**DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION VENTURES**

**Application Guideline**

Open innovation inspires new solutions to the critical challenges affecting millions around the world. In the spirit of open innovation, Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) supports groundbreaking ideas to transform lives by providing flexible, tiered grant funding to test new ideas and models, take strategic risks, build evidence of what works, and advance the best solutions.

DIV funds innovations that demonstrate the three guiding principles of: a) rigorous evidence of impact, b) cost-effectiveness, and c) a viable pathway to scale and sustainability. We accept proposals year-round from any type of organization, sector, and country in which USAID works at the following stages:

* **STAGE 1:** Proof of Concept (up to $200,000)
* **STAGE 2**: Testing and Positioning for Scale ($200,000 to $1,500,000)
* **STAGE 3**: Scaling ($1,500,000 to $5,000,000)
* **Evidence** **Generation** (up to $1,500,000)

**For detailed information about DIV, the selection criteria, and examples of previously funded innovations, please visit** [**www.usaid.gov/div**](http://www.usaid.gov/div)**.**

**Before you begin your application, please read through the following:**

1. **This is a sample application form. It can help you prepare to submit an application on our online system.**
2. Take the [DIV Self-screening Questionnaire](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y6NXNP7) to determine if your innovation is good fit for DIV.
3. Visit <https://www.usaid.gov/div/apply> for tips and instructions on how to submit your online application.
   1. You will need to create an account on the online application portal so that you may work on the application over time and check the status of your application.
   2. Your application will save automatically and continuously as you work on the application.
   3. The application is plain text only.
   4. Once you submit your application, you will not be able to edit the application.
   5. Applications submitted via any method other than the online application portal will not be reviewed.
4. Please submit one application per project and project team.

**DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION VENTURES**

**Application Form**

***Please provide accurate information to the full extent of your organization’s knowledge.***

**SECTION 1: ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

Organization Name\*: (max. 80 characters):

Organization Type\*: [*Picklist selection: Academic, Nonprofit/NGO, For-profit, Federal Agency, Foreign Government, Multilateral, Other*]

Website:

**ORGANIZATION ADDRESS**

Country\*: [*Country List*]

Street Address\*:

City\*:

State/Region\*:

Zip Code/Postal Code\*:

In which country is your organization legally incorporated?\* [*Country List*]

How many employees are in your organization?\*

*Picklist selection: Micro (<10), Small (<50), Medium (<300), Large (300+)*

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Primary Point of Contact\*  (Founder/CEO/Principal Investigator) | Secondary Point of Contact (optional) |
| First Name: | First Name: |
| Last Name: | Last Name: |
| Title: | Title: |
| Work e-mail: | Work e-mail: |
| Work Phone: | Work Phone: |
| Gender: [*Male/Female/Other*] | Gender: [*Male/Female/Other*] |
| Under 30-years-old? [*Yes/No*] | Under 30-years-old? [*Yes/No*] |

**SECTION 2: PROJECT OVERVIEW INFORMATION**

**Project Title** (max. 80 characters)\*: *[Summarize what your project is about.]*

**Please specify to which DIV Stage you are applying**\*: [*Stage 1/2/3/Evidence*]

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage 1** | **Stage 2** | **Stage 3** | **Evidence** |
| Proof of Concept/ Initial Testing | Testing/Positioning for Scale | Scaling | Evidence Generation |
| up to $200,000 | $200,000 to $1,500,000 | $1,500,000 to $5,000,000 | up to $1,500,000 |
| Funds may be used to test proof of concept of any innovative service, product, or business model. | Funds may be used to test the business or delivery model of a product or service. | Funds may be used to scale the innovation to a new context or demonstrate replicability. | Funds may be used (by researchers) to evaluate the impact of potentially cost-effective innovations, often in partnership with an implementer (e.g., a host country government, social enterprise, nonprofit, etc.). |
| Innovations at this stage should be post-prototype or ideation. Pre-revenue innovations will be considered. | Innovations at this stage should have usage and proxies for social impact data.  Commercially scaling innovations should be post-revenue with increasing growth in recurring revenue.  Innovations using public or philanthropic resources must cite or generate evidence of impact through a randomized control trial or quasi-experimental evaluation. | Innovations at this stage should leverage additional external funding or partnerships.  Commercially scaling innovations should have demonstrated commercial viability through a market test.  Innovations using public/philanthropic funds should have partnerships for scaling. | Research should generate rigorous evidence with practical applications or implications. |

**Total Funding Requested (in USD)\*:** *[Please round up to the nearest dollar.]*

**Proposed Cost Share (in USD)\*:** *[Please round up to the nearest dollar.]**Please specify the amount your organization or a partner organization plan to contribute towards the total cost of the project in addition to funding requested from DIV. It can be the value of labor hours or equipment/machinery already owned or donated, which you will use to perform grant activities. It is not required, but will become a condition of an award if it is part of the approved award budget.*

*Note: Stage 3 interventions scaling commercially will only be considered on an equal footing (i.e., $1 in DIV funding for every $1 invested by other funders/donors).*

**With what type(s) of organization(s) do you plan to partner (if any)\*?***Picklist selection(s): Academic, Nonprofit/NGO, For-profit, Federal Agency, Foreign Government, Multilateral, Other,* *None*

**Which of the following best describes the sector(s) your innovation addresses?**

**Primary Sector** (select one)\*:

**Secondary Sector(s)**, if any:

*Picklist selection: Agriculture/Food Security, Democracy/Governance, Disaster Relief/Humanitarian Assistance, Economic Growth, Education and Training, Energy, Environment, Health, Water Sanitation and Hygiene, Other: please specify*

**Where will this project take place?**

**Primary Country** (select one)\*: [*Country List*]

**Secondary Country/Countries**, if any: [*Country List*]

**Does your organization have a long-term or permanent office in the country or countries where the project will take place?\*** [*Yes/No*]

**Expected duration of project activities in months** *(max. 36 months)*\*:

**Expected source of financial support at scale to ensure the long-term sustainability of the innovation\***: [*Public, Private, Hybrid*]  
*Public: Local, State, or Federal Government; Multilateral Donor; Higher Education Institution; NGO*

*Private: Businesses, Financial Institutions, Entrepreneurs, Investors, Philanthropies, and Foundations*

*Hybrid: A combination of public and private sources of financial support*

**Has the applicant received funding for this or a similar project from any of the following**?\*

DIV\*: [*Yes/No*] If ‘Yes’, please provide the grant/award number

USAID (other than DIV)\*: [*Yes/No*] If ‘Yes’, please specify USAID Program/contact

U.S. Government\*: [*Yes/No*] If ‘Yes’, please specify

**Has the applicant submitted this or a similar project for funding consideration to any of the following?\***

DIV\*: [*Yes/No*] If ‘Yes’, please provide the application number

USAID (other than DIV)\*: [*Yes/No*] If ‘Yes’, please specify USAID Program

U.S. Government\*: [*Yes/No*] If ‘Yes’, please specify

**Has the applicant ever received any USAID funding in the past for other projects?\***  [*Yes/No*]

**How did you hear about DIV?\*** [*Please specify*]

*Picklist selection: USAID Staff, USAID Website/Newsletter, DIV Website/Newsletter, DIV grantee, USAID Implementing Partner, Global Innovation Exchange, Conference, Press, Social Media, Other*

**SECTION 3: DETAILED PROJECT INFORMATION - STAGE 1/2/3 APPLICATIONS**

**FOR EVIDENCE APPLICATIONS, PLEASE GO TO PAGE 10**

*Please review the selection criteria available in the Annual Program Statement as guidance for answering the following long-form questions.*

*Additional guidance is included in text boxes in grey. Please read guidance closely and provide detailed responses to each specific question, as applications that do so have the greatest likelihood of receiving DIV support. Answers should be appropriate given the stage and intended pathway to scale of your innovation.*

*Please be sure to include citations/sources for assertions or references when citing evidence and relevant statistics.*

**DETAILED PROJECT INFORMATION: Stages 1, 2, or 3**

1. **What is the problem affecting the base of the pyramid that your innovation addresses?\***

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| *What is the problem and how does it impact the lives of people at the base of the pyramid (i.e., living on less than $5 per day and, especially less than $2)? How would solving this problem improve people's lives? How many people does this issue impact in the country/countries you are working in, and globally?* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **What is your innovation?\***

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| --- |
| *Describe your innovation. For applicants scaling through public and philanthropic means, please explain how your innovation will generate or build on an evidence base.*  *For Evidence Grant applications, please also describe how your work will build on existing evidence and contribute to our knowledge of what works.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **Who does your innovation impact?\***

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| *Explain who specifically is impacted by the problem and who will benefit from your innovation (i.e., different genders, age groups, income levels, minorities).* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **What have you achieved to date and how many people does your innovation currently serve? What social outcomes do you expect your innovation to achieve over the next 5 years?\***

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| *What results have you demonstrated thus far? How many people currently benefit from your innovation? Describe the projected future impact of your innovation in terms of the number of beneficiaries and magnitude of impacts/outcomes (e.g., XX% improved learning, XX% improvement in health outcomes, $XX increase in household income, etc.). We understand precise estimates may be difficult to calculate; we are interested in the logic used to approximate these numbers. Please include explanations and supporting calculations to demonstrate how you reached your estimates and be as concrete as possible. Lastly, please address whether your innovation has been piloted and what you have learned from piloting.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Clearly state what makes your innovation better or more appealing than alternatives. How is it more effective, less expensive, and/or more efficient than alternatives?\***

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| *What alternative solutions exist in the geographic area where your innovation is implemented? What are the advantages of your innovation compared to these existing solutions? What is the total cost of your innovation compared to existing solutions? Specify why your solution has the potential to have a greater impact per dollar than alternative ways of addressing the same development challenge.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **How will your innovation scale and be funded sustainably? Please explain the revenue model (public, private, or hybrid) and how your innovation will reach millions of people? Specifically, how will DIV funding play a catalytic role?\***

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| --- |
| *Please describe your model for scaling and whether you will rely on donor/government funding, a commercial model, or other types of capital including a mix of donor/government/private/philanthropic funds. Based on your pathway to scale, how will DIV funding play an enabling or catalyzing role? For innovations intended to scale commercially, please explain your revenue model, break-even projections, customer/beneficiary segmentation, cost assumptions,and the role of any critical stakeholders.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **What evaluation methodology will you use to measure the success of your innovation? For Stage 2 innovations scaling with public/philanthropic funds and other projects that include a study, please describe your study design and research methodology.\***

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| *Potential evaluation methodologies from which to choose include: (a) client/beneficiary surveys, interviews, case studies; (b) sales or usage measures; (c) collect before and after data from clients/beneficiaries; or (d) an impact evaluation measuring causal outcomes. If your application includes a study, to the extent they are known at this time, please include a) your research questions, b) sampling frame, c) power calculations, and, if a randomized control trial (RCT), d) your unit of randomization and randomization strategy, e) steps you will take to ensure your research influences policy/businesses (i.e., dissemination strategy), and f) any other details you think are needed to understand your study design.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **What relevant metrics/key performance indicators (KPIs) will you use to track your overall grant activity performance and how will you collect the data?\***

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| *Please list relevant metrics/KPIs and your corresponding targets over the next five years. Example KPIs include: # of direct customers/beneficiaries, magnitudes of social outcomes (e.g., XX% reduction in chronic malnutrition, $XX increase in household income), adoption rate by customers/beneficiaries, fully loaded costs per customer/beneficiary, capital raised, ratios of revenue to cost. DIV understands that these indicators and targets may change over time.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **First, list and describe all major activities you will execute for the proposed project and the approximate amounts to be spent on each activity. Second, of the total budget, specify the total amounts to be spent on major budget categories (e.g., salaries, travel, data collection/analysis, implementation, R&D, other).\***

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| *List all major activities and the approximate budget required for each activity and each major budget category. Amounts should be in US Dollars and estimates based on intentional and critical thought.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **What are the biggest challenges and risks you expect to encounter and the measures you will take to mitigate them?\***

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| *All innovations face challenges in achieving scale. Please identify the most important challenges (e.g., generating revenue, supply chain issues, policy requirements, legal regulations, etc.) you may encounter and how you will address them.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **Please provide an overview of the lead implementing organization, including relevant past experience. Describe why this organization is well positioned and has the capacity needed to solve this problem.\***

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| *What is the lead implementing organization’s area of expertise, primary activity, and mission? Please provide detailed information on relevant past experience. Make sure to highlight the lead organization’s core competencies as they relate to addressing the problem statement.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Who are the key team members for implementation of grant activities and what is their level of effort (LOE)?\***

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| *Please provide a list of each key team member contributing to grant activities. For each team member, specify their percentage level of effort (LOE) for project activities, include a one or two sentence summary of relevant skills and experience, and describe how she/he will contribute to grant activities (i.e., CEO Jane Doe (50 % LOE) Doe has worked on a and b since 2004. She will be responsible for x, y, and z).* ***Please DO NOT include entire CVs.*** *[Note: LOE is the percentage of 100% of an individual’s working schedule.]* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Describe key partner organizations, co-funders and/or major clients, and explain how they demonstrated their commitment to participating in the project activities. What skills/experience/resources do they contribute to implementing or scaling the innovation? What are their roles and responsibilities?\***

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| --- |
| *Do you plan to work with any non-governmental organizations, government ministries, service providers (i.e., health centers, schools), universities/research institutions, private sector companies, etc. For each partner, co-funder, and major client, please specify whether they have already agreed to participate and have entered into a formal agreement or indicated verbal interest. Please specify which organizations are providing financial support for this project. Lastly, if an innovation depends on the support of another organization/institution to scale-up, please mention the extent to which the lead organization is working with them.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Please provide up to three (3) references who can speak to the past performance and ability of the applicant.\***

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| *Please include contact information, including name, organization, email, and phone number. References should be able to attest to and validate the applicant’s ability to work effectively, achieve results, and successfully implement similar activities within the past three (3) years. Personal references are acceptable in cases in which a professional reference is not available.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Please use the space below to list additional citations in support of this project. Only content written in the application will be reviewed; these citations will be used to verify factual accuracy if necessary.\***

|  |
| --- |
| *Please list citation URLs or publication information.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

**SECTION 3: DETAILED PROJECT INFORMATION – EVIDENCE APPLICATIONS**

*Please review the selection criteria available in the Annual Program Statement as guidance for answering the following long-form questions.*

*Additional guidance is included in text boxes in grey. Please read guidance closely as applications that do so have the greatest likelihood of receiving DIV support. Answers should be appropriate given the stage and intended pathway to scale of your innovation.*

*Please be sure to include citations/sources for assertions or references where applicable (i.e., when citing evidence and relevant statistics).*

**DETAILED PROJECT INFORMATION: Evidence Generation**

1. **What is the problem affecting the base of the pyramid that your innovation addresses?\***

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| *What is the problem and how does it impact the lives of people at the base of the pyramid (i.e., living on less than $5 per day and, especially less than $2)? How would solving this problem improve people's lives? How many people does this issue impact in the country/countries you are working in, and globally?* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **What is your innovation?**

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| --- |
| *Describe your innovation. For applicants scaling through public and philanthropic means, please explain how your innovation will generate or build on an evidence base.*  *For Evidence Grant applications, please also describe how your work will build on existing evidence and contribute to our knowledge of what works.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **Who does your innovation impact?\***

|  |
| --- |
| *Explain who specifically is impacted by the problem/who will benefit from your innovation and research (i.e., different genders, age groups, income levels, minorities).* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **What have you achieved to date and how many people does your innovation currently serve? What social outcomes do you expect your innovation to achieve over the next 5 years?\***

|  |
| --- |
| *What results have you demonstrated thus far? How many people currently benefit from your innovation? Describe the projected future impact of your innovation in terms of the number of beneficiaries and magnitude of impacts/outcomes (e.g., XX% improved learning, XX% improvement in health outcomes, $XX increase in household income, etc.). We understand precise estimates may be difficult to calculate; we are interested in the logic used to approximate these numbers. Please include explanations and supporting calculations to demonstrate how you reached your estimates and be as concrete as possible. Lastly, please address whether your innovation has been piloted and what you have learned from piloting.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Clearly state what makes your innovation better, more cost-effective, or more appealing than alternatives.\***

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| --- |
| *What alternative solutions exist in the geographic area where your innovation is implemented? What are the advantages of your innovation compared to these existing solutions? What is the total cost of your innovation compared to existing solutions? Specify why your solution has the potential to have a greater impact per dollar than alternative ways of addressing the same development challenge.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **Please describe your study design and research methodology.\***

|  |
| --- |
| *Potential evaluation methodologies from which to choose include: (i) client/beneficiary surveys, interviews, case studies; (ii) sales or usage measures; (iii) collect before and after data from clients/beneficiaries; or (iv) an impact evaluation measuring causal outcomes. As applicable, please include a) your research questions, b) sampling frame, c) power calculations, and, if a randomized control trial (RCT), d) your unit of randomization and randomization strategy, and e) any other details you think are needed to understand your study design.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **How will this research contribute to changes in policy and practice? How will you disseminate evidence generated?\***

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| --- |
| *What are the policy questions your evaluation addresses? Who are the consumers of evidence you generate? How will evidence feed into policy decisions? What are the key barriers for adopting results and for taking the innovation to scale? Describe the scope for the intervention to be scaled up and replicated in other contexts if the research shows positive results.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **Please describe the theory of change linking your innovation to intended outcomes. What are your intermediate and final outcomes of interest and how will you measure these outcomes? How will you judge the success of your research with respect to adoption of results/scaling up of your innovation?\***

|  |
| --- |
| *What is the causal chain linking your innovation to the outcomes you seek to impact? Please list relevant outcomes, metrics for measuring outcomes, and how you intend to measure them (e.g., surveys, administrative data). What must occur in the short-, medium-, and long-term to ensure that research results are adopted by appropriate stakeholders? Which indicators will you use to gauge your success with respect to these steps?* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **First, list and describe all major activities you will execute for the proposed project and the approximate amounts to be spent on each activity. Second, of the total budget, specify the total amounts to be spent on major budget categories (e.g., salaries, travel, data collection/analysis, implementation, R&D, other).\***

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| *List all major activities and the approximate budget required for each activity and each major budget category. Amounts should be in US Dollars and estimates based on intentional and critical thought.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **What are the biggest challenges and risks you expect to encounter and the measures you will take to mitigate them?\***

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| *All research faces challenges in achieving scale. Please identify the most important challenges (e.g., delays in roll-out, threats to validity, low power, etc.) you may encounter and how you will address them.* |

Max. Characters: 4,000

1. **Please provide an overview of the lead implementing organization, including relevant past experience. Describe why this organization is well positioned and has the capacity needed to solve this problem\***

|  |
| --- |
| *What is the lead implementing organization’s area of expertise, primary activity, and mission? Please provide detailed information on relevant past experience. Make sure to highlight the lead organization’s core competencies as they relate to addressing the problem statement.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Who are the key team members for implementation of grant activities and what is their level of effort (LOE)?\***

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| *Please provide a list of each key team member contributing to grant activities. For each team member, specify their percentage level of effort (LOE) for project activities, include a one or two sentence summary of relevant skills and experience, and describe how she/he will contribute to grant activities (i.e., CEO Jane Doe (50 % LOE) Doe has worked on a and b since 2004. She will be responsible for x, y, and z).* ***Please DO NOT include entire CVs.*** *[Note: LOE is the percentage of 100% of an individual’s working schedule.]* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Describe key partner organizations and explain how they demonstrated their commitment to participating in the project activities. What skills/experience/resources do they contribute to implementing or scaling the innovation? What are their roles and responsibilities?\***

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| --- |
| *Do you plan to work with any non-governmental organizations, government ministries, service providers (i.e., health centers, schools), universities/research institutions, private sector companies, etc. For each partner, co-funder, and major client, please specify whether they have already agreed to participate and have entered into a formal agreement or indicated verbal interest. Please specify which organizations are providing financial support for this project. Lastly, if an innovation depends on the support of another organization/institution, please mention the extent to which the lead organization is working with them.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Please provide up to three (3) references who can speak to the past performance and ability of the applicant.\***

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| *Please include contact information, including name, organization, email, and phone number. References should be able to attest to and validate the applicant’s ability to work effectively, achieve results, and successfully implement similar activities within the past three (3) years. Personal references are acceptable in cases in which a professional reference is not available.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

1. **Please use the space below to list additional citations in support of this project. Only content written in the application will be reviewed; these citations will be used to verify factual accuracy if necessary.\***

|  |
| --- |
| *Please list citation URLs or publication information.* |

Max. Characters: 2,000

* *I understand that USAID/DIV may share this application, internally or externally, as part of the due diligence process or if USAID/DIV identifies opportunities to strengthen or fund an application by connecting with other USAID mechanisms, other potential funders, and/or external partners for appropriate consideration.*
* *By submitting this application, I certify that the answers to the questions are accurate to the full extent of my knowledge.*