fees related to the Open Call are borne by each applicant.

Teams selected for the Bootcamp (step 2) will have their accommodation and travel costs covered up to a maximum amount of CHF 1,000 (one thousand Swiss francs) per team and upon presentation of original receipts, any taxes included. This amount includes travel to/from Sion and accommodation costs.

Meal during the Welcome Night and Bootcamp is offered.

## **11 VISA**

Selected participants are solely responsible for obtaining their visa to enter Switzerland. The organizers of the Arkathon Program cannot be held responsible if the visa is refused or not arrive in time. No refund requests will be accepted.

If necessary, the organizers will provide a letter confirming acceptance to the program for the visa applications.

## **12 ORGANIZERS' RESPONSIBILITY**

The organizers reserve the right to modify, shorten, extend or cancel the call for solutions if it considers it appropriate. The organizers cannot be held responsible for this.

The organizers shall not be responsible for any personal injury, loss or damage to any of the participants' property. Participants shall be held responsible for any damage or loss occasioned to their personal office space.

The organizers do not guarantee the availability and continuity of operation of the website or F6S web platform. They shall not be liable for any damage or loss that may be incurred by interference, omissions, interruptions, computer viruses or disconnections of the website or F6S web platform and the services for any cause, including causes beyond the control of Arkathon Program.

## **13 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTIES (IP)**

All applications remain the property of the applicants. It is up to the applicants to take the necessary measures if they consider that their idea requires legal protection.

IP rights remain in the hands of the technology owners. The applicants certify to hold the legitimate intellectual property rights relating to the projects they submit, and they shall be responsible for managing the intellectual property rights with the involved institutions (employer, partner, and so



forth). The organizers claim no intellectual property rights relating to the submitted projects and cannot be held liable for them.

## **14 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

If a winning team/project wishes to create a startup locally by integrating an incubator, it may profit from in-kind support and services by The Ark Foundation estimated at over CHF 100,000.—.