

Regulations

1.1 Purpose and Resources

The Francesco Morelli Foundation aims to promote access to design culture and design professions. As part of its 2026 initiatives, the Foundation presents the fifth edition of the **Francesco Morelli Grant**, dedicated to supporting the development of thesis projects by graduates of IED and Accademia Aldo Galli.

The Francesco Morelli Grant supports promising thesis projects with strong development potential through a structured programme of training, mentorship and financial support. The programme is designed to help participants validate their ideas, strengthen their projects and prepare them for implementation, with the aim of generating meaningful social impact.

The Francesco Morelli Foundation invests a total of €150,000 in the programme. This includes **€100,000** in direct financial support for selected projects, as well as additional resources dedicated to training, mentorship and programme delivery.

The Francesco Morelli Foundation will evaluate all submitted proposals and, at its sole discretion, allocate specific amounts to selected projects until the available funding has been exhausted. Any remaining funds may be redirected to other Foundation activities.

1.2 Who Can Apply

The Francesco Morelli Grant is open to students graduating from the IED Network between **September 2025 and July 2026** from the following institutions and programmes:

- IED Italy: DAPL and DASL programmes, three- years programmes, MIED programmes, MPL programmes;
- Accademia Aldo Galli: DAPL, DASL and five-year Restoration programme, MPL programmes;
- IED Spain: four-year IED Diplomas, TGEAS and BA (Hons) programmes, three- years programmes, MIED programmes, MOF programmes, Post- Graduate programmes;
- IED Brazil: Bachelor's Degree programmes, Post- Graduate programmes, one-year programmes.

Both individual and group thesis projects are eligible.

Projects may belong to different disciplinary fields, including product design, service design, technological innovation, social innovation, cultural practices, design research and interdisciplinary projects.

The Francesco Morelli Grant is open to projects from all design disciplines, provided they demonstrate an intrinsic social impact, understood to be the ability to generate meaningful and intentional benefits for people,

communities, territories or the environment.

Social impact may take different forms, including improving the quality of life of vulnerable groups, addressing environmental challenges, reducing inequalities or giving visibility to underrepresented communities. Applicants must clearly identify the project's intended beneficiaries and expected outcomes in the application.

Projects at different stages of maturity are welcome, provided they demonstrate a credible development trajectory. Only projects meeting these eligibility requirements will proceed to the qualitative evaluation stage.

1.3 Programme Commitment

Participation in the Grant requires active involvement throughout the programme. Applicants are expected to dedicate adequate time to workshops, mentorship sessions, project development activities and reporting. Whenever possible, programme activities will be scheduled during lunchtime or in the evening to minimise interference with participants' professional commitments.

1.4 How to Apply

Eligible graduates may apply independently by uploading and completing the following documents no later than **midnight (CEST) on 15 October 2026**:

1. Application & Development Form available on the Francesco Morelli Grant webpage;

2. a non-professional video (maximum 3 minutes) answering the following questions:

- Who are you?
- Why this project?
- What is the biggest challenge you still need to overcome to make this project a reality?

3. a PDF copy of their original thesis.

The working language of the Grant is **English**. All application documents must therefore be submitted in English, with the exception of the original thesis, which may remain in its original language.

Detailed application instructions will be available on the Francesco Morelli Grant webpage.

1.5 Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed against three main criteria:

- **Project Quality and Social Relevance** – the significance of the challenge addressed, the quality of the proposed solution and its potential to generate meaningful social impact.
- **Development Potential** – the project's capacity to evolve through the Grant programme, including the credibility of its development trajectory, awareness of its main challenges and its long-term sustainability.
- **Applicant Motivation and Commitment** – the motivation, commitment and availability of the applicant(s) to actively engage in the programme.

The Assessment Committee will evaluate both the current quality of the project and its potential for future development. Applicants are not expected to present a fully developed project, but to demonstrate a clear understanding of its challenges, opportunities and development priorities. The selected projects will benefit from a tailored mentorship pathway designed to strengthen their feasibility, sustainability and social impact.

1.6 Special Award – Intesa Sanpaolo

An additional **Special Award**, supported by **Intesa Sanpaolo**, will be assigned to one or more projects demonstrating outstanding innovation in the fields of **Blue Economy** and **Global Health**.

1.7 The Process: From Idea to Impact

Phase 1 – Development Programme: Training, Development Planning and Mentorship

Selected applicants will be notified by **15 December 2026** and will take part in a structured development programme including:

- training activities;
- individual and specialist mentorship.

The programme will be conducted primarily in English. Applicants are therefore expected to have a minimum English proficiency of CEFR Level B2, enabling them to actively participate in workshops, mentorship sessions, discussions and all programme activities.

At the end of Phase 1, participants will submit a **Development Plan** and present their project to the Assessment Committee in **March 2027**.

Projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Development Progress** – the progress achieved during the programme, the quality and credibility of the Development Plan, and the project's potential to generate meaningful social impact.
- **Engagement and Commitment** – the applicants' active participation, commitment and ability to benefit from the training and mentorship activities throughout the programme.
- **Final Presentation** – the clarity, effectiveness and persuasiveness of the final pitch in communicating the project's vision, development pathway and future potential.

Phase 2 – Project Development and Implementation Programme

At the conclusion of **Phase 1**, participants will submit their Development Plan and present their project to the **Assessment Committee**. Following this final evaluation, the Committee will select the projects to be admitted to **Phase 2** of the Francesco Morelli Grant.

Admission to Phase 2 is competitive and limited to the projects selected by the Assessment Committee. Only projects admitted to this phase will receive Grant funding and continue with the implementation programme.

Projects selected for **Phase 2** will be announced by mid-March 2027. The financial contribution awarded to each project will be determined according to the eligible costs, the project's development needs and its implementation potential.

Phase 2 includes:

- project implementation and validation;
- ongoing multidisciplinary mentorship;
- monitoring and progress reviews;
- networking opportunities;
- reporting activities.

The overall programme extends over approximately **twelve months**, from **December 2026 to December 2027**, including both the Development Programme (Phase 1) and the subsequent implementation and support activities for funded projects (Phase 2).

Active participation throughout the programme is an essential requirement.

The project development phase must be completed by **15 December 2027**.

1.8 Eligible Costs

The Grant may be used to cover:

- professional consulting services (e.g. legal, tax and intellectual property advice);
- participation in events and fairs supporting project development;
- promotional and communication materials (e.g. videos, presentations and publications);
- materials, equipment and goods that are coherent, functional and indispensable for the development of the project.

The purchase of general-purpose equipment, including but not limited to personal computers, cameras, mobile phones, tablets and similar devices, is normally **not eligible**.

Such expenses may be considered eligible only where the applicant clearly demonstrates that they are strictly necessary for the development, testing or implementation of the project and cannot reasonably be replaced by existing resources.

The final decision regarding the eligibility of these expenses rests exclusively with the Francesco Morelli Foundation. Each Grant ranges from **€3,000 to €25,000** and may cover up to **100% of eligible costs**. Higher project budgets may be considered only where third-party co-financing is demonstrated.

1.9 Monitoring & Payments

Each funded project will participate in a structured monitoring and mentorship programme.

Regular progress reports demonstrating satisfactory project development are required for the release of each funding instalment.

The payment schedule is as follows:

- **1st Instalment (25%)** – March 2027
- **2nd Instalment (25%)** – June 2027, upon submission of the first quarterly report
- **3rd Instalment (25%)** – September 2027, upon submission of the second quarterly report
- **Final Instalment (25%)** – December 2027, following submission and approval of the final report

The final report must be submitted no later than **15 December 2027** to **grant@ffmorelli.it**.

The report must include a detailed statement of expenses supported by invoices and traceable payments (bank transfers or payment cards in the beneficiary's name).

2.1 Changes and Withdrawal

Should any changes to the approved Development Plan become necessary, the Foundation must be notified within **15 days**.

Minor variations (up to **20%** of the approved budget) are permitted. More substantial changes require prior justification and approval.

The Foundation reserves the right to reduce or revoke the Grant where significant inconsistencies or unjustified deviations from the approved project are identified.

The Grant may also be reduced or withdrawn if:

- the beneficiary no longer meets the eligibility requirements;
- false or misleading information is discovered;
- programme obligations or deadlines are not respected.

If a beneficiary decides to withdraw from the programme, they must formally notify the Foundation and reimburse any funds already received within 30 days.

2.2 Project Timeline

15 October 2026, Application deadline

15 December 2026, Announcement of Phase 1 participants

15 January 2027, Training activities

Early March 2027, Demo Day

15 March 2027, Announcement of Phase 2 participants

March- December 2027, Project development and implementation

15 December 2027, Final report

A project by



With the support of



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