



Grand Challenges Canada®
Grands Défis Canada

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

SAVING BRAINS: SCALING IMPACT

This document addresses frequently asked questions regarding the Saving Brains: Scaling Impact Request for Proposals announced July 2014. Additional questions must be submitted to savingbrains@grandchallenges.ca. Answers to the questions will be posted at www.grandchallenges.ca/saving-brains/ by the end of the day on July 25th, August 8th, and August 29th. Any questions submitted after August 29th may not be answered.

This document was last updated on September 4th, 2014.

Eligibility

1. Can institutions in non-eligible countries be collaborators on a project?

A. Yes. It is not the intention of this Request for Proposals to exclude existing productive collaborations between applicants in eligible countries and non-eligible countries. If justified, these collaborations may be part of a proposal. However, the Project Lead must be affiliated with the applicant organization/institution in the eligible country listed in Appendix A and a majority of the budget must be spent in an eligible country (outside of Canada).

2. Is it possible for a Canadian to partner with investigators from the United States (and elsewhere) for Saving Brains funding?

A. Please note that Canadian applicants are eligible to apply as the lead on a project, but must apply with a co- Project Lead based in one of our eligible countries (see Appendix A). You may partner/consult/collaborate with any US based investigators (or elsewhere) on your project but they cannot be project leads.

3. Can I apply as a Project Lead if I am a citizen of an eligible country?

A. For the primary eligibility criteria, the applicant is the organization/institution. Only applicants from the following list of countries listed in Appendix A are eligible to apply to this Saving Brains Request for Proposals. For the purposes of determining eligibility, Grand Challenges Canada may consider both the applicant's home jurisdiction and any other jurisdiction within which grant project activities will take place. The Project Lead must be primarily affiliated with the applicant institution. Citizenship is not a factor in determining eligibility.

4. Can an application have a project lead from the eligible country and another project lead from a non-eligible country/US, but who does research in an eligible country?

- A. All project leads must be primarily affiliated with an institution in an eligible country. Project Leads with primary affiliations in Canada are eligible to apply, but must apply with a co-Project Lead in an eligible country listed in Appendix A of the call for proposals (outside of Canada) and the majority of the budget must be spent in a country on the eligible country list, other than Canada.

5. Is this call looking specifically for a Brazilian lead or is it possible for there to be a project lead from another country with a Brazilian collaborator or with Brazil being the country of focus for the project?

- A. Funding for projects in Brazil must have a Brazilian institution as applicant, and project leads should be primarily affiliated to the Brazilian institution.

6. Is there any way to connect with potential collaborators in eligible countries?

- A. Grand Challenges Canada has established a Global Health Innovation Group on LinkedIn for the purpose of connecting potential collaborators. Please see the Members Guide at www.linkedin.com/groups/Global-Health-Innovation-3839474?goback=%2Egna_3839474 to navigate LinkedIn's features to find other members and collaborate.

7. Can a company/NGO/ etc. apply for a Saving Brains grant, and would their application be at a disadvantage compared to an academic program?

- A. Eligible applicants include individual non-profit organizations, for-profit companies, or other recognized institution or organizations that are legally registered or incorporated in an eligible jurisdiction, as listed in Appendix A, that can successfully execute the activities in their respective technical area and are capable of receiving and administering funding. Please see the eligibility criteria in Section 4.1 of the Request for Proposals. All eligible applications are evaluated by the same criteria, as found in Section 4.5 of the Request for Proposals document.

8. Are Aboriginal communities in Canada eligible as project sites?

- A. No. This program is focused on low- and lower-middle-income countries and Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and International Development Countries of Focus. Grand Challenges Canada may consider both the applicant's home jurisdiction and any other jurisdiction within which grant project activities will take place.

Any recognized organization in Canada, including Aboriginal organizations, that can successfully execute the activities in their respective technical area, and are capable of receiving and administering grant funding are encouraged to apply in collaboration with an eligible applicant. Canadian applicants must apply with an applicant in an eligible country listed in Appendix A (outside of Canada) and the majority of the budget must be spent in the partner country in order to be eligible.

9. Is it possible to include more junior individuals to conduct the day-to-day work?

- A. Yes. Project Leads are encouraged to assemble teams that are best suited to achieve the project goals within the time and resources available and that set up a foundation for a sustainable solution. Where the majority of the work is being done by team members, it is important to clearly describe where the Project Lead's leadership will be focused and how this will increase the likelihood of project success. Please see the 'leadership capability to champion change' evaluation criterion.

10. Does the program require co-funding?

- A. There are no specific co-funding requirements for the Seed funding, however, applicants are encouraged to secure co-funding. Transition-to-Scale projects require 50% matching funds at the time the grant is signed.

11. If the applicant organization is associated with another organization in a non-eligible country does this disqualify the applicant organization?

- A. In order to be eligible for this competition the applicant organization must be a legally registered institution in a country listed in the eligible country list (Appendix A in the Request of Proposals). The applicant organization must be able to successfully execute the activities in their respective technical area, and have the capacity to receive and administer grant funding independent of the organization in the non-eligible country. Therefore, a link to another organization in a non-eligible country would not be grounds for disqualification.

12. Can a project lead submit two different applications for the seed grants?

- A. Project leads are permitted to submit only one (1) application to either the seed grant or the transition to scale grant competitions (note that applicants from Brazil are only eligible for the seed grant competition).

13. Can two or more proposals be submitted from the same institution/organization?

- A. Multiple applications may come from the same applicant institution/organization, but a Project lead is permitted to submit only one (1) application.

14. Can an organization apply for multiple programs funded by Grand Challenges Canada with the same Project Lead at the same time?

- A. Yes, an organization can apply with the same Project Lead for multiple programs funded by Grand Challenges Canada provided that the proposal for each program is responsive to the specific call and addresses the program scope and criterion outlined in each Request for Proposals.

Please note, it is an expectations that each proposal for each submission is novel, if an applicant is successful in more than one program and Grand Challenges Canada's deems that the proposals are conducting the same work, funding will only be granted through one

program and the selection of which program will be up to Grand Challenges Canada. Finally, if an organization is selected for funding in multiple programs with the same Project Lead, the projects will be carefully assessed for execution risks that may undermine the likelihood of success for any or all projects selected for funding.

15. I work in <country/region> and we need support to develop our innovation, can we apply?

- A. Please see Appendix A of the Request for Proposals to determine whether your country would be eligible to receive funds through the Saving Brains program. Note that collaborators can be from any country but implementation countries must also be on the eligible countries list.

16. Can funds be used to implement innovations in countries that are not on the eligible country list?

- A. No. Funds can only be used to fund implementation in countries on the eligible country list.

17. Can any representative of the applicant institution/organization lead the project?

- A. There are no restrictions in terms of who may be the Primary lead, except that they must be affiliated with the applicant institution. Funding for projects in Brazil must have a Brazilian institution as applicant, and project leads should be primarily affiliated to the Brazilian institution. Project leads are evaluated on their ability to conduct the project and enable successful development of the innovation. Please see the evaluation criteria in Section 4.5 of the Request for Proposals document to better understand the criteria that the Project Lead will be evaluated on.

18. Can organizations apply straight for transition to scale grants or do they have to first be recipients of seed grants?

- A. Yes, this call for proposals for Saving Brains is open to all organizations, regardless of whether they have been previously grantees at GCC.

19. Can one institution hold multiple grants through the Saving Brains program? (Aug 8)

- A. Yes, the institution can hold multiple grants. The only restriction is that projects should be different enough that it still contributes to the portfolio (it could be rated poorly on the innovation front if not sufficiently different).

20. Would it be possible in any way to have one Primary Project Lead, and two Secondary Project Leads? (Aug 8)

- A. You can only have two leads on a project. You can however certainly engage others if you list them as collaborators – there are no limitations on their role in the project, just for the title.

21. We would like to enquire on the eligibility of our organization to apply to a Saving Brains grant from Grand Challenges Canada. Our head office is in France but we have a local office in <eligible country> where the project will be implemented – we are legally registered and can successfully execute the activities in our respective technical area, through a local Partner.

- A. Your institution would be eligible if it is a legal entity in <eligible country> (incorporated & legally registered) and we can grant directly to the local country office. Would that be the case? Saving Brains funding cannot be awarded to an institution outside of the eligible countries listed in Appendix A.

22. We would like to enquire on the eligibility of our organization to apply to a Saving Brains grant from Grand Challenges Canada. Our head office is in France but we have a local office in <eligible country> where the project will be implemented – we are legally registered and can successfully execute the activities in our respective technical area, through a local Partner.

- A. Your institution would be eligible if it is a legal entity in <eligible country> (incorporated & legally registered) and we can grant directly to the local country office. Would that be the case? Saving Brains funding cannot be awarded to an institution outside of the eligible countries listed in Appendix A.

23. Are Government Ministries/Departments/Agencies in an eligible country eligible to apply, either as Individual applicants or as a member of a Consortium?

- A. A government agency/ department would be eligible for Saving Brain funds. The key thing for us is that you are a legal entity and can enter into legal agreements/ contracts with us. It is best to verify this with your legal department.

24. Is it possible to resubmit a proposal for a previous Scaling Impact RFP? We would like to resubmit a proposal modified to incorporate all the reviewers suggestions and our team believes we can do this and offer a robust proposal with excellent partners that addresses a much needed area. (Sep 4)

- A. Yes, resubmission is definitely an option and we recommend you take the reviewers comments at heart. Please do read through the RFP carefully as some things have changed since our last call for proposals (e.g. 18 month project timeline vs. 24). You will also find that some of the application questions have changed.

25. Q. We are registered in the US as well as <eligible country>. What are the eligibility criteria? (Sep 4)

- A. Of key importance is that the applicant organization is **incorporated** in an eligible jurisdiction. The fact that you have an office in the US does not make a difference in this, but please note the grant will have to flow directly to the office in <eligible country>.

Project Scope

26. Can the proposed project exceed the time limits?

- A. No. Please ensure that the proposed project is feasible within the time limits (i.e., 18 months for seed grants and 3 years for transition to scale grants) set in the Request for Proposals. Please note that this will be evaluated under the 'technical merit / execution plan' evaluation criterion.

27. Will products be considered under this Request for Proposals?

- A. Yes. As outlined in Section 1.3 of the Request for Proposals, the ultimate goal of the Saving Brains program is to increase human capital through the development and delivery of bold ideas with real-world impact that protect and nurture early brain development at scale in a sustainable manner. These ideas should be innovative, affordable, cost-effective and evidence-based products, services, and/or implementation models. Please refer to evaluation criteria (Section 4.5) for more details on how each proposed idea will be evaluated.

28. Can funding be used to implement interventions in more than one country?

- A. Yes, funds may be used to support implementation in more than one country and there is no limitation to the number of implementation countries. However, implementation countries must be on the eligible country list. Implementation in multiple countries may be more feasible with the given time and resources available to Transition to Scale grantees. Projects are evaluated on the feasibility of their project plan and timelines, as set out in the evaluation criteria of Section 4.5 in the Request for Proposals.

29. Is the emphasis on the first 1000 days of a child's development a strict requirement or would Saving Brains consider funding projects for slightly later stages of development (i.e. preschool/kindergarten age)?

- A. All proposals should provide a strong rationale as to why the innovation is likely to have significant sustained impact on brain development. Our program is focused on the first 1000 days of a child's development because this to be a very influential stage of a child's cognitive development, but proposals are not limited to this period. Any proposal focusing solely on later stages will need to clearly justify why the impact at that age is likely to be significant enough compared to one given earlier.

30. Can projects focused on basic/translational science apply?

- A. Bold, innovative, transformational solutions are encouraged to address gaps in products, practice, policy and implementation. This call is not closed to a basic/translational research approaches or to product development – while we do not generally fund basic research alone, the suitability of the project will depend on the proposed integrated innovation and how well it could address challenges on the ground and achieve transformative impact at scale. Please refer the researcher as well to the evaluation criteria in the request for

proposals for more details on how each proposal will be evaluated, to get a better idea of how their innovation may or may not be a good fit with this call.

31. I am uncertain whether the eligibility age of ≥ 2 years for our proposal would be appropriate for this grant application. Could you clarify your requirements?(Aug 8)

- A. Our program is focused on the first 1000 days of a child’s development because this is a very influential stage of a child’s cognitive development, but proposals are not limited to this period. Any proposal focusing solely on later stages will need to clearly justify why the impact at that age is likely to be significant enough compared to one given earlier.

32. The project has identified the national government as ‘the business partner’. We will be able to demonstrate support from the government and a commitment to make a financial investment to ensure scale and sustainability of this initiative. Will this adequately cover GCC’s ‘integrated innovation’ model or are we required to secure a private sector/corporate partner, as well? (Aug 8)

- A. Projects are judged on integrated innovation, and the business innovation refers to developing something that could be financially sustainable or is appropriate for a low enough cost that it could be accessible. There is no formal “business partner” required for seed grants, but a “**smart**” partner is needed to co-fund transition to scale applications and to provide additional skill sets that would help project go to scale (as much more than money is often needed). Government partners are acceptable, but would need to also provide financial support.

33. Are you most interested in nutritional interventions to decrease stunting? (Aug 8)

- A. No. Saving Brains is interested in all innovative approaches to ensuring children are able to reach their full developmental potential, and are most interested in combined approaches that address the child’s needs including health, protection from maltreatment, and providing a stimulating and nurturing environment.

34. Can you explain the following question to me? “Briefly describe how the state of local infrastructure and technological capacity affects the problem?” (Sep 4)

- A. Thank you for your feedback on this question. Basically, this question allows you to provide information on local infrastructures relevant to the area you plan to work in – this may refer to technological infrastructure (e.g. internet access; mobile phone ownership) as well as physical infrastructure (e.g. whether access by road is possible; number of health clinics, access to clean water), as it relates to your proposal. It could also be interpreted more broadly to include the programs or services that are currently available as well. You should include any related information that provides important context for reviewers when considering the problem you are trying to solve or how your innovation or proposal would work in this context.

35. The application lists specific outcomes section: DII Ultimate Outcomes and Intermediate Outcomes. Are all projects expected to focus efforts on both of the outcomes? Life saving and life improvement? Or might a project focus on life improvement or life saving solely? (Sep 4)

- A. You are not expected to measure both ultimate outcomes during the life of the grant. It may also be that neither outcome is applicable to your innovation (if you are early days) and this is completely fine at the seed grant stage. You can simply leave blank or include n/a if not applicable to your innovation. Please see the help document included in the application form for further details about filling out the outcomes matrix.

36. Section DIII5 outlines a list of core metrics. Are projects expected to address all or some of these core domains, or might they elect to focus on some but not all of the metrics? May we add other metrics? (Sep 4)

- A. You are expected to measure all of the core metrics. And yes you can add other metrics. (See Question 38 as well)

37. Q. If the proposal is about a product or package of products to be developed or validated, will the metrics be required? If so, and there is change at the end of 18 months, can this be directly attributable to the product? (Sep 4)

- A. It is expected that measurements of the core metrics are included in all evaluation plans, as set out in Section 2.2 under "Inclusion of Core Outcome Metrics" (www.grandchallenges.ca/wp-content/uploads/20140711_SB_R4_RFP_EN.pdf). Incorporating the core outcome metrics into project plans and actively participate in optimizing the set of core outcome metrics is also set out as an expectation in Section 3: Activities and Deliverables.

We would expect the team to design the impact evaluation and measurements so that the impact measured can be attributed to the intervention (product or package). We also suggest you look at the evaluation criteria to understand how the proof of concept, implementation plan and metrics would be evaluated (Section 4.5).

Application Process

38. What is the difference between seed and transition-to-scale grants?

- A. Seed grants provide up to C\$250,000 in funding to support the development and validation of innovative ideas over a maximum of 18 months. Proposals are expected to demonstrate proof of concept of the idea. Transition-to-scale grants provide up to C\$1,000,000 in matched funding (thus up to a total of C\$2 million of project funds) to support refinement, testing and implementation of innovative solutions that have already achieved proof of concept to bring them toward scale over a maximum of three (3) years. Each funding stream has separate application forms and requirements. Please carefully review the different evaluation criteria for seed and transition-to-scale grants listed in Section 4.5 of the Request for Proposals.

39. Where is the application? Do I need to submit a proposal?

- A. The application is online, at www.grandchallenges-application-proposition.fluidreview.com

Please register with the site or login if you are an already existing user. **Once you have logged on to the site, click ‘Saving Brains Application Form’ to start your application.** You can save your work and continue at a later date. Please note only online applications will be considered.

40. Is there room for an extension beyond the September 8th deadline?

- A. There are no extensions possible on our September 8th deadline. Saving Brains is a funding priority of Grand Challenges Canada. It is our intention to make a similar Request for Proposals on an annual basis in order to build the toolkit of solutions and community of innovators focused on this challenge.

41. Is this the only chance to apply for this program?

- A. Saving Brains is a funding priority of Grand Challenges Canada. It is our intention to make a similar Request for Proposals on an annual basis in order to build the toolkit of solutions and community of innovators focused on this challenge.

42. In what language should the application be completed?

- A. Applications in either English or French are accepted. The review process, which is conducted by Canadian Institutes of Health Research, is set up to fairly manage applications in either language.

43. What evidence or data should be included in the application?

- A. The review committee assesses each proposal against the evaluation criteria stated in Section 4.5 of the Request for Proposals. Any evidence or data that supports the proposed idea with respect to the evaluation criteria should be included. Applicants are encouraged to access Grand Challenge Canada’s Online Proposal Development Resource at www.grandchallenges.ca/proposaldevelopment, which contains material to help researchers and innovators around the world develop their project proposals.

44. Can Grand Challenges Canada recommend mentors to guide potential applicants with their application?

- A. No, however applicants are encouraged to access Grand Challenge Canada’s Online Proposal Development Resource at www.grandchallenges.ca/proposaldevelopment, which contains material to help researchers and innovators around the world develop their project proposals and plan for how their innovation will go to scale, be sustained and have impact globally.

45. Are there any resources available to assist in research design and determining which assessment tools we can best use to capture the core outcome metrics? (Aug 8)

- A. Please see Grand Challenges Canada website for our “Proposal Development Resources”: <http://www.grandchallenges.ca/proposaldevelopment/>

At this point, we unfortunately do not have additional guidance available on the assessment tools to capture the Saving Brains core outcome metrics. Please note that Saving Brains awardees will be given the opportunity to connect with experts and peers around best practices to overcome any challenges with regards to research design and assessment tools in your context.

46. The application site will not let us advance, unless we include an answer. Is there a way to view all the questions in the application? (Aug 8)

- A. You can now download the application questions as a pdf document on the landing page/first page of the application site. To advance to the next page, you can enter a character in each of the text boxes on the page. You will be able go back to these questions to edit at a later stage.

47. One of our faculty members is applying for the above mentioned grant/LOI and would like to know when they complete their LOI application in the GC online system, if there is a way to save or download all parts of the application as pdf or word or any other format for institutional review and sign off. (Sep 4)

- A. On the first page/ landing page (if you are in the application form hit the ‘back to proposal’ and you’ll get there too) – you’ll find a menu (to the right of the page) which includes “Download Proposal”. This will print a report of the application in PDF.

Budget

48. Do indirect costs need to be included within the funding limits?

- A. Yes. All costs including indirect costs need to be included within C\$250,000 for seed grants and C\$1,000,000 in matched funding for transition to scale grants. Indirect costs cannot exceed 12% of direct costs. Please note that ‘value for effort’ is an evaluation criterion: applications that request funds commensurate to the proposed study goals, propose particularly thoughtful and efficient use of resources and leverage additional cash (preferred) or in-kind support will be viewed favourably.

49. What costs should be captured under the Personnel budget category?

- A. Personnel are an individuals employed by the applicant institution/organization. All salaries, allowances, honourariums paid to staff directly contributing to the activities of the project are included in this category. If the individual is not an employee of the applicant

institution/organization, the costs should be placed in the Consultants category. For more information, please see budget definitions at: www.grandchallenges.ca/resources.

50. What costs should be captured under the Consultant budget category?

- A. Consultant is a non-employee of the applicant institution/organization. All expenses related to acquiring the services of a consultant for a specific activity within the project can be included in this category. The consultant's rate must be specified. Costs may also include travel, accommodation, living expenses, and support services hired directly by the consultant. If the individual is an employee of the applicant institution/organization, the costs should be placed in the Personnel category. For more information, please see budget definitions at: www.grandchallenges.ca/resources.

51. Is the maximum grant size based on the entire project or is it a maximum envelope for each year of the project?

- A. The maximum grant size is based on the entire grant project. For the seed grant this is up to a maximum of C\$250,000 for the entire grant and for the transition-to-scale grant this is up to a maximum of C\$1,000,000 in matched funding for the entire grant.

The value of the awards is expected to vary and will be commensurate to the proposed project. The level of funding requested should be sufficient to assure completion of the goals in the stated timeframe. Grand Challenges Canada reserves the right to fully or incrementally fund selected application(s), to partially fund selected applications(s), and to increase or decrease budgets as it deems appropriate at its sole discretion. Indirect costs need to be included within the budget. Indirect costs cannot exceed 12% of direct costs. Our maximum allowable indirect cost rate of 12% reflects our new policy.

Please note that 'value for effort' is an evaluation criterion: applications that request funds commensurate to the proposed study goals, propose particularly thoughtful and efficient use of resources and leverage additional cash (preferred) or in-kind support will be viewed favourably.

52. Do all costs, including those related to monitoring and evaluating the progress, need to be reflected in the budget?

- A. Yes. All costs need to be reflected in the budget.

53. Should the amounts for travel to community meetings (required twice a year) be included in the budget?

- A. Seed grants will receive additional funds on top their budget for the travel of one team member to the community meetings twice a year. Transition-to-scale applications must include \$20,000 per year within their budget to cover the costs of two project team members attending two community meetings per year.

54. The call requires us to spend majority of the budget in an eligible country, can you provide the cutoff for majority? In other words what is the least proportion that can

be spent in the eligible country (or the maximum we can spend in the non eligible country)?

- A. Projects must spend the majority of funds in eligible countries – ie more than half of the budget (minimum of 51%). We encourage grantees to spend as much of their budget as possible in the low-middle income countries in which they are working, when it makes sense to do so.

Miscellaneous questions / Technical Support

55. We are working towards submitting our proposal under the Saving Brains category, but are unable to find the section related to PFA (project activity Framework) as in the past. Given this we just wanted to check that this section is not a requirement for this proposal. (Sep 4)

- A. The project framework is indeed no longer a requirement. The questions on Page 4 of the application form (Section D: Project Execution Plan) provides space for you to include the type of information that would in the past been part of the Project Framework table.

56. I am not able to download the budget template, kindly assist. (Sep 4)

- A. The budget template can be downloaded on the last page of the application form. If you are not able to access it there, please check your internet browser settings. This error could occur when using an outdated browser or when your internet is highly secured. Note Chrome works best with the application site and Internet Explorer 8 and above is compatible with the online form as well. Should you still not be able to download the budget template, please email savingbrains@grandchallenges.ca and we are happy to provide you with the template. Please indicate whether you are a seed or LOI applicant.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Any additional questions should be sent to savingbrains@grandchallenges.ca Answers to the questions will be posted at www.grandchallenges.ca/saving-brains/ by the end of the day on July 25th, August 8th, and August 29th. Any questions submitted after August 29th may not be answered.

For information on all Grand Challenges Canada programs, please find us at grandchallenges.ca and on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **LinkedIn**.