

# 2020 Grand Challenges Annual Meeting Call-to-Action

## *Grand Challenges*

### THE OPPORTUNITY

The Grand Challenges Annual Meeting - held in [11 countries](#) over the past 15 years and in a virtual format this year - fosters innovation and international collaboration to address the biggest challenges in global health and development. Our goal is to support a global community of problem solvers who work together to set an innovation agenda and do the breakthrough science to deliver on it. Recognizing the pressing global threat of COVID-19, this year's Annual Meeting will focus on how to accelerate transformational innovation for global health crises. The meeting will seek to facilitate collaboration among scientists, decision makers, and policymakers to discover, develop, and deploy the solutions needed to curb the COVID-19 pandemic, mitigate its impact, and prepare for future global health emergencies. Additionally, the meeting will explore how to harness the energy and lessons from COVID-19 to drive continued progress against a broad range of global health and development goals. Besides this Call-to-Action request for proposals from meeting participants, there are three public [grant opportunities](#) addressing global health and development that are opening at the meeting.

### THE CHALLENGE

The Call-to-Action provides an opportunity for Grand Challenges Annual Meeting participants to take action based on ideas they developed and people they met at the meeting. The [grants awarded](#) for the 2018 and 2019 Call-to-Action were for projects arising from diverse types of opportunities – as noted by applicants in their submitted proposals – to interact at the meeting and to bring together combinations of expertise and perspective to speed the impact of what would otherwise be separate work by individual investigators. We hope that interactive elements at this year's virtual meeting will still provide ways to catalyze collaborative grant applications and that the extra urgency of the meeting's focus this year will inspire projects with a goal and design that will yield a tangible solution to a key problem by the end of the grant.

### Funding

Each meeting participant will have one opportunity to apply as the primary applicant for a USD \$100,000 grant or a collaborative USD \$200,000 grant, both with an 18-month grant duration. Collaborative awards require the participation of at least two meeting participants from different institutions. While restricted to one application as the primary applicant, meeting participants may participate as collaborators in multiple collaborative applications. Priority will be given to new or newly expanded collaborations, rather than to existing partners seeking new funding.

### We will give highest priority to proposed projects that:

- Contribute to a network of creative people, anchored around the investigators and implementors who are closest to the problems in the countries most burdened by global health and development inequity and have the knowledge and perspective to direct the right approaches to the right parts of the problems to help ensure success – their collective action and directed energy is helping solve today's key problems in global health and development, while building a mechanism ready to solve tomorrow's

- Specifically address the meeting's goals and content around the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, noting that this funding opportunity is not designed to more broadly address COVID-19
- Are likely to yield a tangible answer to a question or solution to a problem within the grant term under the current and likely near-term constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic
- Are explicitly aligned with the content within the meeting's scientific tracks, noting that proposals will be reviewed based on their alignment with one primary track. Eligible scientific tracks for this Call-to-Action are listed below, and they include one separate scientific session (Novel Technologies for Global Health) as well as the entire Keystone Symposia Global Health Series conference overlapping with the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting. The Smart Farming Innovations track is not eligible, because it has its own separate [request for proposals](#).

#### **Scientific tracks eligible for the Call-to-Action**

- Addressing Challenges to Manage COVID-19: The Indian Experience - Addressing the need, the status, and the gaps that are unique to each solution and discussing the way forward for making all of these solutions accessible and affordable from an Indian perspective
- Applying a Translational Lens to Global Health - Exploring the use of translational tools in nutrition and COVID-19, including the challenges and opportunities from planning and executing clinical trials in a pandemic
- Global Partnerships & Grand Challenges – Supporting local innovators solving local problems, helping build a critical mass of innovation champions linked through a global network to collectively address the most pressing global health and development challenges
- Leveraging Pathogen Genetic Sequencing - Sequencing SARS-CoV-2 during the COVID-19 pandemic, sequencing applied to epidemic and endemic pathogens, and building a suite of interoperable and open-source data analytics and visualization software packages for use in real-time epidemic and endemic disease control
- Optimizing Birth, Growth, and Development – Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic's direct and indirect effect on global health work around maternal, newborn, and child health, including pivoting resources during COVID-19, respiratory support in low- and middle-income countries, and studies of maternal (intrauterine) nutrition and fetal growth
- Repurposing Drugs for COVID-19: Approaches and Challenges – Exploring ongoing efforts to identify candidate drugs to repurpose for COVID-19 treatment and prophylaxis, including screening platforms and model systems
- Novel Technologies for Global Health – Showcasing development of the COVID-19 Cell Atlas and exploring the COVID-19 Human Tissue Atlas and a systems biology approach together with additional technologies
- Enabling Crop Analytics at Scale - Removing bottlenecks to large-scale collection, use, and sharing of ground truth data or processes for smallholder farmer applications
- Optimizing Nutrition for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (Keystone Symposia) – Emphasizing interdisciplinary research and connecting global nutrition and molecular nutrition experts

**We will not consider funding approaches that:**

- Are not explicitly aligned with the content within the meeting's scientific tracks eligible for this request for proposals that are listed above
- Are not accomplishable within the grant term under the current and likely near-term constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic

**Note** (added November 12, 2020): The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will consider proposals targeting topics under the meeting scientific tracks and sessions listed in the request for proposals – the *Radical Mental Health* track and *Leveraging Digital Technologies to Address Health Crises and Beyond* track are not part of this particular request for proposals. Proposals submitted under the *Global Partnerships & Grand Challenges* track should address one of the listed eligible meeting tracks or sessions and bring a specific focus on partnership.