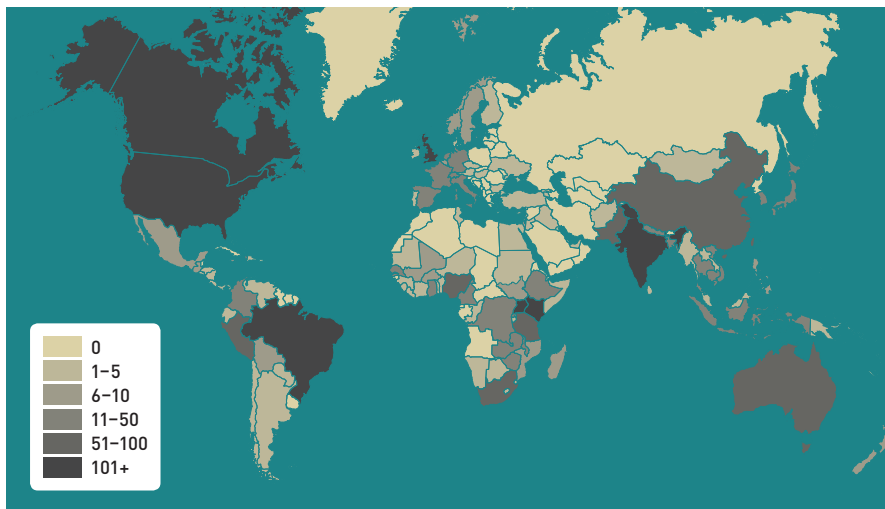


Grand Challenges is a family of initiatives fostering innovation to solve key global health and development problems

# GRAND CHALLENGES

## HISTORY

The Grand Challenges (GC) family of programs stems from a century-old idea that crowdsourcing solutions to a defined set of unsolved problems can spark innovation and accelerate progress. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and its Grand Challenges funding partners first used Challenges — open requests for grant proposals — in 2003 to focus attention and effort on pressing global health and development problems for those most in need.



Together, GC partners have invested US\$1.6 billion, awarding 3,800 grants to a diverse pool of scientists and researchers in 118 countries, while at the same time fostering a global innovation ecosystem in places where it will have the most impact (please explore the animated grant map at [grandchallenges.org](https://grandchallenges.org)).

## WHAT MAKES GRAND CHALLENGES UNIQUE?

The GC family of initiatives, which is about going further and faster together for impact:

- Seeks to engage the world's most creative minds and empower those with local perspectives to direct the right approaches to the right parts of the problems to ensure success.
- Aspires, with each challenge, to build a grant program that encourages collaboration across projects to accelerate impact.
- Nurtures a network of policy & decision makers, advocates and local, regional and global funding partners to build an enabling environment for innovation.
- Advocates for ongoing support for the innovators that are solving key problems in global health and development while strengthening a resilient innovation ecosystem so it's ready to solve tomorrow's.

## GRAND CHALLENGES ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting supports a global community of problem solvers who work together to set an innovation agenda and conduct the breakthrough science to deliver on it. Meetings have been held in 12 countries since 2005: the United States, South Africa, Thailand, Tanzania, India, Canada, Brazil, China, the United Kingdom, Germany, Ethiopia, and Belgium. During the COVID-19 pandemic, two successive meetings were held in virtual format. The 2023 meeting will be held in Dakar, Senegal.

Please visit [grandchallenges.org](https://grandchallenges.org) for more information.

## TIMELINE

- 2003** Grand Challenges in Global Health is launched
- 2005** Grand Challenges in Global Health funds 43 projects targeting 14 Grand Challenges; first Grand Challenges Annual Meeting
- 2007** Grand Challenges Explorations is launched
- 2010** Grand Challenges Canada is launched
- 2011** Grand Challenges for Development is launched
- 2012** Grand Challenges Brazil is launched
- 2013** Grand Challenges India is launched
- 2014** Grand Challenges South Africa is launched
- 2015** Grand Challenges Africa, Grand Challenges Ethiopia, and Grand Challenges China are launched
- 2021** Grand Challenges Botswana, and Grand Challenges Global Call-to-Action are launched
- 2022** Grand Challenges Senegal is launched.
- 2023** Grand Challenges Rwanda is launched



## INITIATIVES

### **Grand Challenges in Global Health**

was launched in 2003 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as an initiative initially focused on 14 major scientific challenges that, if solved, could lead to key advances in preventing, treating, and curing the diseases and health conditions contributing most to global health inequity. Since relaunching in 2014 as Grand Challenges, 45 challenges have been launched to address some of world's biggest problems. The Gates Foundation has also launched sister initiatives: Grand Challenges Explorations in 2007 to engage more of the world's innovators more quickly, and the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting Call-to-Action in 2018, a request for proposals open to meeting participants to support new ideas and collaborations inspired by the GC annual meeting.

**Grand Challenges Canada** was launched in 2010 and is dedicated to supporting Bold Ideas with Big Impact®. Funded by the Government of Canada and other partners, GC Canada funds innovators in low- and middle-income countries and Canada, supporting ideas that integrate science and technology, social, and business innovation — known as Integrated Innovation®— as well as Humanitarian Innovation and Indigenous Innovation.

**Grand Challenges for development** was launched in 2011 by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and has played a critical role in expanding Grand Challenges to address a range of global health, development, and humanitarian issues. To date, USAID and its partners have launched 12 Grand Challenges for Development and mobilized over \$530 million to identify, pilot, and scale solutions to support humanitarian response, early-grade literacy, maternal and child health, access to off-grid energy, responses to Ebola and Zika, and access to water and clean energy for agriculture.

**Grand Challenges Brazil** was launched in 2012 by the Brazilian Ministry of Health, the Brazil National Council of Technological and Scientific Development, and the Gates Foundation and is the first country-specific Grand Challenges initiative, catalyzing innovation for impact in Brazil and for the world.

**Grand Challenges India** was launched in 2012 as a partnership between the Indian Government's Department of Biotechnology and the Gates Foundation and is housed at the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) in New Delhi. GC India aims to foster Indian innovation and research to develop affordable and sustainable solutions to improve health, in India and across the globe.

**Grand Challenges South Africa**, launched in 2014 by the South African Medical Research Council and the South African Department of Science and Innovation, introduces joint challenges aimed at catalyzing innovative health research within South Africa. It works closely with GC Africa and other GC partners to nurture and strengthen the innovation ecosystem in Africa.

**Grand Challenges Africa** was launched in 2015 with the vision to support the creation of extraordinary innovations that address health and developmental challenges in Africa. It works in partnership with the African Union Development Agency (AUDA- NEPAD) and is implemented with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV), Drug Discovery and Development Centre (H3D), Wellcome, the Sanofi Foundation, and the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation.

**Grand Challenge China** was launched in 2015 by the National Natural Science Foundation of China and the Gates Foundation to jointly fund investigators in China and international collaborations.

**Grand Challenges Ethiopia**, launched in 2015 by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health and hosted at Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI), aims to stimulate the creation, appraisal, promotion and scale-up of innovative ideas and concepts that respond to Ethiopia's defining health-related challenges and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Grand Challenges Botswana** was launched in 2021 by the Botswana Innovation Hub as a unique collaborative initiative within Grand Challenges Africa. GC Botswana supports local innovators in developing and implementing bold scientific solutions to accelerate progress toward national development priorities.

**The Grand Challenges Global Call-to-action** was launched in 2021 by the Gates Foundation to build on lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. It seeks to fund cutting-edge science projects that together advance high-priority global health objectives while supporting and expanding a locally-led research and development ecosystem with a balance of women investigators.

**Grand Challenges Senegal** was launched in 2022 by the government of Senegal, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Cooperation and is hosted by Institut Pasteur de Dakar (IPD) foundation. GC Senegal aims to identify and support innovations important to Africa's global health challenges, with a focus on the ECOWAS region. Seeded with funding from the Gates Foundation, GC Canada, and ELMA Philanthropies, GC Senegal focuses on both excellent science and impact.

**Grand Challenges Rwanda** was launched in 2023 by Rwanda's National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) in collaboration with national and global stakeholders. GC Rwanda prioritizes funding innovative research projects that could lead to ground-breaking products and services to improve the lives of Rwandans and, more broadly, African citizens.