

Call for Solutions: Strengthening Kaohsiung's Urban Forest

Expanding the City's Green Lung through the Kaohsiung-ICLEI City-Business
Accelerator (CiBiX)

**Do you have a solution for urban nature stewardship and expansion?
Apply to join the City-Business Accelerator (CiBiX) in Kaohsiung this September**

This Challenge Call sets out details of the City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) for the Kaohsiung City Government, supported by ICLEI. This opportunity is for companies with solutions to pitch these to the City of Kaohsiung. Receive tailored feedback from international experts to improve your pitch and potential solution. Connect with city leaders not only from Kaohsiung but also from the Kaohsiung-ICLEI Community of Practice on Climate Neutral and Smart Cities. We also offer you an exclusive, hands-on look at Kaohsiung's pioneering work on urban nature.

The City Business Accelerator (CiBiX), developed by ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, assists local governments in defining their cities' sustainability priorities and identifying private sector innovations to address these pressing issues. Our City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) approach helps foster mutual understanding of needs and opportunities between local governments and businesses, with an ICLEI-facilitated exchange supporting the identification of potential responses to a specific urban sustainability priority.

There are 4 key steps to the City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) approach:

1. City Challenge defined;
2. Potential private sector solutions identified;
3. Solutions assessed; and
4. Facilitated City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) to jointly explore options.



While previous initiatives have primarily engaged local businesses, this City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) also welcomes applications from businesses across Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to participate in person in the City-Business Accelerator (CiBiX), where selected solution providers will engage directly with city representatives, technical experts, and key stakeholders. Please note that attendance at the workshop is mandatory for selected applicants. Participants are responsible for covering their own travel and meal expenses. Hotel accommodation will be arranged and fully covered for one representative per selected organization.

Background for Companies

Kaohsiung is a large industrial and port city that plays a critical role in the country's economic development. Historically driven by heavy industry, petrochemicals, manufacturing, and port-related activities, the city is now undergoing a transition toward sustainable and net-zero urban development while balancing economic competitiveness and environmental resilience. Kaohsiung accounts for approximately one-fifth of the country's total greenhouse gas emissions, largely due to its industrial concentration¹.

At the same time, Kaohsiung faces increasing climate-related risks associated with rapid urbanization, coastal exposure, the climate impact of vulnerable industrial activities, and increasingly extreme weather events (typhoons, extreme rainfall, etc). Key environmental challenges include urban flooding, coastal vulnerability, ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, rising urban temperatures, and declining environmental quality. Dense urban development implies people, place and infrastructure are increasingly at risk from climate impacts. Impermeable surfaces continue to reduce natural water absorption and drainage capacity².

In response, the city has prioritized climate adaptation, resilience, and net-zero development (ICLEI refers to this combination as integrated climate action - to achieve climate neutrality) through governance reforms and sustainability planning. Kaohsiung established the "Committee for Sustainable Development and Climate Change Response Promotion" to coordinate sustainability, climate adaptation, and net-zero actions across departments.³ The city government has also adopted the "Kaohsiung City Self-Government Ordinance for the Development of Net-ZeroCity," setting targets to reduce emissions by 30% by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.⁴

¹ [2025 Kaohsiung City Voluntary Local Review](#)

² [2025 Kaohsiung City Voluntary Local Review](#)

³ [2025 Kaohsiung City Voluntary Local Review](#)

⁴ <https://ksep.kcg.gov.tw/en/Announcement/administrationplan?PageType=1&id=5c086121-25b4-44a0-a13e-cc6981d49369>



Kaohsiung's sustainability strategy places a strong emphasis on climate resilience, environmental quality, ecological restoration, and sustainable urban development. To address increasing climate risks, including flooding, heat stress, and biodiversity loss, the city has implemented a range of adaptation measures such as detention basins, smart flood monitoring systems, urban greening initiatives, and sponge-city infrastructure⁵. Building on these efforts, Kaohsiung increasingly recognizes Nature-based Solutions (NbS), are essential tools for enhancing urban resilience while generating biodiversity, economic, and public health co-benefits.⁶ These approaches support the city's vision of becoming a resilient, liveable, and ecologically sustainable urban centre.

Kaohsiung City formally signed the Berlin Urban Nature Pact in June 2025⁷, positioning itself as one of the leading cities in East Asia committed to advancing the goals of the UN Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. As part of this commitment, the city is required to develop a local action plan and contribute toward becoming nature-positive by 2030 and achieving harmony with nature by 2050.

Despite growing recognition of NbS in urban resilience planning, implementation remains fragmented due to financing constraints, governance challenges, competing land-use priorities, and limited cross-sector collaboration. While the city has demonstrated progress through green finance initiatives, sustainable urban planning, industrial transformation, and climate governance frameworks, scaling NbS implementation will require stronger collaboration with the private sector. Kaohsiung has already shown growing momentum in ESG-aligned finance and green investment, including NT\$7.7 billion (approximately €220 million) invested in green-related bonds and NT\$21 billion (approximately €600 million) in approved green credit by the Bank of Kaohsiung.⁸

The Challenge

As part of its commitment to net-zero urban transformation and building climate resilience, Kaohsiung City is prioritizing the strategic expansion and digital management of its urban "green lungs" - specifically focusing on parklands, public green spaces, and street-tree networks. Driven by the Kaohsiung Environmental Protection Bureau (EPB), this challenge invites global and local businesses to submit innovative, open-ended solutions that help the city map, maintain, and scale its urban forest ecosystem. The overarching goal is to deploy private-sector ingenuity to accelerate urban cooling, protect local biodiversity, build resilient shading networks, and accurately enhance and quantify the city's local carbon sink capacity.

The Challenge

⁵[2025 Kaohsiung City Voluntary Local Review](#)

⁶[Integrating Nature-based Solutions into Urban & Territorial Planning, 2025](#)

⁷ <https://www.berlin.de/urban-nature-pact/>

⁸ [2025 Kaohsiung City Voluntary Local Review](#)



Kaohsiung is increasingly experiencing the impacts of climate change and rapid urbanization, including intensified urban heat island effects, more frequent extreme heat events, heavy rainfall, and growing pressure on public health and urban infrastructure. As one of the country's major industrial and port cities, Kaohsiung's dense built environment, extensive paved surfaces, and uneven distribution of green spaces contribute to higher surface and air temperatures, particularly in densely populated districts with limited tree canopy coverage and insufficient shading infrastructure. This challenge is further exacerbated by longer and hotter summers, increasing heat stress, energy demand, and health risks for vulnerable populations such as elderly residents, outdoor workers, and lower-income communities with limited access to cooling and green public spaces. At the same time, fragmented green corridors, compacted soils, and conventional urban maintenance practices reduce the ecological performance and resilience of existing green infrastructure.

In response, Kaohsiung is seeking to strengthen its urban forest and green infrastructure network as a key climate adaptation strategy. Through this challenge, the city is interested in innovative partnerships, technologies, and governance approaches that can support the expansion of urban tree canopy coverage, biodiversity-sensitive urban management, and the integration of nature-based solutions into both public and private developments.

Potential solutions may include urban greening technologies, heat mitigation strategies, biodiversity-enhancing landscape design, digital monitoring systems, community stewardship programs, green corridor development, or financing and partnership models that support long-term urban resilience. By expanding its urban "green lung," Kaohsiung aims to create a cooler, healthier, and more climate-resilient urban environment while improving biodiversity, air quality, stormwater management, and overall urban liveability.

Key opportunities: Expanding the city's green lung

The city currently lacks a fully integrated digital inventory of street trees, parks and urban green infrastructure. This, represents a challenge for:

- Identify canopy gaps;
- Prioritize heat-vulnerable areas;
- Monitor tree-health;
- Access ecosystem services; and
- Guide strategic planting investments.

Desired Deliverables & Outcomes

Participants may submit technical solutions, implementation models, financing mechanisms, or integrated approaches that address the challenge while advancing biodiversity conservation, urban greening, and climate resilience.

Potential solutions may include urban forestry technologies, heat mitigation strategies, biodiversity-enhancing landscape design, water-sensitive greening systems, tree health



monitoring tools, soil restoration techniques, community stewardship programmes, and innovative financing or partnership models that support the expansion and long-term management of urban nature.

Cities around the world are already demonstrating the value of integrated urban greening strategies. For example, Melbourne implemented its Urban Forest Strategy⁹ to expand canopy coverage, reduce urban heat impacts, and improve biodiversity and public health through integrated urban greening approaches. Similarly, Barcelona has expanded green corridors and nature-based urban infrastructure to improve climate resilience¹⁰, thermal comfort, and ecological connectivity across dense urban areas.

The city is in particular looking for:

- **Urban Forestry Inventory Modeling and Management:** Advanced tools (such as AI, remote sensing, and digital twin software) to census public green spaces, street-tree networks, and canopy coverage.
- **Micro-Climate and Heat Mapping:** Highly accurate thermal mapping and data-driven intelligence to identify extreme urban heat islands and strategically guide urban cooling.
- **Cooling Implementation & Materials:** Actionable solutions to reduce ambient temperatures.
- **Carbon Sink Enhancement & Tracking:** Solutions to verifiably enhance and track carbon sequestration.
- **Biodiversity-Driven and Climate-Adaptive Maintenance Standards:** Proven and innovative best practices, including a reform of conventional care, maintenance, and pruning practices, to ensure tree health and maximize shading benefits.
- **Creative Public-Private Partnership Frameworks:** The city is interested in how to effectively engage the private sector in the expansion and management of urban nature and is open to creative solutions from governance models to financial mechanisms.

Eligibility Criteria

The call is open to companies, start-ups, NGOs, research institutions, consultancies, technical experts, and collaborative partnerships working in areas related to biodiversity, climate resilience, urban greening, nature-based solutions, environmental technologies, ESG financing, or sustainable urban development.

⁹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/urban-forest-strategy>

¹⁰ https://w110.bcn.cat/MediAmbient/Continguts/Documents/Documentacio/BCN2020_GreenInfraestructureBiodiversityPlan.pdf



Assessment Criteria

Submitted solutions will be assessed through a weighted evaluation framework designed to identify proposals that are innovative, technically feasible, aligned with the objectives of the Kaohsiung City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) and capable of delivering a measurable environmental and social impact. Proposals will be evaluated across four main categories:

- Project design and feasibility (Clear scope, objectives, and project plan with high technical viability (30%),
- Concept alignment (30%),
- Transformative impact (20%),
- Financial viability (20%).

Jury

Selected applicants will be invited to present their solutions during the City Business Accelerator (CiBiX). The pitches will be evaluated by a jury panel appointed by the City of Kaohsiung and ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability - considering gender balance in the selection of multi-disciplinary experts. The panel may include local technical experts, and representatives from relevant city departments.

The jury will evaluate the final pitches based on the assessment criteria outlined above, and overall contribution of the proposed solution to Kaohsiung's urban diversity and climate resilience priorities.

What You Get If Shortlisted

1. Promotion and visibility across ICLEI global platforms
2. Promotion by the City of Kaohsiung and ICLEI Kaohsiung Capacity Center platforms and networks
3. Exclusive access to Kaohsiung decision-makers, including senior city leadership focused on Kaohsiung's urban nature agenda
4. Hotel accommodation will be arranged and fully covered for shortlisted companies, for one representative per company
5. Local site visits hosted by the City of Kaohsiung
6. Tangible, actionable feedback from international experts through hands-on workshops in Kaohsiung
7. Participation Certificate

Participation and Submission Conditions

Applicants are requested to submit a completed submission form together with any relevant supporting materials that demonstrate the technical feasibility, environmental contribution, and implementation potential of the proposed solution. Supporting documents may include



presentations, brochures, case studies, visuals, technical specifications, monitoring data, or reference projects. Applicants are encouraged to align their submission with the [Berlin Urban Nature Pact \(BUNP\) Implementation Principles](#).

Submissions should clearly explain:

- The proposed solution and its relevance to the challenge
- Expected environmental and social impacts;
- Technical and operational feasibility;
- Estimated budget;
- Potential partnership, financing, or ESG components; and
- Scalability and applicability within the urban context of Kaohsiung.

All submissions must be provided in English or Mandarin via email to circular.development@iclei.org (send to) and (cc) urban.research@iclei.org before **27 July, 23:59 CEST (UTC+2) / 28 July, 05:59 Taiwan (UTC+8)**

Compliance Criteria

To be considered eligible for evaluation, submissions must:

- Address the City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) challenge;
- Demonstrate relevance to biodiversity, climate resilience, urban greening, or nature-based solutions;
- Complete the registration form;
- Include sufficient technical and organizational information; and
- Be submitted within the indicated submission period.

Incomplete or non-compliant submissions may not be considered for shortlisting.

Procurement and Participation Conditions

The City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) is a collaborative innovation and platform and does not constitute a procurement, tender, or funding process. Participation in the program does not guarantee project implementation, procurement contracts, or financial support from the City of Kaohsiung, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, or associated partners.

Intellectual property and confidentiality

Applicants retain ownership of their submitted materials and intellectual property. By participating in the City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) applicants agree that submitted information may be reviewed and discussed by the organizers for evaluation and workshop purposes. Any confidential information should be clearly indicated in the submission materials.



Workshop details and draft agenda

Date	2 September 2026
Venue	In person in Kaohsiung
Main theme	Strengthening Kaohsiung's Urban Forest: Expanding the City's Green Lung through the Kaohsiung-ICLEI City-Business Accelerator (CiBiX)
Time	9:00-17:30 GMT+8
Organizer	ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability
Languages	English, Mandarin
Participants	Kaohsiung city officials, ICLEI technical experts, Community of Practice members, and private companies
Format(s)	In-person

Time	Agenda
8:30 - 9:00	Arrival and Coffee
9:00-9:15	Welcome and Introductions and Ice-breaker
9:15 - 9:45	Challenge background presentation
9:45 - 12:45	Site Visit/s
12:45 to 13:45	Lunch Break
13:45 - 16:45	The City Business Accelerator (CiBiX) Solutions Pitch Session
16:45 - 17:15	Coffee break -time for jury to select the winner-
17:15 - 17:30	Award ceremony and close of the event



