

Call for Student Participation in The Open Innovation Challenges for Students

7-9 July 2026

Online / Hybrid format

Organized by the University of Warwick



Co-funded by
the European Union

1. Overview: Description and Objectives

The EUTOPIA Innovation Challenge 2026, organised by the University of Warwick, brings together students from across the EUTOPIA Alliance to develop their innovation skillset and expand their global network. Delivered in an online / hybrid format on 7–9 July 2026, the programme is organised in partnership with Warwick’s student innovation societies and its central Enterprise department, which together bring extensive experience of running similar events and a wide network of contacts across the local innovation ecosystem.

Working in teams of five students from their home university and guided by expert mentors, participants respond to real-world challenges set by start-ups and creative or social enterprises from the Warwick Innovation District. The challenges span a range of sectors and disciplines and are designed to be approachable for students from any background; the specific challenges will be confirmed once the participating start-ups have been selected.

By the end of the programme, teams will have developed and presented their ideas in a final pitch format. The challenge is a great opportunity to connect with the ecosystem of student start-ups at Warwick and with student teams based at the other EUTOPIA universities, and to reflect on the societal and economic relevance of innovation. Prior knowledge or experience is not required – what matters most is curiosity, creativity, and a willingness to collaborate.

2. Admission Requirements

2.1 The programme is open to:

- Bachelor (BA) students from any organic unit
- Master (MA) students from any organic unit

2.2 Applicants must be regularly enrolled at one of the EUTOPIA partner universities both at the time of application and during the event, and should have:

- a strong interest in innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship
- a willingness to work in interdisciplinary and international teams

2.3 To apply, students are required to fill in the application form provided for the Open Innovation Challenges.

2.4. Ineligibility: if, at any stage of the application procedure, it is established that the information provided by the applicant has been knowingly falsified, the candidate will be disqualified from the selection process.

3. Application Procedure

3.1 Application Procedure

Each university will select its team of five (5) students through internal selection processes following the application and admission requirements established in this call. Universities are also encouraged to draw up a reserve list of an additional 5–10 students.

3.2 Application Deadline: Deadlines for applications will be established by each university according to their academic and administrative calendars, so that selected participants can be confirmed and their details shared with the University of Warwick by 15 June 2026. Where helpful, the organising team will support the formation of balanced, interdisciplinary teams across the participating universities to ensure the best possible fit for collaborative work on the challenges.

4. Selection Process

4.1 Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed based on:

- balance among faculties, ensuring a fair number of selected students from each faculty;
- ensuring gender balance and balance between cycle of study (bachelor and master students);
- motivation to participate and interest in innovation, and entrepreneurship;
- English language proficiency and clarity of expression in the application form.

4.2 Selection committee

A selection committee will be established at each partner university to assess the applications. As part of the selection process, an online interview may be scheduled. In the event of a tie, priority will be given following the criteria of gender balance and disciplinary equilibrium.

4.3 Publication of Results

Applicants will be informed individually about the outcome of the selection. Selected students will need to contact the EUTOPIA Office of their university by email to confirm their participation. Final decisions will be communicated by 15 June 2026.

5. Rights and Obligations of Selected Students

Selected participants are expected to:

- actively participate in all programme activities, including any online activities held before the event

CALL TO SELECT STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
EUTOPIA OPEN INNOVATION CHALLENGES FOR STUDENTS
EUTOPIA MORE Project No. [101089699])

- contribute to team-based work on the innovation challenges
- take part in the final presentation / pitch

Selected participants will have the right to:

- attend all trainings and programme activities and take part free of charge
- as the programme is **delivered primarily online, no travel is required for participation**. Where any in-person element applies, eligible expenses are covered by the EUTOPIA MORE Project.

6. Calendar

Deadline for applications: 11 June 2026

Communication of results: 15 June 2026

Deadline for appeals: 16 June 2026

Deadline for acceptance and confirmation of participation: 16 June 2026

7. Data Protection

Information relating to individuals (personal data) is collected and used in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) n. 2016/679 of the European Commission, with regard to the processing of personal data by European institutions and organizations and the unrestricted circulation of such data.

8. Contact Information

For any inquiries or additional information on this call

- Email: eutopia@unl.pt / novaimpact@unl.pt