



**Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
Institutions for Development Department
Competitiveness, Technology and Innovation Division (IFD/CTI)**

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Selection of Host Institution(s) for the Korea-LAC Tech Corps Program**

I. BACKGROUND

Worldwide technology is transforming our societies and economies by changing the ways in which people interact, businesses function and innovate, and governments design and implement policies. Given the unprecedented dimension and speed of this transformation, concerns have emerged about the preparedness of Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) economies to face these challenges, especially because of the weakness of the region's educational systems, the limited broadband coverage, and the fact that most firms are not engaged in innovation activities. Among other actions, improving the supply of specialized human capital and increasing ICT knowledge will be critical to take full advantage of the possibilities of the technological transformation and to mitigate its negative effects to the economy and the whole society. In fact, policy makers worldwide are particularly interested in the supply of scientists, engineers and ICT experts because of their direct involvement in technical change and the ongoing digital transformation.

The Republic of Korea (Korea) represents a paradigm of innovation-led economic development. The country has changed its economic structure in favor of more technologically sophisticated industries and has diversified the number and nature of its productive specialization. Today, Korea is a major contributor to the accelerating development of a wide range of ICTs. Its economic transformation has been achieved in close collaboration among government, industry and the academic community. Among its strengths, Korea has one of the highest rates of spending on R&D in the world and a highly educated labor force with a strong interest in science and technology. Many higher education institutions in Korea provide innovative and high-quality programs, which constitutes an important contribution to its reputation as a global ICT leader.

II. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Overview. The IDB launched the Korea-LAC Tech Corps Program with the financial support of the Knowledge Partnership Korea Fund for Technology and Innovation (KPK) administered by the IDB. The program aims to enhance the institutional capacity of the public sector of LAC countries with an enriched understanding and extensive use of ICTs. As part of this program, the LAC Tech Corps component will provide mid-level public officials from LAC countries with full scholarships to pursue a master's degree offered by a higher education institution in Korea.

Degree program. 1-3 higher education institution(s) in Korea will host the LAC Tech Corps component by offering a master's degree program in public management or policy with a concentration on ICTs and innovative technologies or other subject areas with an ICT focus. The degree program will be conducted entirely in English and is expected to take place for a period of 16-18 months over 1 remote semester in the students' home country and 2 semesters in Korea. The degree requirements, or the expected level of commitment and efforts to complete the program, shall be equivalent to those of a full-time, in-person master's degree program. For further details, please refer to the proposal guidelines.



Students. Each of the IDB’s 26 borrowing member countries¹ will be invited to shortlist 3-6 mid-level public officials that meet the admission criteria of the host institution(s). Eligible LAC candidates will then apply for the spring 2022 admission at the Korean host institution(s) and go through their admission process – i.e. document screening and, if applicable, on-line interviews. Admission decisions will be made by the host school(s) based on their admission criteria. Efforts will be made by all parties to maximize the participation of eligible countries.

Scholarships. The LAC Tech Corps component is expected to finance at least 26 full scholarships. The IDB, through the Knowledge Partnership Korea Fund for Technology and Innovation (KPK), will contribute a maximum of US\$ 810,000. Matching contributions in cash or in-kind are expected to be made by the host institution(s). The total number of scholarships is subject to vary according to the contents of the proposed degree program(s) and the scale of matching resources from the host institution(s). Each unit of scholarship is expected to cover the student’s full tuition, educational materials, and other eligible expenses pertinent to the entire degree program, as well as accommodation, monthly allowance for living expenses, health insurance, travel to and from Korea, and other relevant expenses incurred during the semesters in Korea. The host institution(s) will provide all services related to the degree program.

Terms and conditions. An agreement will be signed between the IDB and the host institution(s) establishing the terms and conditions for disbursement and use of funds, commitment of matching resources, and other relevant rights and responsibilities of the signatories.

III. SELECTION PROCESS

Higher education institutions in Korea wishing to participate in the program are invited to submit a proposal **by July 9th, 2021 (EST) at TECHCORPS@iadb.org**. All information contained in the proposal must be in English. Proposals submitted after this date will not be considered.

An independent evaluation panel composed of international experts will perform a desk review of the submitted proposals and hold individual evaluation sessions with each contending institution. The evaluation session will be held virtually and may be complemented by a brief site visit by IDB’s technical team to verify the true and fair presentation of the institution’s on-campus facilities.² In any case, a visual presentation of the relevant on-campus facilities during the evaluation session is highly encouraged. The final selection results are expected to be communicated to all contenders by the end of July 2021.

For additional information, please contact the Tech Corps team at TECHCORPS@iadb.org.

This program is a beneficiary of the Knowledge Partnership Korea Fund for Technology and Innovation.

¹ IDB’s 26 borrowing member countries are Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

² The site visit by IDB’s technical team will be subject to the Bank’s travel policies and authorization regarding COVID-19.