

# IEEE SPS & HTB Call for Proposals on Signal Processing Technologies for Local Community Challenges

<https://htb.ieee.org/funding-opportunities/sps-and-htb-cfp/>

[IEEE Signal Processing Society \(SPS\)](#) and [IEEE Humanitarian Technologies Board \(HTB\)](#) are partnering to conduct a special Call for Proposals to support projects in SPS chapters that utilize Signal Processing technologies to address local community challenges.

Awards from US\$1,000 to US\$3,000 will be made to selected projects that present a convincing plan to a) understand the real needs of a local community or local stakeholder organization and b) complete in no more than six months' time a pilot project utilizing Signal Processing technologies to address those local community challenges.

Any local community challenge that can map back to the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) can be considered.

Signal processing is the enabling technology for the generation, transformation, extraction, and interpretation of information. It comprises the theory, algorithms with associated architectures and implementations, and applications related to processing information contained in many different formats broadly designated as signals. Signal processing uses mathematical, statistical, computational, heuristic, and/or linguistic representations, formalisms, modeling techniques and algorithms for generating, transforming, transmitting, and learning from signals.

Projects must have a good connection to the local SPS chapter and engage a significant<sup>[1]</sup> number of IEEE members.

## Attributes of projects considered:

- Applicants must demonstrate understanding of the real needs of a local community or local stakeholder organization,
- Proposals must involve deployment of technology, customization of technology, and/or development of technology that is relevant to SPS's fields of interest.
- Projects should have active "local" IEEE SPS volunteer involvement. That means that key IEEE SPS members responsible for implementing the project are currently living in the country/countries where the project is to take place.
- Projects must have active local community involvement including relevant stakeholder groups. For example, those affected in the local community should be involved and have a voice in determining what is needed/desired and how a project will be designed and executed.

<sup>[1]</sup> "Significant" will depend on the scope of the project. Project teams should make a concerted effort to involve as many IEEE members as appropriate for the project.

- Proposals must clearly articulate the impact of the project and how it will be measured, using the [Project Assessment Matrix](#) to the best of the applicant's ability. We encourage applicants to take the free online HTB/SIGHT course on IEEE ILN, "[Project Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation](#)" for clear instructions on how to complete the matrix and how to implement monitoring and evaluation best practices at all stages of a project.

### **Projects NOT considered:**

- Projects that do not directly relate to a pressing need of a specific community.
- Projects that do not involve deployment of technology, customization of technology, and/or development of Signal Processing technologies.
- Projects that do not clearly articulate active community involvement.
- Projects that are primarily research or commercial in nature.
- Projects with no clearly articulated plan for impact measurement.

Any proposal which (i) is incomplete, (ii) does not meet the attributes of projects considered, (iii) requests less than US\$1,000 or more than US\$3,000, (iv) has a primary applicant with an ongoing or incomplete HTB funded project, (v) is not in English, (vi) has a primary applicant who is not an SPS member in good standing, or (vii) for which a completed [IEEE SPS & HTB Projects Budget Template](#) is not submitted will not be reviewed. All proposals must disclose if an identical or similar proposal is currently under evaluation for funding elsewhere.

### **Legal, Compliance, and Risk:**

Humanitarian technology and sustainable development projects, due to their real-world nature, may involve a certain amount of risk. It is imperative that potential risks are acknowledged and mitigated wherever possible. IEEE has taken steps to mitigate several of these risks. While not a comprehensive list of risks or mitigation strategies, please review the following carefully:

- Projects MUST comply with all national/federal, state, and local laws, guidelines, safety codes, and restrictions.
- IEEE is subject to the full range of U.S. economic sanctions and export control laws, and as such, IEEE may not be able to provide certain services to certain designated countries or entities or individuals from those countries or entities. A more detailed description of OFAC, economic sanctions, and embargoes applicable to IEEE can be found at <https://legal.ieee.org/compliance/ofac>.
- All projects that involve children must follow [IEEE Guidelines for Working with Children](#). Any project funding will be contingent on policy compliance.
- In the event the project collects, uses, processes, or otherwise involves the personal data of any individual, the grantee agrees that they shall, to the maximum extent possible, respect the privacy of those individuals. Grantee will comply with all applicable data privacy laws or regulations.
- SPS & HTB funds may not be used for a) tests of medical equipment on people/animals or b) mass production and/or deployment of devices that require but have not yet undergone the appropriate regulation, such as government approvals. Medical device

manufacturing and deployment are highly regulated fields and may require partnership with and approval by relevant national/federal, state, and/or local authorities.

- All projects considered for funding will be shared with the IEEE Office of Risk and Insurance Management Services (ORIMS) and, in some cases, the IEEE Legal & Compliance Department, for their review prior to final decision.
- Projects must avoid any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. Project teams must abide by the [IEEE Principles of Business Conduct](#). For more information on what should be disclosed and how to avoid conflicts of interest, see the [HTB website](#).
- Projects selected must agree to the HTB [Intellectual Property Policy](#) as a condition of funding.
- Legal agreements between IEEE and external entities must be vetted by IEEE Legal prior to signing.
- Funds will not be disbursed to individuals or external organizations. All funds must flow through a local IEEE OU - generally the local IEEE Section. Any funds that are not used according to the approved budget will be returned to SPS & HTB.
- Please note that, depending on the nature of a project, additional review may be required at any stage of the project.

### **Submission Timeline:**

- 17 August - 17 September at 11:59pm EDT.

### **Eligibility to apply:**

- The primary applicant must be an IEEE & SPS Professional member grade or higher in good standing. SPS Student members or SIGHT members may be secondary applicants. Staff checks all member numbers during the intake process. If membership status of the primary applicant is in arrears, the submission cannot move forward.
- Each team may submit only one proposal.
- Project teams that received HTB, SIGHT, or SPS funding for a project in the past may only apply if the project has been successfully completed and all reporting requirements fulfilled.
- An IEEE OU - preferably the local Chapter or Section - must act as the fiscal agent. Applicants must discuss this with the Chapter/Section Treasurer prior to proposal submission. HTB generally cannot transfer funds to a Student Branch. IEEE financial requirements for funding disbursements will apply. Please see [IEEE FOM 2.E - IEEE Unit Reporting](#) (Including, but not limited to, Societies, Technical Councils, Geographic Units, and Conferences).
- Because U.S. economic sanctions and export controls are subject to frequent change, please review the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control's [Sanctions list](#) to determine if your country can receive funding or contact [HTB-projects@ieee.org](mailto:HTB-projects@ieee.org) with any questions before applying.

## Eligible Project Costs

IEEE SPS & HTB Projects prioritizes support of direct project costs, including necessary equipment, materials, supplies, and travel. Travel expenses must comply with [IEEE Travel and Expense Reimbursement Guidelines](#). Given that projects are local in nature, travel costs should be minimal. Depending on local health and safety conditions, any non-essential travel and in-person components may need to be avoided.

No reimbursement of volunteer salaries or honorariums will be provided. Reimbursing the salary of anyone contributing to the project must be carefully justified. Associated salary costs should be clearly explained and limited to a minor part of the overall budget proposed.

No indirect costs will be considered for funding, including but not limited to, overhead expenses, honorariums, competition or contest prizes, Facilities & Administrative (F&A) costs, tuition, etc.

Please discuss in advance with the IEEE OU that will be your fiscal intermediary (generally the local Chapter or Section) if there are any mandatory bank or administration fees that are incurred with a transfer of funds from HTB/SPS to the OU. These fees may be included in the project budget; however, the OU must confirm to HTB/SPS that these are mandatory.

## Questions

Do you have any questions you wish to ask about the potential suitability of your proposal? If in doubt, please contact SPS at [sps-mdi@listserv.ieee.org](mailto:sps-mdi@listserv.ieee.org) before developing and submitting your proposal.

## Application Form

### How to Submit

- Please submit via the IEEE HTB/SIGHT [Online Funding Opportunities Portal](#)
- Please download this template files which will be required to be uploaded into your online application
  - ❖ [Project Assessment Matrix](#)
  - ❖ [IEEE SPS and IEEE HTB Projects Budget Template](#)

### Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to Signal Processing technologies
- Benefit to the affected local community
- Project scope well defined

- Strength of team and capacity to attain goal
- Involvement of relevant stakeholder network
- Relevance to IEEE's mission of advancing technology for the benefit of humanity
- Overall potential for success

### **Acceptable Time Frame to Utilize Funds & Reporting Schedule**

- Funds must be expended within a maximum of 6 months from the approved project start date.
- Brief progress updates must be submitted at monthly intervals after the project's approved start date.
- A final report must be submitted with evaluation metrics within 60 days of the conclusion of the project grant period.
- Reports on longer-term outcomes and impact of the project may be requested for up to 3 years after the conclusion of the project's grant period.

Final Comments: Please note that this funding program is highly competitive. Not all worthy projects may be funded due to budget limitations, or may be offered lower funding than requested.