

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

HUMANITARIAN GRAND CHALLENGE: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

This document addresses frequently asked questions regarding the Humanitarian Grand Challenge Request for Proposals (RFP) announced October 2020. Additional questions must be submitted to: info@humanitariangrandchallenge.org.

This document will be updated periodically during the application submission period. The deadline to submit any questions is **November 6, 2020**, after which we may not respond.

Please contact fluxsupport@grandchallenges.ca for technical support with the application through Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal.

ENGAGEMENT WITH PRIVATE SECTOR, AFFECTED PEOPLE AND/OR HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES

What does "Private Sector engagement" mean?

A. We place strong emphasis on supporting innovation that engages the private sector in its design and evaluation, as we believe that it is best positioned to more effectively, quickly, and cost-efficiently produce or deliver goods or services that cannot be otherwise delivered by traditional forms of humanitarian assistance (see **Section 2.7** of the RFP).

Private sector includes small, medium and large enterprises in any relevant country.

Engagement is loosely defined at **seed stage** and can include distinct engagement such as discussions, or close engagement like partnerships. Seed applicants are not required to partner with the private sector at this stage, but those who do, will be viewed positively.

Innovators in the **transition-to-scale** program are encouraged to engage private sector actors for technical expertise, distribution channels, local knowledge, financial banking, or other core capacities. Though it is strongly preferred, secured commitment of matched funds is not required at the time of application. In some circumstances, the Humanitarian Grand Challenge partners may be able to assist in finding appropriate private sector partners as long as applicants are able to articulate their needs.

TOPIC AREAS

If my innovation isn't targeting the key focus areas as mentioned in Section 2.2 of the RFP, can I still receive funding?

A. No. Proposals that do not address water and sanitation (**TTS ONLY**), energy, life-saving information, or health supplies and services will not be considered for funding.

Can a seed stage project submit a proposal for the Safe Water and Sanitation area of focus?

A. No. Only Transition to Scale stage projects will be considered for the Safe Water and Sanitation area of focus in this round.

Who is the target population?

A. Proposals must clearly outline why the target population is vulnerable and hard-to-reach in a conflict-generated humanitarian emergency.

Factors that increase a person's vulnerability include but are not limited to physical barriers that make it even harder for people to access assistance, or social barriers that marginalize certain groups (e.g. exclusionary attitudes linked to sex, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age, people with disabilities, minorities, or people who are stateless). See **Section 2.4** of the RFP.

Do you consider refugees as conflict affected population, even though they are now outside the conflict zone?

A. While we do consider funding innovations that serve refugees and internally displaced persons, priority will be given to innovations that serve those living in conflict zones. See **Section 2.4** of the RFP.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Who is eligible?

A. Eligible applicants include recognized institutions (e.g., social enterprises, non-profit organizations and for-profit companies) that are formed and legally registered and can successfully execute the activities in their respective technical area, and are capable of receiving and administering grant funding. Sole proprietorships are not eligible for funding. Please see the eligibility criteria in **Section 4.1** of the RFP.

I am from <Country name>. Am I eligible to apply for funding?

A. There are no geographical restrictions, therefore legally formed organizations that are not the subject of a US, UK, Dutch, European Union, World Bank, Canadian, or United Nations Security Council sanctions are eligible to apply for funding.



I would like to work in <Country name>, would this be considered a conflict-zone?

Please note that the Humanitarian Grand Challenge is focused on helping people who are hardest-to reach as a result of conflict-generated humanitarian emergencies. We do not impose any geographical restrictions. It is incumbent upon the applicant to explain why the population they seek to serve is relevant to the challenge.

Are locally-led proposals given preference?

A. Yes, we are particularly interested in funding locally-led innovations. We believe that people living in conflict zones, and those that have been directly affected by conflict, are best placed to address the needs of their communities. Locally-led applications will be given preference during the evaluation process.

However, we do encourage applications from outside of conflict affected communities, but these must demonstrate strong engagement with affected communities and an understanding of local needs. See **Section 2.1** of the RFP

Can multilateral organizations such as the United Nations (UN) apply to this Request for Proposals?

A. In our past experience, we have found that multilateral organizations such as the UN are typically unable to agree to the terms and conditions of our funding agreements. We highly recommend that these organizations instead apply through a local eligible partner organization. Staff from the UN office could act as collaborators on the project.

Do I need any specific academic qualifications to apply?

A. No. This competition is open to everyone regardless of age or academic qualifications. The Project Lead and team must have the skills to carry out the proposed activities of the innovation.

We have two partners – one health centre and one delivery centre –can we apply as a consortium?

A. One of the partners should apply as the lead applicant. This organization should be capable of entering into a contract with GCC and be able to receive and administer funds, if the application is successful. The other partners would act as collaborators or sub-grantees on the project, with funds flowing to them via the lead organization.

Can a Project Lead submit two different applications for the Humanitarian Grand Challenge?

A. Project Leads are permitted to submit only one (1) application per Request for Proposals. Applications for other Request for Proposals at Grand Challenges Canada are permitted (i.e., an application may be submitted to each of the Humanitarian and the Stars in RMNCH Requests for Proposals).

Please note: It is an expectation that each proposal for each submission is unique. If an applicant is successful in more than one program and Grand Challenges Canada's deems that the proposals are conducting the same work, funding will only be granted through one program



and the selection of which program will be up to Grand Challenges Canada. Finally, if an organization is selected for funding in multiple programs with the same Project Lead, the projects will be carefully assessed for execution risks that may undermine the likelihood of success for any or all projects selected for funding.

Can a Project lead in one application be a collaborator in another application? A.

Yes, a Project Lead can be a collaborator on another application.

Can two or more proposals be submitted from the same institution/organization?

A. Yes, multiple applications may come from the same applicant institution/organization, but a Project Lead is permitted to submit only one (1) application per competition.

Can one institution hold multiple grants?

A. Yes, an institution can hold multiple grants.

FUNDING AND DURATION

What is the difference between seed and transition-to-scale grants?

A. Seed grants provide up to \$250,000 Canadian Dollars (CAD) in funding to support the development and validation of innovative ideas over a maximum project duration of 18 months. Proposals must explain clearly what the expected outcomes of the projects are and, if successful, how they would scale up.

Transition-to-scale funding provides up to \$1,000,000 CAD to support refinement, testing and implementation of innovative solutions that have already achieved proof of concept, to bring them toward scale over a maximum project duration of 18 months.

We have an innovation that has been tested already and would like to take it to scale. Can we apply for Transition-to-Scale now, or do we need to apply for Seed funding first, and after 24 months trial, depending on the results, apply for the Transition to Scale funding?

A. There are two separate, simultaneous funding streams – one for Seed projects and one for Transition to Scale. Applicants do not need to have received Seed funding from us first in order to be able apply for Transition to Scale funding. You should determine which stream is appropriate for your innovation. See **section 2.5** of the RFP, as well as the evaluation criteria in **sections 4.5 and 4.6**.

Based on your description, assuming Proof of Concept has been successfully achieved, you could apply for Transition to Scale funding.

Is my innovation best suited to Seed or to Transition to Scale funding?

A. We are not able to provide specific guidance on your innovation. However, at the Transition to Scale level, we would be looking for strong proof of concept that the solution works in *conflict*



settings. If your solution has yet to be tested in a conflict setting then a seed proposal may be more appropriate. We would strongly recommend reviewing the evaluation criteria in the RFP (**sections 4.5 and 4.6**) to determine which funding stream your innovation is best suited for.

How many projects will be funded?

A. Funding for **up to 15 Seed projects** is expected to be awarded. Successful proposals for seed funding will each be awarded grants of up to **\$250,000 CAD over a maximum of eighteen (18) months** to support the validation and testing of new approaches

Funding for **up to 8 Transition-to-Scale projects** is expected of up to **\$3,000,000 CAD over a maximum of eighteen (18) months** to support the refinement, testing, and implementation of innovative solutions that have already achieved proof of concept.

Can the proposed project exceed the time limits?

A. No. Please ensure that the proposed project is feasible within the time limits (i.e., 24 months) set in the Request for Proposals. Please note that this will be evaluated under the 'Project Execution Plan' evaluation criterion as set out in **Section 4.4** of the RFP.

For the TTS budget, how would we differentiate between sub-contractor and sub-grantee?

A. A sub-grantee is a key external partner that receives funding from the primary grantee to carry out core activities in support of your innovation. The sub-grantee's contribution is critical to the success of a project.

Subcontractors are goods/service providers and are paid by the primary grantee upon delivery of those goods/services. They are considered simply as service providers as opposed to partners.

Can you share a sample Grant Agreement so that we can ensure we are able to comply with the award terms and conditions?

A. We are not able to share a sample Grant Agreement template with you at this stage. The full due diligence process will begin once successful applicants have been chosen, at which point the full list of requirements will be shared.

Some key policies that must be complied with are contained within the RFP, in **sections 2.9, 2.10, and 2.11**, as well as throughout **sections 4.7 to 4.15**. We recommend reviewing the entire RFP in detail.

I am applying for Transition to Scale funding but I am not sure what can be considered as match? Can it be a mix of cash and in-kind?

A. In your proposal you should describe all of the resources you believe you can/will secure, whether it be cash or in-kind. Should your proposal move through to the next phase of the review process, we will explore what can be considered as match funding in more detail. Most



awardees will be required to secure a 1:1 match within the TTS funding period; however, this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis during the due diligence process.

Does the match funding for Transition to Scale projects have to come from a private sector entity?

A. No. We do not prescribe the source of match funding. Depending on the innovation, public sector funding may make more sense. While we emphasize the need for connections to the private sector, such contributions may also be non-financial.

Can you define further what Transition to Scale match funding means?

A. We define match funding as cash received directly from strategic partners that furthers the development of the innovation. Note that typically, we would not consider funds received more than a year ago to be match funding, the idea being that match funds should represent ‘new money’ that can help grow the innovation beyond the proof of concept phase. The match funding principle is designed to encourage “smart partnerships” that can optimize the impact of the innovation. Ideally, a “smart partner” is not simply providing money, but also helping to scale the innovation via their distribution channels, local knowledge, entrepreneurial experience, etc.

PROJECT SCOPE

Do you emphasize certain elements in the Integrated Innovation® approach (i.e., science and technology versus social and business innovation)?

A. Grand Challenges Canada defines Integrated Innovation® as the coordinated application of scientific/technological, social and business innovation to develop solutions to complex challenges. This approach does not discount the singular benefits of each of these types of innovation alone. While proposals may emphasize innovation in one of these areas more than others, all proposals should describe how they apply Integrated Innovation within their proposals. Proposals will be reviewed according to the criteria laid out in the Request for Proposals. For more information on our Integrated Innovation approach, please refer to our website: grandchallenges.ca/integrated-innovation.

Proposed solutions should include a combination of:

- **Scientific/Technological Innovation:** Based in the psychological, natural, health or behavioural sciences or in engineering or economics; can be simple, i.e., there is no requirement for high-tech solutions
- **Social Innovation:** Recognizes and/or addresses the broader social, structural and/or political determinants of health, with a particular focus on gender and intersectional inequalities; addresses local and/or cultural contexts that factor into implementation and scaling
- **Business Innovation:** Maximizes the value, relevance and unique quality of the solution to create demand and **financial sustainability**; addresses barriers to affordability and accessibility.



What does “Systems Change” mean and why is it relevant to this call for proposals?

A. Systems change is defined as changing the underlying models through which humanitarian assistance is delivered, thereby impacting relationships and power dynamics as well as deeply held values and norms. For example, developing a new process, product or approach that encourages a structural shift towards the local manufacturing of relief items instead of importing ready-made items shifts production away from traditional humanitarian supply chains and empowers local markets and populations.

We will favour innovations that, in addition to impacting the lives of communities involved during the project period, can bring about wider systems change to the way humanitarian assistance is delivered.

If the program or model proposed is already being implemented, can it still be eligible for funding?

A. Our definition of innovation includes trying existing ideas in new contexts. Something that works in a stable context that has never been tried in a conflict setting, could be considered for funding. Applicants will need to clearly define why they believe the idea would apply in another context.

The application asks us to “list the assumptions made about the plan of your proposed project and the expected results”. What type of assumption do you mean?

A. In this section, applicants can describe any major assumptions that are made when describing the project's timelines, activities and execution plan for the project. Some examples include assumptions around partners that need to be secured, regional unrest, ability to reach target population, or other important considerations or risks to the project's success.

Can proposals cover multiple countries/regions, or must we focus on one country/region?

A. There is no restriction on the number of implementation countries/regions. We recommend carefully considering feasibility within the project timeframe/budget.

APPLICATION PROCESS

What is the application deadline?

A. Applicants must submit an application no later than **November 16, 2020, 11:00 am Eastern Time (North America)/ 15:00 GMT**.

What is the deadline to create an account?

A. Applicants should create an account no later than **November 6, 2020** (see more below).

Are there specific application questions or templates we need to use to apply? A. The application questions can be accessed online via our community portal.



TTS applicants must also submit a budget using the template provided on the form, as well as supporting documents where applicable.

To access Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal (gcc.fluxx.io), you must **first** create an account to identify yourself and the organization that will be applying for a grant. A response will be provided within **one business day**. To create an account, please visit: gcc.fluxx.io/lois/new.

Once your account has been approved, you will receive an email with your user name and password. You can then visit gcc.fluxx.io to start your application. Please answer all the mandatory questions, as incomplete applications will not be considered. For technical support, please contact fluxxsupport@grandchallenges.ca.

In what language should the application be completed?

A. Applications may be made in English or French. Applications in any other language will be rejected without review.

What evidence or data should be included in the application?

A. The review committee assesses each proposal against the evaluation criteria stated in the Request for Proposals. Any evidence or data that supports the proposed idea with respect to the evaluation criteria should be included.

Can I arrange a meeting with Grand Challenges Canada to discuss the call/my proposal in more detail?

A. Unfortunately, given the number of applications we receive and in the interest of being fair to all applicants, we cannot discuss individual proposals in detail. Please review the Request for Proposals available at humanitariangrandchallenge.org for information on the eligibility criteria, areas of interest, and evaluation process. If you think your proposal is a fit with the call, you are most welcome to apply.

Can I submit my proposal by email, mail or in person?

A. Proposals cannot be submitted by email, mail or in person. All applications **must** be submitted to the Humanitarian Grand Challenge program through Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal. In order to gain access to the Portal, applicants must first create an account: gcc.fluxx.io/lois/new.

The deadline to create account is **November 6, 2020**. Note that it takes one (1) business day for Grand Challenges Canada to process your account request. Requests made after this date may not be processed.

When will invitations to submit a full Transition to Scale application be sent?

Transition to Scale applicants will first be required to submit a concept note via the flux application portal. Following an initial screening process, the most promising applicants may



then be invited to submit a full application on a rolling basis between November 2020 and March 2021, based on availability of funds. The first set of invitations are expected to be sent in November 2020.

Is there room for an extension beyond the submission deadline?

A. There are no extensions possible beyond the deadline.

Please consider submitting your application early, as technical support may take up to one business day to respond. If you have any technical challenges submitting a completed proposal through our Community Portal, please contact technical support immediately (fluxsupport@grandchallenges.ca). We will do our best to respond to requests received prior to the submission deadline.

Is there a requirement for all authors/researchers of the proposal materials to be acknowledged?

A. Grand Challenges Canada does not require the authors of the proposal materials to be formally acknowledged on the submitted proposal. The proposal must be uploaded by the Project Lead, who certifies their authorization to submit the application on behalf of their organization. The Project Lead would also be signing on to Grand Challenges Canada's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.grandchallenges.ca/terms-and-conditions/>) which indicate, among other things, that the user-generated content uploaded is wholly their original work or that they have the necessary right, title, interest and licenses to upload and/or make available to Grand Challenges Canada.

BUDGET, USE OF FUNDS, ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Are indirect costs or overhead considered eligible expenses?

A. Funding Recipients are entitled to indirect costs of up to 10% of all eligible direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and sub-awards and subcontracts up to the first \$30,000 CAD of each subaward or subcontract. Please review our [Eligible & Ineligible Expenses Directive](#).

When converting our budget, what currency should we use?

A. Please submit your summary budget in Canadian Dollars (CAD). You can find the current exchange rate using this site: oanda.com/currency/converter.

Is time spent working on the application an eligible cost?

A. No. The time dedicated to writing/submitting the proposal is not reimbursable. Salaries to execute the project, if it is selected for funding, may be included in the budget.

Can we include part of the office renting cost and utilities for our local partner where project implementation will take place?

A. You cannot include part of office renting cost and utilities for your local partner. Only costs directly related to project activities are allowed under this Request for Proposals. For example,



rent would only be an eligible expense if a space is being rented for participants/research directly (e.g., a daycare centre). If it were office space for administrative work to be completed, then it would **not** be an eligible expense.

Is there any difference between a Project Lead and a collaborator in terms of what funds they can receive?

A. A collaborator may receive funding as remuneration if they are an employee of your organization or a sub-grant organization, or they may be compensated through subcontractors' fees. If selected for funding, more information would be provided during grant negotiations.

Are organizations allowed to hire additional staff (i.e. NOT subcontracting) specifically for the purpose of implementing the Project?

A. Yes, you may hire new staff to support project implementation as appropriate.

What do you mean by the term 'sub-grant'?

A. Sub-grants are agreements that you might have with partners who are collaborating on core and integral elements of your innovation. In such instances, our funds would flow from your organization to these partnering organizations.

OTHER

What claim does Grand Challenges Canada make on IP ownership, or requirements for licenses or publications?

A. Please carefully review **section 4.12** of the RFP.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Please contact fluxxsupport@grandchallenges.ca for technical support with the application through Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal.

Please contact humanitarian.gc@grandchallenges.ca for any questions that are not addressed in this FAQ.

For information on all Grand Challenges Canada programs, please find us at grandchallenges.ca, and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

For information on the Humanitarian Grand Challenge, please see:

- humanitariangrandchallenge.org
- facebook.com/HumanitarianGC/
- twitter.com/HumanitarianGC

This document was last updated on September 29, 2020.

