

# **Grand Challenge: Neglected Tropical Diseases Data Innovation Incubator 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](http://www.grandchallenges.org)

### **Is this NTD Data Innovation Incubator 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 March 25, 2019, at 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Daylight 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**

### **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 the NTD Data Incubator Grand Challenge by viewing the topic language.

### **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 link on the Challenge page to submit a Letter of Inquiry (LOI). 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 March 25, 2019 at 11:30 am U.S. Pacific Daylight 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 LOI stage, the foundation is unable to facilitate collaborations for purposes of developing a LOI.

### **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.

### **Does the 5-page LOI limit include... (e.g., graphs, tables, references, contact information)?**

All information submitted must be contained within 5 pages for the Letter of Inquiry. LOIs should communicate the proposer’s core objectives and plan.

### **What are the qualities of a good LOI?**

Tips for applicants can be found in the Rules and Guidelines document; however, compelling proposals typically feature the following attributes:

- Focus on the problem at hand and how to solve it, rather than the past accomplishments of the team members
- Give an honest and thorough assessment of the risks involved and provide a plan to mitigate those risks
- State assumptions and provide rationale
- Identify success metrics, particularly those that indicate the project is on track far in advance of achieving the end goal
- Assemble the best team possible, which may mean reaching out beyond the typical circle of collaborators

### **When is my application due?**

Applications are due no later than March 25, 2019, at 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Daylight 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.

### **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 and other private foundations
- Up to maximum of 10% for U.S. universities and U.S. community colleges
- Up to maximum of 15% for all other non-governmental organizations, international organizations, for-profit 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](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 LOI. However, we will communicate with applicants once a decision has been reached.

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

We expect to communicate to all applicants by May 2019, 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

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

We intend to make decisions regarding which proposals will be funded by July 2019.

### **How do I know if my LOI/Proposal went through?**

You will receive an email confirmation when your application is submitted. If you do not receive this confirmation, please contact us at [grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org](mailto:grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org) to confirm your application was received. **Please first check your junk/spam folder to ensure the proposal confirmation was not accidentally sent there.**

## 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’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](mailto: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.

## Award

### **How many grants are you willing to fund, and for how much? What budget range are you expecting to see in the proposal?**

For Round 1, we are suggesting a maximum budget of \$200,000 USD for up to 6 months of work. For Round 2, we have decided not to specify funding limits or expectations. The number of awards and quantity of each award amount will depend upon the quality of the proposals received. Proposers are expected to develop a budget commensurate with the scope and scale of the work necessary to achieve their detailed objectives; however, the objectives should be achievable within 12-18 months from onset of Round 2 funding.