

Shine 2027

Accelerating early-stage innovation
for urban climate action

In partnership with

**Apply before
15 September
2026**



“The number one cause
of human change is when
people around us change.
Beliefs do not change
our action. Actions change
our beliefs”

Paul Hawken

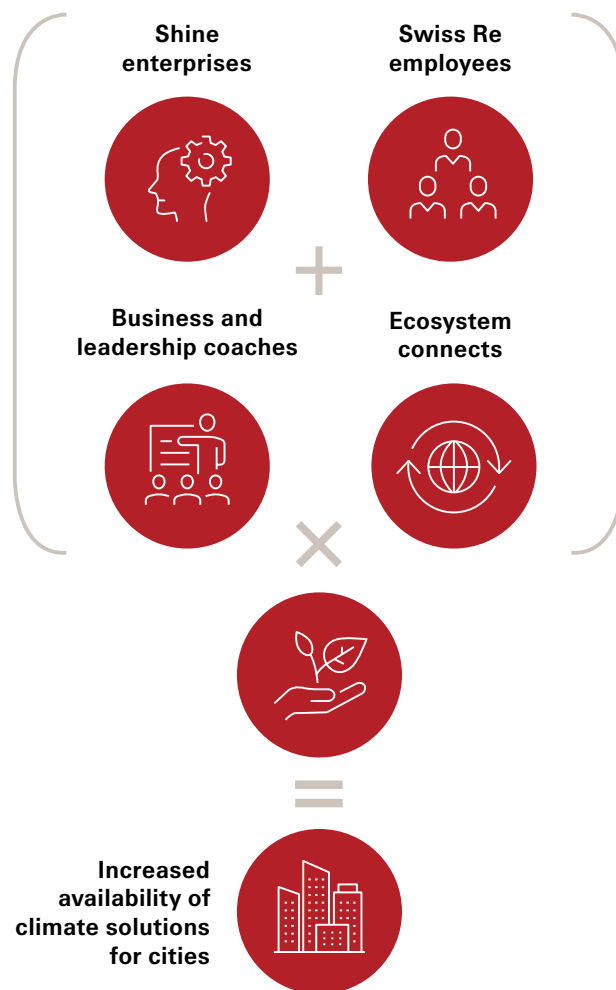
Overview

Shine provides early-stage social entrepreneurs with foundational grant and access to Swiss Re business expertise, leadership and coaching to help them scale their initiatives for impact.

Cities are both at the centre of the climate challenge and among the most powerful agents of climate action. They account for approximately 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions and are home to more than half of the world's population, a figure projected to reach nearly 70% by 2050. At the same time, urban populations are increasingly exposed to climate-related risks, including heat stress, flooding, resource scarcity, and infrastructure disruption.

While many cities have developed climate action plans and established governance structures to address these challenges, implementation remains a significant barrier. Cities often struggle to deploy solutions at scale, mobilise resources, engage citizens, and achieve equitable outcomes. This implementation gap presents a significant opportunity for entrepreneurial innovation.

Shine for Cities aims to support early-stage climate ventures that contribute to urban decarbonisation, and inclusive development. By enabling entrepreneurs to test, validate, and scale solutions aligned with city climate priorities, Shine can help bridge the gap between climate ambition and implementation while fostering a new generation of climate innovators.





Bangalore
INR 2 000 000



Bratislava
EUR 40 000



Cape Town
ZAR 300 000



London
GBP 40 000



Manila
USD 30 000



Mexico City
USD 30 000



New York
USD 40 000



Zurich
CHF 55 000



What Shine offers to social innovators

- Swiss Re expertise in risk, strategy, and business development
- Leadership and executive coaching for a growth mindset
- Support in developing scalable climate business models
- Grant funding to accelerate validation and growth
- Access to ecosystem partners and climate innovation networks
- Potential reinvestment by the Foundation with a larger mandate post evidence of scale, 12 months since the programme

Who should apply?

Geographies

Entrepreneurs operating in or serving one of the eight Shine cities.

Approach

Product-based, or service-based innovations with emissions reduction potential.

Pathway

Scalable business models that are capable of achieving measurable environmental outcomes.

Focus

Innovations that aim to make climate solutions affordable/accessible/livelihood opportunities to low-income communities. In geographies where this may not be relevant, the solution should address mitigation/adaptation from a climate justice lens.

Maturity

Applicants must be early-stage enterprises (0 – 4 years of existence) that have established a minimum viable product (MVP), with a pilot or commercial launch underway.

Financial viability

Applicants must display a strong drive for financial sustainability, pursuing non-grant revenue streams, customer pipelines.

Time commitment

Founder(s) of the enterprise would need to commit significant time and attention for four months of the programme, including 11 in person days and rest being virtually.

Themes

Applicants must have a nuanced understanding of the environmental challenge with a theory of change envisioned.

Focus Areas

Shine for Cities will prioritize ventures addressing key urban climate challenges commonly identified across the eight city climate action plans of the Shine cities.

- 1. Energy Transition** – Solutions that accelerate renewable energy adoption, distributed energy systems, energy storage, and low-carbon energy access.
- 2. Building Efficiency and Electrification** – Innovations that improve energy efficiency, support building retrofits, enable electrification, and reduce emissions from the built environment.
- 3. Sustainable Transport** – Solutions that promote low-carbon mobility, public transportation, active mobility, fleet electrification, and equitable transport access.
- 4. Waste and Circular Economy** – Technologies and business models that reduce waste generation, increase resource recovery, improve recycling systems, and create circular value chains.
- 5. Urban Nature and Land Use** – Solutions that enhance urban biodiversity, green infrastructure, sustainable food systems, and nature-positive urban development.
- 6. Climate Data, Governance and Monitoring** – Platforms and tools that improve climate intelligence, decision-making, emissions tracking, risk assessment, and public engagement.

Impact framework

Climate Impact

In alignment to the Swiss Re Foundation's larger environmental objectives, the primary environmental impact metric for Shine for Cities will remain:

- Tonnes of CO₂ emissions avoided or reduced

Where relevant, additional environmental indicators may include:

- Vulnerable land protected or restored
- Waste diverted from landfill

Social Impact

Consistent with the Swiss Re Foundation's commitment to improving lives, Shine will prioritize solutions that generate inclusive outcomes alongside climate impact.

Examples of lives improved include ventures that:

- Create quality jobs and livelihood opportunities for low-income communities.
- Increase access to affordable climate solutions for underserved populations.
- Improve quality of life through cleaner, healthier, and more resilient urban environments.
- Expand public access to climate information and awareness.
- Enable individuals and communities to adopt lower-emission behaviours and practices.



A successful Shine journey extends beyond the four months.



Venture Outcomes

At the end of the four-month programme, Shine ventures should demonstrate:

- Stronger market readiness.
- Refined impact measurement and management capabilities.
- Improved go-to-market strategies.
- Increased operational resilience and risk awareness
- Defined growth mindset.



Ecosystem Connects

As a follow-on support to Shine, the Swiss Re Foundation would enable ventures to access:

- Follow-on funding from mission-aligned investors.
- Ecosystem connects for strategic partnerships.
- Potential pilot opportunities and market access.
- Technical assistance.

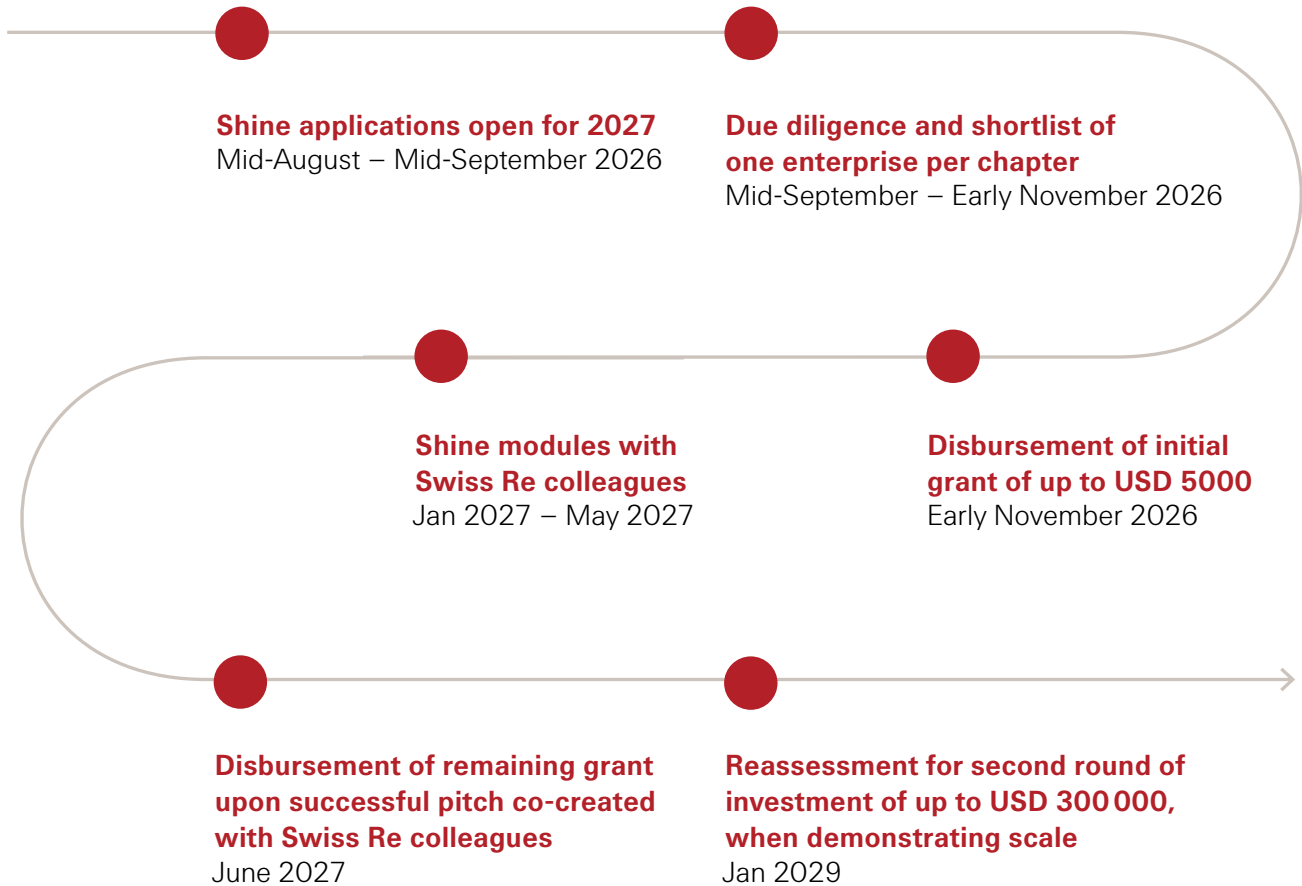


City Outcomes

Over time, supported ventures should contribute to:

- Faster implementation of city climate action plans.
- Increased availability of climate solutions.

Time schedule



Programme structure for 2027 edition

Shine for Cities	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3
Bangalore	2 – 5 February	15 – 18 March	26 – 28 May
Bratislava	16 – 19 February	15 – 18 March	12 – 14 May
Cape Town	9 – 12 February	9 – 12 March	12 – 14 May
London	8 – 11 February	15 – 19 March	24 – 26 May
Manila	25 – 28 January	1 – 4 March	12 – 14 May
Mexico City	19 – 22 January	22 – 25 February	21 – 23 April
New York	8 – 11 February	22 – 25 March	18 – 20 May
Zurich	2 – 5 February	8 – 11 March	20 – 22 April

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3
• Think in systems • Connect with the stakeholders • Decode the business strategy • Design for impact	• Craft your impact narrative • Sharpen your go-to-market • Build for resilience	• Pitch your business & implementation roadmap • Own your emerging leadership journey



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How to apply

Please fill in the [application form](#)
and we will get back to you.

About

Swiss Re Foundation

The Swiss Re Foundation reflects the social and humanitarian values of Swiss Re, a leading wholesale provider of reinsurance, insurance and other forms of insurance-based risk transfer. With our external partners and Swiss Re employees, we strengthen resilience in low-income communities and near Swiss Re locations around the world. The Foundation supports entrepreneurial solutions, system efficiencies and local charities by offering tailored financing and access to Swiss Re expertise, creating actionable evidence and amplifying impact with aligned partners. We foster scalable solutions that build low-income people's resilience to climate and health risks.

[Read more](#)



Climate KIC (Ecosystem Partner)

Climate KIC is Europe's leading climate innovation agency and community, creating climate-resilient communities and fighting climate breakdown by mobilising systems change in countries, regions, cities, and businesses. Together with partners across the globe, Climate KIC orchestrates solutions and facilitates learning to bridge the gap between climate commitments and current reality, driving faster and more ambitious action.

[Read more](#)



Contact us

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