

# Grand Challenges **China**

## New Interventions for Global Health

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

*This document **will** be modified frequently. Please check it often.*

*Last updated: 28 April 2016. See “edit history” at the end of this document for significant changes.*

### Abbreviations

NSFC – National Natural Science Foundation of China

BMGF – Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

LOI – Letter of Intent

GC – Grand Challenges

RFP – Request for Proposals

### Key Hyperlinks

[Main Page](#) (BMGF)

[Main Page](#) (NSFC)

[Application Portal](#)

[Request for Proposals](#) (English)

[Request for Proposals](#) ([提案征集](#)) (Chinese)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) (this document)

[Letter of Intent Instructions](#)

[Letter of Intent Template](#)

### Scope

*What type of interventions can we propose to develop through this Grand Challenge?*

We are interested in developing interventions in the therapeutics and vaccines spaces in this challenge. These interventions must be applicable to the diseases as listed in the [Request for Proposals](#).

*Are diagnostic interventions, accepted in this Grand Challenge?*

No. We are specifically focusing on therapeutic and vaccine development in this Grand Challenge.

*What disease areas are of interest in this Grand Challenge?*

These differ by intervention type (therapeutic or vaccine). Please see the request for proposals for a comprehensive list of the disease areas of interest in this Grand Challenge.

*My idea is not disease specific, but may have implications on the disease areas discussed in the request for proposals. Can I apply?*

Yes. Proposals need not be directly relevant to the disease areas listed in the request for proposals, but they should be at least indirectly relevant. Transformative interventions that will have implications on one or more of the disease areas listed in the request for proposals are encouraged to apply.

## Eligibility

### *What is the maximum budget I can apply for through this Grand Challenge?*

The maximum total budget is US\$1,000,000. The maximum budget for the China-based investigator is US\$500,000, and the maximum budget for the non-China-based investigator is US\$500,000. The two budgets need not be equal.

### *How long is the grant period?*

Applicants should propose work that will take four years, between 2017-2020.

### *What are the eligibility requirements for the “China-based” investigator?*

The majority of the work done by the China-based investigator and his/her staff must occur in an institution based in the People’s Republic of China. The China-based investigator must be eligible for domestic funding by the [NSFC requirements](#).

### *What are the eligibility requirements for the “non-China-based” investigator?*

The “non-China-based” investigator should be based at a U.S. or non-U.S. organization outside of the People’s Republic of China. This could include a non-profit organization, for-profit company, international organization, government agency or academic institution. Individuals and organizations classified as individuals for U.S. tax purposes (including sole proprietorships and some single-member limited liability corporations) are not eligible to receive a BMGF award in connection with this Grand Challenge. The majority of the work done by the non-China-based investigator and his/her staff must occur in an institution based outside of the People’s Republic of China.

### *What indirect costs are allowable with respect to activities undertaken by the non-China-based investigator?*

See the BMGF [Indirect Cost Policy](#).

### *Do global access and open publication policies apply to this Grand Challenge?*

Both the BMGF and the NSFC are committed to the idea that the advances generated by this program will be promptly and broadly disseminated and that the developments created will be delivered at an affordable price to the people who need them most. Likewise, research published as a result of this funding should be promptly and broadly disseminated. See the following for more information on [global access](#) and [open publication](#).

### *What is the “substantive collaboration” requirement and how will it be evaluated?*

One of the purposes of this Grand Challenge is to foster collaborations between investigators based in Chinese institutions and those outside China. The nature of the proposed work should be such that one of the principal investigators could not do it alone – that the investigators leverage each other’s capabilities and expertise. Both the LOI and the full application templates have sections that ask the applicants to describe the nature of the collaboration; these sections will be part of the reviewers’ considerations.

Some components of projects may be more expensive than others, while still being equally vital to the work. Thus note that we require the *contributions* and scope of work to be approximately equal, but the budgets need not be.

Please note that those applicants who are invited to submit full applications also may be asked to submit a Collaboration Agreement reflecting that the Chinese and non-Chinese applicant organizations have in place the necessary agreement to support the proposed collaboration.

*Are multiple submissions from a collaboration allowed?*

Yes, any collaboration can submit multiple proposals as long as the content of each proposal is different and each application must be led by a different principal investigator.

*I am not presently employed by any organization. May I still apply?*

No. Grants will be awarded to the organization, institution, or company with which the relevant investigator is associated. Individuals are not eligible for funding under this Grand Challenge.

*Am I eligible to apply if I work in the private sector?*

Yes, we are accepting LOIs to support projects led by investigators at both private and public organizations. This includes but is not limited to those in academia, the pharmaceutical industry, and the biotechnology industry.

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## Application Process

*What is the timeline for the process?*

This is the *tentative* timeline for the application, review, and grant making processes:

Event/Activity	Date
RFP Open	Early February – Mid-March
LOI Portal Open	Mid-February
LOI Deadline	Tue., 15 March 2016 08:00 Beijing Time (14 March 2016 17:00 Seattle Time)
LOI Review	Mid-March – Mid-April
Full Application I Invitations Sent	Late April
Full Proposal Development Period	Late April – Mid-June
Full Proposal Deadline	Wed., 15 June 08:00 Beijing Time (15 June 17:00 Seattle time)
Full Proposal Review	Mid-June – Late July
Due Diligence & Grant Making	Early August – Late October
Announcement of Winners	October 2016



*Can I speak to someone about my application?*

Due to the high volume of inquiries and for fairness to all applicants, we are not able to provide individual guidance on ideas either before or after submission.

*What qualities are common to successful Grand Challenges proposals?*

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, including collaborators

*How do I submit my LOI?*

A single, combined LOI from both investigators must be submitted **in English** to the portal here: <https://app.wizehive.com/appform/display/nighchina2016>. It must be submitted by the application deadline shown in the timeline above. Both NSFC and BMGF reviewers will have access through this portal.

*What language should I submit my LOI in?*

All LOIs should be submitted in English, except one field in the template that asks for the China-based applicant's name in Chinese characters (if applicable).

*Am I able to edit my LOI once submitted?*

You may submit revisions your LOI via the application portal up until you click the “submit” button and before the deadline. Once you click submit, or after the deadline, the proposal cannot be modified.

*If I am unable to identify a collaborator or sub-contractor, is anyone available to help me identify such a group?*

No. Neither the BMGF nor the NSFC are able to facilitate collaborations.

## Selection Process

*How many applicants will be invited to submit a full application? How many will be awarded funding?*

The number of applicants invited to submit a full application and the number awarded funding will depend on the quality and diversity of proposals received. Each award will be up to US\$1,000,000 (up to US\$500,000 for the China-based investigator and up to US\$500,000 for the non-China-based investigator). How appropriate the budget requested is for the work proposed will be taken into account by the reviewers, so we suggest the applicant be reasonable when composing his/her budget.

*Who will be reviewing the proposals?*

LOIs and full applications will be reviewed by a broad range of experts, including but not limited to staff at the BMGF, external reviewers picked by the BMGF administrators, and external reviewers picked by the NSFC administrators.



*What feedback can I expect if my LOI is not selected?*

Unfortunately we are unable to provide feedback specific to the technical content of each proposal. However, we will communicate with applicants once a decision has been reached.

*How will I know that my LOI has been selected?*

Applicants will be contacted via the timeline given above, although the dates may change. All applicants will be notified by email in a timely manner of any change to the notification and Full Application deadline dates. If you are selected to submit a Full Application, you will receive an invitation email with an application portal link and proposal templates.

*What are the criteria for selection?*

Reviewers will be asked to fill out a form similar to the following when evaluating **LOIs**:

<p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Strongly recommend</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Recommend</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Discourage</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Strongly discourage</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Proposal is not responsive to the request for proposals</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaboration:</b> Does the proposal include a <i>substantive</i> collaboration between at least one principle investigator at a China-based institution and at least one principle investigator at an institution based outside of China?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comments.</b> Please provide comments on the collaboration, the strengths of the proposal, and the weaknesses of the proposal. What would turn a "recommend" to a "strongly recommend," or a "discourage" to a "recommend?"</p>   

Reviewers will be asked to fill out a form similar to the following when evaluating **full applications**:



**Recommendation:**

- ☐ Strongly recommend
- ☐ Recommend
- ☐ Discourage
- ☐ Strongly discourage

**Overall Comments:** *Please comment on the overall proposal. In addition to your general comments, please consider:*

- **Scientific Quality and Impact:** Please comment on the impact this will have in advancing research aimed at improving people's health, quality of life, and reducing the burden of disease upon society.
- **Necessity, Complementarity, and Added Value of the Collaboration:** Please comment on the nature of the collaboration. Could this work be done by one of the investigators alone? Does it leverage the capabilities and expertise of the collaborators? Will it be equitable?

**Individual Work Plan Comments:** *Please comment on the work plan for each individual principal investigator. In addition to your general comments, please consider:*

- **Research Plan and Methods:** Please provide technical comments on the feasibility of the work plan and the scientific quality of the project.
- **Scientific Merits and Expertise of the Applicants:** How well situated is the team and institution to carry out the work?

**Rationale for Budget:** How appropriate is the budget? Please feel free to provide modifications.

**China-Based Investigator:**

**Non-China-Based Investigator:**

## Technical Support

*I submitted my proposal but did not receive a confirmation. How would I know if my proposal went through?*

Yes, once an application is submitted, an auto-generated email confirmation will be sent to the email address on file.

*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) with "Grand Challenges China" in the subject line.

*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.

## Edit History

(First started after 5 February 2016 version)

Publication Date	Changes
2 March 2016	<p>Added this edit history table and “see edit history guidance” to top of document. Added “What indirect costs are allowable with respect to activities undertaken by the non-China-based investigator” section.</p> <p><i>Significant</i> changes to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the eligibility requirements for the “non-China-based” investigator?</li> <li>• What is the “substantive collaboration” requirement and how will it be evaluated?</li> <li>• I am not presently employed by any organization. May I still apply?</li> <li>• Am I eligible to apply if I work in the private sector?</li> </ul>
15 March 2016	Only minor edits