Step 4. Design and Implement Program

This document will provide guidance on how to develop open innovation programs within your Grand Challenge for Development (GCD). While the benefits of an open innovation approach have been described elsewhere, this document will focus on defining the term, specifically the key concepts for open innovation and motivations for undertaking a grant or prize competition. This document includes details about program design and execution processes and offers guidance on:

- **Defining Open Innovation Programs**, a review of key terminology central to the GCD initiative and discussion on how to identify when an open innovation program is appropriate or valuable.
- **Designing the Open Innovation Program**, comprehensive discussion of the activities in an open innovation program, from confirming strategic objectives to integrating acceleration activities to support winners after they are announced.
- **Preparing for Program Launch**, including drafting the Call for Innovations (i.e. competition) and mobilizing internal stakeholders.
- **Launching the Program**, including discussion about publicizing the call and managing applications.
- **Evaluating and Selecting Winners**, a discussion of how to manage evaluation, select and announce winners, and ensure that winners are best supported to succeed.

**Defining Open Innovation Programs**

Grant and prize competitions are open innovation programs that call attention to an issue, source solutions from a diverse audience, and use awards to incentivize and reward results. In designing open innovation programs you will be applying the same critical thinking process and applying similar foundational design principles used in typical USAID program design.
For USAID’s purposes, open innovation refers to the Agency’s activities to drive innovation and progress toward a development outcome by inviting the public or a targeted community to contribute knowledge, ideas, and resources in ways that reveal new solutions or approaches.

While these terms are covered elsewhere, a review of terminology specific to open innovation design may be useful for the purposes of this document. A few of the key open innovation terms used by the GCD initiative:

- **Open Innovation**: An approach to problem-solving emphasizing openness, networks, transparency, and cooperation.

- **Crowdsourcing**: A means of obtaining needed services, ideas, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people.

- **Competitions and Challenges**: Structured one-off and serialized activities that open opportunities for people or organizations to compete for a reward.

- **Grant Competition**: A type of competition that awards grants to applicants with the best solution. The grant award is typically for the implementation of a proposed solution or activities prior to the accomplishment of outcomes. The grant award can be paired with non-financial rewards, such as participation in networking or industry events, acceleration services, etc.

- **Prize Competition**: A type of competition that makes awards to winners who have achieved an outcome defined by the competition. A prize is a “pay-for-performance” tool whereby the prize sponsor makes the award and the winner is under no expectations of further implementation or relationship (unless this is incorporated in the terms of the competition or award).

Open Innovation programs can utilize various types of assistance and acquisition awards. Detailed discussion about solicitation mechanisms follows (see Determine the Best Mechanism and Draft the Call for Innovations).

**WHEN ARE OPEN INNOVATION PROGRAMS APPROPRIATE?**

Open innovation programs work best when the best solution and the identity of the provider/innovator are unknown. In this situation, the GCD team will make important choices about the kind of open innovation program that is appropriate for the problem. The following are some common scenarios that illustrate an objective and the appropriate choice for an open innovation program:

- **You are looking for multiple solutions to tackle multiple facets of the problem.** A grant competition resulting in a portfolio of innovations that may be better suited to your needs.

- **You want your innovator to implement their solution.** A delivery prize (that pays on the achievement of implementation outcomes) or a grant competition is best.
There is little or no incentive in the market to invest in developing new solutions. A point-solution prize that has low barriers to entry will stimulate the broader market to invest in product development but also result in a concrete prototype.

Tip
If the market trends suggest your desired solution will become available at your target price point soon, it is best to wait before taking further action. The market will provide the solution soon enough. Focus your GCD program on a set of problems that lack catalytic attention and investment.

WHEN ARE OPEN INNOVATION PROGRAMS MOST VALUABLE?
Open innovation programs are well suited to deliver value in five distinct areas.

Where innovation is sluggish. Competitions bring attention to and accelerate innovation in areas where markets are not well formed or competition to develop better products is too slow to meet an important demand. These may be areas that are captured by big industry or where conventional wisdom says there is not sufficient potential for a healthy return on investment.

Where actors are diverse and diffuse. Some areas, for example social entrepreneurship, are teeming with innovative ideas and growing energy. This diversity of activity can focus attention to problems but it is often short-term, scattered, activity with suboptimal outcomes. Competitions can perform an agenda-setting role, help a field prioritize and focus joint effort, and subsidize risky investments.

Where thinking needs to be expanded. Competitions are good at setting ambitious and sometimes risky targets that open up new ways of thinking about a problem or opportunity. This can be particularly helpful in new or emerging areas of science and technology.

Where markets or behaviors can be energized or changed. Competitions generate action and buzz, which can, in turn, create public interest in an idea, brand, or product. Competitions that incorporate fun, thoughtful, and targeted incentives can increase the odds that a competition will “go viral” in the public domain. Increased public attention benefits an open innovation program in attracting a wider stakeholder base.

Where there is a precisely defined need. The most successful competitions establish clear, discrete, innovation opportunities that help an organization or company understand the gaps the sponsor seeks to address. Furthermore, competitions can help an organization outsource discrete problems more efficiently and cost-effectively than internal research and development.
Some problems are simply ill-suited to open innovation programming. For example, all the point-solution generated prototypes in the world or top class grant-funded innovations will not change budgetary priorities, laws, and the regulatory environment. It is best to focus your energy and resources on problems and barriers that can be effectively addressed through open innovation programs.

### Resources and References

There is often a tendency to propose prizes when other forms of innovation programs may be more appropriate. The cases of “when not to use prizes” is discussed in the Prize Toolkit.

### Value of Open Innovation Programs to Sponsors

Grant and prize competitions can deliver considerable value for their sponsors:

- **Pathway independent.** Open innovation competitions do not predict which team or approach is best; only a desired outcome is specified and awarded. These competitions can often attract non-traditional actors and new approaches to solution design.

- **Analyze the state of innovation.** The process of opening up the problem to a broad audience gives sponsors an opportunity to analyze the current state of innovation and practices in the market and cull the best ideas, solutions, and approaches. These programs create opportunities for sponsors to learn and source insights from a global talent pool.

- **Incentivize innovation.** When designed well with the right process and incentives, open innovation programs can motivate new behaviors and collaborations, and catalyze a broad audience of participants to take risks and be rewarded for innovations that address gaps in the existing market.

- **Access global talent pool.** A well-publicized and visible competition centered on an engaging problem and well-defined success criteria will attract some of the best minds in the world, often from communities not traditionally associated with the sponsor. (See the Communications Toolkit for in depth discussion.)

- **Enhance brand.** Open innovation competitions define a story that moves through the media and the public to educate, inspire, and mobilize the public. With a thoughtful communications strategy, these programs can offer significant returns in press coverage and brand enhancement for the sponsor. (See the Communications Toolkit for in depth discussion.)

- **Investment leverage.** Open innovation programs are able to mobilize resources from applicants that far exceed the value of the awards purse. Most often, the total funds and resources invested by competitors far exceeds what is spent on operating and allocating the award.
Designing the Program

The discussion that follows elaborates on the innovation approach program design process. Like any creative design process, this process will be iterative and circular. For example, you may learn critical information while defining your evaluation approach that compels you to reconsider your strategic objective(s). While reconsidering your objective(s) may initially seem like a setback, in fact, correcting the course early will only refine program design and lead to better end results.

This section provides guidance on each of the following steps in the program design phase:

- Confirm the Strategic Objectives
- Determine the Type of Innovations Sought
- Understand Motivations of Target Participants
- Determine The Appropriate Competition Modality
- Draft the Call For Innovations
- Determine the Best Mechanism
- Define the Awards
- Reach and Recruit Participants
- Define the Evaluation Approach
- Determine Platform Needs And Requirements
- Plan Winner Announcements And Celebrations
- Integrate Acceleration Activities

Tip
Integrate multiple opportunities to test your assumptions, conduct targeted research, and work with key actors to refine ideas and decisions. It is also critical to consider available resources to ensure that your program is not overstretched with too many concurrent activities or under-resourced with staff and funding.

CONFIRM THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The GCD team will have defined the problem, written the Challenge Statement (see Step 1 Identify and Define the Problem), and have defined the strategic objectives of the GCD. The following decisions and documents should also be ready at hand:

- A clear barrier analysis on the problem and state of innovation analysis assessing the gaps in the market.
- A GCD strategy that articulates which programs you will run over the life of the program. (See Step 3 Develop the Strategy.)
- Clearly mapped solver networks and target audiences.
- Dedicated **partners and funding** for program operations and awards.
- An approved **Project Activity Description** (PAD).
- A **Communications Strategy**. If other GCD program activities have already been launched there should already be a Communication Strategy in place. If you are designing your first competition, now is the time to start developing your Communications Strategy (see the Communication Toolkit for in-depth discussion and guidance).

The key action for the GCD team is to review the research to date and ensure that everyone agrees on the strategic objectives. Begin the program design discussion by confirming what you want to incentivize (i.e. the strategic objective) before deliberating on how to achieve those goals. Your strategic objective may be one or some combination of the following:

- Prompt a major breakthrough in thinking and practice.
- Shine a light on a neglected issue.
- Build a portfolio of late stage innovations.
- Gather data on an issue.
- Accelerate or scale proven solutions.
- Bring a new product or service to market.
- Identify a pipeline of existing innovations addressing an issue.
- Identify great ideas.
- Prompt new collaborations and partnerships.
- Build the capacity of new market entrants.
- Incentivize capacity of new innovators and support their entry to market.
Critical Considerations

In the design of Securing Water for Food (SWFF) GCD, the team used market analysis assessments to better understand the overall market and target audience and refine the Challenge Statement. Later in the strategy setting and program design process they opted to conduct a State of Innovation Analysis.

In parallel with this effort, the SWFF team reached out to their target audience to better understand their motivations for participating in a program like SWFF. Was it just funding? Was it a combination of financial and non-financial assistance? What kinds of assistance do they need? What are their key challenges to scaling?

Similarly, they engaged industry experts to get feedback on how various industry partners (NGOs, research, private sector) could better work together to improve the potential for an innovation to be brought to scale.

Assessments, analysis, and consultations led to three key design decisions:

- **Designing the right program with the right incentives is the key to getting the desired results.** The problem wasn’t the need for invention or early stage ideation, but rather for existing products to be adapted to markets or to create partnerships for manufacture/distribution in developing countries. The first call focused on innovations in later stages of the innovation lifecycle that have already demonstrated a viable business model and are generating revenue and require support for commercial growth. The Desal Prize, launched after the close of the first grant competition call, was designed to generate workable prototypes for small-scale multi-use desalination because further technology innovation was necessary.

- **Set a clear scope and focus for your GCD program.** Based on industry and entrepreneur feedback, it became clear to the SWFF team that having an innovation wasn’t enough; overcoming key legal, regulatory, or other “enabling” environment challenges were key. The SWFF team decided not to include a component for overcoming enabling environment challenges. To account for these market conditions SWFF required applicants to describe key elements of the enabling environment and local market conditions in detail, and describe how USAID could help them to overcome key challenges. The SWFF design team planned for the eventual acceleration activities to involve support to the awardees to help fill this gap.

- **Reward for performance.** SWFF’s funding is milestone-based, using both financial and technical (including impact) milestones. Early strategy planning backed up by analysis and consultations led the team to opt to use this more management heavy award model to ensure SWFF funds innovations with the greatest potential to succeed. The SWFF team also opted to make matching funds and/or in-kind contributions mandatory for later stage innovations as a demonstration of market viability.
DETERMINE THE TYPE OF INNOVATIONS SOUGHT

Once the GCD team confirms its objectives, it can consider how to achieve those goals. What type of competition is most appropriate? What kind of innovations are you seeking? What does an ideal winner and winner portfolio look like?

Figure 1 shows the progression of objectives across the GCD lifecycle, from problem definition through to impact. **Competitions can be a powerful tool for sourcing many different types of innovations if you are you are clear on what type of innovations you seek.** Moving from the left to right, the figure illustrates how the relationship between objective and stakeholders evolve over the lifecycle. An early objective is broad with limited performance criteria and can attract a wide variety of solvers. As the objective becomes more specific, the solution space narrows, performance criteria are stricter and the potential solver group narrows.

FIGURE 1. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ACROSS THE INNOVATION CONTINUUM

Though this continuum appears linear, innovations do not necessarily follow a straight path or a single model of development. Innovations require testing and refinement and often change significantly before demonstrating market success or achieving their customer-capture targets. Innovations will come from a variety of sources and the individuals and organizations that have developed them will possess different capabilities. For example, the individuals or team behind an innovation may be able to move rapidly from ideation to prototype but struggle to secure contracts or partners to achieve their dissemination targets. When setting objectives, consider if applicants (i.e. contest winners) have the capabilities to meet the program goal and what type of support activities they may require.

Clarify what types of innovations a competition will target (based on the state of innovation analysis and other research) and consider if this will change over the lifespan of a GCD. These considerations will strongly influence program design decisions about program activities.
UNDERSTAND MOTIVATIONS OF TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Competitions should be designed to motivate your target competition participants. Step 3 Develop the Strategy explained the importance of, and how, to map key actors and identify different target audiences (for a refresher, see Figure 2 below). At this stage in program design, the focus moves to the potential solvers, your primary target participants.

Critical Considerations

In the Counter Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) prize, USAID’s objective was to educate students about counter-trafficking issues. The CTIP team decided to use a point solution prize call, asking students to develop a technology solution. However, the CTIP prize suffered from a design flaw; college students, the target audience, did not have the specialized skills and knowledge required to develop promising solutions. The choice to use a point solution prize was misaligned with the strategic objective. A better program design choice would have been an engagement prize or ideation prize with low barriers to entry. A more effective call could have involved asking students to propose innovative community mobilization techniques to raise awareness of the issue.

FIGURE 2. COMPOSITION OF TARGET AUDIENCES

**Primary Target:** solvers who have developed innovative solutions or are seeking out means for expanding and scaling access to their solutions.

**Secondary Target:** Experts, companies, development community, USAID and other donors.

**Tertiary Target:** US Government, Academia, Media
In order to understand what will motivate potential solvers to participate, it is recommended that your team define segments (e.g., university students, scientists, engineers, technology start-ups) and conduct in-depth analysis of each to understand their incentives, motivations, and capabilities in meeting your objective. The key questions to consider for each segment include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Why have they not achieved the objective yet (current practice, behavior, norm)?
- What kind of rewards would incentivize them to participate/succeed?
- What kind of relationship do they want to create between winner and sponsor?
- What is their aspiration around the objective?
- What is their commitment level to the objective or the problem (e.g., time, direct or tangential)?
- What else competes for their time and attention?
- What risk are they willing to absorb? Are participants capable of and willing to offer up the investment, take action, or absorb risk without upfront payment? (If so, consider a prize format.)
- How would participants want Intellectual Property (IP) issues treated?
- What constraints would they face in learning about or participating in the program?

It may be useful to conduct desk research, informant interviews, surveys, online webinars, and forums with existing communities of practice in order to gather information on solver segments. Note that you may need to conduct or outsource additional analyses and actor mapping to better understand how to design the program to maximize their participation.

Once you have a clear understanding of your target participant segments, begin using this information to inform elements of the program design.

- **Solver Profile:** Develop solver profiles that capture the solver segments and their motivations for participation. It can be useful to include this in your Call, your Communications Strategy, and eventually in your evaluation guidance documents to help application reviewers understand what a winning innovation looks like (see Step 3 Develop the Strategy).

- **Eligibility:** Set eligibility guidelines and restrictions (if any) (e.g., size restrictions, geographic emphasis, legal restrictions, stage, and other restrictions).

- **Setting Awards:** Translate participant incentives into financial rewards and non-financial support.

- **Reducing Barriers to Entry:** Think about how you will effectively compete for participant attention and engagement throughout the program.

- **Communications Strategy:** Ensure the Communications Strategy will reach participants with the right messages through the right channels.
**DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE COMPETITION MODALITY**

*Choosing between Grants and Prizes*

While grant and prize competitions use similar open innovation techniques to source innovative ideas, services, and products from users, they differ in several distinct ways, as elaborated in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TABLE 1. GRANT COMPETITION VERSUS PRIZE COMPETITION</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational role</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Typically the centrepiece of a program / initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Breadth of challenge statement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Extent of partnerships</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of potential awards</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expectation of engagement with winners</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual property</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monetary and non-monetary awards</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grant competitions are ideal when seeking to spur and foster innovative initiatives that address structural gaps and barriers that perpetuate a problem. Prizes for these types of competitions are best deployed to solicit the development or utilization of specific products, approaches, or applications that fill gaps in delivering solutions to the problem.

**Types of Grant Competitions**

To identify the type of grant competition that will best serve your objective(s), you will first want to determine what the ideal portfolio mix for your GCD looks like. A grant competition should catalyze the changes you want to see in the market. You may want to make several awards within a single call to elicit different approaches and innovations. Grants work well in cases in which the solver cannot or will not take on the initial investment risk of developing the innovation, and you, the sponsor, make the award contingent on the promise or potential of an innovation to achieve a specific outcome (rather than proven ability to achieve the outcome). The following provides an overview to the different types of grants you can design:

**Early-stage Grants.** These competitions tend to focus on targeting early stage ideas or pilot programs. The winners will receive smaller grants for proving technical or market viability. These competitions are often coupled with acceleration support that refines the innovation (e.g., the technology or business models), making the innovation more likely to succeed as they enter the next growth stage.

**Later-stage Grants.** These competitions tend to focus on targeting commercially viable or growth-oriented innovations. The winners will receive larger grants and milestones should be set around market expansion, replication, and scale. These competitions are often coupled with acceleration support that focuses on investment or market transaction that promotes growth. (See the Acceleration Toolkit for discussion and guidance on how acceleration activities can and should be integrated into GCD program design and implementation.)

**Types of Prize Competitions**

Prizes work well in the GCD model for cases when the potential applicants are willing and able to take on the investment risk of achieving the outcomes for the potential of winning an award and the funder wants to award outcomes that have been achieved (contrasted to a grant that awards implementation and takes time to see results). There are four basic objectives of prize competitions to consider for your GCD:

- **Recognition prize competitions** typically reward excellence in a field, often for work already accomplished (i.e. “retrospective” awards). A well-known example of this kind of prize is the Nobel Prize, which does not set specific goals or targets, and in which a selection committee recognizes excellence and lifetime achievement across specific domains.

- **Ideation prize competitions** seek entries in the form of written proposals or models. These competitions seek to stimulate and learn from a broad range of thinkers within or beyond the boundaries and influence a particular institution or network. Ideation prizes tend to have fewer criteria for demonstrating successful outcomes, are open to a larger range of solvers, and accept proposals that may be untested. In practice, this tends to yield many proposals across a broad spectrum of innovations and of varying quality.
- **Point solution prize competitions** often target specific performance standards for the development of a new technology solution. The aim is to open and advance research and development where markets are sluggish or the risks of failure are too big for any single company to absorb. Point solution prize competitions have more stringent criteria for success, and often require more expertise and time, so in practice they tend to have fewer solvers and require larger purses. The Securing Water for Food Desal Prize is an example of a point solution prize.

- **Engagement and delivery prizes** seek innovations but prioritize the involvement of stakeholders and accelerating innovations over the program lifecycle. An engagement prize, while often interested in a novel idea or solution, emphasizes generating broad awareness and engagement of potential solvers around a subject or cause. A delivery prize is more targeted and seeks to achieve targets around technology delivery, scale, and market expansion of a solution.

A prize award can be structured in many different ways. You may offer an award recognizing a “best in class” innovation. You may set a prize purse with first, second, and third place awards. Or an award can involve some or no money and instead offer exposure to mentors, journalists, or investors that will help the winning innovations achieve goals of growth or scale.

**Hybrid Competitions**

Some cases may benefit most from some combination of broad scope grants and prizes that award specific goals. In these situations, you may want to consider a hybrid grant-prize or prize-grant model. To ensure that the hybrid competition attracts the right target group, phase the two competitions over a period of time. For example, the SWFF team issued a Call for Innovations using a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) and designed the first round as a grant competition. Through conducting a state of innovation analysis, SWFF identified that there was a dearth of brackish water desalination devices suitable for smallholder farmers. To fill a gap for their current end-users, SWFF sponsored a prize for a brackish water desalination technology that runs on renewable energy and is suitable for home and agricultural use. In the planned third round of SWFF’s Call for Innovations, which will be a grant competition, the winners of the Desal Prize will be eligible / encouraged to submit an application to explore testing and scaling their innovation.

**Concurrent Competitions**

You may choose to run a grant and prize competition concurrently. Before doing so, consider the whether the prize competitions target the same audience and whether concurrent competitions risk splitting your target’s resources to detriment of both competitions. Also consider the target organizations’ capacities to absorb the potential awards and manage the implementation of two programs at one time.
DRAFT THE CALL FOR INNOVATIONS

Understanding the Mechanisms

USAID has several types of solicitation mechanisms that can be used for open innovation programs. The following are the four mechanisms commonly used by GCD programs:

### TABLE 2. COMMON TYPES OF MECHANISMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Request for Assistance (RFA)</td>
<td>A solicitation for proposals from non-profit or for-profit grant seekers. RFAs are usually issued for a specific competition under a GCD and are open for a limited time. Under an RFA, various types of grant awards can be issued for both grant and prize competitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for Quotation (RFQ)</td>
<td>A solicitation used to invite suppliers into a bidding process to offer specific products or services to USAID. These result in contract agreements (as opposed to grant agreements) and often attract for-profit applicants who then provide services or goods to be owned by USAID. This is often a difficult format for innovation programs where USAID is interested in the innovators retaining ownership of the services and deliverables performed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)</td>
<td>A solicitation that mimics a hybrid of the RFA and RFQ, broadly announcing the goals of the GCD and the competition but leaving the contracting mechanism flexible. The BAA attracts both non-profit and for-profits as well as grant seekers and contract seekers. This solicitation creates the space for a program team to negotiate award agreements after winners are selected. This is useful for an innovation program because it allows USAID to work with awardees on a case by case basis to determine what type of award is most appropriate for the innovation.</td>
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The Global Development Lab recently issued the **Development Innovation Accelerator Broad Agency Announcement (DIA BAA)** which seeks opportunities to co-create, co-design, co-invest, and collaborate in basic and applied research and development for Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnership (STIP). Awards under the DIA BAA will be based on individual addenda to the BAA. Each addendum will describe the particular research area of interest, the evaluation criteria, and administrative information such as the requirements for concept papers, statements of interest, and response deadlines.

For more information, see:
- [https://www.fbo.gov/?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=cfd628c7c03c32c1203f&tab=core&_cview=0](https://www.fbo.gov/?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=cfd628c7c03c32c1203f&tab=core&_cview=0)

Continued
What is a Call for Innovation?

The Call for Innovations (sometimes just called the “Call”) is the generic term for a USAID GCD grant or prize competition, RFA, RFP or BAA (see Table 2). The Call for Innovations should be distinguished from the Challenge Statement. While the Call and the Challenge Statement communicate the GCD to stakeholders, the Call specially solicits the target audience to participate in prize or grant competitions.

To better understand how the Call is used, consider past USAID GCD Calls for Innovations:

- In the case of **Saving Lives at Birth** (SL@B), the GCD team defined a “Problem” (http://www.savinglivesatbirth.net/problem) and a “Challenge” (http://www.savinglivesatbirth.net/challenge). SL@B has issued four Call for Innovations using a different RFA for each round. The most recent Call for Innovations was Round 4 (http://savinglivesatbirth.net/sites/default/files/round_4_saving_lives_at_birth_grand_challenge_rfa.pdf). SL@B uses two types of awards: seed grants for testing early stage innovations (awards of up to $250,000) and Transition to Scale grants for proven innovations ready to scale / expand into new markets (awards up to $2M).

- In the case of **All Children Reading** (ACR), the GCD team defined a “Problem” (http://allchildrenreading.org/wordpress/problem/). For the first Call for Innovations ACR issued an RFA seeking grant proposals (http://allchildrenreading.org/wordpress/innovation/). ACR later issued a second Call for Innovations using a different RFA (http://allchildrenreading.org/challenge/) so they could focus on a different aspect of the problem. Under this RFA, ACR issued the Enabling Writers Prize (https://www.omnicompete.com/enabling_writers.html) and two additional rounds of prizes will follow.

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**MECHANISM** | **DEFINITION**
--- | ---
**Annual Program Statement (APS)** | A solicitation that is open for one year, describes USAID’s interest in a specific goal or type of program, and asks bidders to provide concept papers that will be evaluated and asked to submit a second submission in the form of a full application if the concept paper is deemed potentially viable. An APS can be very conducive to open innovation programs because it is can be written to suit the objectives of the team, uses a two stage submission process that allows USAID to talk with the bidders about their concept, and does not obligate USAID to issue any awards.

The **Global Development Alliance Annual Program Statement (GDA APS)** is a specific APS that that announces opportunities for the private sector to work with USAID to build Global Development Alliances (GDAs)/Public-Private Partnerships that advance USAID’s strategic priorities and objective, and achieve sustainable development innovation, outcomes, results and impact. The GDA APS requests Papers and based on those Concept Papers, USAID determines whether to request a full application. The GDA APS is not supported by specific funds; funding comes from the issuing Mission or USAID/W Bureau or Office.

For more information see:
In the case of **Powering Agriculture**, the GCD team defined a “Problem” (http://www.poweringag.org/problem) and a “Challenge” (http://www.poweringag.org/challenge). Powering Agriculture issued a BAA (http://www.poweringag.org/sites/default/files/2012_12_18_baa_powering_agriculture.pdf) as their Call for Innovations and made grant awards to winners (http://www.poweringag.org/2013-winners). A second BAA is currently being drafted to issue a second Call for Innovations.

In the case of **Securing Water for Food (SWFF)**, the GCD team defined the “Challenge” (http://www.securingwaterforfood.org/the-challenge/) and issued a Request for Information (RFI) to gather feedback from target participants. To date, SWFF has issued two calls for proposals. The first was issued as a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA), (https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=154483d98f0a32c1c2c831b51330bf3&tab=core&tabmode=list&); the second call was the Desal Prize, issued as an RFA (http://www.securingwaterforfood.org/the-desal-prize). Awardees for the first call will be issued Cooperative Agreements in accordance with their Stage of Innovation (see BAA). The decision on the type of award mechanism for the Desal Prize will be finalized in October 2014.

**Drafting the Call for Innovations**

The Call for Innovations draws from the Challenge Statement and previous activities. The Call should include: a statement of the problem you wish to solve, the barriers you wish to address, the type of innovations sought, and application/submission information.

To refine the objectives of the Call and to ensure that the Call will solicit the right target audience, consider these questions:

- **What problem do you wish to solve?**
  - What barrier(s) do you want solvers to address?
  - What outcome do you want solvers to achieve?
  - What impact on the problem do you want to have?

- **What type of innovations are you seeking?**
  - What type of innovation (i.e. product, service, process) can solve this problem?
  - What type of innovation (e.g., product, process, technology, business model) or what stage of innovation will the Call target?

- **What criteria will be evaluated to determine a winning innovation?**
  - Is the emphasis on technology, a venture, or an entrepreneur?
  - Is the emphasis on development impact, business sustainability, and/or performance indicators?

- **What should a promising application look like?**
  - What information will applicants be asked to submit?
  - What form of application will be best for presenting this information (e.g., written
concept note or proposal, business plan, explanation of prototype, proof of results achieved)?
— Will target participants be capable of submitting such an application?

**Critical Considerations**

In preparing to draft the Call for Innovations, you may find that your team needs to revisit or conduct new analysis to augment the information gathered during problem definition. Conduct or outsource additional research as needed to refine or validate the draft program design. Additional steps may involve updating or conducting a more specifically focused Barrier Analysis or State of Innovation Analysis.

**DETERMINE THE BEST MECHANISM**

USAID and its partners have access to a range of mechanisms that can meet the objectives of the grant competition or prize competition objectives. Engage the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) and your GCD Partners to select a mechanism that best suits the needs of your open innovation program. Consider the following:

- Do you (and your partners) want to reach countries that are outside USAID’s geographic financing authority?
- Can solvers meet USAID (or partner) financing requirements and regulations?
- Can applicants meet the terms of the solicitation (e.g., if an applicant has to have a DUNS number this may reduce the ease of use)?
- Are you looking for a long-term or short-term relationship with the awardees?
- What size of award will you be releasing? The size of the award will trigger or necessitate the use of different mechanisms. Consult with OAA to determine which mechanism is most appropriate.
- Will you issue a one-off payment, grants, contracts or a mix of grants and contracts? Will awards take the form of pay for performance financing, debt guarantees, advance contracts, or access to services (i.e., non-financial rewards)?

**DEFINE THE AWARDS**

The major parameters driving the decision about how you will define the awards for your program will be **the solicitation mechanism, the amount of money available** for awards, and **award management capacity**. The type, amount, and structure of awards should align with the motivations of the target participants and your program objectives. The following questions raise critical design considerations that should influence design decisions about the financial awards for your program.
- **What type of award will motivate participants to apply?** The knowledge you have gained about target participants—their risk-return profiles, motivations, and incentives—should give rise to an award that speaks directly to their interests.

- **What other sources and forms of capital are available for innovation in this space?** Understanding the risks and benefits and the abundance or scarcity of these other capital sources for target participants will help you to situate the GCD award in the context of a competitive landscape. How a USAID award will be differentiated, or at least non-duplicative, should inform decisions about the award.

- **What award structure is most appropriate for the goals and capacity of the winners?** Consider the identity of winners and their absorptive capacity. Are winners a single organization, individual, or a consortium of actors? The identity of target participants and their capacity for managing an award will inform the award structure you choose.

- **What award structure is most appropriate for the goals of the program?** Consider whether you plan to make awards that are tiered, multiple or single, pay-for-performance, or milestone-based disbursements. For example, if you are seeking to stimulate many new ideas, you want to give a large number of small, non-dilutive, early stage, one-off payments rather than few large sized grants. On the other hand, if you are focused on scaling proven solutions you may prefer larger contracts or debt guarantees, such as a Development Credit Authority (DCA), which provides a guarantee to a financial institution for a loan provided to an innovator.

- **What types of non-financial rewards are appropriate for winners?** You may find that non-financial rewards are just as or more motivating than financial rewards for your target participants. Non-financial awards include travel funds to participate in conferences or events, acceleration support, or pilot opportunities. Participants may value recognition, visibility, and networking opportunities. For these groups, building a successful brand with relevant networks and audiences may be a critical need and ideal award. How these factors affect your award decision should be reflected also in your Communications Strategy and acceleration activities (see the Communications Toolkit and Acceleration Toolkit).

- **What type of legal authorities and mechanisms are available for issuing awards?** The number of and size of the awards (e.g., winner takes all award, distributed number of awards, runner up or tiered awards) will affect your choice of mechanism. If you want the ability to issue grants or contracts, then consider a BAA. If you only want to issue grants, then an RFA is appropriate. It is critical to work with OAA during the design process to ensure that you have the authority to structure awards that align with your program goals and winners’ needs.

- **What is the staff capacity for awards management?** The number of staff you have available to serve as an Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) for the awards will have a significant bearing on the number/type/size of awards you issue. The number of awardees has greater impact on the day-to-day workload of an AOR than the dollar value amount of the individual awards.
Resources and References

Acceleration activities can be a powerful reward in addition to financial awards. These activities can take a variety of forms: technical assistance to winners or exclusive attendance at a Commit Fair or an Acceleration Event where mentors or potential innovation funders are invited to attend. These activities may be provided directly by USAID or outsourced to implementing firms or acceleration partners. The Acceleration Toolkit offers detailed discussion and guidance on how to select and design these activities.

REACH AND RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS

Once your target participants are identified, set a credible goal for the number of submissions you wish to receive. Your Communications Strategy should help you identify existing networks, marketing partners, and current online social communities that can be leveraged to reach the right participant community and achieve your submission number goal. You will be building an individual campaign for each program, and will want to consider which communications entry points/channels to target and how to build and sustain enthusiasm through marketing, especially around the milestones of the program. You may need to create additional messaging, collateral and branded material that resonates with the participants, and you may need to direct target groups’ attention to the specifics of the program opportunity. Again, as with all communication activities, you will want to identify what assets and resources (i.e. human, financial, tools) you can leverage and sustain for the full term of the program’s lifecycle.

DEFINE THE EVALUATION APPROACH

The application evaluation approach should grow out of the ideal winner portfolio and strategic objectives. There are three key elements in the evaluation approach: selection criteria, reviewers, and process.

Selection Criteria

- What selection criteria should be used for selection? Consider technical viability, business/financial viability, market potential, sustainability, scalability, or degree of innovativeness.
- What scoring or ranking type will you use? Will evaluation be based on quantitative scores, qualitative rankings, in-situ testing, field evaluation or evidence of success (if prize for actual solution), or presentations made to evaluators (in-person or virtual)?
- If using an ‘overall score,’ how will such a score be calculated? What percentage weight will be given to different criteria?
- How will you make cut-offs for semi-finalists, finalist and winners (i.e. rankings, portfolio mix discussion, average score)?
■ Clearly define the criteria and scoring thresholds. Will criteria and scoring thresholds be included in the call for submission?

Resources and References

Each GCD sets their own selection and evaluation criteria based on the strategic objectives of their program. However, because of the defining elements of the GCD model – science, technology, and innovation – there are commonalities across programs that target similar stage innovations. Samples of actual GCD

Evaluation Process

■ How can you promote and foster credibility, transparency and community growth, and excitement through the selection process?

■ How many evaluation phases or selection tiers (one, two or three-tiered) will take place and what difference if any will there be between them?

■ What selection structure would create a positive experience for reviewers (e.g., general open voting, voting blocks, and/or jury, in-person, tele or online voting, blind or open reviews, or further analysis and interviews in subsequent rounds after initial submission)?

Reviewers

■ What reviewer talent and skills set would align with the identified criteria?

■ Decide what type of reviewers (internal, private sector, NGOs, academic) to involve in the review process. You should also consider whether you want to have multiple screening and/or evaluation stages, such as a concept note submission, followed by a full proposal for applicants passing the first screen, and then a full evaluation to select winners. (This is discussed in greater detail in the following section, Evaluating and Selecting Winners.)

■ What stakeholders would be credible reviewers / judges to the participants and would help amplify the motivation, reach, and visibility for the participants? Do the reviewers have expertise that is specific to the Call for Innovations or are they generalists?

■ Should there be a mix or public voting and/or private jury selection?

■ Determine rules of reviewer engagement and set clear expectations regarding honorariums, LOE, terms of reference; commitment. Will they be part of the program throughout the life or just for the intake?
SELECT REVIEWERS

It is important to identify the reviewers early in program design. Make a list of potential reviewers, thinking about strength of relationship, credibility with solvers, potential for supporting acceleration outcomes, diversity of skills, and knowledge and availability. Good reviewers are in high demand, so speak to the value proposition of what a reviewer will get out of their time and engagement (e.g., early access to innovative ideas, visibility as a thought-leader, an opportunity to engage with like-minded professionals) through the recruitment process.

When selecting the reviewers, check for conflict of interest between the reviewer and innovator.

Once you’ve selected the reviewers, consider whether you need or want to have the reviewers sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) and/or No Conflict of Interest declaration forms before being given access to the platform and applications.

Tip

360-degree Reviewer Panels. Consider building a review panel that combines diverse skill sets and perspectives that help filter your pool of applicants into a high-quality innovation portfolio. Invite a diverse set of high-caliber internal and external reviewers who can collectively help review the innovation from 360 degrees. The process and duration should be shaped by the GCD team based on the strategic objective and time and resources available. The following criteria should inform the review:

- Technical Viability
- Business Model Viability
- Market Potential
- Leadership Quality
- Organizational Capacity
- Transformational/Impact Potential
- Industry or System Challenges and Risks
- Geographic Perspective and

DETERMINE PLATFORM NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS

Whether you expect a large or small number of applicants to the program, a technology platform can be a useful tool to help implement the program phases and securely capture associated data. If you use a technology platform, you will need to make sure your program design choices match your platform design choices.
The basic steps involved in determining platform needs and developing platform requirements are outlined below.

- **Understand your platform needs** for application acceptance and evaluation, and what services can be furnished by a third party solution provider.

- **Understand who the platform users will be**, what functionalities are relevant to them, how to set user roles, and how to design an online environment that promotes desired behaviors from users.

- **Understand the processes for designing a platform** and how to match it to the phases of your program (i.e. launching application acceptance, evaluation, award announcement, grant management).

- **Create a Program Requirements Document** that reflects the program design (e.g., eligibility, submission format, reviewer criteria) and describes how the platform service provider will be managed.

- **Understand how the platform can complement your communications strategy**, grants management, acceleration processes, and monitoring and evaluation activities.

The *Platform Toolkit* is a valuable resource for the program design process. The document offers detailed explanation of different types of platforms, how to determine your platform needs, and offers guidance on how to make choices about the platform design and implementation.

**PLAN WINNER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CELEBRATIONS**

It is not uncommon for improved visibility to be a critical motivating reward for participation in a competition (sometimes to an even greater extent than the financial reward). By building a robust strategy for celebrating innovator-participants and enhancing their networks of partners, media, and peers you can also enhance the participation levels in your program. It is critical even in the early design stage to think about how you will tell the story of competition winners and celebrate the accomplishments of each program. Think about what resources, networks, related conferences and events you can leverage and share with competition winners as the program moves from announcement to outcomes. These activities should be built into your Communications and Acceleration Strategies.

The *Acceleration Toolkit* and *Step 5 Manage and Accelerate the Solutions* discuss the importance of these activities, tested model, and guidance on this process.

**INTEGRATE ACCELERATION ACTIVITIES**

Acceleration activities can be a valuable addition to your GCD program if planned for during the program design process. Acceleration activities should complement the goals of a grant or prize competition, match the needs of the awardees, and require realistic allocation of resources and staff time for management and implementation. To the greatest extent possible, think about how acceleration activities will span the life of the GCD, not just through a single grant or prize competition.
The list of questions below offers critical considerations for the design of your acceleration activities. You should also consult the Acceleration Toolkit for in depth discussion and guidance.

- **Critical or Optional?** To what extent are acceleration activities critical to helping competition winners achieve the strategic objective? Efforts and resources should be commensurate with the degree to which acceleration activities are critical to the success of the program.

- **Juncture and Duration?** At what point in time and for how long should acceleration activities take place? This will influence decisions about what is feasible and help allocate staff and resources at different junctures in the program work plan.

- **Award Terms and Management?** How will acceleration activities become part of or separate from the awards? Acceleration activities can operate as part of awards if written into the terms, can be an additional and/or optional set of activities that complement the award, or can operate as an independent set of activities.

- **Access?** What will trigger winners’ access to acceleration activities? Will decisions about who receives acceleration support be made on an individual case-by-case basis or for an entire cohort of winners? Is there differentiated support based on the stage of innovation or geography? Will costs be covered by a portion of the award, through cost-share, or through additional funding from USAID or GCD Partners? The answers to these questions should also influence design choices in the application evaluation process, award design and management, and in communications.

### Preparing for Program Launch

**DRAFT PROGRAM WORK PLAN**

A work plan is critical in managing the phases of program implementation over the program’s full lifespan. A strong work plan is comprehensive and includes key activities and tasks for each phase, from drafting the call to announcing the winners to later phases such as management and acceleration of awardees. Each activity should have an associated timeline, deliverables, lead roles and primary stakeholders. Naturally, in program implementation there are a number of concurrent activities and dependencies between activities. For example, if you are running an application intake phase, you are concurrently publicizing the call to recruit applicants, and you will not be able to announce finalists until OAA has examined the reviewers’ application scores. In order to mitigate implementation risks, it is important to build in extra time as the program progresses across phases and to pay attention to whether additional capacity is needed to meet deadlines.

You will need to anticipate whether and when the work plan needs revisions. Work plan revisions should be expected. Be sure to co-create and/or build buy-in with all stakeholders responsible for leading activities during implementation when revising the work plan.
FINALIZE AND OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR THE CALL

At this stage, your technical team will bring all of the analyses and program design discussions together into a comprehensive solicitation document. The technical section of the solicitation document should articulate the problem to be solved in clear and inspiring language, and contain the summaries of, or some of the data and analyses around, the problem, barriers, and the innovation sought.

It is critical for applicants to understand whether their innovation is a good fit for the program in order to maximize the time potential applicants spend in considering the Call and the time your GCD team spends evaluating applications.

Make sure the overall objectives of USAID call for innovations are well represented in your GCD Call in order to attract innovative, out-of-the box solutions and non-traditional (new to USAID) applicants. The Call should explain eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and ideal solver profiles.

Tip

Look for ways to simplify the language and the application process in order to reduce barriers to entry. This is particularly important when you want to reach a large and diverse group of target participations. Description of the mechanism choice, solicitation documents and the application and award management procedures should be clear, simple, and widely understood. For example, simplifying M&E requirements for early stage innovation may be worth considering if you feel it will not undermine the program and could result in significant increase of quality applications.

Consider whether time and resources are available for your team to gather feedback from external actors before finalizing the call. In some cases, this may not be appropriate or feasible, but in other cases, using an RFI or pre-solicitation to get public and potential applicants to provide feedback on your solicitation document can be beneficial to ensuring the Call is as well designed as possible to achieve your objectives.
Allow ample time for approvals and engage OAA and General Counsel (GC) from the start. As noted in Step 2 Secure Partners and Funding, early engagement with OAA and GC is essential for a smooth and efficient process. These stakeholders will directly impact the mechanism selection and drafting processes. Therefore, ensure that you have a dedicated point of contact in each office, as well as productive, continuous dialogue with both offices. Also, consider whether GCD Founding Partners or Collaboration Partners will need to review or approve the final solicitation documents. Partners and OAA will need to finalize required solicitation documents for the program (e.g., RFA, BAA, GDA, Prize call). Ensure that GCD Founding Partners sign-off on the Call before launch and that Collaboration Partners have reviewed and provided input on the document.

**SECURE IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS AS NEEDED**

Program implementation is a hands-on, labor-intensive process. GCD teams should consider issuing an RFP for implementation support in areas where USAID and GCD Partners do not have skills or capacity to provide direct implementation support. The following key activities will help you ensure that your team has the bandwidth to provide the support necessary for implementation.

**Determine implementation needs and solicitation options (if outsourcing program elements).** Discuss internally if implementation partners or consultants are needed to execute any aspect of the program. If so, determine the statement of work (SOW) and contractor solicitation options available to USAID. Examples include grant management, technology platform providers, and communication firms. This should be done in tandem with your program design choices and as you weigh options for the solicitation mechanisms.

**Procure implementation contractor (if outsourcing program elements).** Conduct a competitive solicitation to select implementation partners or consultants as needed.

**Obligate funds for implementation contractor (if necessary).** Obligate funds for an implementing contractor in coordination with OAA. In some cases, it will be necessary for USAID and GCD Founding Partners to jointly determine if hiring a support contractor is appropriate (e.g., if using pooled funds).

**Clarify roles and responsibilities.** Ensure that the contractor is clear about roles and responsibilities and how USAID and the partners wish to engage in the implementation effort (if at all). For example, in Powering Agriculture, the GCD team accesses support services on implementing the program but USAID is responsible for grant management and winner evaluation/selection.
Resources and References

To date, GCD teams have opted to use various mechanisms to obtain different types of support service. Powering Agriculture issued PASTO, a Request For Task Order Proposal (RFTOP) for implementation support services. SWFF issued an RFI to identify service providers for a Technical Assistance Facility which will be used to implement the acceleration activities of their GCD programs. ACR issued an RFP specifically seeking support for a Prize Service Provider. These documents are provided as samples in the Resources section.

BRIEF INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Before a program launch, your GCD team should brief internal stakeholders on the state of program activities. Lab leadership, USAID’s Regional Bureaus, Missions, and field offices of partner organizations should be made aware of the program to get buy-in, raise awareness, and discuss opportunities for collaboration, such as local outreach and providing application reviewers.

To build a plan for internal engagement, consider the following:

- Who needs to be at the table?
- What materials are you sharing with leadership?
- What are the desired outcomes for the briefing?

Launching the Program

PUBLICIZE THE CALL AND APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE

Successful program implementation, from a process and outreach standpoint, hinge on the decisions about the timing for when to launch and publicize a GCD program. The decisions about program launch fall into three stages: (1) publicize the program, (2) publicize the Call for Innovations, and (3) publicize the start of the application acceptance period.

In order to plan the sequencing of these stages, you will need to answer basic questions about the launch process:

- Will you announce the program before the Call for Innovations has been finalized?
- Will there be a period for public feedback on the program through an RFI or comments on a BAA?
- Will the launch and announcement of the Call for Innovations come before or coincide with the application acceptance phase?
Once sequencing decisions are made, consider the following factors when deciding how and when to publicize the Call and application acceptance period:

- Outreach to press and media should begin in advance of the program launch to ensure there is timely coverage of the story.
- Campaigns should build toward a spike of online activity around the announcement of the Call and the application acceptance period.
- Avoid major holidays and take advantage other technical events or campaigns related to the GCD whenever possible.
- Organize a launch event (as part of a relevant conference or industry event if possible) to generate buzz about the Call and build connections among key stakeholder and target participants.

The Communications Strategy should support the program launch and other announcements with targeted campaigns. The Communications Toolkit offers detailed explanation of a campaign, suggestions on how best to utilize the communication channels to reach your target participants, and how to equip GCD Partners with the materials necessary to increase reach (e.g., package marketing materials, prepare for press coverage and outreach).

Be prepared to sustain outreach over the course of the application acceptance period. The data analytics of your campaign and platform will equip you to understand who you are reaching (e.g., who has begun the application process). Most applications are likely to come in during the last days of the application period but information gained early on will help you make the necessary adjustments to reach the right solvers and increase the potential for accessing the best innovations.

ORGANIZE QUESTION AND ANSWER OPPORTUNITIES

Regardless of how well you’ve designed the program, how comprehensive the Communications Strategy, or how well you’ve publicized the call, it may be worthwhile to organize question and answer (Q&A) opportunities. Q&A opportunities allow potential solvers and applicants to learn more about the program and pose questions about solicitation documents or application procedures. Some programs, for example, may want to include a “how to write a proposal” webinar or events for potential applicants. This is particularly useful if the expected applicant pool is new to USAID proposal requirements. There is also value for the competition designers and sponsors in organizing Q&A as these opportunities offer sponsors a chance to assess the participant pool composition and to integrate, or at least anticipate, participant feedback and opinions of the call.

To ensure that the Q&A provides the optimal value for applicants and sponsors/designers, preparation for a Q&A is critical. Instructions for participation must be clearly communicated and the event must be properly staffed by the GCD team. Unclear instructions or the appearance of an unresponsive or poorly organized competition sponsor can confuse or alienate potential applicants before they even begin to participate.
APPLICATION INTAKE

The application intake stage marks the start of the period when applicants can submit their proposals. This coincides with ongoing recruitment and communications activities. Be sure to gather data on applicants that are useful for your analysis. For example, information on the geographic location of applicant, geographic location of implementation of the innovation, what stage of innovation, and what type of innovation applicants propose will help you assess whether you are reaching targets through the campaign and communication efforts. Such information will also contribute learning about outreach success, participant composition, and lessons on program and platform design.

Critical Considerations

At this point you will have already worked with the platform provider to design the platform and test the application intake functions. The platform must be user friendly and easy to find and access. It is also imperative to have staff, from the platform service provider and USAID, designated to provide ongoing and responsive support to applicants who may struggle with the system or with understanding basic requirements.

The Platform Toolkit explains how to assess your platform needs, select a provider, and design and test the platform in further detail.

If the application intake process is online, collect relevant data about submissions at multiple points to enable flexible and appropriate course-corrections for applicant recruitment efforts. If you find yourself mid-way through the application intake process and still missing critical audiences (e.g., for example, the academic community, scientists, engineers, social enterprises) or target groups (e.g., women, youth, local entrepreneurs), you will have the time and necessary information to change outreach tactics.

Tip

In some cases you may want to develop a multistage intake process that asks innovators to provide basic information in the first round and supplement their application with additional information only if they move to later stages. This design choice reduces the barriers to entry and gives the sponsor a broader view of potential solutions early on.
Expect most applications to be completed in the final days of the application intake period, often there are spikes in application completion even in the final minutes before an application deadline. Think of creative ways to incentivize early submissions and think about how you (or the platform) will manage the increased volume of activity in the final days.

At the end of the intake period, close the application window and transition submitted applications to the evaluation stage. You will need to safely store the information on applicant proposals. Make sure that they are stored on USAID servers and designate someone from the team to lead the data reporting and capture.

Evaluating and Selecting Winners

CONDUCT THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation process will move you to a desired portfolio of winners. It is important that the process is credible, efficient and transparent from the perspective of not only internal stakeholders such as OAA but also to the applicants, reviewers and partners. Engage the best technical reviewers from the Agency network as well as from GCD Partners. Some GCD teams opt to use a multi-stage review process and mixed formats (online and offline) to create important checks and balances in the evaluation process. The evaluation process should be captured in the work plan. The figure below (used by SWFF based on an adapted version of the SL@B process) shows the most common evaluation phases. The duration of each phase, the number of screens, and the number and type of evaluation reviews vary slightly among GCD programs.

FIGURE 3. COMMON APPLICATION INTAKE AND EVALUATION PHASES
**Manage Reviewers**

During the evaluation process, manage the reviewers using a “VIP treatment” approach. Provide timely information, sufficient review time, clear expectations and customer service throughout the process. Reviewers typically enjoy the opportunity to engage with USAID and the other reviewers. Think about how to complement offline reviews with in-person discussions so as to create connections among reviewers and to encourage debate about the quality and selection of applications.

One-on-one interviews between reviewers and applicants can be a powerful tool for evaluating the quality of the innovations, the individual or organization’s skills, and can create an opportunity to solicit detailed information and insights on the innovation that may be difficult to capture through written submissions. While such interviews offer value to all involved in the process, they also take great effort and planning; ensure that you have the resources necessary for implementation.

**Set Information Access**

Consider what information from the applicant pool is most relevant or appropriate for the reviewers to access. This may differ for different reviewer types. For example in the first selection phase, you may want reviewers to look only at the executive summary/concept note of the application or the technical viability of reviewers, whereas in a later stage you may want to give reviewers access to budget information.

If you are using a technology platform, coordinate with the platform team to make sure the features that allow you to provide oversight in reviewer activity and communicate instructions are enabled. A platform will help ensure that competition deadlines are being met (see the Platform Toolkit for more detail).

**Capture Evaluation Data**

During each stage of the evaluation process, capture data and relevant information (via the online platform or through notes from in-person sessions) and analyze the data for anomalies/ outliers. Any evaluation process is at risk of biased selection so it is important to design a process that is clear, fair, and balanced. Someone from the USAID GCD team should play an oversight role to ensure that reviewers are scoring fairly and according to the established criteria. Most platforms will allow back-end calculations for scoring and data exports for easier data analysis and ranking assessments (see the Platform Toolkit).

Finally, work with OAA early to ensure that your team meets OAA preferences in how and when they receive the technical documents for oversight and storage. These documents may include every application submitted, reviewer comments, and overall scoring and rankings.
Engage the Public

The review period is the period when most programs lose momentum in public communications and engagement. Be sure to integrate campaign tactics to avoid this kind of interruption. Tactics such as continuing to share relevant information about the problem on social media, updating your audiences about where the evaluation process stands, or posting profiles on your technical reviewers may be effective in sustaining public interest through the evaluation period.

It may be part of your program design to engage the public in the review process. If so, consider making finalist applications available to the public for crowdsourced feedback and to heighten public interest. A common way to engage the public in competition evaluation is to implement a “People’s Choice Award” that can provide additional recognition and incentive for applicants. This tactic also reinforces your communications campaign and incentivizes external parties to take interest in the evaluation process and your winners.

Provide Feedback to Winners and Non-Winners

One of the most valuable things that a GCD team can provide to all applicants, winners and non-winners alike, is feedback on their applications. Given that innovators put hard work into competition applications, offering feedback is a good way to strengthen a new innovator’s relationship with USAID and GCD partners that can produce valuable results down the road. Here are some ideas of how to do this:

Feedback for Applicants

Ensure applicants get valuable feedback on how their application was evaluated. USAID reads and evaluates applications based on perspectives and expertise that individual applicants may not have. By providing feedback, USAID helps applicants understand the terms under which their application was evaluated. Equally important for the GCD program, providing feedback enhances USAID’s reputation as a responsive partner in innovation. This can filter into the broader communities of solvers that the GCDs (and other USAID innovation programs) seek to engage and improve the response to future GCD calls.

Design an evaluation process and package application evaluation details. Applicants are particularly interested in who their reviewers were and how their innovations were evaluated. Though capturing and packaging this information can be challenging, the
A competition platform can automate data collection and aggregation to make both quantitative and qualitative scoring information easy to export and share as feedback with applicants if designed to do so from the outset. (See Platform Toolkit.)

**Design an application platform that collects and packages information about applicants** to share with both winners and non-winners. Application information you may want to capture includes: demographic info, types of innovations, and analysis of which barriers were being addressed. This information can be shared in helpful ways across the innovator community, where individuals may be working in isolation and not know about peers and potential partners USAID is in touch with.

**Feedback for USAID**

**Analysis of the applications can provide an invaluable source of information to inform future calls.** Perhaps a certain region will provide far more applications than expected, while another falls short of expectations. Perhaps innovators gravitate toward just one barrier. By analyzing the applicant pool in relation to the application process, challenge statement and barrier analysis, a GCD team can update its assumptions, target more effectively in the future, and hone its analysis and targets for future calls for innovation. This information can also be shared with partners and other relevant parts of USAID to inform related programs.

**Demographic data can be used to describe the diversity of applicants and to justify the resources for outreach campaigns based on reach.** Think about how to capture and process information that can empower the USAID GCD team to advocate for and promote GCD programs. Capturing key data will allow teams to make adjustments and course corrections throughout their outreach strategies to yield a more diverse applicant pool.

**NEGOTIATE AWARDS**

Once winners are selected, the awards must be finalized. This may sound procedural but is in fact an opportunity to demonstrate to winners the capacity to release funding in a timely, efficient, and transparent manner.

During the program design phase, you should work with OAA to help them understand the goals of your program, what types of innovations you are seeking under the Call, and what types of awards you anticipate making based on your target participants and solver profiles. In turn, OAA will be able to help you plan for the types of awards that best suit the goals of the program and help you allocate staff time and resources for award management.

It is important to start planning how you will structure, negotiate, and manage awards during the program design phase. The next step, **Step 5 Manage Awards and Accelerate Innovations**, offers detailed discussion on award negotiation, including grant management, awardee capacity building, and how to maintain clear communication with awardees.
ANNOUNCE WINNERS

Announcing the winners is critical part of the process. Consider how to best stage the announcement to create maximum visibility for the winners and the program, while complying with OAA policies. Announcement should be aligned with the overall Communications Strategy and leverage all communication assets utilized by the GCD during program design and implementation.

In order to decide how best to stage the announcement of winners, the GCD team must first decide:

- Whether to first publicly announce winners and/or finalists online through a digital campaign or announce at high-profile event.
- Whether to announce finalists before announcing winners (giving you a larger subset of innovations to showcase).
- Whether to negotiate and finalize awards before public announcement or announce first and finalize awards afterwards.
- Whether any other assessments, preparation or communication materials are required before public announcement. For example, your team may want the winners to provide videos, marketing materials, etc. so there are communication materials ready to be released to the public.

A public event, such as the DevX, is an inspirational way to showcase innovations to the public and partners, bring the innovators together into a community, create new networks and acceleration opportunities, and build social media and press interest. Such events should always be combined with digital campaign tactics like posting innovator videos and stories on the website and linking to social media accounts to build cross-coverage.

You should begin designing and planning acceleration activities during the program design phase. Both Step 5 Manage Awards and Accelerate Innovations and the Acceleration Toolkit are excellent resources for understanding why and how acceleration activities integrate into your GCD program.
# Resources and References

## RESOURCES

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<td>6</td>
<td>Securing Water for Food Innovation Investment Advisory Committee—Scoring Guidelines</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAVING LIVES AT BIRTH GRANTS EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each GCD sets their own selection and evaluation criteria based on the strategic objectives of their program. The following is a sample of Saving Lives at Birth’s grant program evaluation criteria.

For Seed Grants—TEC 1 and TEC 2

1. **Innovation**

Demonstration that the proposed solution offers a creative approach to the problem outlined in the challenge and is clearly differentiated from existing approaches.

2. **Sustained Impact**

Demonstration that the proposed solution is relevant to the problem outlined in the challenge and potentially transformative. Does the solution:

- Address a key roadblock or critical condition as described in the challenge.
- Apply to hard-to-reach, low-resource settings in low- and middle-income countries once implemented.
- Address gender dynamics where relevant.
- Have the potential to substantially reduce stillborn, maternal and/or newborn deaths.
- Provide a clear and compelling description of the potential scale at which the innovation could be applied.
- Provide a realistic strategy of how health and development impacts will be sustained at scale, including a realistic timeframe and pathway to reach the point of revenue breakeven for revenue-generating projects or continued support from other sources such as local governments, donors, private foundations, etc. for projects not generating any income or revenue.
- Demonstrate a specific and segmented understanding of the target population, i.e. a clear articulation of the innovation’s value proposition and evidence of demand (including willingness and/or ability to pay).
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

RESOURCES

3. Execution and Evaluation Plan

Extent to which the proposed project objectives and interim milestones are appropriate, feasible and technically sound within the budget and time allocated for seed funding.
Extent to which the project has proposed clear, measurable and realistic monitoring and evaluation plan, including key indicators. Reviewers will examine the quality of the proposed indicators of the outcomes/results you expect to achieve and any other method(s) you propose to use to measure project success.

4. Organizational Capacity and Partnerships

- Depth and breadth of organizational capacity, including talent, experience and leadership of key project personnel or partners, if applicable (e.g., relevant domain knowledge and experience, track record of professional success relevant to the proposal and its applicability to the program objective).
- Demonstration of support and/or engagement of local/national partners in project design, implementation, and evaluation.
- For applicants who received a grant under previous rounds of Saving Lives at Birth and are now seeking follow-on seed funding under this RFA for the same project, describe plans to engage partners in implementing and/or transitioning to scale your innovation.

For Seed Grants—In person meeting

Pioneering

Applications with highest potential to achieve sustained, groundbreaking impact and/or to become true game changers in the field.

For Transition Grants—TEC 1 and TEC 2

1. Innovation

Demonstration that the proposed solution to be refined, rigorously tested, and scaled offers a creative approach to the problem outlined in the challenge and is clearly differentiated from existing approaches.
LIFE CYCLE OVERVIEW

STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

RESOURCES

2. Sustained Impact

- Demonstration that the proposed solution is relevant to the problem outlined in the challenge and potentially transformative. Does the solution:
  - Have the potential to substantially reduce stillborn, maternal and/or newborn deaths?
  - Have sufficient and credible evidence of proof-of-concept, i.e., strong evidence of promising health outcomes in a controlled or limited setting and/or strong evidence in the reduction of significant barrier(s) to health and evidence of demand for the solution in a controlled or limited setting for mothers and/or newborns?
  - Illustrate an integrated solution combining science and technology, service delivery and demand creation?
  - Address a key roadblock or critical condition as described in the challenge?
  - Demonstrate the ability to be scaled up in hard-to-reach, low-resource settings in a low- and/or middle-income country?
  - Provide a clear and compelling description of the potential scale at which the innovation could be applied and the expected impact on intended beneficiaries both within and beyond the life of the grant?

- Demonstration that the proposed solution can continue to have beneficial health and development impacts after the funding period.
  - For revenue-generating projects, a realistic timeframe and pathway to reach the point of revenue breakeven should be included.
  - For projects that are not generating any income or revenue, and/or expect the innovation to be delivered through public sector channels, the proposal should provide a compelling and realistic plan for ensuring continued uptake after completion of Saving Lives at Birth program support.

- Extent to which the project demonstrates a specific and segmented understanding of the target population, i.e., a clear articulation of the innovation’s value proposition and evidence of demand (including willingness and/or ability to pay).

3. Execution Plan

Extent to which the proposed project objectives and interim milestones are appropriate, feasible and technically sound within the budget and time allocated for either transition funding.
4. Evaluation Plan

Extent to which the project has a clear and rational monitoring and evaluation plan that is structured to evaluate outcome and impact and inform future scale up activities. Reviewers will examine the quality of the proposed indicators (clear, measurable, and realistic) of the outcomes/results you expect to achieve and any other method(s) you propose to use to measure project success.

5. Organizational Capacity and Partnerships

Demonstration that the applicant and its partners have the necessary depth and breadth of talent, experience and leadership to transition to scale and sustain the project.

- Extent to which the applicant have sufficient alliances or partnerships to scale the innovation (e.g., relevant stakeholders, joint ventures, selling/distribution agreements, channel partnerships, licensing arrangements, etc.? This could also include evidence of co-funding from partners to support sustainability.

- Extent to which the applicant and its partners have relevant domain knowledge and experience, track record of professional success relevant to the proposal and its applicability to the program objective.

- Demonstration of support and/or engagement of local/national partners in project design, implementation, and evaluation.

For Transition Grants—In person meeting

Pioneering

Applications with highest potential to achieve sustained, groundbreaking impact and/or to become true game changers in the field.
ALL CHILDREN READING SELECTION CRITERIA

Each GCD sets their own selection and evaluation criteria based on the strategic objectives of their program. The following is a sample of All Children Reading’s selection criteria for their grant program.

SECTION V — APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Each application submitted in response to this RFA will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth below. These criteria: a) identify the significant areas that Applicants should address in their applications; and b) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

1. Application Evaluation Process

Applications received pursuant to this RFA will be evaluated using a two-step evaluation process.

Step 1 — Evaluation of the Abstract

For all applications meeting the basic eligibility requirements, a technical evaluation panel will evaluate the Abstract to:

(1) Determine the application’s relevance to improving student reading in the primary grades and their focus on teaching and learning materials and/or education data; and
(2) Determine how innovative the project idea is and its potential for transformative impact.

These criteria are of equal importance. Applications deemed to be within the competitive range will move on to Step 2, where the full application will be evaluated. Applications that are outside of the competitive range will not move on to Step 2. In these cases, the full applications will not be evaluated.

Step 2 — Evaluation of the Full Application

All applications included in the competitive range after Step 1 will then be evaluated based on the following technical evaluation criteria. The relative scoring weights of the criteria are listed below, so that applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of information.
(a) Technical Approach (60 Points)

This evaluation component contains two major sub-factors—Innovation and Relevance—which, when combined, represent the totality of this significant technical evaluation factor. Each of these two sub-factors is equally important relative to each other.

i) Innovation — The application will be evaluated on the extent to which the intervention is innovative and potentially transformative. Each sub-factor listed below is listed in descending order of importance. The first sub-factor is the most important.

a. the extent to which the intervention has the potential to lead to substantial and sustainable improvements in student reading in primary grades; and
b. the extent to which the intervention integrates innovative, low-cost solutions and/or technological approaches.

ii) Relevance — The application will be evaluated on the extent to which the intervention is relevant to the implementation context. Each sub-factor listed below is listed in descending order of importance. The first sub-factor is the most important.

a. the extent to which the intervention responds to a critical and unmet need; the extent to which the theory of change to reach student reading goals is clear and logical;
b. the extent to which the intervention appropriately addresses the characteristics of users/beneficiaries (e.g., language, reading level) and the needs of the education system in the implementation context; and
c. the extent to which there is support and/or engagement of local/national/regional partners in project design, implementation, and evaluation.

(b) Sustainability (20 Points)

The application will be evaluated on the potential sustainability of the intervention after the conclusion of the project. The sub-factors below are listed in descending order of importance. The first sub-factor is the most important.

- the potential linkages and/or integration with country education systems in the proposed implementation context; the potential scale at which the innovation could be applied, including affordability of the intervention at scale if applicable is the most important sub-factor;
- the clarity and logic of the approach to implementation within the existing capacity in the proposed implementation context or how capacity will be developed to the required level; and
LIFE CYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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- the potential for success and relevance across multiple contexts.

(c) Management and Implementation (20 Points)

The application will be evaluated on the appropriateness, clarity, and logic of the approach to managing and implementing the project. Each subfactor is equally important relative to each other.

- the extent to which the approach to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation is appropriate, clear, and logical; and

- the extent to which objectives are realistic and logical and to which the objectives are appropriate within the budget and time period allocated.

Non-scored Evaluation Factors:

While no points are assigned to the below factors they are important and material to the award decision.

(a) Past Performance

The application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant's past performance indicates the potential for success in this project. The following factors will be taken into account in the evaluation of this criterion:

- the applicant's prior experience and success in implementing, managing, and evaluating similar activities; and

- the applicant's record of collaborating closely with various levels of host country governments and/or other public and/or private sector partners.

(b) Gender Analysis

The application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates an understanding of how gender norms in the implementation context will affect the project, as well as how the project will affect gender norms in the implementation context, if at all. It will also be evaluated on the extent to which the analysis demonstrates an understanding of the constraints and opportunities that may affect outcomes for either girls or boys.
RESOURCES

(c) Cost

Costs included in the proposed budget will be reviewed to ensure they are allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Cost effectiveness will be considered in relation to any proposed cost-share. While a cost-share is not required, it could contribute to the achievement of the results of this funding opportunity.

Budget proposals will also be subject to cost realism analysis. The cost realism analysis will verify the applicant’s understanding of the requirements, assess the degree to which the cost application reflects the approaches in the technical application, and assess the degree to which the costs included in the application accurately represent the programmatic requirements set forth in the application.

[Note: Applications that do not present realistic costs may risk not being considered for award.]

All other factors being technically equal, the Founding Partners reserve the right to ensure geographic diversity in applications selected for award.
**LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM**

**RESOURCES**

**SECURING WATER FOR FOOD WORK PLAN SAMPLE**

A program work plan should be comprehensive and kept up to date by the individual(s) leading key activities. GCD teams often unique create work plans to cover a specific phases of a program because the level of detail is so exhaustive. This Securing Water for Food work plan spans the months of April to September 2014 during which the BAA was issued and the Desal Prize was launched.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Finalize MOUs</td>
<td>3/31/2014</td>
<td>4/11/2014</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Write detailed investment Committee process and timeline</td>
<td>3/31/2014</td>
<td>4/7/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Share MOU with leadership</td>
<td>4/7/2014</td>
<td>4/7/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAA</td>
<td>Call and confirm semi-finalists</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/15/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAA</td>
<td>Discuss amendment requirements with OAA</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/11/2014</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BAA</td>
<td>If amendment is required, draft materials</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/17/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Finalize high value conferences</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/15/2014</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Finalize text and pictures for side event</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/15/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Develop list of recipients for DevX Support RFP</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/15/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Revisit World Water Week opening plenary possibilities or secure other high level speaking engagement</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/15/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Develop TEC 2 training materials</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/18/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Develop detailed agenda for introductory Investment Committee calls</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/15/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Finalize detailed Investment Committee process/timeline</td>
<td>4/14/2014</td>
<td>4/15/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Draft email with 1) summary of Investment Committee calls; 2) next steps; and 3) key changes to TEC process document</td>
<td>4/18/2014</td>
<td>4/21/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Schedule and reserve webinars for Investment Committee</td>
<td>4/21/2014</td>
<td>4/24/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Develop training PPT to accompany document</td>
<td>4/21/2014</td>
<td>4/24/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Call RFP recipients and encourage them to apply</td>
<td>4/21/2014</td>
<td>4/23/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Sign contract for side event</td>
<td>4/28/2014</td>
<td>5/2/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Schedule website planning meeting</td>
<td>4/28/2014</td>
<td>5/2/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Develop Photo Prize</td>
<td>4/28/2014</td>
<td>5/2/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Develop SDF for USAID to get awardees to World Water Week</td>
<td>4/28/2014</td>
<td>5/2/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Conduct TEC 2 training</td>
<td>4/28/2014</td>
<td>4/30/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Finalize reviewer assignments in platform</td>
<td>4/28/2014</td>
<td>4/29/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Begin Full Application Review/TEC 2</td>
<td>5/1/2014</td>
<td>5/30/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (Including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Guidance to reviewers about scoring Qs</td>
<td>5/5/2014</td>
<td>5/7/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Create initial plan for collaborator/partner event (informal) with awardees at World Water Week</td>
<td>5/5/2014</td>
<td>5/9/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Map semifinalist partners from Full Applications</td>
<td>5/5/2014</td>
<td>5/23/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Create detailed timeline for RFP with all key dates and information</td>
<td>5/5/2014</td>
<td>5/12/2014</td>
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</table>
### Lifecycle Overview Step 1. Identify and Define the Problem

**Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Description</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Lifecycle Overview Step 1. Identify and Define the Problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TECs (including Investment Committee)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up regarding score calculations</td>
<td>5/19/2014</td>
<td>5/22/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send “thank you” note to reviewers; let them know we’ll announce finalists and send next steps list</td>
<td>5/26/2014</td>
<td>5/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and finalize DevX planning document</td>
<td>5/26/2014</td>
<td>7/14/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compile scores and summary applicant information for Founding Partners</td>
<td>5/26/2014</td>
<td>5/30/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine contact information for Mission reviews (on USAID side); compile Mission/Embassy contacts from Founding Partners</td>
<td>5/26/2014</td>
<td>6/5/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft emails to successful/unsuccessful applicants; clear with OAA</td>
<td>5/26/2014</td>
<td>5/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine planning requirements for high value conferences</td>
<td>5/26/2014</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>in process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input all custom questions and advance finalists in the platform</td>
<td>5/29/2014</td>
<td>5/30/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial discussion to determine wants/needs, and then language for grant/award agreements</td>
<td>6/2/2014</td>
<td>6/6/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send advance/not advance emails to semifinalists (through platform and constant contact)</td>
<td>6/2/2014</td>
<td>6/3/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post finalists on website</td>
<td>6/2/2014</td>
<td>6/2/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribute proposals from WWW Awardee Support RFP to TEC (Tamara, Seema, Ku)</td>
<td>6/2/2014</td>
<td>6/4/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read proposals and hold TEC for WWW Awardee Support RFP</td>
<td>6/2/2014</td>
<td>6/10/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help facilitate USAID/SciO/DGIS meetings in the field with mission/embassy staff</td>
<td>6/2/2014</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>in process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send finalists to Netherlands MER</td>
<td>6/3/2014</td>
<td>6/3/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule VTCs/skype calls with all finalists</td>
<td>6/4/2014</td>
<td>6/12/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop VTC guidance document for Founding Partners and Reviewers</td>
<td>9/6/2014</td>
<td>6/13/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial discussion with OAA to determine language for grant/award agreements</td>
<td>6/9/2014</td>
<td>6/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update comms materials to reflect finalists</td>
<td>6/9/2014</td>
<td>6/18/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reschedule mission webinar</td>
<td>6/9/2014</td>
<td>6/13/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop template for Reviewer convening; finalize agenda and Founding Partner decision meeting</td>
<td>6/16/2014</td>
<td>6/18/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold webinar to walk through Mission/Embassy review and online platform</td>
<td>6/16/2014</td>
<td>6/16/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft description of Networking event and create initial invitee list</td>
<td>6/16/2014</td>
<td>6/20/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine list of individuals/offices at USAID that should be kept informed of invites/event status (i.e. Water Office, Partnership Office, other Bureaus, etc.)</td>
<td>6/16/2014</td>
<td>6/20/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send Mission/Embassy reviews to Founding Partners for review</td>
<td>6/19/2014</td>
<td>6/23/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Lifecycle Overview Step 1: Identify and Define the Problem

### Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partners + Internal</th>
<th>Create Plan that Sida can execute to bring on Norway as a Founding Partner</th>
<th>6/23/2014</th>
<th>6/30/2014</th>
<th>completed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Send draft event language and initial invitee list to Founding Partners</td>
<td>6/23/2014</td>
<td>6/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Work with OAA and innovators on budgets</td>
<td>6/23/2014</td>
<td>ongoing until award</td>
<td>completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Set up weekly check ins with OAA</td>
<td>6/23/2014</td>
<td>6/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Draft comments for all (7) unsuccessful applicants</td>
<td>6/23/2014</td>
<td>7/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Confirm Founding Partner meeting date</td>
<td>6/23/2014</td>
<td>6/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Outreach</td>
<td>Send “thank you” note to mission/embassy reviewers</td>
<td>6/23/2014</td>
<td>6/27/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Outreach</td>
<td>Determine whether any missions would fund SWFF finalists</td>
<td>6/30/2014</td>
<td>7/25/2014</td>
<td>in process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Survey applicants regarding common and tailored milestones; clear with OAA</td>
<td>6/30/2014</td>
<td>7/11/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Create production schedule for collateral design, writing, publication, shipping</td>
<td>6/30/2014</td>
<td>7/4/2014</td>
<td>in process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Send “Save the Date” to invitation list</td>
<td>7/7/2014</td>
<td>7/11/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Finalize award language with OAA</td>
<td>7/7/2014</td>
<td>7/25/2014</td>
<td>in process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Ask Founding Partners to develop Round 3 design options for discussion at Founding Partners Meeting</td>
<td>7/7/2014</td>
<td>7/8/2014</td>
<td>completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Conduct press mapping for World Water Week</td>
<td>7/14/2014</td>
<td>8/2/2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Create awardee orientation agenda and materials and write talking points</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>8/1/2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Draft metrics language for inclusion in awardee grants</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>7/25/2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Finalize agenda for Founding Partner meeting</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>7/23/2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Draft colls collateral per innovator (postcards) for World Water Week</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>8/1/2014</td>
<td>in process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Finalize agenda for Founding Partner meeting</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>7/25/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Outreach</td>
<td>Send all “apparent awardees” to key missions</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>7/25/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Develop Media Guidance Document for World Water Week</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>7/30/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Send awardee list to IAAC</td>
<td>7/21/2014</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Founding Partner Convening to determine awardees</td>
<td>7/23/2014</td>
<td>7/25/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
<td>Develop agenda for intra-SWFF brainstorming sessions</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>8/1/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnerships (new)</td>
<td>Schedule and hold conversation with USAID Partnerships office</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>8/1/2014</td>
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<td>Knowledge Management</td>
<td>Hold at least two KM brainstorming sessions to inform KM doc</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>8/1/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Finalize all awards</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>9/30/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Send final invitation</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>7/31/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Draft press release</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>7/31/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Develop awardee-oriented social media kit for missions</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>8/1/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Modify GCD M&amp;E Ops Plan for SWFF</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>8/2/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Write M&amp;E training materials for awardees</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>8/2/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Send Email to Applicants Informing them of their Successful/Unsuccessful Applications</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TECs (including Investment Committee)</td>
<td>Notify successful and unsuccessful applicants</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Clear press release (Water office, LPA, etc)</td>
<td>7/29/2014</td>
<td>8/29/2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Write awardee 1-papers/postcards for DevX</td>
<td>8/4/2014</td>
<td>8/15/2014</td>
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</table>

Done through Platform, OAA needs to clear
## Lifecycle Overview Step 1. Identify and Define the Problem

### Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date Created</th>
<th>Date Updated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Ask acceleration contractor for additional names for invitation list</td>
<td>8/11/2014</td>
<td>8/15/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Clear awardee orientation agenda and materials (with Founding Partners; DAA??)</td>
<td>8/11/2014</td>
<td>8/15/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Clear communications collateral per innovator (postcards) for World Water Week</td>
<td>8/11/2014</td>
<td>8/15/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Draft materials for Founding Partner meeting (annual report, financials, etc)</td>
<td>8/11/2014</td>
<td>8/28/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Outreach</td>
<td>Draft progress report on mission co-funding and/or implementation plans, including recommendations &amp; next steps</td>
<td>8/15/2014</td>
<td>8/23/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Clear (with LPA, Water Office) awardee &quot;roles and expectations&quot; document, including talking points for press</td>
<td>8/18/2014</td>
<td>8/22/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Draft bios of attendees (which will later be sent to all attendees)</td>
<td>8/18/2014</td>
<td>8/20/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Send brief bios of attendees to all networking event participants</td>
<td>8/18/2014</td>
<td>8/22/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Develop Round 3 design options for discussion at Founding Partners meeting</td>
<td>8/18/2014</td>
<td>8/27/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Decide whether to have already-created marketing collateral available at event</td>
<td>8/25/2014</td>
<td>9/1/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Publish innovator content to website</td>
<td>9/1/2014</td>
<td>9/1/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Implement post-World Water Week Comms strategy</td>
<td>9/1/2014</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
<td>Compile draft innovator tools for website</td>
<td>9/8/2014</td>
<td>9/19/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Outreach</td>
<td>Connect awardees with missions</td>
<td>10/1/2014</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Outreach</td>
<td>Determine partner, acceleration, and enabling environment opps</td>
<td>11/1/2014</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DevX Planning</td>
<td>Finalize all World Water Week logistics (final room reservations, invoices, set-up, etc)</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Begin World Water Week press/comms planning</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners + Internal</td>
<td>Finalize Sustainability Framework</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
<td>Register for high value events</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Launch DevResults platform</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Finalize metrics with innovators</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnerships (new)</td>
<td>Finalize &quot;new partner&quot; strategy</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnerships (new)</td>
<td>Conduct additional partnership mapping</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Outreach</td>
<td>Conduct follow-up calls with key missions</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

RESOURCES

SECURING WATER FOR FOOD RFI FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FACILITY

GCD teams have opted to use various mechanisms to obtain different types of support service. This is a sample of the RFI Securing Water for Food issued to identify service providers for a Technical Assistance Facility which will be used to implement the acceleration activities of their GCD programs.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)
Solicitation Number: SOL-OAA-14-000098
Notice Type: Request for Information (RFI)
Subject: Securing Water for Food Technical Assistance Facility

Issuance Date: April 23, 2014
Closing Date: May 2, 2014
Closing Time: 2:00 PM EST

I. Description

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in support of the Center for Development Innovation (CID) is seeking information on GSA schedules currently held in relation to this request, clarity of the proposed requirement, labor categories, other direct costs and any comments on the requirement would be helpful.

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes – it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. This request for information does not commit the Government to contract for any supply or service whatsoever. Further, USAID is not at this time seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Respondees are advised that the U.S. Government will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party’s expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP, if any is issued. If a solicitation is released, it will be synopsized on the Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) website; www.fbo.gov. It is the responsibility of the potential offerors to monitor the website for additional information pertaining to this requirement.
LIFE CYCLE OVERVIEW

STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

II. INTRODUCTION

The SWFF Innovator Technical Assistance Facility is an essential component of Securing Water for Food: A Grand Challenge for Development (SWFF). The Innovator Technical Assistance Facility will provide guidance for 10–30 SWFF innovators\(^1\) to achieve technical and financial milestones and reach scale. The purpose of the Facility is to directly provide assistance or arrange for assistance to help awardees “accelerate” their innovations. The Facility Manager will work in coordination with the innovators, Founding Partners (USAID and Sida), and other parties that directly support SWFF. The successful consortium will:

- Demonstrate a proven record of accelerating innovative, technology-focused ventures at both the market driven product/business development and scaling/commercialization stages;
- Demonstrate the ability and commitment to develop person-to-person relationships with SWFF awardees;
- Demonstrate an expert understanding of the marketplace for water technologies and/or business model innovations;
- Demonstrate established contacts and well-developed networks with investors and financial institutions—especially those looking to invest in water or food innovations; and;
- Demonstrate the ability to source and manage assistance from multiple firms/organizations for business development, investment facilitation, and partnership development—including developing country firms/organizations.

III. BACKGROUND

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), (collectively, the “Founding Partners”) launched Securing Water for Food: A Grand Challenge for Development (SWFF) on September 2, 2013 in Stockholm, Sweden. Through this Grand Challenge for Development, we will identify and accelerate science and technology innovations and market-driven approaches that enable the production of more food with less water and/or make more water available for food production, processing, and distribution in developing and emerging countries.

\(^1\) The Acceleration Facilitator will also offer limited acceleration support in the form of online training and group skills development to all finalists (those invited for face-to-face interviews) in addition to the 10–30 awardees.
SWFF is focused on three (3) areas that are critical to reducing water scarcity in the food value chain:

(1) **Water Efficiency and Reuse**—especially targeted at the food value chain. This will become a greater necessity as water availability is threatened by competition between industrial, agricultural, and energy uses. Improving water efficiency and reuse has tremendous potential water-saving benefits that may have multiplier effects at various levels of a country’s economy.

(2) **Water Capture and Storage.** These systems are in high demand in many regions where rain occurs at limited times. With projected increases in rainfall variability due to climate change and increased demands for food production, capture and storage systems at various scales are needed to secure water supplies throughout the year and build resiliency to drought and floods.

(3) **Salinity and Salt Water Intrusion.** In coastal areas, over pumping and rising sea levels are leading to saltwater intrusion, forcing farmers to use marginal quality water for irrigation. With more than 30% of the world’s population living in coastal areas and drawing food supply from fertile deltas, urgent solutions are required to reduce the impacts of salinity on the quality of aquifers and food production.

The Founding Partners opened the first “call for innovations” in November 2013 and invited Concept Note submissions from applicants around the world. The Founding Partners have invited 83 semi-finalists to submit a Full Proposal that addresses a more rigorous set of questions about their innovation and target market. In July 2014, the Founding Partners will convene in-person interviews with the top 40 finalists. In September 2014, the Founding Partners will make approximately 10–30 awards and provide chosen innovators with a mix of financial and technical support. Awardees may be nonprofits, for-profit ventures, and universities and research institutions. The Founding Partners will provide financial support and the SWFF Innovator Technical Assistance Facility will provide technical support as outlined in this document. The primary customers of the Facility will be the innovators who choose to participate in the Innovator Technical Assistance Facility.

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As part of the awardee selection process, the Founding Partners will convene the Innovation Investment Advisory Committee (IIAC). The Founding Partners anticipate that the IIAC will be standing panel of 21 technical experts, business specialists, sustainable development experts, and researchers with extensive experience in water innovation. Business specialists may include individuals from large companies (food production; food and beverage; water engineering), financial services, technology incubators and/or accelerators, and service providers. The IIAC will review the semi-final applications and make recommendations to the SWFF Founding Partners. The Founding Partners and members of the IIAC will then hold in-person interviews with the top 40 finalists.
SWFF will support innovators in two broad stages of innovation:

- **Stage 1—Market-driven product/business development:** These innovations have been verified through a standalone pilot or a series of pilots and now need to be tested and adapted for adoption in new developing or emerging countries. These innovations may require technical validation and proof of adoption/uptake in a new market.

- **Stage 2—Scaling/Commercial Growth:** These are established innovations that have already demonstrated a viable business model and are generating revenue. They require support for commercial growth, including adaptation of the innovation for larger scale production, market adoption, and distribution. It is expected that these innovations have already demonstrated technical feasibility and market acceptance and can provide evidence supporting these points.

SWFF awardees will receive an initial tranche of funding that is approximately 15-20% of the total amount of funding available per awardee depending on their Stage. In order to receive additional funding beyond the initial tranche, each awardee will be required to meet mutually developed and agreed-upon financial and technical milestones. Though awardees are not required to participate in the Innovator Technical Assistance Facility, it is designed to help innovators achieve their financial and technical milestones. The awardee, the USAID Agreement/Contracting Officer, the USAID Program Manager, and an Acceleration Facilitator (as explained below under “Specific Tasks and Requirements”) will jointly determine milestones at the time of award for awardees that choose to participate in the Technical Assistance Facility. The USAID Program Manager, the innovator, and the Acceleration Facilitator will review progress toward the completion of awardee milestones every six months. The USAID Agreement/Contracting Officer will ultimately assess if milestones have been achieved at the annual review.

**IV. Objectives**

The objectives of this contract are to provide advice, technical expertise, and implementation services relating to work performed and supported by the Securing Water for Food Grand Challenge for Development. The contractor will provide a comprehensive suite of products, services, and deliverables, with a specific focus on grants management, acceleration support, and monitoring and evaluation support. This will be the basis for evaluation and awarding of the contract. Additional work is anticipated beyond but related to these tasks. A flexible ability to add and subtract STTA (short term technical assistance) and LTTA (long term technical assistance) will be required. In addition, major program elements may require delivery through sub-contracts.
1. **Innovation Program Conceptualization, Development, and Implementation**

- Concept notes, barrier analysis and state of innovation work.
- Partner development and implementation
- Launch and other event planning and execution.
- Writing grant calls.
- Application intake, evaluation methodology, and execution for selecting grantees from 100s of applications
- Grant award processing
- Grant management

2. **Acceleration support for SWFF Innovators (described more specifically in Section A below)**

- Provide direct assistance (or facilitating the provision of assistance) to innovators, enabling them to improve their innovations, reach new markets, attract outside capital, and secure partnerships.
- Work with innovators to determine technical assistance needs including but not limited to: business model improvements; testing/piloting prototypes; operational improvements, strategic marketing, manufacturing, and distribution networks, marketing goals; partnership identification and networking; human resource management; marketing; IT: legal/regulatory, procurement, supply chain, manufacturing, and distribution experts and business model innovation advisory services and organizational capacity/training.

3. **Monitoring and Evaluation (described more specifically in Section B below)**

- Individual grantee analysis
- Program specific analysis
- Data collection, verification, and analysis
- Grantee technical support (including trainings) to help them meet all M&E requirements of the grant
- Consolidation of reports from multiple grantees for the same program

4. **Travel support logistics for USAID paid travel by grantees, presenter, and others as directed by USAID**

- Primary POC for communications with the traveler
- Scheduling and reservations
- VISA processing support
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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- Financial tracking and accounting
- Voucher processing from the traveler
- All other functions required for a successful and pleasant experience by the traveler

A. SWFF Technical Assistance Facility

A.1 Objectives

The Innovator Technical Assistance Facility’s objective is to help SWFF-supported innovators reach scale. The Facility will create connections to the marketplace, providing direct assistance (or facilitating the provision of assistance) to awardees, enabling them to refine their innovations, access new markets, bring in outside capital, develop partnerships, and—ultimately—have measureable impact in improving water availability and efficiency along the food value chain, thus boosting food security, alleviating poverty, and stimulating inclusive growth. SWFF innovators will have varying needs, and as such, offerors need to demonstrate their ability to function as a highly networked apex organization that draws on multiple firms/organizations for business development, investment facilitation, and partnership development. The offerors extensive network will enable them to flexibly provide technically and geographically varied services depending on the individual needs of SWFF innovators. This type of networked organization will be able to provide training at the group level in addition to facilitating specific market based development per awardee. Services should be sourced both from international and local firms/organizations and individuals.

The Facility will directly provide or manage the provision of a wide array of services to participating SWFF awardees to increase demand for their innovations and increase their organizational and institutional capacity to meet that demand—both of which are likely required to bring SWFF innovations to scale. The Facility will provide both supply and demand side advisory services. Some technical assistance may be delivered to all awardees participating in the Facility, and other types of assistance will need to be targeted towards individual awardees. As further outlined under “Specific Tasks and Deliverables” below, this assistance may include advisory services, technical services, and partnership facilitation. Supply side interventions may include: improving the innovation, capacity building of the management team, improving distribution models, gaining operational efficiency, and expanding access to capital to finance the growth strategy. Demand-side interventions may include: improving market linkages, securing contracts, building partnerships, enabling penetration of new markets, and support in attracting a growing customer base.

The Facility Manager should propose their overall acceleration methodology that includes a detailed explanation of direct technical advisory services and marketplace facilitation opportu-
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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...We recognize, however, that not all awardee needs can or will be identified in advance. As such, the offeror must also propose a methodology for identifying and sourcing highly specialized services that may require subcontractors and/or the management of a voucher program (whereby innovators would receive a voucher for the procurement of services from organizations identified and approved by the Facility Manager).

While the Facility Manager should propose their general acceleration methodology (including a robust menu of direct technical advisory offerings and marketplace facilitation opportunities), we recognize that not all innovator needs can (or should) be identified in advance. The contractor must therefore propose a methodology for identifying and sourcing highly specialized services that may require additional subcontractors and/or the management of a voucher program, whereby innovators would receive a voucher toward the procurement of services from organizations screened by the Facility Manager.

A.2 Results

Results sought (for innovators who use the services of the Facility) will include:

- Increased technical and financial viability of SWFF-supported innovations
- Increased usage/uptake of SWFF-supported innovations
- Expanded number of partnerships between SWFF awardees and the private sector
- Increased amount of outside capital attracted by SWFF awardees
- Expanded number of collaborations between SWFF awardees and industry experts
- Improved organizational and institutional capacity of SWFF innovators

A.3 Specific Tasks and Requirements

The full scope of targeted services will depend on the needs of each innovator participating in the Facility. The following, however, are general support categories that the Facility Manager will be expected to provide. Offerors should propose cost-effective ways of delivering the services described below (for example, some activities could be done virtually and/or in groups).

The Facility Manager shall:

- Provide overall management of the Facility. This includes providing direct technical assistance to SWFF awardees, as well as provisioning assistance from consortium members or additional providers that have yet-to-be identified (see flexible subcontracting or voucher program below).
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- Provide an Acceleration Facilitator who will manage the relationships with all awardees. The role of the Acceleration Facilitator will be to work with the innovator and the USAID Program Manager to develop Acceleration Workplans; work with the innovators to determine technical assistance needs; match innovators with required assistance; provide targeted advice and mentorship; proactively build connections and find opportunities for partnerships; facilitate access to new sources of capital; access industry or other resources (for example mentors, resource partners) that will help the innovator achieve milestones; and track progress on the Acceleration Workplan and develop semi-annual reports (with a summary of key actions, qualitative findings of opportunities and challenges and reporting on acceleration metrics) for each innovator. We recognize these abilities/areas of expertise may not be found in one organization, and consortia are encouraged to fulfill this requirement. Sub-awards may be made to meet these obligations.

- Create a network of mentors for SWFF innovators. Mentoring is a productive way to connect innovators with industry professionals, which may lead to valuable partnership opportunities. The Facility Manager will establish a mentor network, drawing from the water and agricultural industries, as well as other corporations, financial institutions, universities, and nonprofits. The Acceleration Facilitator will match awardees with mentors that can provide insight, advice, and assistance. Offerors should propose creative and cost-efficient ways of sourcing and retaining mentors throughout the duration of the SWFF program.

- Create a flexible subcontracting or voucher program. If the Facility Manager or a member of its consortium is unable to directly provide services, the Manager will source and competitively contract providers to deliver this support. The Facility Manager will also oversee the delivery of support. These services may alternatively be procured through a voucher program, whereby the innovator identifies the provider and the Facility Manager provides a voucher that the innovator can use to procure needed services.

- Facilitate access to investors and opportunities to raise capital for innovators who are seeking outside capital. Activities may include holding workshops on investment-preparedness; convening investors’ circles; facilitating co-investment partnerships with investors and/or other financial intermediaries; facilitating partnerships with risk insurance entities; and helping innovators source and close deals. Investment-related activities and follow-up actions will be documented in the Acceleration Workplans at six-month reviews.

- Enable partnerships for innovators who are seeking partners. The Facility Manager should initiate and grow relationships that result in business linkages between SWFF innovators and the private sector. Activities may include helping commercially ready innovators to develop marketing and distribution strategies, overall sales and business development support, partnership development, and facilitation of international marketing opportunities. Types of partnership opportunities may include co-investment opportunities with commercial water technology, engineering, or similar companies; partnerships to
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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develop and commercialize new water technologies (such as advance market/purchase commitments); or due diligence/ validation/screening partnerships (particularly focused on Stage 1 awardees). The first of these activities will be the Securing Water for Food development exchange (DevX) in September/October 2014. We expect the Facility Manager and Acceleration Facilitator will work with an existing contracted organization to provide initial support to awardees in late August/early September. Partnership-oriented activities and follow-up should be documented in the Acceleration Workplans at six-month reviews.

The Acceleration Facilitator shall:

- Work to create and maintain “Acceleration Workplans” that evaluate and establish targets for technical or business model improvements; testing/piloting; operational goals; marketing goals; partnership identification and networking; and organizational capacity/training. The Acceleration Facilitator will work with the innovator to set adoption/uptake targets. The Acceleration Workplans will detail recommended activities, resources, and timeframes. Workplans should establish mutual expectations by documenting what the innovator will contribute and what the Facility will contribute. Activities should directly accelerate the innovator’s capacity and ability to achieve technical and financial milestones. Workplans will be updated at six-month reviews. The Facility Manager will determine what support each innovator receives and at what point in time. The Facility Manager will make support recommendations to the USAID Program Manager, which may include increasing or decreasing support for a particular innovator. The percent of support per innovator will not be constant over time; it will vary depending on the stage and progress of each awardee as they move along the innovation pipeline.

- Provide or manage the provision of business development services and mentoring to SWFF awardees to help develop their innovation and organizational capacity (based on individual innovator needs). Types of business development services may include access to technology and engineering, pricing, human resource management, marketing, IT, legal/regulatory, procurement, supply chain, manufacturing, and distribution experts and business model innovation advisory services. Needs and services should be documented in the Acceleration Workplans at six-month reviews.

- Actively identify market opportunities for adoption and uptake. SWFF innovators will already have an implementation plan for their innovation and the Acceleration Facilitator will help awardees meet their original adoption/uptake target. The Acceleration Facilitator will identify additional opportunities for adoption and uptake (within the target country and/or regionally). This may include demand/market surveys, competitor assessments, press/media outreach, and facilitating participation in marketplace events and trade shows.
B. SWFF Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) Technical Assistance Facility

B.1 Objectives

The objective of the Securing Water for Food M&E Technical Assistance Facility (SWFF-METAF) is: (i) to provide vital support services to the SWFF Partners to enable their effective management, monitoring and evaluation of the program; and (ii) to facilitate the dissemination and transfer of SWFF-related knowledge and lessons learned to further promote the design and deployment of innovations that produce more food using less water and/or make more water available for food production, processing, or distribution in developing countries. The contractor is expected to coordinate and work closely with USAID’s Global Development Lab’s support contractor providing a variety of services to all of the Grand Challenges programs. We expect that specific short-term technical assistance (STTA) or long-term technical assistance (LTTA) will be required to address the specific water and/or agriculture technical metrics that each awardee will need to meet the requirements of SWFF.

B.2 Core Activities

The following types of activities will be undertaken through SWWFMETAF:

(1) Advising on and strengthening SWFF awardees’ ability to comply with USAID policies and procedures. SWFF anticipates that many of the awardees may be organizations that have little or no experience working with USAID. The SWWFMETAF contractor shall serve as a front-line resource for the awardees in understanding and complying with USAID operational policies and procedures, such as those articulated in the Automated Directives System (ADS). Anticipated areas of assistance may include, but are not limited to: facilitating pre-award surveys, establishing appropriate accounting and financial management practices, and providing guidance in technical/financial reporting. Specific activities may include the preparation of standard awardee operation manuals/guidelines, providing individualized assistance to awardees, hosting training workshops, and establishing an awardee “hotline” through which tailored assistance may be remotely provided.

(2) Monitoring awardee performance. The SWWFTO contractor shall assist SWFF with overseeing the implementation and progress of the awards. This will include the following types of activities:

(a) Quality control of awardee progress reporting. Given many awardees’ expected lack of familiarity with USAID reporting requirements, the contractor shall review their progress reports, which may include semi-annual and annual reports, for completeness and coherency before they are submitted to USAID. The contractor shall prepare a
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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... reporting template for awardees to follow, including progress towards meeting project objectives and reporting on the relevant, selected indicators described in the awardees’ monitoring and evaluation plan. Any reporting templates produced shall be reviewed by USAID before being finalized, and could be developed as an input to the Award Management Online Platform (see (c) below).

(b) Field visits to verify achievements and assist with addressing any shortcomings: As required, the contractor shall travel with the USAID Program Manager to the awardees’ implementation sites to verify reported achievements and the completion of project milestones, which may be required for payment of invoices under Fixed Obligation Grants (FOGs), and provide guidance to awardees on overcoming any obstacles that may be hindering project progress.

(c) Development and maintenance of an Award Management Online Platform: The contractor shall develop an online platform that will enable the SWFF Partners to quickly access information on the awardees’ projects and current performance. The platform should include reader-friendly presentation of the projects’ objectives, place of implementation, targets, current results, identified risks to achieving targets, and links to any associated material such as press releases, videos, etc. The platform should also provide access to an archive of the awardees’ documents, including relevant contractual information and progress reports.

NOTE: If there is already an existing GCD online M&E platform at the time of the implementation of this contract, the contractor will make sure to assist awardees and, where necessary, directly enter awardee projects’ objectives, place of implementation, targets, current results, identified risks to achieving targets, and links to any associated material such as press releases, videos, etc.

(3) Designing and conducting performance and impact evaluations: The SWWFMETAF contractor shall work with SWFF to further implement the overall monitoring and evaluation framework for SWFF that links to the broad “meta-level” Grand Challenge for Development (GCD) Strategic Framework as well as the Securing Water for Food Strategic Framework. Additionally, the contractor shall assist SWFF and awardees with developing individual project monitoring and evaluation plans that include targets and indicators tailored to the awardees’ individual projects and inclusive of USAID standard indicators for water and agriculture subject areas.

As required, the contractor shall perform mid-term project performance evaluation that, inter alia, assess progress towards achieving the projects’ objectives, identifies implementation obstacles and assesses awardees’ efforts to overcome them, and recommends any mid-term project modifications. The contractor may also perform end-
of-project performance evaluations that assess the extent to which the project’s objectives were achieved and captures lessons learned that may be informative for the design of future SWFF projects. The contractor may also be required to assist with the design and execution of impact evaluations that typically utilize counterfactual analysis to assess the changes, both intended and unintended, that can be attributed to the project. During the development of the overall monitoring and evaluation framework, the contractor shall advise on the feasibility and likely effectiveness of impact evaluations and timing and characteristics of baseline data collection.

(4) **Organizing and facilitating SWFF events:** The SWWFMETAF contractor shall take a leading role in organizing SWFF events, including such activities as making logistical arrangements, reserving appropriate venue space, organizing speakers, vetting speakers’ presentations, printing materials, preparing binders, renting equipment, as necessary, organizing catered meals, assembling and disassembling exhibit booths, etc. As required, the contractor shall facilitate the travel arrangements of SWFF event participants, including making flight and hotel arrangements and obtaining visas. At the SWFF events, the contractor shall undertake such activities as facilitating and moderating sessions, taking notes, preparing note summaries or proceedings, and taking photos and video. Additionally, the contractor may be required to present on selected technical topics related to the SWFF.

(5) **Facilitating outreach and communication:** Effective outreach and communications are critical to the success of SWFF; given its focus on attracting attention to the SWFF development problem, engaging with non-traditional partners, and disseminating technical and non-technical information to SWFF audiences. The contractor shall prepare a wide set of written and visual content that will be used in multiple locations. This content will include but not be limited to press releases, program notices, one-pagers, web content, emails, and social media posts. In addition, the contractor shall aggregate and post relevant SWFF related information that might be of interest to the SWFF audience, particularly on social media sites. The contractor shall also develop videos, infographics, and additional non-traditional content along with providing photos that effectively communicate SWFF goals and results to the targeted audience. The contractor shall assist the SWFF team with developing the SWFF website into a platform that serves both as a tool for communicating with the general public as well as a technical resource for development experts and other stakeholders. The contractor will help ensure that the website provides ready access to the latest information on innovations, solutions and approaches at the clean energy/agriculture nexus.

(6) **Facilitating travel by SWFF awardees and experts:** The contractor shall, as appropriate, support the travel of SWFF awardees and/or experts in the clean energy/agriculture nexus to events such as meetings, workshops, conferences and other fora related to SWFF. This may include payment of travel costs (e.g. airline tickets, per diem, hotels, ground transportation) and/or
LOGICAL SUPPORT by assisting with travel and event-related arrangements, such as flight and hotel reservations, conference registration, etc. The contractor shall assist participants with obtaining visas, as necessary.

(7) **Develop training manuals for awardees:** Training materials should be able to easily be viewed as a single document (PDF and/or PPT), as well as throughout the online database. Training materials should include “quick tips” and FAQs. Consultant will participate in dry-run training sessions to test efficacy of materials and make adjustments accordingly.

(8) **Integrating Securing Water for Food Projects into Partner Programs.** To transfer knowledge gained from SWFF projects and activities and strengthen USAID and partner programs in the clean energy-agriculture nexus, the contractor shall conduct assessments and provide training and technical assistance to selected USAID Bureaus and Missions, their implementing partners, and other stakeholders or partners. This may include technical advice on incorporating clean energy solutions in the design and implementation of USG agricultural and food security programs, such as Feed the Future. Other activities may include hosting training workshops, including preparing course curriculums and materials, inviting speakers, and giving presentations; review of selected USG clean energy/ agriculture program designs and workplans to identify opportunities for incorporating clean energy solutions; conducting assessments of field programs (estimated one per year), and preparation of analytical papers, toolkits and other materials to disseminate SWFF lessons learned.

V. **Period of Performance**

This estimated period of performance for this task order is September, 2014 through September, 2018.

VI. **Place of Performance**

The majority of activities will be implemented in Washington D.C. to enable effective communication between USAID and the contractor. International travel will be required to implement some of the above tasks, including at least once a year to each of the project implementation sites and to the location of annual SWFF Partners meetings, which rotates between the home offices of the Partners.
VII. Deliverables

The following deliverables shall be submitted to USAID in association with SWFFMETA:

A. Work Plan. Within 30 days of contract award, the contractor shall submit a draft Work Plan that describes key objectives, activities, milestones, responsible contractor staff and/or sub-contractors, and timeframe.

B. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Within 45 days of the contract award, the contractor shall develop an operation plan to implement the overall SWFF M&E Framework. The operational plan will be developed in close consultation with the SWFFMETA COR, and include components for assessing outputs, outcomes, and, as appropriate, impacts with associated key indicators and methodologies for their measurement. Up to three times per year, the contractor shall monitor and verify progress results through site visits, interviews, and review of project documentation.

C. SWFF Awardees’ Progress Reporting. The contractor shall prepare a progress report template for the SWFF awardees to document their progress in meeting project objectives and reporting on the relevant, selected indicators described in the awardees’ monitoring and evaluation plan.

D. Evaluations. The contractor shall design and perform up to three mid-term, performance and/or impact evaluations per year.

E. Award Management Online Platform. The contractor shall develop an online platform that will enable the SWFF Partners to quickly access information on the awardees’ projects and current performance. The platform should include reader-friendly presentation of the projects’ objectives, place of implementation, targets, current results, identified risks to achieving targets, and links to any associated material such as press releases, videos, etc. The platform should also provide access to an archive of the awardees’ documents, including relevant contractual information and progress reports.

NOTE: If there is already an existing GCD online M&E platform at the time of the implementation of this contract, the contractor will make sure to assist awardees and, where necessary, directly enter awardee projects’ objectives, place of implementation, targets, current results, identified risks to achieving targets, and links to any associated material such as press releases, videos, etc.
F. Outreach and Communications. The contractor shall develop up to thirty articles, press releases, and/or other written content per year, and up to two videos per year, which communicate to targeted audiences information about SWFF and associated projects, activities and events.

G. Accrual Reports. The contractor shall submit an estimated accruals reports on a quarterly basis to the SWWFMETAF COR, which includes the following information:

1. Total amount obligated,
2. Total amount invoiced,
3. Total amounts expended but not yet invoiced for, and
4. Remaining unexpended funds.

H. Reporting. Following the award of SWWFMETAF, the contractor shall submit to the SWWFMETAF COR concise quarterly reports that summarize the major activities and achievements made during the quarter, problems encountered and remedial actions proposed or taken, and activities planned for the next quarter. An annual report shall be prepared at the end of each fiscal year that summarizes the quarterly reports (a fourth quarter quarterly report will not be required) and assesses progress against the Work Plan described in Section X (A) above.

I. Key Personnel. The Contractor shall propose the following Key Personnel for implementation of SWFF M&E TA Facility:

1) Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (MES): The MES will be responsible for implementing the overall SWFF M&E framework described in Section II.2.c. Additionally, the MES shall assist SWFF and awardees with developing individual project monitoring and evaluation plans that include targets and indicators tailored to the awardees’ individual projects and inclusive of USAID standard indicators for water and agriculture subject areas. The MES must have at least seven years of experience with designing and performing mid-term, performance and impact evaluations in developing countries, preferably associated with the implementation of clean energy programs. S/he must be able to demonstrate a high degree of knowledge of M&E methodologies and best practices, including, but not limited to, developing M&E plans and collecting baseline data in a developing country context, statistical sampling, and analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data. S/he must have strong oral and written communication skills and be prepared to travel to SWFF award sites, which may be in remote, rural areas, to collect data, conduct interviews, and verify results.
The technical proposal shall include a summary of each of the Key Personnel's qualifications. A complete and current resume must be submitted as an Appendix for each of the Key Personnel positions, detailing the requisite qualifications and experience of the individual and references with contact information. Resumes may not exceed five (5) pages in length. Qualifications, experience and skills shall be placed in chronological order starting with most recent information. Each resume shall be accompanied by a signed letter of commitment from each candidate indicating his/her: (a) availability to serve in the stated position, in terms of days after award; (b) intention to serve for a stated term of the service; (c) agreement to the compensation levels which corresponds to the levels set forth in the cost proposal; and (d) prior work experience with the Prime contractor or subcontractor (if nominated by a subcontractor). The letter of commitment must specify the length of commitment to the position. Applicants shall also submit a minimum of three (3) references of professional contacts within the last three years with current and complete contact information, including email addresses, for each proposed candidate.

J. Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan should describe how the Contractor intends to implement the activities described in Section II: Statement of Work and to achieve the specified deliverables, as set forth in Section V: Deliverables. It should include the following sections:

(a) An Introduction describing the Contractor’s overarching strategy and approach.

(b) A Technical Approach that identifies key milestones and associated activities in achieving SWWFMETAF objectives and the inputs and outputs required for their achievement. Associated timeframes and indicators for monitoring implementation progress should also be presented.

(c) A Management Plan that clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of Key Personnel and other staff that may be required to complete the activities described in Section I: Scope of Work. The Management Plan should include an organization chart and describe the Contractor’s proposed decision-making structure and system for the internal controls and communication.

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY to identify sources that can provide Securing Water for Food Technical Assistance Facility. The information provided in the RFI is subject to change and is not binding on the Government. USAID has not made a commitment to procure any of the items discussed, and release of this RFI should not be construed as such a commitment or as authorization to incur cost for which reimbursement would be required or sought. All submissions become Government property and will not be returned.
GCD teams have opted to use various mechanisms to obtain different types of support service. This is a template for an RFP for a Prize Service Provider.

**Request for Proposal (RFP) for Prize Service Provider under the XXX Grand Challenge for Development**

**STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**
All information within this RFP, regardless of the communication form, is given in absolute confidence and may not be disclosed without written permission from XXX.

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**Introduction**

XXXX

**The Objective**
This prize competition will focus on engagement of applications that will ……..

The Recipient

The principal recipient for this program is Grand Challenge for Development (GCD). …..
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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The Scope

The Service Provider will be required to implement and manage this challenge in support of objective. This includes the review of design, creation of marketing and communication plans, creation of launch content, associated launch activities, day-to-day management of the submissions, including support to problem solvers, initial evaluation and receipt of all applicant data post challenge. This SoW and the associated contract involve two phases (pre-implementation and implementation) of the global innovation prize competition.

Crucial to the challenge’s success will be the Service Provider’s:

- Contextual Knowledge—it is essential that the service provider work closely with the GCD to check and adapt, as needed, the developed ‘problem statement’ to be addressed by the prize GCD partners.
- In-depth Knowledge of Innovation Prizes and Competitions – the service provider must demonstrate past successful design and management of time-sensitive prize competitions and operations, including the initial evaluation of the individual entries and prizes.
- Global Presence—the prize competition must be globally applicable and developed for low-resource environments. The successful bidder must have the ability to do this.
- Linking with Developing Country Innovators—The service provider will, through a compelling and widely marketed competition, ideally catalyze a network of innovators, including those in developing countries, to work on solutions for poor communities.

Area of Focus

Please see Attachment A – Prize Statement

The Requirements

The award period will be split into two segments, (Task 1) pre-implementation and (Task 2) implementation.

Task 1 Pre-implementation Phase Requirements:

The four to six week pre-implementation phase will require the Service Provider to:

- Review the GCD partners’ prize design, including judging criteria for submitted solutions.
- Provide GCD with a marketing plan that identifies all aspects of promotional work, inclusive of press releases regarding the prize competition launch.
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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- Create content for prize competition launch for approval by GDC.
- Create a prize competition microsite that resembles and is linked to the GCD website.
- Ensure a competitive and global response through compelling marketing which also targets innovators from the regions/countries where these challenges exist.
- Propose a judging review process for approval by GCD two weeks prior to launch.
- Submit a detailed work plan and budget for the follow-on implementation phase.
- Update the work plan with revised costs for the launch/implementation phase (within agreed budget), as necessary.

**Task 1 Pre-implementation Phase Deliverables:**

Deadlines are to be confirmed with the Service Provider(s), but we anticipate the following deliverables:

- Brief written project plan to include agreed-upon final problem statement, upcoming consultations, risks to delivery, etc. for approval by GCD two weeks after contract is approved.
- Written recommendations plus a presentation either in person or via conference call with GCD partners’ prize design for approval by GCD four weeks after signed contract.
- Marketing and communication plans, inclusive of a written approach to catalyze problem solvers in the developing world, submitted for approval to GCD two weeks prior to launch.
- Prize competition microsite that seamlessly reflects and links to the GCD website, developed, jointly reviewed and user-tested with GCD two weeks prior to launch.
- Content for launch to GCD for approval two weeks prior to launch.
- Judging process proposal inclusive of rating scale and timeline for approval to GCD three weeks prior to launch.
- Written implementation and program plan for the duration of the program, presented to the GCD project team submitted one week prior to launch.

**Task 2 Implementation Phase Requirements:**

The implementation phase will require the Service Provider to:

- Launch the prize competition on the prize competition microsite in accordance with the approved work plan.
- Manage on-going prize processes to achieve intended results, such as all technical aspects of the prize competition microsite; handling technical and competition enquiries in consultation with GDC when applicable; sending deadline reminders to those registered; training the software review team on using the microsite (if applicable), leading the initial evaluation process, and providing an initial list of top applicants for review by the judging panel.
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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- Provide microsite access to top applicant submissions to independent judging panel and any other parties requested by GCD for judging; and support training of judges on microsite, if needed, and on all technical aspects of the microsite and enquiries they may have.
- In accordance with GCD, notify successful winner(s) and provide timely award pay outs.
- Produce report with all applicant data submissions and ranking per agreed upon criteria and transfer data.
- Produce an evaluation report at the conclusion of the prize competition that details successes, challenges, recommendations, and considerations pertinent to Phase 2 of the prize challenge.
- Forecast and invoice for spending according to agreed schedules (to be confirmed in the pre-implementation phase).

Task 2 Implementation Phase Deliverables

Deadlines are to be confirmed with the Service Provider(s), but we anticipate the following deliverables:

- Prize competition microsite open to competition.
- Monthly report on technical and content related questions by problem solvers, web statistics, challenges with the competition and proposed activities for upcoming month.
- Evaluation report with agreed upon number of top applicants for review by independent judging panel.
- Draft award letter for approval and award notifications sent to winners at agreed upon date.
- Transfer all applicant data submissions and ranking per agreed upon format and criteria to GCD.
- Deliver final evaluation report on prize competition at agreed upon date to GCD.
- Provide final invoicing in accordance with contract.

Additional Requirements

The Service Provider must ensure that the competition is inclusive of three fundamental elements both in the services provided under this scope of work, as well as in the winning submissions of the competition.

Open Access: All prize deliverables will be required to comply with USAID’s Enhanced and Open Access Policy. Applicants will be required to submit an Open Access and Data plan. Where appropriate the costs of complying with USAID’s open access policy should be clearly identified within your proposal.
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

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Gender: All winning prize entries should address any existing gender inequities and provide solutions that are inherently equitable and accessible to both sexes.

Disability: All prize entries should demonstrate how their proposed solution may be used and/or adapted for with disabilities, as well as promote equality for and empowerment of people with disabilities.

Contractual Arrangements

Service Providers will be asked to propose an appropriate payment plan as part of their bid. This plan should link payments to successful delivery of program outputs and performance, and should clearly demonstrate the Service Provider’s acceptance of risk of non-delivery. GCD reserves the right to scale back or discontinue this program at any point (in line with our Terms and Conditions) if it is not achieving the results anticipated. Conversely, we may also scale up the program should it prove to have a strong impact and the potential to yield better results.

Timeframe

This task is defined to nominally run for 8-10 months. Initiation of this task requires GCD approval to proceed. Our envisaged timeframe for launching the individual prize under this scope of work is detailed below. However, some flexibility exists and a finalized timeframe will be agreed upon during the pre-implementation phase.

Coordination

The coordination of this work will be led by X.

Format and Conditions for RFP Responses

All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of GCD and will not be returned.

GCD ultimately reserves the right throughout this process to select any servicing option that best meets its business requirements regardless of this process.

Respondent agrees to the following conditions in participating in this process:

Neither issuance of this RFP nor receipt of proposals represents a commitment on the part of GCD.
GCD will not be responsible for any costs incurred by respondents in the preparation of any materials or presentation relating to this process.

This document is provided for the exclusive use of your organization and copies shall not be made available to any other party without written consent from the individual identified above. Neither party shall use the name of the other in publicity releases, referrals, advertising, or similar activity without the prior written consent of the other.

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**Timeframe of RFP**

**Instructions for RFP Responses**

Your point of contact for this RFP process is:

Name  
Title  
Address  
Email:  
Phone:

Any questions associated with the requirements of this RFP process should be submitted in writing (email) to the person listed above.

Email one (1) soft copy (in PDF format) of the proposal by the date and time to the GCD contact identified above, and send in one sealed bid post-dated the date of submission.
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

RESOURCES

If you do not intend to participate in this RFP process, please notify the individual listed above, at your earliest convenience and delete and/or destroy all information in this document.

RFP Response

Please provide a written proposal, addressing each of the areas below. Proposal should be no more than 20 pages, including all attachments and appendices.

Evaluation Criteria

Suggested areas of evaluation include but not limited to the three category titles of:
Organization Overview/Relevant Experience
Technical Proposal,
Pricing & Pricing Methodology

Evaluation

GCD will evaluate proposals and select a service provider at its discretion. GCD will utilize the evaluation categories and point system as noted above.

GCD will carefully evaluate all proposals received that it believes demonstrate significant alignment with its goals and requirements.

Issuance of this RFP, the preparation and submission of proposals by respondents and the subsequent receipt and evaluation of proposals by GCD shall not commit GCD to award a contract to anyone. Furthermore, in no event shall choosing a Service Provider for presentation, negotiations, or otherwise be construed to create any legal obligations on the part of GCD.
SECURING WATER FOR FOOD INNOVATION INVESTMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE—SCORING GUIDELINES

Innovation Investment Advisory Committee – Scoring Guidelines

Thank you for being part of the Securing Water for Food Innovation Investment Advisory Committee (IIAC). The IIAC is a critical part of the program and will help the Founding Partners ensure that we support the most technically sound, commercially viable, and sustainable innovations. The objectives of this document are to:

- Summarize the overall aims of the program;
- Describe what the IIAC is reviewing;
- Common themes from the Concept Note review;
- Describe what types of innovations we are/aren’t looking for in SWFF;
- Provide IIAC Reviewer Guidelines; and
- Describe how the Founding Partners will use your reviews of the Full Applications.

Overall Aims of the Program
Prior to undertaking the Full Application review, please take some time to review the Broad Agency Announcement (BAA). In short, SWFF is focused on three areas that are critical to reducing water scarcity in the food value chain: 1) water efficiency and reuse; 2) water capture and storage; and 3) salinity and saltwater intrusion. Within these three areas, SWFF will support innovators in two broad “stages” of the innovation lifecycle:

- Stage 1 – Market-driven product/business development: These innovations have been verified through a standalone pilot or a series of pilots and now need to be tested and adapted for adoption in new developing or emerging countries. These innovations may require technical validation and proof of adoption/uptake in a new market.
- Stage 2 - Scaling/Commercial Growth: These are established innovations that have already demonstrated a viable business model and are generating revenue. They require support for commercial growth, including adaptation of the innovation for larger scale production, market adoption, and distribution. It is expected that these innovations have already demonstrated technical feasibility and market acceptance and can provide evidence supporting these points.

What the IIAC is Reviewing
The IIAC is reviewing Full Applications from the 83 semifinalists who made it past the Concept Note stage. As we mentioned during the introductory calls, SWFF received 520 Concept Notes from around the world. In March, the Founding Partners narrowed the 520 Concept Notes to 83. We believe that these 83 semifinalists showed the greatest promise of helping reach our overarching goal of enabling the production of more food with less water and/or making more water available for food production, processing, and distribution in developing and emerging countries.

Rather than allowing applicants to simply write proposals, they were all required to answer specific questions. The answers to these questions comprise the Full Application. The questions we asked can be
found on page 42 of the BAA. As described during the introductory calls, each subcommittee member will read the entire Full Application, but only score the answers to questions in their specific area of expertise (technical, business, or sustainability) depending on the subcommittee to which they belong.

We are now asking the IAC to undertake the next stage of review. From the 83 semifinalists, we’re calling upon your knowledge and expertise to get us to approximately 40 finalists with whom we will hold video-teleconference (VTC) interviews in July.

**Common Themes from the Initial Concept Note Review**

The Concept Note review revealed some common challenges across the applicants, including those who made it to the semifinalist stage. We provided this feedback to semifinalists in a webinar held on April 9 and thought it might be helpful for you to know as well:

- Some applicants had a weak linkage to the overarching goal of SWFF; they did not prove how their innovation would enable the production of more food with less water and/or make more water available for the food production, processing, or distribution. This was particularly the case with innovations that could make wastewater available for agriculture.
- Many applicants were unclear about their customer or end-user demand. All semifinalists must provide evidence that describes “who will be buying” and “who will be using” their innovation.
- Some applicants did not clearly describe how or why their innovation was distinct from other innovations. All semi-finalists must clearly state what is game-changing about their innovation, who their competitors are, what distinguishes them from their competitors, and what distinguishes their innovation from existing innovations.
- Applicants did not always back up their claims. We have asked all semifinalists to provide evidence to support their answers and to avoid making oversimplified statements.
- Some applicants were confused by our instructions to provide a unit cost analysis. Since some applicants were accustomed to “traditional” international development programming, they provided us with general budget information rather than a unit cost analysis. We hope this will not happen during the Full Application stage.
- Some applicants provided “laundry lists” of partners, with limited or no explanation of how the partner would be engaged. Applicants are required to provide evidence of partnerships at the Full Application stage rather than simply name-dropping.
- Some applicants did not propose innovative ideas. We hope that – for the most part – we have not advanced those applicants to the semifinalist round.

**What Are We Looking For?**

Broadly speaking, the Founding Partners are looking for innovations that:

- Directly enable the production of more food with less water and/or make more water available for food production, processing, and distribution in developing and emerging countries.
- Are proven, yet would be game-changing in a new developing or emerging market, and/or that could be game-changing for the water and agricultural industries in developing countries writ large;
• Are scalable, evidenced by (for example) demand, urgency, partnerships, and an understanding of the enabling environment;
• Are supported by a financial model and viable business plan;
• Are cost-effective for users in emerging and developing countries;
• Are backed by partnerships (local and international) that will increase uptake in local markets (without doing harm), and also increase the potential for wide scale;
• Will be attractive for additional funding (matching funds or in-kind contributions required); and
• Directly or indirectly benefit the poor (whether through income, products, environment, or opportunities to improve gender equality).

We are particularly interested in investing in approaches that incorporate the latest scientific and technological breakthroughs, although all SWFF innovations must be past the prototype stage to be considered for funding.

The Founding Partners are not interested in innovations that are:

• Representative of traditional international development programs; for example, innovations that are overly reliant on donor funding (especially future donor funding), are not market responsive, lack customers, and/or do not generate revenue.
• One-off water technology installations or pilot projects to support proven technologies for proven applications, unless they include an innovative component(s) to achieve scale, such as a new business model.
• Established, commercially viable innovations that are currently used throughout the eligible countries.

IAC Reviewer Guidelines

Your wisdom and judgment are central to our process. We have purposefully provided some general guidelines for scoring rather than a prescriptive set of instructions for evaluating each question. We want you to rely on your expertise; please use your own knowledge and intuition to determine what the innovation is trying to accomplish and compare to what you know is out there.

Before we get to scoring, a good rule of thumb is to think about the potential of the applicant in your area of expertise. Here are some things we’d like you to keep in mind as you are reading the Applications:

• We are not looking for or expecting perfection in applicants. While we are looking at this process through an investment lens, we are willing to take more risk than a commercial investor.
• We are working within an international development context. Please judge the potential of the applicant and their innovation. We expect some rough edges, particularly as English may not be the applicant’s first language.
• Please don’t compare applicants or innovations against each other. We have a wide range of semifinalists representing for-profit ventures, nonprofits, universities, and research institutions. Within this range, we have very sophisticated companies from developed countries alongside start-ups from developing countries.
LIFE CYCLE OVERVIEW STEP 1. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM

RESOURCES

- All three categories are weighted equally. Based on our initial screen, we feel it is unlikely that many applicants will score high in all three categories (technical, business, and sustainability). That said, we are looking for applicants who have high potential to succeed in all three categories. One of the goals of the Technical Assistance Facility that we are launching alongside the grant support is to provide targeted assistance to innovators so that the applicant has a better chance of reaching their potential and bringing their innovation to scale.

Now for the scoring guidelines. As you saw in the BAA, we have asked between 10-15 questions of semifinalists in each of the three categories. Each response requires a score on a scale of 0-4:

- Awarding a 4 indicates that – based on the applicant’s response to the question – the applicant shows extremely high potential. A score of 4 indicates that all of the criteria for that question have been met; the response is well-defined, clear, and requires no additional elaboration; the claims are detailed, evidence-based, and realistic; and any results described have extremely high possibility for being attainable.

- Awarding a 3 indicates that – based on the applicant’s response to the question – the applicant shows strong potential. A score of 3 indicates that all of the criteria for that question have been met; the response is generally clear but key elements may require additional elaboration; the claims are generally evidence-based and realistic but may require additional elaboration; and any results described have high possibility for being attainable.

- Awarding a 2 indicates that – based on the applicant’s response to the question – the applicant shows good potential. A score of 2 indicates that most of the criteria for that question have been met; the response is complete but several key elements were insufficiently elaborated; the claims are generally evidence-based and realistic but require additional elaboration; and any results described have good possibility for being attainable.

- Awarding a 1 indicates that – based on the applicant’s response to the question – the applicant shows low potential. A score of 1 indicates that little of the criteria for that question have been met; the response is vague and unlikely to be improved with additional elaboration; the claims are ambiguous and doubtful, lacking evidence or realism; and any results described have low possibility for being attainable.

- Awarding a 0 indicates that – based on the applicant’s response to the question – the applicant shows almost no potential. A score of 0 indicates that little, if any, of the criteria for that question have been met; the response is vague and cannot be improved with additional elaboration; the claims are ambiguous and doubtful, lacking evidence or realism; and any results described have low to zero possibility for being attainable.

In some cases, you may need to ask the applicant additional questions to determine their potential or to flag critical issues that are not addressed in the application. You have that opportunity here. We would like you to come up with 1-2 questions for each applicant where you already see good or high potential for success (applicants to whom you award an average score of 2 or above across the questions), and whereby additional information will help verify that the applicant shows promise. To be clear: we are not using the custom questions to increase our finalist pool; we’re not looking to use your custom questions to bring a score from a 1 to a 2. Only finalists will receive questions (see cut-off score in the next section).
The custom questions will be answered by the applicant in writing prior to the interview (we will share those answers with the IIAC prior to the interview), and we will use the questions (and responses) during the VTC interview with finalists.

A final note about the review. Your written feedback is important to the evaluation process. In the online platform, please provide a minimum of 2 narrative comments per applicant. Comments could focus on the strengths/weaknesses of the category you scored; the reasons you believe the applicant shows good/high potential or low potential; comments about the market environment in which the applicant is proposing to work; areas in which you believe the applicant has the greatest opportunities for success; etc. The score and comments comprise the complete review.

**Using the IIAC Reviews to Determine Finalists (Interviewees)**

Now that you’ve done all this work, you are probably wondering what the Founding Partners are going to do with your recommendations. The Founding Partners will use your recommendations to advance the top ~40 applicants to the “finalist/interview” round. To advance to this round, the applicant will need to have an overall average score (across all categories) of 2 or higher to advance. That means that if the top 40 have scores between 1.8 and 3.9, only the applications scoring 2.5 - 3.9 will advance, thereby giving us a smaller group of finalists/interviewees. This scenario is OK, and we do not want you to artificially inflate scores if you believe the applicant has low potential in your category.

Please note that the Founding Partners are going to review all of your findings. There may be one or two applications that we’d like to discuss with you the week of May 26 before making final decisions, and we sincerely appreciate you making time for us.
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