

Grand Challenges

Frequently Asked Questions

ABOUT THE INITIATIVES

What are Grand Challenges?

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recognizes that solving the most pressing challenges in global health and development requires more of the world's brightest minds working on them. The [Grand Challenges](#) family of initiatives seeks to engage innovators from around the world to solve these challenges. Grand Challenges initiatives are united by their focus on fostering innovation, directing research to where it will have the most impact, and serving those most in need. www.grandchallenges.org

Is this grant opportunity part of Grand Challenges Explorations?

No, but both this grant program and Grand Challenges Explorations are part of the overall Grand Challenges family of grant initiatives. The application deadline for this RFP is Tuesday, January 13, 2015, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Standard Time, after which time applications will no longer be accepted.

Grand Challenges Explorations proposals are solicited and awarded multiple times per year, with each funding round addressing a few specific topics. For more information on this grant program, please see <http://gcgh.grandchallenges.org/Explorations/Pages/Introduction.aspx>.

APPLICATION PROCESS

How do you define “low- and middle-income country” in the context of eligibility for the Creating and Measuring Integrated Solutions for Healthy Birth, Growth, and Development challenge and the Women and Girls at the Center of Development challenge?

For those challenges for which grants will go to investigators in low- and middle-income countries, the organization receiving the grant should be located in a [low-income](#), [lower-middle income](#), or [upper-middle income](#) country as indicated on these lists.

Recognizing that the definition of this may be somewhat ambiguous for some international organizations with multiple units, we would encourage you to apply, and if selected, submit a full proposal, and we will follow up with specific questions. The intent is that the project leadership clearly be by LMIC investigators.

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Can I speak to someone about my application?

Due to the high volume of inquiries, we are not able to provide individual guidance on ideas either before or after submission.

Applicants should decide if their ideas fit the specific criteria of one of the available topics by viewing our [website](#).

Please visit the foundation's main [website](#) to see if your area of interest will be a potential topic in the future and to understand the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation strategic priorities for our Global Health and Global Development/Agriculture work. To find specific team strategies, mouse over 'What We Do' in the gray bar, and select the team of interest to read their strategic priorities and goals.

Are multiple submissions from an institution allowed?

Yes, any organization can submit multiple proposals as long as the content of each proposal is different and each project is led by a different Principal Investigator. We discourage organizations from submitting the same application under different Principal Investigators.

Is there a specific format for the application?

Yes, please use the foundation application portal to submit a Letter of Inquiry (LOI). Select the "Learn more" button at <http://grandchallenges.org/grant-opportunities.html> and "Apply Now" to submit an application. The LOI application template is located on the main application page within the application portal.

Am I able to edit my letter of inquiry once submitted?

You may edit your proposal up until the deadline of Tuesday, January 13, 2015, 11:30 am U.S. Pacific Standard Time. After the application deadline, you cannot edit your document. Requests to update a LOI document will not be accepted.

If I am unable to identify a collaborator or sub-contractor, will the foundation help me identify such a group?

At the Letter of Inquiry (LOI) stage, the foundation is unable to facilitate collaborations for purposes of developing a LOI. In addition, the foundation will not be providing any specimens or samples to grantees.

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How do I submit my letter of inquiry?

All open grant programs are listed on the [Grand Challenges Website](#). Navigate to the call you are interested in and click “Apply Now.” Applications must be submitted through the application portal. E-mailed applications will not be accepted.

When is my application due?

Applications are due no later than Tuesday, January 13, 2015, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Standard Time. Late applications will not be accepted or considered.

Is it possible to have multiple applicants on a proposal?

Team collaborations are welcome within a single application. However, applicants need to elect a single Principal Investigator who will serve as the primary contact for the team. If awarded, the grant will be made to the Principal Investigator.

What is a principal investigator?

A principal investigator is defined as the lead for the proposed project and should have relevant technical skills to manage the project.

What language should I submit my proposal in?

All proposals should be submitted in English.

In the Letter of Inquiry form, what is the difference between “IV. Organization and Investigator Capabilities (includes the expertise and resources available)” and “Section V. Collaboration (includes collaborating individuals and organizations where relevant and their capabilities)”?

Capabilities: Summarize the expertise and experience of the primary applicant organization and investigators and how these will help achieve the goals of the project. Describe the resources and facilities available for conducting the proposed project and research.

Collaboration: If relevant, summarize the organizations or individuals that will be collaborating with the primary applicant to execute the proposed project. Include experience, resources, and facilities these collaborations would bring to the proposed research.

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I am not presently employed by any organization. May I still apply?

In order to apply, you must be affiliated with an organization. The foundation currently does not grant to individuals.

Am I eligible to apply if I work in the private sector?

Yes, we are accepting letters of inquiry from individuals at both private and public organizations.

What amount of indirect cost is available? Do you accept my U.S. organization's federally negotiated indirect cost rate?

The foundation allows indirect cost within certain guidelines at the following rates:

- 0% for governmental agencies, other private foundations, and "for-profit" organizations
- Up to maximum of 10% for U.S. universities
- Up to maximum of 15% for all other non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations and non-U.S. universities

Details of the foundation indirect cost policy guidelines can be found here:

http://www.gatesfoundation.org/grantseeker/Documents/Indirect_Cost_Policy.pdf

SELECTION PROCESS

What feedback can I expect if my Letter of Inquiry is not selected?

Unfortunately we are unable to provide feedback specific to the technical content of each proposal. However, we will communicate with applicants once a decision has been reached.

How will I know that my Letter of Inquiry has been selected?

The foundation will communicate to all applicants by mid-April, although this date may change depending on the number of applications received. All applicants will be notified by email in a timely manner of any change to the notification and full proposal deadline dates. If you are selected to submit a full proposal, you will receive an invitation email from the foundation. The invitation email will provide an access code and will invite you to an application portal to download the proposal templates and relevant materials to submit a full proposal to the foundation.

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What are the criteria for selection?

Each call has specific criteria listed in the respective call language located on the [Grand Challenges Website](#).

TIMELINE

I have submitted a Letter of Inquiry. When will I hear back from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation?

The foundation will communicate to all applicants via email by April 2015. You will either receive information that your proposal has not been selected for further consideration or you will receive information on how to submit a full proposal. These time periods are subject to change if the volume of applications exceeds the number expected and thus requires additional time for processing and evaluation. All applicants will be notified by email in a timely manner of any change to the notification and full proposal deadline dates.

When will invitations be issued to submit full proposals?

Invitations to submit full proposals will be issued in April 2015. These time periods are subject to change if the volume of applications exceeds the number expected and thus requires additional time for processing and evaluation. All applicants will be notified by email in a timely manner of any change to the notification and full proposal deadline dates.

When will the foundation make decisions on which proposals to fund?

Decisions regarding which proposals will be funded will be made by August 2015.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

I forgot my password. Where do I find my temporary password?

You can update your password on the main application screen by clicking “Forgot Password?” located under the “Login” section on the upper-right side of the page.

I have created an account for the Grand Challenges Exploration (GCE portal) or Clinical Studies Tracker. Do I need to create another account?

Yes, you need to create a new account to submit an application.

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I submitted my proposal but did not receive a confirmation. How would I know if my proposal went through?

Yes, once an application is submitted, an email confirmation will be sent.

I'm having trouble uploading my application file. What should I do?

If you are having issues submitting your application, we would encourage you to submit from a different browser. If the issue persists, please email the specifics of your problem to: grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org.

How often do you intend to update the Frequently Asked Questions, and do you plan to provide answers to all questions submitted?

We will periodically post answers to questions as they are submitted, but do not have a specific schedule. We will only provide answers on this page that are of relevance and of general interest to potential applicants.