Strengthening Data Science Capacity and the Ecosystem: Enabling Data-Centered Public Health Interventions

Rules & Guidelines

Applications due no later than January 13, 2022, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time

Supporting Materials
1) [Full RFP – Strengthening Data Science Capacity and the Ecosystem to Enable Data-Centred Public Health Interventions](#)
2) [Application Instructions](#)
3) [Budget Template and Narrative](#)
4) [FAQ Document](#)

Application Instructions

Key dates and deadlines*

Key Dates	Event
November 17, 2021	Application period opens
Thursday January 13, 2022, **11:30 a.m. US Pacific Standard Time**	Application period closes, deadline to submit
Mid-April 2022	Proposal selection completed
By July 1, 2022	Estimated start dates
October 2022	Awardees invited to attend Grand Challenges Annual Meeting

*Note, any changes to the Key Dates or Events, to include the request for additional information, will be directly communicated to invited applicants.

How to Apply

Changes to the Rules and Guidelines and to the frequently asked questions (FAQ) document will be posted periodically, including any changes to the dates listed above. Please read the FAQ document before submitting any questions or concerns. Your proposal package will consist of:
   (1) Applicant profile and information – completed via our application portal
   (2) Your Proposal (4pages maximum) – uploaded as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe® PDF file
   (3) Budget table and narrative (1 page, use template provided) - uploaded as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe® PDF file

We will consider proposals for awards of up to USD $250,000 including associated indirect costs permitted under our [Indirect Cost Policy](#) for implementation of up to 18 to 24 months. If you are selected, as a primary applicant, to receive a grant, your organization will be required to agree to the terms and conditions governing the grant award.

For detailed information application instructions, please see the application instructions document.

Proposal File – 4 pages maximum
Proposal Format
Your proposal must be formatted as follows.

- No longer than 4 pages maximum
- 11-point font or larger
- At least 0.5" margins all around
- Single line spacing
- Standard character spacing (neither expanded nor condensed)
- Arial or Times New Roman font
- Microsoft Word® or Adobe® PDF filetype
- Entire file size of 3MB or less
- Please do not include a cover sheet with your proposal. A cover sheet will be automatically generated from your registration data.

Applications that do not adhere to these restrictions may be blocked from submission and review.

Proposal Content
Along with this application instructions document, we encourage you to reference the request for proposals overview document and the challenge rules and guidelines to ensure that your proposal responds to the challenge. You are required to submit either a Microsoft Word® or PDF® document; no more than 4 pages in length describing your project as well as a one-page budget table and narrative. Please do not include a cover sheet with your proposal. A cover sheet will be automatically generated from your registration data.

Please include the following in your proposal: (suggested lengths in parentheses) (Indicated page limits are guidelines only for individual sections, but **your entire proposal document may not exceed 4 pages**.)

1) **Executive summary (~1/2 page)** The summary should indicate the specific problem that the proposal 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) **Proposal information (~ 1.5 pages)**
   a. Describe the specific goals of the project and how they are responsive to coordinated program objectives noted in the Request for Proposals. Describe how your project would collaborate and support other funded projects, under the 2 other categories, to enable the coordinated program within the two-year funding timeframe?

b. Include a brief presentation of any relevant ongoing initiatives and/or existing resources you'll be leveraging.
c. Describe the project plan and the key milestones and deliverables your project will generate throughout its lifespan. Include any key dependencies between activities or interim milestones that will influence project decisions or directions.

3) **Core team (~1/2 page)**: Include a table summarizing the composition of the core team, including their affiliation/s and geographical location, the role of each collaborator and their skills/experience relevant to this call. This should include data partners, if any. Briefly describe the collaboration and how it will contribute to achieving the project goals. This table should include information about your mentor.

4) **Data Sources (~1/2 page):**
a. If you're applying for a data re-use project, please describe the data you intend to use for this project and include in the description whether you already have access to the data or not. If you' re using multiple data sources, we recommend you include a table summarizing this information.
b. If you're applying for one of the cores, please include how you intend to leverage data sources used by the data re-use projects and if you plan to use any other data sources.

5) **Stakeholders and community engagement (1/2 page):** Describe briefly how you intend to get stakeholders and the wider public/communities involved throughout the process. How would they contribute? How will the project impact them?

6) **Path to impact (1/2 page):** What would your next steps be if you are successful in this work? How would this proposal contribute to accelerating data-centered health research and improving health emergency preparedness?

Budget Table and Narrative – 1 page maximum

Please use the budget template (linked and on the application portal) to include a breakdown of allowable direct costs under the following categories.
- Personnel
- Subcontracts
- Subgrants
- Capital Assets/Equipment
- Travel
- Supplies
- Other Expenses
- Indirect Costs (please review the Indirect Cost Policy)

Additionally, please provide a one (1) paragraph Budget Narrative to explain the major cost drivers, how costs relate to planned activities and target outcomes and how the funding would be distributed across partner organizations.

Proposals must be submitted prior to the deadline of January 13, 2022, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time

Awards

The funding level for the Strengthening Data Science Capacity and the Ecosystem: Enabling Data-Centered Public Health Interventions is **a grant of up to $250,000 USD, provided to the organization,** with a term of up to 18 to 24 months depending on the scope of the project. Application budgets should be commensurate with the scope of work proposed. Indirect costs should be included in the $250,000 award. (Subject to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's indirect cost policy.)

Please note:
During the application process you will be required to confirm that you have read and understood the Website Terms of Use and Privacy Policy, and these Rules and Guidelines, and acknowledge that any information that you provide to us (either orally or in writing) will be subject to and handled in accordance with such provisions.

Subject to the Foundation's Privacy Policy, the Foundation may share information you and your host organization provide to us (either orally or in writing) with third parties, including external reviewers, key partners and potential co-funders. This document is subject to the Foundation's Terms of Use.

Eligibility Criteria
This initiative is open to organizations actively working in Africa, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and Brazil, including non-profit organizations, for-profit companies, international organizations, government agencies and academic institutions. **Each proposal should be submitted by one primary applicant, but the awards require the participation of at least two research institutions from the regions listed above and not both in the same country.**

Individuals and organizations classified as individuals for U.S. tax purposes are not eligible to receive an award from the foundation as part of this initiative.

Upon registration, applicants must provide information about the tax status of their organization as different terms and conditions may apply. You should confirm your organization's tax status with the appropriate advisor or entity within your organization such as your grants or contracts department, finance, or office of sponsored research. The foundation may request additional information regarding your tax status. For information about tax statuses, you may check with your own advisors and review information provided on the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) web site at: www.irs.gov.

Review Process

Handling of Applications
When submitting materials to the Foundation please keep in mind that because we have a focus on achieving charitable outcomes, we view information that we obtain through our grantmaking as a public good. Subject to the Foundation's Privacy Policy, the Foundation may also share information you provide to us (either orally or in writing) with third parties, including external reviewers, consultants, contingent workers, key partners and co-funders. You should assume that nothing will be kept confidential and should not include any information in the proposal, budget, supplemental materials, or reports that you consider proprietary.

Additionally, the foundation is required by the IRS to publish a list of its grants. The foundation also provides general descriptions of its grants on its web sites, in press releases, and in other marketing materials. These Rules and Guidelines are subject to these Terms of Use.

Review of Applications
The application review process is executed in five steps:
1. The first step consists of screening applications to evaluate whether proposals address the key needs described in the topic. We screen for responses that are completely unrelated or specifically excluded in the topic description. Excluded responses encompass ideas related to the topic but that, for strategic reasons, we are not funding under the Grand Challenges initiative. In addition, we exclude proposals considered incremental advances, appropriate responses that are similar to work in which the foundation or other Grand Challenges programs are already investing, or avenues of inquiry we deem ill-suited to the Grand Challenges initiative. Applicants with proposals removed from consideration during the screening process will be notified that their proposals were declined but will not receive specific feedback.

2. In the second step, reviews are chaired or co-chaired by technical leads from the foundation and, in some cases, other funding partners and are conducted by reviewers both outside and within the foundation. Reviewers are selected from the world's leading researchers and comprise both experts in the topic area and experts in complementary areas. Not all reviewers have deep expertise in the topic; please consider this information when drafting your proposal.

    The criteria considered in these reviews are:
    - Potential to lead to solutions with substantial impact related to the specific topic
    - How would the proposal contribute to the coordinated program implementation and building re-usable resources?
    - Scientific and technical excellence & innovation, including:
        o creativity of the project's approach and clear differentiation from existing approaches
        o a clear and rigorous conceptual framework for the activities
    - Project Plan, including:
        o investigators capabilities and potential for the suggested collaborations to advance the project goals and yield insights that are unlikely in the absence of the collaboration and co-produced approaches
        o value in terms of appropriateness of the budget and timeline relative to project complexity, collaborative aspects, risk, and potential impact

3. Shortlisted proposals may be invited for short interviews. Additional information will be provided to Investigators before the interviews

4. The fourth step is the validation and final selection of the proposals to be funded by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may recommend the proposal be funded, subject to specific modifications which will be negotiated as part of the award process. Organizations invited to submit full proposals will be provided additional technical instructions at that time.

5. The fifth and final step is a due diligence review and to directly discuss and negotiate any adjustments to the proposed project recommended by the Executive Committee.

Investigators will be contacted as part of the due diligence review.

Management of Conflict of Interest
To identify and avoid conflicts of interest among application reviewers, such reviewers will not be permitted to review proposals from organizations with which the reviewer has self-identified conflicts of interest.

Eligibility and Notifications
Please review the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's sample terms and conditions. Please note that depending on the tax status of your organization, alternate terms and conditions may apply. Please also review the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's standard Request for Proposal (RFP) Terms and Conditions.

Privacy Notice and Terms of Use
Our full privacy policy and terms of use are located at Privacy and Terms of Use.

Representation: By providing any Submission Materials, the sender represents to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation that he/she (i) has the authority to bind the named Applicant to the terms set forth above, without amendment, (ii) agrees to be bound by such terms; and (iii) has the right to provide the information submitted.

Frequently Asked Questions
Answers to many application questions can be found on the frequently asked questions document.

Inquiries
Please direct all questions about this initiative, selection criteria or application instructions by e-mail to the following address: grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org.