



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FY2018 & 2019 Development Innovation Ventures

Annual Program Statement (APS)

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Pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the United States Government, as represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Global Development Lab (Lab), invites applications for the Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) program.

The purpose of this APS is to disseminate information to prospective applicants so they may develop and submit applications for USAID funding. This APS: (A) describes the types of activities for which applications will be considered; (B) describes the funding available and the process and requirements for submitting applications; (C) explains the criteria for evaluating applications; and (D) refers prospective applicants to relevant documentation available on the internet. USAID/LAB anticipates awarding multiple grants and/or cooperative agreements as a result of this APS.

To be competitive under this solicitation, applications must be fully responsive to all directions under this APS document.

Issuance of this Notice does not constitute a binding commitment on the part of the Government to issue an award, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any concept papers, engagement, collaboration, co-creation, or full applications. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted under this APS.

Sincerely,

/s/

Roderick Watson
Agreement Officer
Office of Acquisition and Assistance
M/OAA/SIDP/B

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DIV Introduction

Through a year-round grant competition, Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) sources innovative ideas, pilots and rigorously tests them, and supports the scale-up of solutions that demonstrate proven impact and cost-effectiveness. DIV's tiered funding model; inspired by venture capital funds, invests comparatively small amounts of funding in a variety of unproven ideas, and provides more substantial support only to those that demonstrate rigorous evidence of impact, cost-effectiveness, and potential to scale. Taking a portfolio approach to its impact enables DIV to embrace risk - and occasional failure - as it generates an evidence base for open innovation. DIV's aim is to create a portfolio of innovations across all sectors and geographies in which USAID works, to improve the lives of millions around the world.

DIV funds development innovations, which can include:

- New technologies.
- New ways of delivering or financing goods and services.
- More cost-effective adaptations to existing solutions.
- New ways of increasing uptake of existing proven solutions,
- Policy changes, shifts, or nudges based on insights from behavioral economics.
- Social or behavioral innovations.

Innovations are not required to be technology-based, but should be evidence-informed. DIV supports applications on all development topics and sectors¹, and from organizations eligible under D.2. below, as long as their work will take place in a country in which USAID operates.

DIV assesses proposals according to its core principles: rigorous evidence of impact, cost-effectiveness, and viable pathways to scale, as well as the capacity of the team testing or implementing the proposed intervention. DIV's staged funding model provides investment corresponding to an innovation's demonstrated potential according to each of these criteria. DIV recognizes that the organizations it supports will need flexibility to iterate and adapt innovations, and DIV strives to provide this flexibility through outcomes-oriented contracting.

There are several types of projects that are not a good fit for DIV's objectives. These include (but are not limited to):

- Interventions with limited potential to scale, and/or minimal demonstration of cost-effectiveness and impact (e.g., building schools).
- Basic scientific research (e.g., laboratory research of a prototype with no field testing; pharmaceutical testing before full regulatory approvals).
- Innovations on a private sector path to scale that lack a "base-of-the-pyramid" customer focus and are unlikely to lead to significant development impacts for the poor.

¹ Although DIV strives to be open across all sectors, DIV's funding to support activities in certain sectors may be limited or not available during a given fiscal year, based on the nature of its appropriated funding. This is often the case in the health sector, and particularly for projects addressing HIV/AIDS, for which funding is limited. If you have questions about what types of activities DIV may be able to support, please contact div@usaid.gov.

- Planning or diagnostic tools that are difficult to link directly to measurable development impacts
- Innovations that is applicable only in very limited contexts.
- Research that will not provide evidence of impact, cost effectiveness, or scale potential.
- Intermediaries with an indirect impact on development outcomes (e.g., incubators, accelerators, start-up boot camps, conveners).
- Innovations who cannot adequately explain their theory of change.

Learn more about DIV, including examples of past winners, at www.usaid.gov/DIV or www.divportfolio.org.

DIV Core Principles

There are three fundamental objectives that drive DIV’s search for innovative and impactful development solutions:

- **Evidence**—DIV is designed to find, test, and scale-up the most effective innovations, and encourage rigorous testing methods (e.g., market tests, randomized controlled trials) as appropriate, given a proposal’s stage and scale path. Evidence can encompass ultimate impacts (e.g., infant mortality), or improvements in implementation outcomes (e.g., adoption) for solutions that have been causally linked to ultimate impacts in the past. Measurement of impact should focus either on outcome variables that can be taken as objectives in themselves (e.g., lives saved or additional income), or on intermediate outcomes for which strong evidence already exists of impact on ultimate outcomes (e.g., vaccination rates).
- **Cost-Effectiveness**—DIV seeks innovations that deliver more development impacts per dollar than other ways of achieving the same development goals, such as increased literacy per dollar in comparison to existing practices to improve literacy. Cost-effectiveness does not necessarily mean an innovation must be the lowest-cost innovation. Rather, cost-effectiveness is a function of both impact and cost. An innovation can be highly cost-effective either by achieving a larger impact on specific outcomes at a cost comparable to alternatives, or by achieving comparable impact on specific outcomes at a significantly lower cost than alternatives.
- **Pathways to Scale**—DIV’s ultimate goal is to support development solutions to scale sustainably in order to reach millions of people. Solutions must have a potential pathway to scale, whether a) commercially; b) through incorporation into the practices of developing country governments, donors, or philanthropists; or c) through a combination of commercial and public or philanthropic support. DIV recognizes that innovations can take a variety of pathways to scale, but expects that they will ultimately grow without continued DIV support.²

² Throughout this document, “commercial scaling” refers to an innovation that will scale through the private sector, relying on customer payments and/or financing arrangements from investors; “public scaling” refers to incorporating an innovation into the standard practices of developing country governments, donors, or philanthropists; “hybrid scaling” refers to a scaling approach that relies both on some form of revenue or investment capital as well as support from donors, governments, and philanthropists.

The more funding requested, up to 5 million dollars, the more confidence DIV will need to have in the innovation's evidence base, cost-effectiveness, and potential to scale, as well as the capacity of the team testing or supporting the intervention. This includes gathering appropriate evidence of impact and/or commercial viability at each stage and for each type of pathway to scale. Specific requirements regarding evidence, cost-effectiveness, and scaling expectations are described below, and may differ based on funding stage, type of innovation, and pre-existing evidence base and lessons learned.

Points of Contact

For any questions regarding this APS, contact div@usaid.gov.

The Agreement Officer for this APS is Rod Watson, rwatson@usaid.gov, in USAID's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) Special Initiatives Development Partners. If an application is awarded, the Agreement Officer will appoint an Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) at that time to provide technical and administrative oversight of the specific award.

A. Stages of Financing

- **STAGE 1: Proof of Concept / Initial Testing** (up to \$200,000)
Stage 1 is used to test the proof of concept of any innovative service, product, or business model in a developing country context. A Stage 1 innovation is at initial stages of implementation and needs to be tested within a market to understand interest from consumers, impact, and feasibility. While a strong theory of change is critical, the impact of the innovation may be less obvious on "direct beneficiaries" in the short-term (for example, innovations that reduce pollution, improve governance, etc.). Innovations must be post-prototype or ideation phase, but pre-revenue innovations are considered at this stage.
- **STAGE 2: Testing and Positioning for Scale** (\$200,000 to \$1,500,000)
Stage 2 is used to test the business or delivery model of a product or service. Building on the parameters of Stage 1, smaller Stage 2 awards (up to \$500,000) are generating evidence of user demand beyond the proof of concept. For commercial models, Stage 2 awards support the generation of a sustainable business model and, therefore, innovations should be post-revenue. Innovations should be collecting data on usage as well as proxies for eventual social impact, however, clear and rigorous evidence of impact is not needed in the lower range of funding levels for this stage.

Larger scale Stage 2 innovations (over \$500,000) must include or test the evidence of impact of an innovation. This evidence of impact must be causal and rigorous – the grantee must either have rigorous underlying evidence already established, use this funding to run an evaluation with an evaluation partner, or run an evaluation with its own funding during the grant period. There must be demonstrated significant demand for the innovation.

- **STAGE 3: Scaling** (\$1,500,000 to \$5,000,000)
Stage 3 provides funding for catalytic partnerships to scale the innovation to a new

context or demonstrate replicability. Funds must leverage additional external funding or partnerships. Innovations with an expected private sector scaling pathway should have already demonstrated commercial viability in their existing location and the ability to attract commercial and/or impact capital on market terms that would allow sustained expansion, as well as a prima facie case for development impact based on causal, rigorous evidence and demonstration of cost-effectiveness. For commercial innovations, organizations should no longer need donor funding for basic operations; rather, these funds should be used to attract external funding, or for strategic partnerships to scale to new contexts. Stage 3 investments in commercial projects will only be considered on a pari passu (“equal footing”) basis with other donors/investors, and not as the lead donor. For public sector innovations, organizations should have partnerships with the government or other organizations in place to scale the innovation.

- **Evidence Generation** (up to \$1,500,000)

DIV is committed to generating evidence in the development sector. Researchers may apply for funds to evaluate the impact of cost-effective innovations in partnership with an implementer (for example, a host country government, social enterprise, nonprofit, etc.). Research is separated from the requirements of staged funding, since research projects vary in funding need and may apply to build on existing research or for any amount up to the funding cap for new research projects. We encourage evidence generation efforts alongside innovation development. DIV is also willing to fund evidence generation for a project implemented by other means. Small grants (up to \$150,000) are available for researchers to participate in the application of the research results to improve development outcomes. Pilot research projects for which funds are not used to generate causal, rigorous evidence are strongly discouraged.

- As part of DIV’s support for cash benchmarking, funds will be made available to support the rigorous evaluation of standard programs in order to create comparisons to the DIV-funded household grants evaluations.

B. Evaluation Criteria

DIV will use the following criteria to assess applicants at both the Expression of Interest and Due Diligence Stage in the application process. DIV’s expectations of fulfilling these criteria vary by stage. See Section A above for more details on DIV’s stage-specific expectations. Ratings are applied by section (innovation, plan, monitoring and evaluation, and team); and the sections are weighted equally in importance.

- **Innovation & Impact**

DIV will assess the application for the degree to which it demonstrates:

- Clear explanation of the innovation and compelling problem statement in the development context addressing issues surrounding extreme poverty.
- Clear explanation of how the problem impacts people's lives and how solving this problem would improve people's lives.
- Realistic explanation and clear articulation of the number of people (i.e., beneficiaries/customers) impacted by the proposed activity locally and globally.
- Clear identification of target beneficiaries/customers and general information by demographic disaggregation (i.e., gender, age, income, geography, etc.).

2. Cost-effectiveness

DIV will assess the application for the degree to which it demonstrates:

- Clear justification that the innovation can achieve better results at lower cost and be more effective at solving the problem than the status quo or alternatives.
- Potential social benefit to beneficiaries/customers and society.
- The possibility of sustainably reaching millions of individuals within ten years.
- Legitimate justification for funding amount requested.

3. Evidence & Evaluation

DIV will assess the application for the degree to which the proposed evaluation efforts demonstrate:

- A clear theory of change that draws upon existing evidence when applicable/available, either from valid sources and/or previous implementation experience.
- Well-defined metrics or key performance indicators to judge success of the project including proof-of-concept viability, commercial viability, causal impact, cost-effectiveness, reach, and other social impact.
- Clear explanation of how the metrics would be collected including relevant assumptions for early stage applicants.
- Appropriate choice of methodology for assessing the commercial viability, cost-effectiveness, and/or development impact of the innovation.
- Commitment to measure and evaluate the project to capture results truthfully and pivot when necessary to achieve greater impact and scale.

4. Implementation

DIV will assess the application for the degree to which the proposed implementation activities demonstrate:

- Stage-appropriate plans to build operational capacity, systems, and partnerships to drive the project or organization towards scale.
- A clear theory of change exists that draws upon existing evidence when applicable/available and a clear understanding of current barriers to success.
- Ability of the applicant to successfully implement and execute the project as designed, which includes demonstrated past experience with projects of similar magnitude, complexity, objectives or in similar contexts.
- Reasonable tests of technical, organization, distribution, and financial viability in a real world setting that can inform future implementation.
- Clear systems to document project execution including the costs of implementation and ongoing financial requirements.
- Commitment to testing theory of change and pivoting when necessary to achieve greater impact and scale.

5. Sustainability and Pathway to Scale [Note this criteria does not apply for evidence-based applications]

DIV will assess the application for the degree to which the project team demonstrates:

Sustainability:

- A stage-appropriate, targeted strategy for securing long-term financial viability and engagement of stakeholders that will drive the organization towards sustainability after DIV funding has ended.
- Clear plans to sustain long-term viability of the project/organization by way of growth in revenue, increased beneficiaries/customers, greater adoption, acquisition, etc.

Scale:

- A clear methodology for the intended pathway to scale.
- Potential for partnerships with government, private sector, and/or other donor/funder to attain social impact goals.
- Clear demonstration that DIV funds will be used to effectively catalyze expansion of the solution, including strategic use of leverage and/or cost-share.
- Realistic assessment of future challenges and risks anticipated and practical mitigation plans to address them.

6. Project Team

DIV will assess the application for the degree to which the project team (including partners) shows:

- Clear demonstration of expertise and relevant experience to execute the proposed plans.

- Clear assignment of key roles and level of effort (percent of full time) across the team, as deemed necessary for success.
- Clear understanding of current context on the ground and potential challenges to implementation, as well as capabilities to address them should they occur.
- For Stage 2 proposals, a credible pathway to scale and involvement/commitment of partners as part of the assessment; for stage 3 proposals, involvement and/or commitment of stakeholders essential to ensure significant scale.

Evaluation Matrix

DIV will use the following scoring methodology to assess each application:

Rating	Description
Excellent	Exceeds expectations in that it is comprehensive, thorough, and with exceptional merit, demonstrating that the proposed project will likely result in effective and efficient performance. Exhibits no significant deficiencies.
Very Good	Demonstrates overall competence, meets all minimum requirements, and exceeds requirements in some areas, but not all. Even if there are some identified weaknesses, the applicant demonstrates that it can successfully complete all deliverables in a timely, efficient, and economical manner.
Good	Meets requirements. While the applicant demonstrates an ability to complete the work in some areas, there are some significant weaknesses or deficiencies. However, these combined weaknesses or deficiencies still represent a manageable performance risk.
Fair	Minimally meets basic requirements or demonstrates a limited understanding of the requirements. Implementation of the proposed project would likely lead to unsatisfactory performance. Contains deficiencies and significant weaknesses that may negatively affect performance.
Poor	Many deficiencies and/or gross omissions, including failure to address key elements, failure to understand work necessary to perform the required tasks, or failure to provide a reasonable approach to fulfilling requirements.
Nonresponsive	Fails to address all elements of the criteria; fails to understand the work necessary to perform the required tasks; fails to meet the requirements of the solicitation.

C. Application & Award Process

The amount of resources made available under this APS will depend on the concepts received and the availability of funds. The award process under this APS has the following steps: DIV will review applications on a rolling basis, so applicants are encouraged to submit applications at any time.

C.1. Expression of Interest: All interested organizations must submit an application through www.usaid.gov/DIV/apply. After an application is received, DIV reserves the right to pose clarifying questions and conduct discussions with the applicant. Further, posing clarifying questions and holding discussions may not be done with each applicant, or any applicants. If initial review indicates the application merits further consideration, the application enters the Due Diligence process.

C.2. Due Diligence Process: For applications which DIV deems to have merit, DIV will issue an invitation to collaborate and “co-create” with the applicant. This is the second, more intensive stage of the application process, known as the Due Diligence, into which only a small subset of applicants will be invited. During this process, DIV may request to interview the applicant, request supplementary materials which further outline the technical approach and its responsiveness to DIV’s principles, submit follow-up questions to the applicant, contact other funders of and partners to the applicant, engage experts within USAID or external experts to review and comment on specific elements of the application, and any other information gathering it deems necessary. The supplementary materials that an applicant may be requested to submit may include, but are not limited to: an initial budget, financial model, project milestones, and an implementation plan. DIV may engage in co-creation with the application to get the documents ready for further assessment. An updated application is submitted if any substantive changes are made to the application.

Additional Partners/Resources: During the Due Diligence process, both the applicant and USAID may identify additional partners³ and resources, and whether additional mechanisms are necessary to implement the project. Shared resourcing may be accomplished through funding by DIV, the award recipient, and/or third parties, either through cash resources or the exchange of other resources, both tangible and intangible, such as in-kind contributions, expertise, intellectual property, brand value, high-value coordination, and access to key people, places, and information. Co-investing does not require equally shared resourcing (such as 1:1 leverage), but rather resource contributions that are appropriate to the specific project’s objectives, considering the comparative advantages brought by the participation of each party and the award type.

C.3. Review by a Decision Panel: All updated applications will be reviewed for their technical merit by a Decision Panel, comprised of USAID and/or Non-USAID Experts. USAID may request applicants who have submitted applications for larger awards to present their application to the

³ If additional partners are identified, invitations will be sent to the potential partners to participate in a co-creation workshop, conference, meeting, or the method designated by USAID to work together with all invitees to further develop the idea initially presented in the Expression of Interest. All potential partners may not move forward to C.3. below. The inclusion of additional partners will only occur when it makes technical sense and there is agreement to include additional partners between the original applicant and DIV.

Decision Panel via teleconference, video-conference, or to travel to USAID/Washington at their own expense. The Decision Panels will only meet with applicants when they determine a meeting is necessary; applicants should not contact DIV to schedule a presentation.

Based on the criteria outlined in Section B above, the Decision Panel will recommend to DIV which applications are advanced to the Agreement Officer for award instrument negotiation and finalization. Using its technical expertise, the Decision Panel may suggest revisions/additions to the project, and potential partners and resources. All potential partners may not move forward to C.4 below. The inclusion of additional partners will only occur when it makes technical sense and there is agreement to include additional partners between the applicant and DIV.

C.4. Agreement Officer Determination: Positive Decision Panel recommendations will be shared with the Agreement Officer for further review and to inform award instrument negotiation and finalization. During this process, the Apparently Successful Applicant and DIV can further refine the technical approach, general resource requirements, and management control of the project under the guidance of the Agreement Officer.

Request for Additional Information. If necessary, the Apparently Successful Applicant and DIV may also work with partners identified by the Decision Panel, to provide additional information on the approach. The Apparently Successful Applicant may also be asked to provide more information about its technical approach, capacity, management and organization, past performance, and budget, as well as certifications and representations, or other information, as needed.

Final Review and Negotiation. The Agreement Officer, in conjunction with DIV, will engage in final review, negotiation, and determinations of award instrument type, responsibility, and cost reasonableness, and will craft an award instrument with the Apparently Successful Applicant. If the Apparently Successful Applicant and USAID cannot arrive at a mutually agreeable arrangement, the Agreement Officer will cancel the project at no cost to the Government.

Award. The USAID Agreement Officer will award the instrument.

D. Award Information

The number of awards could vary annually, and may not mirror the number of applications or invitees to co-creation.

D.1. Awards under this APS will be made to successful applicants on the basis of their ability to further USAID's goal of dramatically improving or saving the lives of the poor in developing countries, and reflect DIV's core principles, and that provide excellent value to the Government to substantially contribute to these objectives.

D.2. Eligibility Information. Public, private, for-profit, and nonprofit organizations, as well as institutions of higher education, public international organizations, non-governmental organizations, U.S. and non-U.S. governmental organizations, multilateral and international donor organizations are eligible under this APS. All organizations must be determined to be responsive to the APS and sufficiently responsible to perform or participate in the final award. This award is also contingent on USAID obtaining concurrence from the responsible Mission.

All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. Local organizations are eligible and encouraged to apply, as well as consortia of local organizations. Participation of foreign government organizations under this APS is possible only through an approved subaward agreement with a prime recipient.

USAID encourages applications from new partners. Resultant awards to new partners may require USAID to undertake necessary pre-award reviews of these organizations to determine “responsibility” in regards to fiduciary and other oversight responsibilities of the award. In order for an award to be made, the Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is “responsible” as discussed in ADS 303.3.9.7B

D.3. Standard Clauses and Provisions of Award. The standard clauses or provisions for awards are generally prescribed by law and regulation. Information regarding clauses and provisions will be offered to the applicant when the award is drafted.

D.4. Organizations are encouraged to consider providing reasonable cost sharing, leverage, or other exchange of resource arrangements, and are encouraged to suggest creative approaches to resourcing projects. Organizations are reminded that voluntary committed cost share becomes a binding requirement of the award if accepted by USAID.

D.5. Ongoing programs. Any follow on, or continuation of a program applying for additional funding, must demonstrate a proposed change or adaptation in scope or direction in response to the APS. Such programs should clearly explain in their application their progress to date and update the context for their program as well as demonstrate why continuation of programming will contribute to the overall goals of the APS. Programs applying for ongoing funds must highlight why continued programming will contribute to a sustainable approach – simply applying for another award because a previous or current award is running out of funding is not in and of itself sufficient justification.

E. Special Funding Opportunities

Periodically, we may open additional special funding opportunities, which will be posted at www.grants.gov and www.usaid.gov/div.

F. Application

Format

Please submit your application using the link found at www.usaid.gov/div/apply. Those applicants that have the most promising applications will be contacted by DIV and invited to the Due Diligence process. Due to the sheer volume and nature of applications received by DIV, it is possible that you may not receive detailed feedback on why your application was not accepted.

Applications must be submitted through the link found at www.usaid.gov/div/apply.

Applications sent by any other means will not be considered. The DIV website, www.usaid.gov/div, contains detailed content that is useful for applicants. Please do not contact USAID staff with general questions.

Other Application Parameters

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. DIV seeks to select projects across a wide range of technical and regional areas across all three stages. USAID will not fund applications that, in its view, will result in the use of U.S. taxpayer funding in a duplicative or redundant manner. This includes activities determined to be outside of the best interest and value to the United States Government.

If DIV identifies opportunities to strengthen or fund an application by connecting with other USAID mechanisms, other potential funders, and/or external partners, USAID/DIV may make that application available internally or externally for appropriate consideration.

DIV applicants or winners may be added to a public innovation list that we encourage USAID and other development implementers to source innovations from. This means that other USAID or external projects that might have potential application or use for a DIV innovation in their program will be provided with contact access to a DIV applicant or winners.

DIV applicants and winners will be expected to cite the support they receive from DIV/USAID or access via the DIV process to any journalists, press, or content outlets that inquire or write stories about the innovation that was supported by DIV and USAID.

Additional Information on Award Administration

- General Information: www.usaid.gov/div
- Working with USAID: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/how-to-work-with-usaid>
- Information regarding the award solicitation and award process and Standard Provisions for U.S. organizations and Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations is available in ADS 300 (Chapter 303 is particularly helpful): <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-300>.
- Grant and Contract Process (most relevant for applicants include steps 7/8): <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/grant-and-contract-process>
- For US organizations, 2 CFR 200, [OMB circulars](#), and the Standard Provisions apply.
- For non-U.S. non-governmental organizations, the [Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations](#) apply.
- Intellectual property⁴ and other issues: http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=d3769da5cf0d02900f539c8deb2cd59c&mc=true&node=se2.1.200_1448&rgn=div8.
- Environmental Compliance background information: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance

⁴ In general, awardees may elect to pursue ownership of intellectual property that is developed as a result of an award from this APS. In such cases, USAID would typically retain a nonexclusive, non-transferable, royalty-free license to use any such intellectual property

- Information on how the Agency will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation when required by the 22 CFR 216 determination (ADS 204):
<http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-200>
- Branding and Marking policy and frequently asked questions:
<https://www.usaid.gov/branding/faqs>
- USAID's Gender Equality Policy
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/GenderEqualityPolicy.pdf>