

Smart Farming Innovations for Small-Scale Producers:

A Grand Challenge Request for Proposal

Application Instructions

Your complete application package will consist of the following components:

- (1) Applicant Profile – Completed via our application portal
- (2) Your Letter of Inquiry – Uploaded as a Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF file
- (3) Budget table and narrative – Uploaded as a Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF file
- (4) Additional informational requirements

Please note that templates for the letter of inquiry and budget narrative and table can be found within the corresponding task on the application portal. Details on each section can be found below.

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) – 4 pages maximum

Your LOI must be formatted as follows:

- Total of 4 pages, maximum.
- Font size 11 or bigger for text
- Arial or Times New Roman font
- At least 0.5” margins all around
- Single line spacing
- Standard character spacing (neither expanded nor condensed)

(Indicated page limits are guidelines only for individual sections.)

1. Executive summary (~1/2 page)

The summary should indicate the specific problem that the project seeks to address, the approach proposed to solve this problem and the expected impact of the project – if successful – at the end of the grant period. At the beginning of this section, include one or two sentences in bold that capture the essence of your idea.

2. Goals & Rationale (~1 page)

Describe the specific goals of the project and how they are responsive to the objectives noted in the Request for Proposals. Describe the digital innovations to support small-scale crop and livestock producers that the proposed project will deliver within the funding timeframe. Specify any hypotheses and/or technologies, data and delivery models that will be tested. If applicable, briefly present any relevant preliminary data. Indicate the expected results from the project. Briefly indicate what the next steps might be and how the project’s results could lead to successful outcomes, as well as what additional partnerships may be needed for the next stage beyond Seed or Scale-Up grants (depending on which option is chosen).

3. Design, Scope and Approach (~1 page)

This section should include a clear description of the proposed solution, service, product innovation and how this differs or adds value on current approaches. Please include brief designs for specific innovation aims, including key milestones and any supporting services you may need to complete your work. If applicable, include any key dependencies between activities or interim milestones that will influence decisions or directions. Key criteria for successful applications are listed below.

4. Organization Capabilities & Collaboration (~1/2 page)

Summary of the lead PI's and applicant organization's previous experience and expertise relevant to this call. This should include a description of the consortium's strengths in the proposed technology solution(s) and/or business models and implementing or delivering the proposed products and/or services.

5. Scale and Sustainability (~1/4 page)

Describe how this innovation will scale, the unit economics (including costs and value) and how the solution will provide sustainable value to SSPs over the longer term

6. Gender and Climate Smart (~1/4 page)

Describe how the innovation addresses gender gaps / women's inclusion, climate resilience and climate adaptation.

Budget Table and Narrative – 1 page maximum

Please use the template (found on the Grand Challenges webpage for this challenge and on the application portal) to include a brief breakdown of allowable costs under the following categories:

- Personnel
- Subcontracts
- Subgrants
- Capital Assets/Equipment
- Travel
- Supplies
- Other Expenses
- Indirect Costs (please review the [Indirect Cost Policy](#))

We will consider proposals for awards of up to USD \$250,000 for implementation up to 12 months for Seed Awards and up to USD \$1,500,000 for implementation over 2 years for Scale-Up Awards.

Additional Documentation (Scale-Up Awards only) – 1 page maximum

Please see below for guidance on additional content required for [Scale-up Grant proposals](#)

Please note: Seed Grant submissions that exceed 5 pages total and Scale-Up Grant submissions that exceed 6 pages total may not be reviewed.

Proposals for this Grand Challenge must be submitted prior to the deadline of 11:30am Pacific Time on February 25, 2021.

Awards

Awards: There are two grant types – Seed Grants and Scale-Up Grants – each with its own requirements. Applicants can only apply for one of these grant types must select which level for which they are applying (proposal should *not* be submitted for both grant types).

Seed Grants – Up to **USD 250,000** to be implemented up to **12 months**. Seed Grants are proposals for Smart Farming solutions that can demonstrate potential in meeting the following criteria:

- **Leveraging digital technology innovations** with the potential to scale, for example, utilizing a proven technology that has been applied in agriculture in another geography, ; transferring a technology from another sector such as health, infrastructure or finance; sourcing an entirely new technology;
- Show potential to improve SSP **incomes, productivity and ability to adapt to climate change**;

- Address **barriers to scaled adoption of digital services**, such as access, affordability and language and digital literacy. This includes addressing **women’s access** to digital services and closing the digital divide between those who have access and marginalized populations who do not;
- Have the potential to be **bundled** with multiple farmer-facing services into an integrated solution;
- Are enabled by robust **digital and data technology platforms and services**;
- **Provide fit-for-purpose solutions** (e.g. developed using human-centered design) for SSP enterprises who seek to sell a portion of production to markets;
- Show **potential to be scaled using a sustainable business model and are affordable and able to provide positive return on investment** at a smallholder farm level through successful pilots, scaling partners, or higher volume production driving down prices.

Scale-Up Grants – Up to **USD 1,500,000** to be implemented up to **24 months**. Scale-Up Grants are proposals with demonstrated ability and sufficient evidence to have positive impact. In addition to the criteria listed above for Seed Grants, Scale-Up Grants must also:

- Leverage digital technology innovations with demonstrated **readiness to scale** and proven ability to bundle with other services;
- Meet all criteria regarding technology innovations, scalable platforms, and sustainable bundled service delivery models;
- Demonstrate that additional funding will enable value capture by SSPs or other value chain actors and sustainable and viable service delivery models over the long term.
- Please upload a separate document – 1 additional page maximum – that describes your partner consortium in more detail, including the various partners’ capabilities, and additional evidence of value add, income, productivity, women’s empowerment and long-term sustainability of the solution.

Consortiums: To increase the probability that projects funded through this RFP will continue after the initial project completion and evolve into a continuing global public good or sustained solution, applicants are encouraged to consider of a range of partners to form a consortium. This investment will prioritize those who partner with organizations interested in Smart Farming in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) as long-term opportunities. There are several types of organizations we envisage being part of consortia submitting proposals: Enterprise Technology Platforms (Big-Tech), Enterprise Agriculture (Big-Ag), Ag-Tech Startups (Ag-Tech + Farm-Tech), Research Organizations (R&D), national and international NGOs and farmer-based organizations (Implementors), Government and International Organizations.

Geographies: While we primarily seek solutions applicable to the LMICs listed below and favor those forming local partnerships. Other geographies will be considered if a strong case is made for doing so.

- Africa: Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique
- Asia: India (Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh), Bangladesh