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## **Alliance – Columbia Blockchain Innovation Challenge (BIC)**

The Alliance Program is partnering with Columbia Entrepreneurship and the [Columbia Venture Competition](#) to launch a Blockchain Innovation Challenge (BIC). The competition is open to students and recent graduates from Columbia University, Sciences Po, Ecole Polytechnique and Paris 1 – Panthéon Sorbonne. (See “Eligibility, Rules and Regulations” below).

Teams of students and recent graduates from all four institutions are invited to submit proposals for new or existing ventures using blockchain technology to create innovative solutions in a range of areas, including (but not limited to): crypto protocols, finance, asset management, investment, insurance, supply chain, property, healthcare, online publishing, journalism, entertainment, the Internet of Things, voting and elections.

For Sciences Po, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and Ecole Polytechnique, the competition is in three stages (See timeline below):

**1. Written, application.** Each team submits the following documents in English to the BIC selection committee within their respective institution:

- A one-page description of the project (350 words), which highlights the critical role of blockchain technology in the project, the innovative nature of the solution proposed, key objectives, outcomes and deliverables, as well as the potential for impact (in the areas of finance, education, health, social justice, etc.). The description should also include a list of partners and a timeline. See “Evaluation Criteria” below
- Separate CV for each team member
- A separate spreadsheet budget, including funding already raised through investment for the project. Teams with more than \$150,000 (€130,000) in investment by March 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 are not eligible.

Applications (including project description, CVs and budget sheet) should be sent by email to: [picha@univ-paris1.fr](mailto:picha@univ-paris1.fr)

Deadline for applications: **February 7<sup>th</sup> 2019**



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**2. Interview.** Shortlisted candidates will be invited to present their projects to each of their institution's BIC selection committee.

**3. Start-up Columbia Entrepreneurship Festival.** Each of the four institutions will select one finalist team to represent them. Each finalist team will present their project to an independent panel at the Columbia Venture Competition on the New York City campus of Columbia University on **April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019**. The winners will be announced the following day at the [Start-up Columbia Festival](#) on **April 5<sup>th</sup> 2019**.

The winning team will be awarded a cash prize of \$30,000. In addition, each of the other finalist teams will be awarded a \$5,000 cash prize and offered mentorship sessions with successful industry leaders and entrepreneurs who will offer them the chance to test their ideas, benefit from expert advice and strengthen their proof of concept.

## **Awards**

**First Prize:** \$30,000

**Each of the 3 remaining finalists:** \$5,000

## **Timeline:**

December: launch of the call for applications

Feb 7<sup>th</sup>: **deadline for applications**

March 1<sup>st</sup>: shortlisted teams announced

March 7<sup>th</sup>: Interview of shortlisted teams by each of the 4 institutions

April 4<sup>th</sup>: Finalists pitch their project at the finals of the Columbia Venture Competition

April 5<sup>th</sup>: Finalists invited to attend the Columbia Startup Festival, where the winner will be announced

## **Eligibility, rules and regulations**

1. The Alliance Blockchain Innovation Challenge is intended for new, independent ventures in the seed or early start-up stages.
2. Businesses built using technologies or IP licensed from Columbia University, Sciences Po, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and Ecole Polytechnique will be accepted but ownership of the IP must be clearly stated and documented. Ownership of intellectual property and equity shares in the business must not be in dispute.



3. Status of incorporation and any funding received must be clearly stated. Cash grants will only be awarded to teams that have established, legally-formed business registration.
4. Teams do not have to be formally incorporated to enter – or win – the Blockchain Innovation Challenge. However, winning teams must be legally-formed business entities to receive the grant. If a winning team is not yet an incorporated entity, BIC sponsoring institutions may be able to provide advice and guidance.
5. Teams must not have raised more than \$150,000 USD in dilutive investments prior to March 1st, 2019.
6. The Alliance Blockchain Innovation Challenge is intended for ventures founded, managed, and owned by eligible founders (students or recent alumni within 5 years of degree) from Columbia University, Sciences Po, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and Ecole Polytechnique. Winning teams with members not affiliated with these universities must document the role all founders have had in the conception and development of the venture. At least one founder must be a student or recent alumnus (recent alumni within 5 years of degree) from one of these academic institutions.
7. All team members are asked to state their academic institution affiliation with degree year. BIC administrators may also require proof of the length of time each founder has been engaged in their venture.
8. All four BIC finalist teams must present live, in English, on Thursday April 4th, 2019.
9. The winners will be announced on Friday, April 5th at the #Startup Columbia Festival. Contestants must agree to release rights to use their images and brief descriptions of their business models to help promote BIC sponsoring institutions’ programs. Winners will be given rights to use their images, photos and videos for their own promotional purposes.
10. It may take BIC sponsoring institutions up to three months after the final winners are determined to award the grants.
11. Eligibility is contingent on compliance with the rules listed above. Teams can be disqualified at any point, during the competition and prior to receiving funds at the administrators’ discretion. Disqualification is final and cannot be appealed.

**Evaluation criteria**

Critical role of Blockchain technology in the idea’s implementation	30%
Potential for impact (financial, social or political impact and potential market growth	30%
Well thought-out concept and description of the product or service; bonus for a prototype or demo	20%
Compelling, credible and polished presentation	10%
Originality of the idea and marketability	10%