



Press Release

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Global Nexa Initiative Launches to Support Climate and Health Innovations

— Global consortium seeks bold, scalable solutions that reduce climate-driven health harms on vulnerable communities —

London, UK – At London Climate Action Week, Grand Challenges Canada (GCC) and the Science for Africa Foundation (SFA Foundation) today announced the launch of Nexa, a global initiative to support locally led innovations that address the growing health impacts of climate change. Nexa is led by GCC (in partnership with the Government of Canada) and SFA Foundation, together with a global network of collaborators that includes Novo Nordisk Foundation, Sanofi Foundation, Fund for Innovation in Development, and members of the Global Grand Challenges Network in Botswana, Brazil, Malawi, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa. Nexa aims to mobilize upwards of US\$50 million in partner investment to expand the impact of urgently needed climate-health innovations in low- and middle-income countries. The first Nexa funding call opens June 22 for innovations in Africa and the Americas.

The climate crisis has been described in *The Lancet* as the greatest global health threat of the 21st century. An estimated 3.6 billion people worldwide live in climate-vulnerable regions. Nexa responds to the challenges communities across low- and middle-income countries face as intensifying climate pressures drive new and worsening health risks and place additional strain on already overburdened health systems.

“Communities around the world are facing rapidly growing threats to their health and livelihoods while global climate commitments are weakening,” said Dr. Karlee Silver, CEO, Grand Challenges Canada. “Nexa is about supporting bold, locally led innovation to transform how people stay healthy in the face of climate change.”

Nexa is informed by findings from the largest climate and health survey to date, which engaged 6,400 respondents across 107 low- and middle-income countries. In 2025, Grand Challenges Canada, the Science for Africa Foundation and the Global Grand Challenges Network partnered with The Geneva Learning Foundation to gather insights from health workers, scientists, innovators, policymakers, and humanitarian workers affected by climate-related health threats. Findings are being prepared for publication in an academic journal.



“Climate and health is one of the defining challenges of our time and it will require new models of partnership and investment,” said Dr. Tom Kariuki, CEO of the Science for Africa Foundation. “Those closest to these challenges are often closest to the solutions. Nexa demonstrates what is possible when African priorities, local innovation, and global collaboration come together around a shared goal.”

Rising temperatures, changing disease patterns and severe weather events disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, people with chronic illnesses, children, and underserved communities with limited access to healthcare. Nexa will support bold innovations that focus on three key climate-related drivers of health risks to vulnerable communities: changing vector patterns (causing malaria and dengue), extreme heat, and poor air quality.

“The Government of Canada is proud to support Nexa. Investments in locally led climate and health innovations can create new pathways for vulnerable communities to overcome the health impacts of climate change and safeguard global health,” said the Honourable Randeep Sarai, Canada’s Secretary of State for International Development.

Nexa will provide catalytic funding for both early-stage and growth-stage climate and health innovations that strengthen health systems adaptation and resilience and have a strong potential for impact and scale. Proof of Concept innovations will receive up to US\$200,000 over 18-24 months to support early-stage ideas. Proven solutions will receive approximately US\$250,000 - \$2,000,000 of Transition to Scale funding each, depending on the maturity of the innovation.

Innovations may take the form of a product, process, service, or delivery model that can deliver better outcomes than existing approaches and lead to transformational impact. Applications for innovations in Africa and the Americas will be accepted from June 22 – July 22, 2026. Future funding calls will address climate and health innovation in Asia. Initial investments to support early- and growth-stage climate and health innovators will begin in early 2027.

Philanthropic, public-sector, and private sector partners interested in joining Nexa and potential applicants can visit www.nexaclimate.org to learn more. Funding opportunities will open June 22, 2026, at www.grandchallenges.ca/apply-for-funding/

About Nexa: Nexa is a global climate and health initiative co-led by Grand Challenges Canada and the Science for Africa Foundation, together with a global network of partners. Nexa supports locally led innovations that help communities anticipate, adapt, and respond to climate-related health threats, with an initial focus on extreme heat, mosquito-borne infections, and poor air quality. Informed by insights from past funding calls and the largest-ever global survey of health workers on climate and health, Nexa invests in solutions that strengthen timely health



action where it's needed most.

Nexa partners include Grand Challenges Canada, the Science for Africa Foundation, Novo Nordisk Foundation, Sanofi Foundation, Fund for Innovation in Development, and members of the Global Grand Challenges Network in Botswana (Botswana Innovation Fund), Brazil, Malawi (NCST Malawi), Rwanda (NCST Rwanda), Senegal (Institut Pasteur Dakar), and South Africa (South African Medical Research Council).

About Grand Challenges Canada: Grand Challenges Canada (GCC) backs Bold Ideas with Big Impact®. With anchor funding from the Government of Canada, GCC invests in bold, locally led innovations solving critical health and development challenges, and helps the most promising solutions reach millions of people around the world. GCC has supported more than 1,600 innovations in 110 countries and aims to reach 700 million people by 2035. Learn more at www.grandchallenges.ca

About Science for Africa Foundation: The Science for Africa Foundation (SFA Foundation) is a pan-African, non-profit, and public charity organisation that supports, strengthens, and promotes science and innovation in Africa. SFA Foundation serves the African research ecosystem by investing in transformative research and innovation, enabling interdisciplinary collaborations, and building and reinforcing environments that are conducive for scientists to thrive and produce quality research that generates new, locally relevant knowledge. Learn more at www.scienceforafrica.foundation