Advancing Indigenous Gender Equality through Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Frequently Asked Questions

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Document overview:

Below are some questions you may have about this Request for Proposals. These questions are grouped together by topic, and you can click on a question in the list to jump to the answer. If you need more information or do not see your question, please email info@indigenousinnovate.org or phone 416.583.5821 extension 5585.

⚠️ Please submit questions no later than June 5, 2020. After this date, we may not be able to respond in time for you to successfully submit your application.

General questions:

- What is the challenge statement?
- What is innovation?
- What is social entrepreneurship?
- What does 2SLGBTTQQIA+ mean?
- How will COVID-19 impact this Request for Proposals?

What is the challenge statement?

The challenge statement is a document that outlines what the Advancing Indigenous Gender Equality through Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program is, what funding is being provided and the key challenges that we are looking to solve with this funding.

When we review your expression of interest, a key thing we are looking for is how well it responds to the content of this challenge statement. See Section 4.2 of the Request for Proposals for more details about how your expression of interest will be assessed.

What is innovation?

Innovation is when some or all parts of a program, product, process or service are new or are a unique modification to a current program, product, process or service. From an Indigenous perspective, innovation does not have to be something new, but can include applying historical or traditional Indigenous knowledge and practices to a new situation.

What is social entrepreneurship?

Social entrepreneurs are innovators who focus on maximizing social impact for their communities, and not just on making a profit. Social entrepreneurs often work to support their community and other entrepreneurs. For example, they could share their experience with other entrepreneurs, or act as a role model and advocate for their community by doing things like promoting local employment.

What does 2SLGBTTQQIA+ mean?

2SLGBTTQQIA+ means two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual and includes other non-confirming gender/sexuality identities.
How will COVID-19 impact this Request for Proposals?

While this Request for Proposals is not specifically looking for innovations to address COVID-19 challenges, when we review your application we will consider how it may be impacted by COVID-19. Therefore, it is important that you indicate in your application how your idea may be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and how you would address it.

Proposals focused on solving COVID-19 challenges that Indigenous communities are facing are eligible, so long as they meet the eligibility and selection criteria noted in the Request for Proposals.

Questions about the funding that is available:

- Why is this funding available?
- Where is this funding coming from?
- How much funding can I apply for?
- What is the difference between “seed” and “transition-to-scale” funding? What type is this Request for Proposals providing?
- What can I use the funding for?
- How many projects will be funded?
- Is this the only time you are offering funding?

Why is this funding available?

The goal of this funding is to improve access to innovation and social entrepreneurship opportunities for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTTQIA+ people.

Where is this funding coming from?

This round of funding is coming from the department of Women and Gender Equality (Canada) (WaGE) and the McConnell Foundation. There may be other funders in the future.

How much funding can I apply for?

You can apply for up to $250,000, for a funding period of up to 24 months (two years).

What is the difference between “seed” and “transition-to-scale” funding? What type is this Request for Proposals providing?

Seed funding supports innovators and entrepreneurs to build and test their innovative ideas to see if they work, which is called showing “proof of concept.” Innovators have up to two years to complete this work. This Request for Proposals is for seed funding.

Transition-to-scale funding supports innovators and entrepreneurs to refine and test innovative ideas that are proven to work, or that have achieved “proof of concept,” and to implement these solutions at a large scale. This Request for Proposals is not for transition-to-scale funding. There will be future funding opportunities to support transition-to-scale projects.
What can I use the funding for?

Successful applicants will sign a Grant Agreement with Grand Challenges Canada which outlines the types of activities that can be funded using this grant. This information will also be included in the full application that applicants will be asked to complete, if their expression of interest was selected. The types of activities that could be funded using this grant may or may not include expenses for outreach, research and development, consulting services, Elder or knowledge keeper honoraria, technical calls, travel, training, salaries, child care etc. The final list of eligible expenses will be confirmed with all successful applicants.

How many projects will be funded?

A maximum of 40 applicants will be selected to submit a full application, based on their expression of interest. The number of projects we approve for funding, based on these full applications, depends on the amount of funding each applicant requests and how many top applicants there are.

Is this the only time you are offering funding?

No. There will be other opportunities in to apply for funding, and the next Request for Proposals is anticipated to open in the late 2020. Visit www.indigenousinnovate.org for updates on when future funding is available and follow us on Facebook, Instagram and/or Twitter to stay updated.

Questions about the application:

- What is the application deadline?
- What does it mean to "apply a gender lens" to my application?
- Can my proposal cover multiple provinces or territories in Canada?
- Can you share a sample Grant Agreement so I can align my proposal to the terms and conditions?
- Can I submit my application in a language other than English?
- Can I mail in my application?
- Can I send a video instead of applying through Fluxx?

What is the application deadline?

You are encouraged to register on Fluxx as soon as possible, as it can take up to 3 days to complete this process. Expressions of interest must be submitted, on Fluxx, no later than June 8, 2020 at 11:59pm EST.
What does it mean to “apply a gender lens” to my application?

This means that you develop a proposal that considers the impact of your innovation across all genders and includes thinking about how your innovation empowers women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals. For example, some questions you could ask include if your innovation includes or impacts Indigenous women, girls and/or 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the following ways:

- Are they involved in hiring people to work for your business, venture or organization or to lead your project?
- Are they full or partial owners of your business, venture or organization?
- Are they leading your project or playing a key decision-making role for your innovation?
- Are they members of your Board of Directors?
- Are they filling executive or leadership roles in your business, venture, project or organization?
- Will they directly use or benefit from your innovation?

Can my proposal cover multiple provinces or territories in Canada?

There is no restriction on the geographic boundaries within Canada for your proposal, however, we recommend carefully considering this decision based on your project team, timeframe and budget. All activities funded by this grant must be used by, or directly benefit, First Nation, Inuit and/or Metis peoples in Canada.

Can you share a sample Grant Agreement so I can align my proposal to the terms and conditions?

No. We are not able to share a sample Grant Agreement with you at this stage. If your full application is successful, we will share all terms and conditions with you during the due diligence process. Some key policies that you must comply with are in the appendix of the Request for Proposals, and we recommend you read this carefully.

Can I submit my application in a language other than English?

Yes. Applications can be submitted in English or French. If you need support for translation, please email info@indigenousinnovate.org or phone 416.583.5821 extension 5585 and we will do our best to connect you with someone to support this.

Can I mail in my application?

No. All applications need to be submitted using Fluxx, which is the online application system that Grand Challenges Canada uses for all of its Requests for Proposals. If you have challenges with internet connectivity, or are unable to access Fluxx, please email info@indigenousinnovate.org or phone 416.583.5821 extension 5585 as soon as you can, and we will do our best to support you.
Can I send a video in instead of applying through Fluxx?

All applications need to be submitted using Fluxx, which is the online application system that Grand Challenges Canada uses for all of its Requests for Proposals. However, you can include videos, images and other documents, like PowerPoint Presentations, in your application if you like.

Questions about eligibility:

- Do I need to be Indigenous to apply for this funding?
- If I do not meet the eligibility criteria, can I apply for funding?
- Do I need any specific academic qualifications to apply?
- If the idea I propose is already being used somewhere else, can I apply for funding?

Do I need to be Indigenous to apply for this funding?

Everyone can apply for this funding so long as they meet the eligibility criteria noted in Section 4.1 of the Request for Proposals. The proposal must directly benefit, or be led by, First Nation, Inuit and/or Metis peoples and project teams must have a meaningful relationship with the Indigenous communities that they intend to work with or benefit. Proposals led by Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people will be prioritized for funding.

If I do not meet the eligibility criteria, can I apply for funding?

No. You must meet at least one of the eligibility criteria noted in Section 4.1 of the Request for Proposals to apply for funding.

Do I need any specific academic qualifications to apply?

No. Anyone can apply for funding, regardless of their academic qualifications. However, the team leading the project must have the skills required to carry out the proposed activities of the innovation.

If the idea I propose is already being used somewhere else, can I apply funding?

Our definition of Indigenous innovation includes trying existing ideas in new contexts. For example, if an idea is being used in non-Indigenous communities already and may be able to meet the needs of Indigenous communities but is not relevant or effective for this context, applying traditional ways of knowing and doing to that idea could be considered innovation.

Applicants will need to clearly define why they believe the idea would apply in this new context and what modifications make it innovative.
Questions about submitting multiple applications:

- If I am leading a project, can I submit two separate applications for two separate projects?
- If I am leading a project for one application, can I support (but not lead or apply for) the work for another application?
- Can one organization or entity submit more than one proposal?
- Can one organization or entity receive more than one grant?

If I am leading a project, can I submit two separate applications for two separate projects?

No. Each Project Lead is only allowed to submit one application.

If I am leading a project for one application, can I support (but not lead or apply for) the work for another application?

Yes.

Can one organization or entity submit more than one proposal?

Yes. One organization, business, institution, Indigenous government etc. can submit more than one application, so long as separate Project Leads are leading the work for each proposal.

Can one organization or entity receive more than one grant?

Yes.

Questions about the selection process:

- How will you decide who receives funding?
- Who will be reviewing applications?
- If I submit an expression of interest does that mean I will receive funding?
- How will I know if I am selected to receive funding?
- What if I have a good idea but am not selected for funding?

How will you decide who receives funding?

For all applicants who meet the eligibility criteria, their expression of interest will be assessed based on the criteria noted in Section 4.2 of the Request for Proposals. This includes how innovative the proposal is and how well it addresses the information provided in the challenge statement.

For all applicants who are invited to submit a full application, these applications will be assessed based on the evaluation criteria noted in Section 4.5 of the Request for Proposals. This includes the potential impact of the proposal, particularly on Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people; how much the proposal is aligned to Indigenous ways of knowing and doing; the potential to transition the idea to scale; how prepared the project team is to implement the proposal and the overall feasibility of the project.
Who will be reviewing applications?

The Indigenous Innovation Initiative team will confirm eligible applicants. Expressions of interest will be reviewed by a group of external Indigenous community members. This group is made up of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people with experience in social innovation, business and entrepreneurship, and who are familiar with the Indigenous Canadian context.

For full applications, an external selection committee made up of reviewers from our Indigenous Innovation Council and other industry experts with experience in social innovation, business and entrepreneurship, and who are familiar with the Indigenous Canadian context, will review each full application.

A final list of applications that are recommended for funding will be prepared by the Indigenous Innovation Council, and the final selection decisions will be approved by the Board of Directors of Grand Challenges Canada.

If I submit an expression of interest does that mean I will receive funding?

No. Your expression of interest is just to share a summary of your innovation so we can evaluate how it responds to the challenge statement. If your expression of interest is accepted, you will be invited to complete a full application for funding. You will only receive funding if your full application is approved.

How will I know if I am selected to receive funding?

Successful applicants will be notified via email if they have received funding. You should expect to hear from us in July if your expression of interest was selected, and if you are invited to fill out a full application for funding. You will only receive funding if your full application is approved.

If your full application for funding is approved, you should expect to hear from us in October.

What if I have a good idea but am not selected for funding?

In the future, we may develop a program to support applicants who have good ideas, but who may not be ready for funding right now. This program would support these innovators and entrepreneurs to develop their ideas to prepare for future Requests for Proposals.

When you register on Fluxx you will be asked the following question about this program: “If your application is not selected for funding, would you be interested in participating in a program to further develop your idea and to help prepare you for future Requests for Proposals?” If this is something you are interested in, select yes to this question.
Questions about help and support:

- Is there anyone who can help me apply?
- Who can I ask for help when using Fluxx?

Is there anyone who can help me apply?

Yes. Please email info@indigenousinnovate.org or phone 416.583.5821 extension 5585 and we will do our best to support you.

Questions submitted after June 5, 2020, may not be answered in time for you to submit an application, so please contact us as early as possible.

Who can I ask for help when using Fluxx?

If you require any support for Fluxx, please visit http://www.grandchallenges.ca/fluxxsupport/, email info@indigenousinnovate.org or phone 416.583.5821 extension 5585.