

# Innovations in Cost-Disruptive Tools for Diagnosis and Screening

## Grand Challenges

### Rules & Guidelines

Applications due no later than April 28 2026, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time

#### Supporting Materials

- 1) [Full RFP – Innovations in Cost-Disruptive Tools for Diagnosis and Screening](#)
- 2) [Application Instructions](#)
- 3) [Budget Template and Narrative](#)
- 4) [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) Document](#)

#### Key dates and deadlines\*

Key Dates	Event
March 17, 2026	Application period opens
April 28 2026, 11:30 a.m. US PST	Application period closes, deadline to submit
March 30, 7:00-8:00 a.m. US PST	Webinar
By end of July 2026	Applicants notified of decisions
Nov 2026	Estimated start dates

\*Any changes to the Key Dates and Deadlines will be updated on the Grand Challenges website.

#### Eligibility Criteria

This initiative is open to research institutes, nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, international organizations, government agencies, and academic institutions. Please note that all applicants will be expected to comply with the [Foundation's global access clause](#). We encourage applications from projects led by or collaborating with women and/or researchers at institutions based in LMICs. Individuals and organizations classified as individuals for U.S. tax purposes are not eligible to receive an award from the foundation as part of this initiative.

Upon registration, applicants must provide information about the tax status of their organization as different terms and conditions may apply. You should confirm your organization's tax status with the appropriate advisor or entity within your organization such as your grants or contracts department, finance, or office of sponsored research. The foundation may request additional information regarding your tax status. For information about tax statuses, you may check with your own advisors and review information provided on the Internal Revenue Service web site at: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## How to Apply

Please review the [Application Instructions](#) as you develop your proposal.

Changes to the Rules and Guidelines and to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document will be posted periodically, including any changes to the dates listed above. Please read the FAQ document before submitting any questions or concerns.

## Awards

To accommodate different stages of innovation, this Challenge has multiple award sizes commensurate with technology maturity. For example:

- **Option A:** Smaller proof-of-concept awards (up to five awards of approximately US\$300,000, for each selected project, with a grant term of up to 24 months) to support early feasibility and prototyping, inclusive of technically risky, out-of-the-box concepts
- **Option B:** Mid-level awards (up to three awards of approximately US\$500,000 for each selected project, with a grant term of up to 24 months) to support product refinement and early validation
- **Option C:** Larger awards (up to two awards of approximately US\$1,000,000, for each selected project, with a grant term of up to 36 months) to support mature platforms or advanced adaptation toward verification and field readiness, with commensurate evidence of technical readiness, feasibility, and a clear pathway to validation.

Final award amounts, number of awards at each level, and duration will depend on proposal quality and strategic fit. Applicants should request funding aligned with the scope and maturity of their proposed work and include a clear milestone plan proportionate to the support requested. Indirect costs will be considered and should be included in the budget for up to the grant amount awarded (subject to the [Gates Foundation's indirect cost policy](#)).

## Review Process

### *Handling of Applications*

When submitting materials to the Gates Foundation please keep in mind that because we have a focus on achieving charitable outcomes, we view information that we obtain through our grantmaking as a public good. Subject to the [Gates Foundation's Privacy Policy](#), the Gates Foundation may also share information you provide to us (either orally or in writing) with third parties, including external reviewers, consultants, contingent workers, key partners and co-funders. You should assume that nothing will be kept confidential and should not include any information in the proposal, budget, supplemental materials, or reports that you consider proprietary.

Additionally, the foundation is required by the IRS to publish a list of its grants. The foundation also provides general descriptions of its grants on its web sites, in press releases, and in other marketing materials. These Rules and Guidelines are subject to these [Terms of Use](#).

### *Review of Applications*

The Grand Challenges application review process is executed in four steps:

1. The first step consists of screening applications to evaluate whether proposals address the key needs described in the topic. We screen for responses that are completely unrelated or specifically excluded. Excluded responses encompass ideas related to the topic but that, for strategic reasons, we are not funding under the Grand Challenges initiative. In addition, we exclude proposals that are considered incremental advances, appropriate responses that are similar to work in which the foundation or other Grand Challenges programs are already investing, or avenues of inquiry we deem ill-suited to the Grand Challenges initiative. Applicants with proposals removed from consideration during the screening process will be notified that their proposals were declined but will not receive specific feedback.
2. In the second step, reviews are chaired or co-chaired by technical leads from the foundation and, in some cases, other funding partners and are conducted by reviewers both outside and within the foundation. Reviewers are selected from the world's leading researchers and comprise both experts in the topic area and experts in complementary areas. Not all reviewers have deep expertise in the topic; please consider this information when drafting your proposal.

The criteria considered in these reviews are:

- Potential to lead to solutions with substantial impact related to the specific topic
  - Scientific and technical excellence & innovation, including:
    - creativity of the project's approach and clear differentiation from existing approaches
    - a clear and rigorous conceptual framework for the activities
    - consideration of operational feasibility in LMIC settings
    - a credible pathway to population-scale economics
  - Project Plan, including:
    - investigator and organization capabilities and potential for collaboration
    - value in terms of appropriateness of the budget and timeline relative to project complexity, risk, and potential impact
3. The third step is the validation and final selection of proposals to be funded by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may recommend the proposal be funded, subject to specific modifications which will be negotiated as part of the award process. Organizations invited to submit full proposals will be provided additional technical instructions at that time.
  4. The fourth and final step is a due diligence review and to directly discuss and negotiate any adjustments to the proposed project recommended by the Executive Committee. Investigators will be contacted as part of the due diligence review.

### *Management of Conflict of Interest*

To identify and avoid conflicts of interest among application reviewers, such reviewers will not be permitted to review proposals from organizations with which the reviewer has self-identified conflicts of interest.

## Eligibility and Notifications

Please review the [Gates Foundation's sample terms and conditions](#). Please note that depending on the tax status of your organization, alternate terms and conditions may apply. Please also review the [Gates Foundation's standard Request for Proposal \(RFP\) Terms and Conditions](#).

## Privacy Notice and Terms of Use

When submitting materials to the Foundation please keep in mind that because we have a focus on achieving charitable outcomes, we view information that we obtain through our grantmaking as a public good. Subject to the [Gates Foundation's Privacy & Cookies Notice](#), the Foundation may also share information you provide to us (either orally or in writing) with third parties, including external reviewers, consultants, contingent workers, key partners and co-funders. **You should assume that nothing will be kept confidential and should not include any information in the proposal, budget, supplemental materials, or reports that you consider proprietary.**

Additionally, the foundation is required by the IRS to publish a list of its grants. The foundation also provides general descriptions of its grants on its web sites, in press releases, and in other marketing materials.

For more information, please review the [Grand Challenges Privacy and Terms of Use](#).

## Representation:

By providing any Submission Materials, you represent to the Gates Foundation that (i) you have the right to provide any personal information submitted; (ii) you are a duly authorized representative of the Applicant and agree to be bound by the terms set forth above, without amendment and (iii) none of the information in your Submission Materials is confidential or proprietary.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to many application questions can be found on the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) document.

## Inquiries

Please direct all questions about this initiative, selection criteria or application instructions by e-mail to the following address: [grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org](mailto:grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org).