



Agriculture & Food Security Innovation Challenge (AFSIC - 2026)

By

**Food Security & Agriculture Center of Excellence
(FACE)**



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1. Executive summary

Pakistan's agriculture sector is highly vulnerable to climate change, with over 50% of the population facing food security agriculture sector has a critical role in GDP, employment, and rural livelihoods. To counter the challenge, there is a dire need to innovate locally adaptable solutions to enhance resilience and sustainability.

In this context, FACE is introducing "**Agriculture & Food Security Innovation Challenge**" (AFSIC), aimed at *fostering locally driven, research based or internationally proven innovations to address critical challenges in agriculture due to climate change affecting food security.*

AFSIC will test the intellectual / novelty capacity of students and researchers, by providing a platform for idea conception, direction, funding leading to workable solutions. Through this initiative, FACE aims to position AFSIC as a platform for agricultural innovation in Pakistan, bridging the gap between research and real-world application.

AFSIC will focus on key thematic areas, that will align closely with global and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The innovative proposals will be adopted as per following procedure: -

- Call for Proposals (CFP), from student's ex agricultural universities.
- Submissions of proposals.
- Evaluation of proposals by a panel of experts from academia and industry, for their practicality and feasibility.
- Selection of best five projects.
- Funding to execute proposed projects. This year, up to five projects will be selected and funded on the basis of merit, with an allocation of approximately PKR 2 million per project.
- Post Implementation, it will be propagated for its efficacy, and mass scaleup by all concerned stakeholders.

2. About FACE. The **Food Security & Agriculture Centre of Excellence (FACE)**, is a non-profit organization registered in 2021, under societies act of Pakistan, committed to strengthening **food security** and **promoting sustainable agricultural development in Pakistan**. Through AFSIC, FACE aims to support innovative and research-driven solutions by students and researchers to address key agriculture, climate change, and rural livelihoods challenges. FACE continues to play an impactful role in fostering innovation and building resilience across the agri-food sector.

3. About AFSIC. AFSIC aims to position itself as patron to innovation in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security by:-

- Identifying innovative ideas focusing on agriculture, food security and climate change.
- Addressing critical gaps in agriculture sector and suggest Climate Smart Solutions (CSS).
- Encouraging Agri students and researchers for innovative ideas with solutions.

- Providing platform and funding to convert innovation to implementation.
- Positioning AFSIC as patron to innovation in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security.

4. **Universities identified for submission of project proposal in 2026.**

The Call for Proposal (CFP) will be applicable for following universities:

- University of Agriculture- Faisalabad
- University of Agriculture- Peshawar
- MNS University of Agriculture- Multan

5. **Thematic areas for project proposal submission.**

Following areas have been earmarked for submission of applications in AFSIC – 2026.

- Crop yield increase and quality improvement
- Water use efficiency & Irrigation innovation
- Agri Waste Management and Circular Economy
- Regenerative Agriculture
- Mechanization for Smallholder Farmers
- Data-Driven Agriculture
- Early Warning System
- Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience focusing on Food Security, Prevention in Food Losses, Storage and Post Harvest Technologies
- Urban and Controlled Environment Agriculture
- Soil Health Restoration / Carbon Farming

6. **Project Proposal Submissions.**

- Post CFP, submissions of applications will be undertaken online.
- All submissions will be individually evaluated by a panel of sector specialists
- Up to 05 projects will be awarded funding through their institutes with step wise supervision, expert guidance and improvement of the project.

7. **Panel for Selection of Projects.**

Five-member panel will serve as jury and mentor for the program

- One member from FACE.
- One Member from FFC.
- Three members from Academia and / or leading development sector organizations working on Agriculture & Climate.

8. **Award of Grant**

- A total funding pool of **PKR 10 million** has been allocated for five selected projects in the fiscal year 2026, with an indicative allocation of **PKR 2 million per project**. However, the jury retains the discretion to adjust the funding—either increasing or decreasing the allocation—based on the specific scope, requirements, and merit of each project.
- A tripartite contract will be done between AFSIC (FACE IP), University and Grantee/ team. It will include terms and condition such as fair use of funds, submission of project reports and expense report as pre-requisite to closure of project
- Funds will be transferred to University for the project, referred in the contract. It adds to a layered security and tax breaks. Onwards disbursement as per agreed model in the agreement will be undertaken by the university
- Payment schedule will be 50% release of funds at the time of contract, 30% at the submission of 1st progress report and remaining 20% towards project final conclusion

Note: Additional months for project implementation, moving beyond the specified timeline, will be applicable with endorsement of jury at the selection stage.