



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### SAVING BRAINS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

This document addresses frequently asked questions regarding the Saving Brains Request for Proposals announced July 2017. Additional questions must be submitted to [savingbrains@grandchallenges.ca](mailto:savingbrains@grandchallenges.ca). Answers to the questions will be posted at [www.grandchallenges.ca/saving-brains/](http://www.grandchallenges.ca/saving-brains/) by the end of the day on **October 6, 2017**. The deadline for any questions submitted is October 3, after which we may not respond.

Please contact [fluxsupport@grandchallenges.ca](mailto:fluxsupport@grandchallenges.ca) for technical support with the application through Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal.

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## COUNTRY/ INSTITUTIONAL ELIGIBILITY

### **1. Who fits the definition of eligible applicant?**

A. Eligible applicants include social enterprises and other recognized institutions (e.g., non-profit organizations and for-profit companies) that are formed and legally registered in an eligible country, as set out in Appendix A of the RFP, that can successfully execute the activities in their respective technical area, and are capable of receiving and administering grant funding. Please see the eligibility criteria in the Request for Proposals (Section 5.1).

### **2. Our organization's head office is in <non-eligible country> 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. Can we apply?**

A. Your institution would be eligible if it is incorporated in an eligible jurisdiction, as listed in Appendix A, and is capable of receiving and administering funding. We would grant directly to the local country office. Saving Brains funding cannot be awarded to an institution outside of the eligible countries listed in Appendix A of the Request for Proposals.

### **3. Are Aboriginal communities in Canada eligible as project sites?**

A. No. This program is focused on implementation in countries listed in Appendix A. Note that Canadian applicants must apply with a co-Project Lead who's primary affiliation is an institution incorporated in an eligible country listed in Appendix A of the RFP (outside of Canada) and the majority of the budget must be spent in the partner country in order to be eligible.

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

A. All project leads must be primarily affiliated with an institution in an eligible country, but collaborators can be from any country.

### **5. Do I need any specific academic qualifications to apply?**

A. No. This competition is open to everyone regardless of age or academic qualifications. The Project Lead and team must have the skills to carry out the proposed activities of the innovation.

## MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS OR GRANTS

### **6. Can a Project Lead submit two different applications for seed funding at Grand Challenges Canada?**

A. Project Leads are permitted to submit only one (1) application per Request for Proposals. Applications for other Request for Proposals at Grand Challenges Canada are permitted (i.e., an application may be submitted to each of the Saving Brains and the Stars in RMNCH Requests for Proposals).

Please note: It is an expectation 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.

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

- A. Yes, multiple applications may come from the same applicant institution/organization, but a Project Lead is permitted to submit only one (1) application per competition.

**8. *Can one institution hold multiple grants through the Saving Brains Program?***

- A. Yes, the institution can hold multiple grants.

**9. *Is it possible to resubmit a proposal for a previous Saving Brains RFP?***

- A. Yes, resubmission is an option to future Requests for Proposals. We recommend you use any reviewers' comments provided in making updates or modifications to the proposal. Please do read through the new Request for Proposals carefully, as some things have changed since our last Request for Proposals. You will also find that some of the application questions have changed and applicants are responsible for submitting a complete application.

**10. *Can a Project lead in one application be a collaborator in another application?***

- A. Yes, a Project Lead can be a collaborator on another application.

**11. *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 first Project Lead must be affiliated with the applicant organization/institution in the eligible country listed in Appendix A of the Request for Proposals, and a majority of the budget must be spent in an eligible country (outside of Canada).

**12. *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 criteria.

## GRAND CHALLENGES CANADA FUNDING

### ***13. What is the difference between seed and transition-to-scale grants?***

- A. Saving Brains seed grants provide up to \$250,000 CAD in funding to support the development and validation of innovative ideas over a maximum of 24 months. Proposals are expected to demonstrate proof of concept of the idea. Transition-to-scale grants provide up to \$1,000,000 CAD in matched funding (thus up to a total of \$2 million CAD 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 Requests for Proposals, and applicants must be invited to apply to the Transition to Scale program.

### ***14. Do proposals to this seed program require co-funding?***

- A. No. There are no specific co-funding requirements for the seed funding; however, applicants are encouraged to secure co-funding and partnerships that could accelerate their progress towards sustainable impact at scale.

## PROJECT SCOPE

### ***15. How do you define 'early child development'? Is the emphasis on the first 1,000 days of a child's development a strict requirement? Would Saving Brains consider funding projects for slightly later stages of development (i.e., preschool/kindergarten age)?***

- A. Our program is focused on the first 1,000 days of a child's development (inclusive of growth and development during pregnancy) because this has been found to be a very influential stage of a child's cognitive development, and all proposals should be primarily focused on children under five (5) years of age. All projects should provide a strong rationale as to why the innovation is likely to have significant sustained impact on brain development; proposals including children older than the first 1,000 days should clearly justify the importance of this impact at that age, compared to interventions given earlier.

### ***16. Do you emphasize certain elements in the Integrated Innovation approach (i.e., science and technology versus social and business innovation)?***

- A. Grand Challenges Canada defines Integrated Innovation<sup>®</sup> as the coordinated application of scientific/technological, social and business innovation to develop solutions to complex challenges. This approach does not discount the singular benefits of each of these types of innovation alone. While proposals may emphasize innovation in one of these areas more than others, all proposals should describe how they apply Integrated Innovation within their proposals. Proposals will be reviewed according to the criteria laid out in the Request for Proposals. For more information on our Integrated Innovation approach, please refer to our website: <http://www.grandchallenges.ca/funding-opportunities/integrated-innovation/>.

Proposed solutions should include a combination of:

- **Scientific/Technological Innovation:** Based in the psychological, natural, health or behavioural sciences or in engineering or economics; can be simple, i.e., there is no requirement for high-tech solutions
- **Social Innovation:** Recognizes and/or addresses the broader social, structural and/or political determinants of health, with a particular focus on gender and intersectional inequalities; addresses local and/or cultural contexts that factor into implementation and scaling
- **Business Innovation:** Maximizes the value, relevance and unique quality of the solution to create demand and **financial sustainability**; addresses barriers to affordability and accessibility.

**17. The Request for Proposals states that capacity-building initiatives alone will not be funded. How do you define capacity-building initiatives?**

- A. New initiatives designed to have big impact on early childhood development can include innovative professional development activities, training or curriculum development. However, initiatives that are designed to strengthen the skills or resources of individuals or organizations as the primary outcome would not be within scope of this Request for Proposals.

All proposals should respond to the areas of interest and criteria set out in the Request for Proposals (section 2.4).

**18. The Request for Proposals covers areas of protection from maltreatment, health and nutrition, nurturing care and early learning – do we have to cover all of these?**

- A. No.

**19. Do we have to cover all of the core metrics and intermediary metrics?**

- A. Use of metrics to capture improved child development outcomes should be incorporated into project plans from the proposal stage. Proposals should include a plan to measure at least one metric in each of the following domains:
- Physical growth, such as length/height-for-age, weight-for-age, head circumference, gross/fine motor skills
  - Cognitive function
  - Receptive and expressive language
  - Socio-emotional capacities

Other project output and impact indicators will also be required; see Appendix B of the RFP for further information and a list of potential indicators. Intermediate outcomes listed are not all required – the indicators measured can be tailored to those that make most sense to the project (eg: most projects would not be expecting to change child mortality outcomes and would not be required to measure this)

***20. If the program or model proposed is already being implemented, can it still be eligible for funding?***

- A. As one of our areas of particular interest, Saving Brains seeks innovations that may already be operating at significant scale and with strong paths to sustainability, but that have not yet established the impact of the innovation on child development directly. This priority area could be an opportunity for existing innovations to establish the proof of concept needed to qualify for Grand Challenges Canada's Transition To Scale program.

Do keep in mind however, that Saving Brains is interested in bold ideas for products, services and implementation models that can be placed on a clear path to scale and sustainability. Even existing models should meet these criteria.

***21. For a for-profit company that wants to offer products to the most disadvantaged populations, can it generate revenue through the proposed Saving Brains project?***

- A. Yes. For-profit companies are eligible to apply and Grand Challenges Canada recognizes the value of commercialization. The potential for revenue generation is evaluated under the potential for financial sustainability within the evaluation criteria. Funding recipients are encouraged to commercialize funded solutions but must do so in a manner that promotes meaningful access consistent with GCC's Global Access policy. Funding recipients may satisfy this requirement directly or by way of partnerships, license agreements, or other arrangements with for-profit or not-for-profit entities.

## **TIMELINES**

***22. Can the proposed project exceed the time limits?***

- A. No. Please ensure that the proposed project is feasible within the time limits (i.e., 24 months) set in the Request for Proposals. Please note that this will be evaluated under the 'Project Execution Plan' evaluation criterion.

***23. Is there room for an extension beyond the submission deadline?***

- A. There are no extensions possible on our deadline. Saving Brains is a funding priority of Grand Challenges Canada and it is our intention to publish a similar Request for Proposals on an annual basis.

***24. Is it a requirement that the innovative solution being proposed ought to be delivered/implemented in the funded lifespan of the Project (i.e. the 24 months stipulated as the maximum possible lifespan) OR rather the innovative solution could have been delivered prior to 24 months but then only its impact on child development proposed to be measured in the lifespan of the project?***

- A. It is not a requirement that the innovative solutions be delivered in the funded lifespan of the project, but most projects do in order to evaluate and determine the proof of concept of the innovation. However, an innovation that was previously delivered could be considered

provided it is still a bold idea where determining proof of concept during the lifetime of the grant is possible and would help establish its scalability or sustainability. Projects would still be evaluated under the criteria listed in Section 5.5 (Evaluation Criteria)

As one of our areas of particular interest, Saving Brains seeks innovations that may already be operating at significant scale and with strong paths to sustainability, but that have not yet established the impact of the innovation on child development directly. This priority area could be an opportunity for existing innovations to rapidly establish the proof of concept needed to qualify for Grand Challenges Canada's Transition To Scale program.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### ***25. 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.

### ***26. What evidence or data should be included in the application?***

- A. The review committee assesses each proposal against the evaluation criteria stated in Section 5.5 of the Request for Proposals. Any evidence or data that supports the proposed idea with respect to the evaluation criteria should be included.

### ***27. Are there specific application questions or templates we need to use to apply?***

- A. The application questions can be accessed online via our community portal. As well as responding to the questions, you will also submit a detailed budget using the template provided on the form. Letters of support, letters of recommendation and additional biographical information can also be submitted through the application site but are not required.

To access Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal ([gcc.fluxx.io](https://gcc.fluxx.io)), you must **first** create an account to identify yourself and the organization that will be applying for a grant. A response will be provided within **one business day**. To create an account, please visit: <https://gcc.fluxx.io/lois/new?utf8=%E2%9C%93&commit=Create+an+account+now>

Once your account has been approved, you will receive an email with your user name and password. You can then visit <https://gcc.fluxx.io/> to start your application. Please answer all the mandatory questions, as incomplete applications will not be considered. For technical support, please contact [fluxxsupport@grandchallenges.ca](mailto:fluxxsupport@grandchallenges.ca).

You can also access all Grand Challenges Canada Request for Proposals, as well as frequently asked questions, on our Funding Opportunities web page: [www.grandchallenges.ca/funding-opportunities/](http://www.grandchallenges.ca/funding-opportunities/).

**28. Can I arrange a meeting with Grand Challenges Canada to discuss the call/my proposal in more detail?**

- A. Unfortunately, given the number of applications we receive and in the interest of being fair to all applicants, we cannot discuss individual proposals in detail. Please review the Request for Proposals available at <http://www.grandchallenges.ca/saving-brains/> for information on the eligibility criteria, areas of interest and evaluation process. If you think your proposal is a fit with the call, you are most welcome to apply.

**29. Can I submit my proposal by email, mail or in person?**

- A. Proposals cannot be submitted by email, mail or in person. All applications **must** be submitted to the Saving Brains program through Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal. In order to gain access to the Portal, applicants must first create an account <https://gcc.fluxx.io/lois/new?utf8=%E2%9C%93&commit=Create+an+account+now>.

Please consider submitting your application early, as technical support may take up to one business day to respond. If you have any technical challenges submitting a completed proposal through our Community Portal, please contact technical support immediately ([fluxxsupport@grandchallenges.ca](mailto:fluxxsupport@grandchallenges.ca)). We will do our best to respond to requests received prior to the submission deadline.

**30. It is possible for one of the referees to submit their letter directly and, if so, to what email address?**

- A. Reference letters cannot be submitted by email. All application components must be submitted to the Saving Brains program through Grand Challenges Canada's Community Portal.

**31. Is there a requirement for all authors/researchers of the proposal materials to be acknowledged?**

- A. Grand Challenges Canada does not require the authors of the proposal materials to be formally acknowledged on the submitted proposal. The proposal must be uploaded by the Project Lead, who certifies their authorization to submit the application on behalf of their organization. The Project Lead would also be signing on to Grand Challenges Canada's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.grandchallenges.ca/terms-and-conditions/>) which indicate, among other things, that the user-generated content uploaded is wholly their original work or that they have the necessary right, title, interest and licenses to upload and/or make available to Grand Challenges Canada.

**BUDGET, USE OF FUNDS, ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

**32. Do all costs, including those related to monitoring and evaluating the progress of the project, consultant fees and remuneration need to be reflected in the budget?**

- A. Yes. All costs need to be reflected in the budget. Reimbursable Project Administration Costs can be listed in the budget template. Please see the "Budget Guidance" tab on the

Community Portal for more information on eligible and ineligible expenses. There is no limit on Reimbursable Project Administration Costs.

**33. Are indirect costs or overhead considered eligible expenses?**

- A. Indirect and overhead costs are not eligible under Grand Challenges Canada's agreements. A detailed list of all eligible costs and a breakdown of budget categories can be found in the Request for Proposals (Section 5.6).

**34. When converting our budget, what currency should we use?**

- A. At the top of the budget template, you are asked to select your currency, and to provide the current exchange rate using this site: <https://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>. Use the book currency of the institution submitting a proposal.

When completing the budget template, please use the local organization's book currency for your Year 1 and Year 2 expenses. The Canadian equivalents will populate automatically, provided you have selected the exchange rate at the top of the template.

**35. Is time spent working on the application an eligible cost?**

- A. No. Please refer to Section 5.6 of the Saving Brains Request for Proposals for eligible costs. The time dedicated to writing/submitting the proposal is not reimbursable. Salaries to execute the project, if it is selected for funding, may be included in the budget.

**36. Can we include part of the office renting cost and utilities for our local partner where project implementation will take place?**

- A. You cannot include part of office renting cost and utilities for your local partner. Only costs directly related to project activities are allowed under this Request for Proposals. For example, rent would only be an eligible expense if a space is being rented for participants/research directly (e.g., a daycare centre). If it were office space for administrative work to be completed, then it would **not** be an eligible expense.

**37. Is there any difference between a Project Lead and a collaborator in terms of what funds they can receive?**

- A. A collaborator may receive funding as remuneration if they are an employee of your organization or a sub-grant organization, or they may be compensated through subcontractors' fees. If selected for funding, more information would be provided during grant negotiations.

**38. 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 is not required and may only be suitable once proof of concept is established. Projects are evaluated on the feasibility of their project plan and timelines, as set out in the evaluation criteria of Section 5.5 in the Request for Proposals.

**39. Are construction/building costs eligible?**

A. Construction costs may be included, however, should your proposal be successful, a very strong rationale would need to be provided for this before approval is given. GCC would want to know why construction of a new building would be favourable versus renting/leasing. We would also want to know how any new build would be used beyond the funding period. Importantly, the environmental impact of construction would need to be assessed very carefully to comply with GCC's Environmental Sustainability policy, as detailed in section 2.8 of the Request for Proposals.

**40. Are organizations allowed to hire additional staff (i.e. NOT subcontracting) specifically for the purpose of implementing the Project?**

A. Yes, you may hire new staff to support project implementation as appropriate.

**41. Is it possible to submit proposals with an investment amount greater than 250,000 CAD?**

A. No. The maximum funding amount is \$250,000 CAD

**OTHER**

**42. What claim does Grand Challenges make on IP ownership, or requirements for licenses or publications?**

A. Successful applicants retain ownership of intellectual property rights in their supported innovations and in outputs of funded projects. Since Grand Challenges Canada's intent in funding these innovations is to promote global health in low- and middle-income countries, we do require successful applicants to sign our Global Access Policy, which provides a limited, non-exclusive license to IP rights in supported innovations that allows Grand Challenges Canada to implement and disseminate them in low- and middle-income countries where applicants or their partners are unable to achieve meaningful accessibility. More information about IP licensing and publication can be found in the Saving Brains Request for Proposals, Section 5.11.

**43. 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 <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3839474/profile> to navigate LinkedIn's features to find other members to collaborate with.

**44. We have several ideas that we think are innovative, but we have not yet conducted a pilot study of the ideas. Would the lack of a pilot study significantly reduce the chances of a proposal being funded?**

A. No. A pilot prior to this proposal is not required. This Request for Proposals is to solicit innovative ideas for products, services and implementation models that protect and nurture early brain development. Proposals are to test the proof of concept of the proposed



innovation and to support the development and validation of these ideas. Success at the end of seed funding is defined in Section 2.5 of the Request for Proposals. The chances of a proposal being funded are related to evaluation criteria, which are further detailed in Section 5.5.

**45. Which other organizations make up the Saving Brains partnership?**

- A. The Saving Brains partnership currently comprises Grand Challenges Canada (funded by the Government of Canada), Aga Khan Foundation Canada, the Bernard van Leer Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the ELMA Foundation, Grand Challenges Ethiopia, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, the Palix Foundation, the UBS Optimus Foundation and World Vision Canada.

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

Any additional questions should be sent to [savingbrains@grandchallenges.ca](mailto:savingbrains@grandchallenges.ca). Answers to the questions will be posted at [www.grandchallenges.ca/saving-brains/](http://www.grandchallenges.ca/saving-brains/) by the end of the day on **October 6, 2017**. The deadline for any questions submitted is October 3, 2017, after which we may not respond.

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For information on all Grand Challenges Canada programs, please find us at [grandchallenges.ca](http://grandchallenges.ca) and on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **LinkedIn**.