

Grand Challenges Frequently Asked Questions

ABOUT THE INITIATIVES

What are Grand Challenges?

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recognizes that solving the most pressing challenges in global health and development requires more of the world's brightest minds working on them. The [Grand Challenges](#) family of initiatives seeks to engage innovators from around the world to solve these challenges. Grand Challenges initiatives are united by their focus on fostering innovation, directing research to where it will have the most impact, and serving those most in need.

We are currently running two separate Grand Challenges Request for Proposals, each with specific requirements and individual timelines:

- Smart Farming Innovations for Small-Scale Producers
- Integrating Tradition and Technology for Fermented Foods for Maternal Nutrition

Are these grant opportunities part of Grand Challenges Explorations?

No, but these opportunities and Grand Challenges Explorations are part of the overall Grand Challenges family of grant initiatives. Grand Challenges Explorations proposals are solicited and awarded multiple times per year, with each funding round addressing a few specific topics. For more information on this grant program, please see <https://gcgh.grandchallenges.org/about>.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Can I speak to someone about my application?

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

Applicants should decide if their ideas fit the specific criteria of either Grand Challenge by viewing their respective topic descriptions.

Are multiple submissions from an institution allowed?

Yes, any organization can submit multiple proposals as long as the content of each proposal is different, and each project is led by a different Primary Applicant. We discourage organizations from submitting the same application under different Primary Applicants.

Is there a specific format for the application?

Yes, please select the “Learn more” button at <https://grandchallenges.org/grant-opportunities>. Detailed instructions are available on the right-hand side of each topic. When ready, select “Apply Now” to submit an application.

Am I able to edit my proposal once submitted?

You may edit your proposal up until the specified challenge deadline. After the application deadline, you cannot edit your document. Requests to update a proposal document will not be accepted.

If I am unable to identify a collaborator or sub-contractor, will the foundation help me identify such a group?

At this stage, the foundation is unable to facilitate collaborations for purposes of developing.

How do I submit my proposal?

All open grant programs are listed on the [Grand Challenges Website](#). Navigate to the call you are interested in and click “Apply Now.” Applications must be submitted through the application portal. E-mailed applications will not be accepted.

When is my application due?

Please refer to the specific challenge you are interested in for deadline information. Late applications will not be accepted or considered.

Is it possible to have multiple applicants on a proposal?

Team collaborations are welcome within a single application. However, applicants need to elect a single Primary Applicant who will serve as the primary contact for the team. If awarded, the grant will be made to the Primary Applicant.

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

In order to apply, you must be affiliated with an organization.

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

Yes, we are accepting letters of inquiry from individuals at both private and public organizations.

What amount of indirect cost is available? Do you accept my U.S. organization’s federally negotiated indirect cost rate?

Details of the foundation indirect cost policy guidelines can be found here: https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/Documents/Indirect_Cost_Policy.pdf

SELECTION PROCESS

What feedback can I expect if my proposal 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.

What are the criteria for selection?

Each call has specific criteria listed in the respective call language located on the [Grand Challenges Website](#). The specifics for these Challenges can be found on their respective topic's page.

TIMELINE

Please see the Rules and Guidelines for each topic for more detail on the timeline.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

I forgot my password. How do I reset my password?

You can request to update your password within the application site.

How will I know if my proposal went through?

Once an application is submitted, an email confirmation will be sent.

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.

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.