ÖZYEĞİN UNIVERSITY
SOCIETAL IMPACT SEED GRANT PROGRAM
2026

The Office of the Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Impact (VPRII) is pleased to announce the third Özyeğin University Societal Impact Seed Grants Program. The program embraces the concept of directed action, integrating impact-oriented research, teaching, and engagement to generate actionable, measurable, and scalable solutions for societal benefit. This program underscores Özyeğin University's commitment to becoming an "Entrepreneurial Research University with High Global Impact." By bridging academic knowledge and real-world practice, the program aims to generate meaningful and lasting societal impact through interdisciplinary collaboration.

Program Goals

- Advance and Localize United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Support innovative projects that address local, national, and global challenges within the framework of the SDGs, ensuring solutions are contextually relevant and impactful.
- Foster Directed Action: Promote research that bridges academic knowledge with practical implementation, creating tangible solutions that improve society.
- Encourage Transdisciplinary Collaboration: Incentivize partnerships across faculties and disciplines to address complex, multifaceted societal issues.
- Engage Societal Partners: Actively involve NGOs, government agencies, the private sector, industry, local communities, and OzU administrative units as intellectual contributors in the research process.
- Promote Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI): Embed EDI principles in all aspects of the research, ensuring fair representation and impact for marginalized and underserved communities.
- Create Scalable and Sustainable Impact: Support projects that can be expanded and sustained beyond the funding period.

This program invites proposals that directly address real-world challenges. The program's outcomes will extend Özyeğin University's influence beyond academia, contributing to sustainable development and fostering a positive, lasting impact globally.

Areas of Special Interest

- Projects that leverage artificial intelligence for societal benefit are strongly encouraged. Proposals that employ responsible and inclusive AI, including ethics, data governance, explainability, and EDI, to deliver scalable solutions aligned with the SDGs will receive special consideration.

Eligibility and Funding

- Open to all full-time Özyeğin University faculty members.
- Proposals must represent new research and outreach initiatives and involve societal partners as active intellectual contributors.
- Projects must adhere to principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- Successful proposals will receive up to 200,000 TL per year. In exceptional cases, the duration may be extended to 18 months with no increase in the maximum budget.
- Proposals should include a detailed project plan, timeline, and measurable outcomes.
- Graduate student expenses cannot be included in the project budget.
- Travel expenses for attending national or international conferences cannot be included in the project's travel budget.

Key Dates

- Program Announcement : 1 November
- Application Deadline : 30 November
- Results Notification : 1 January
- Project Start Date : 1 February

Application Process

Applicants are required to submit the following:

1. Project Proposal Form (having co-signed by a societal partner would be a plus).
2. Budget
3. CV of the lead researcher and partner(s).

All submissions must be sent in PDF format to sp@ozyegin.edu.tr by the deadline.

Eligibility Check

Applications will undergo an eligibility check conducted by the Sustainability Platform (SP) within 5 (five) days following the submission deadline:

- Submissions received after the announced deadline will not be considered.
- Incomplete submissions will be disqualified.
- Proposals must adhere to the format and guidelines outlined in the application form provided.

Panel Review & Selection Criteria

Eligible proposals will be evaluated by a Societal Impact Review Panel consisting of the President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Graduate School Directors, and the Directors of the Sustainability Platform.

If applicants wish to present their proposals, they will be invited to a 10-minute presentation to the Review Panel, followed by a Q&A session. During the presentation, applicants are encouraged to:

- Highlight the societal impact and sustainability aspects of their project.
- Outline how they plan to collaborate with stakeholders.

The panel will deliberate on calibrating final scores and establishing a ranking list of projects that meet the quality threshold.

Post-Review Process

- Projects will be selected for support based on the overall strength of design, societal impact potential, and alignment with program goals, within the limits of available funding.
- If applicable, researchers will be requested to submit the ethics committee approval letter by the project start date.
- Contracts will be prepared and signed.
- Each funded project is required to submit a final project report to the Sustainability Platform (SP). The report must detail the project's outcomes, achieved societal impacts, and future development plans.