

# INNOVATION CHALLENGE FUND

## THE PROCESS

01

Each Round of Innovation Challenge Fund is launched on a specific thematic focus. The thematic focus for each Round is approved by the SNG Programme Steering Committee (PSC) which is chaired by Head of Planning in each province. FCDO, UK is a member of the PSC and their concurrence is necessary for any idea to receive grant under the innovation fund.

02

Each Round is governed by a 'Terms Sheet' which is approved by PSC and FCDO. The document is placed on the SNG website for transparency purposes and to provide clarity on application process and other terms and conditions.

03

The 'Call for Proposals' is published widely in national print media, advertised through SNG Social Media and by direct emails to an active data base of potential applicants. Prior to launch, awareness sessions are held with potential applicants to discuss the approach and process.

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The first stage of application requires an online submission of concept note. All logs of submissions are recorded.

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After the closure date of submission of the concept notes, the names of all the applicants are displayed on the SNG Website and a specified amount of time is provided if any applicant feels that their submission has been missed out.

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The concepts are catalogued and are shared with Senior Management at OPM and FCDO.

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The evaluation of concept notes is an extensive exercise. The evaluation is conducted by SNG Innovation team, SNG Technical Team relevant to the thematic focus and by a team appointed by the relevant government department, to which the concept relates. The entire evaluation exercise is then presented to the SNG Reform Working Groups that have been established in all relevant Government Departments and headed by the Secretary of the Department. Finally, the entire evaluation process and ideas are presented to the PSC of which FCDO is a member and a short list is approved for submission of detailed technical proposal.

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All successful and unsuccessful candidates are notified about the PSC decision within 5 working days after the minutes of the PSC are formally approved. Each applicant is sent an individual response with broad feedback. More specific feedback is provided on a case by case basis, when requested.

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The short-listed candidates are then invited to attend a pre-bid workshop where the application process for second stage is discussed and all questions are answered. In addition, a one to one meeting of each applicant is then arranged with the relevant Government Department where the applicants are able to better understand the requirements and problem statements of the government that the innovation is trying to address.

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The short-listed applicants submit the full technical and financial proposals on a pre-defined date. Each proposal then goes through a detailed scrutiny. In addition to SNG Innovation Team, Technical Team with subject knowledge and department teams, external technical experts are also involved to carefully view the proposal from a 360-degree view. The department and external reviewers sign a 'conflict of interest' undertaking to ensure transparent and unbiased evaluation. The RWG then finalizes the evaluation and that is presented at the PSC. The evaluation process involves detailed presentation by applicants to the evaluation team. FCDO/PSC may request for additional presentations if deemed necessary. The PSC makes the final decision on which applications will be funded. The award decision is then communicated immediately as PSC minutes are formally approved by the government and FCDO. The unsuccessful candidates are provided feedback on their submissions. The successful candidates of award will be placed on the website.

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The process as summarized above is governed by a FCDO and PSC-approved Innovation Fund Manual, a key programme document.