



Round 1 Application Packet
Competition Launched October 2025

This is an application packet for the global D-Prize competition. It explains the competition rules, process, and instructions on how to draft and submit your proposal.

If you have questions, send an email to the D-Prize team at help@d-prize.org. *Good luck!*

- Submission deadline for early decision round: **November 23 2025** at 23:59 Pacific Time, UTC -7
- Regular submission deadline: **December 14 2025** at 23:59 PT
- Extension deadline (limited to people who register): **January 4 2026** at 23:59 PT
Register for an extension: www.d-prize.org/extension

Submit Concept Notes and Resumes to: www.d-prize.org/submit

Competition Rules

Who Should Apply?

You should have enormous ambition and can imagine yourself as a successful entrepreneur. You are ready to launch your new venture, and if a pilot proves successful you are excited to grow it into a world-changing organization.

If you are still a student or have existing commitments, you should have a clear idea of how to transition into a full-time founder.

D-Prize is exclusively interested in ventures that will scale the distribution of an already proven poverty intervention in the developing world. We do not fund prototypes of promising new interventions. Please respond to one of our distribution challenges found at:

www.d-prize.org/#challenges

Eligibility

D-Prize challenges are open to anyone or any team. The sole restriction is that individuals and their immediate family on the judging panel may not participate as contestants.

D-Prize is also open to any business model (for-profit, non-profit, and everything in between). All winners will be awarded up to \$20,000. The award is offered in the form of a convertible grant.

You are not competing against other applicants. We typically fund at least 15 proposals per competition, regardless of which challenge track was selected.

Submission Policies

- Proposals must be written in English. However, your English does not need to be perfect to apply, and grammar and vocabulary errors will not be penalized. We only want to understand your idea.
- Proposals must be submitted following the instructions in this packet.
- Extra material outside of the proposal will not be considered.
- Revisions to proposals after submission will also not be considered.
- Only one proposal per person or partnership will be considered.

Deadlines and the Prize Process

Round 1

First Round proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis, using the following deadlines. We strive to send decisions out within four months. Judges may request additional information via email before making a decision.

- *Early decision deadline:* **November 23 2025** at 23:59 PT (Pacific Time, UTC -7).
- *Regular deadline:* **December 14 2025** at 23:59 PT.
- *Extension deadline:* **January 4 2026** at 23:59 PT. Extensions are limited to the first people who register at: www.d-prize.org/extension

Round 2

Top entrepreneurs invited to participate in Round 2 will be asked to respond to several pages of short written questions to create a full proposal. These questions ask for more details about your operations, budget, milestones, and other items. Participants will receive a Round 2 Proposal Packet with full instructions. Those invited to the Second Round will have about two weeks to submit.

Final Round

Entrepreneurs invited to the Final Round will interview with judges over email and on the phone. Depending on the promise and cost-effectiveness of a proposal, judges may award up to \$20,000 in funding. The average D-Prize award size is \$16,000.

Piloting Winning Ventures

Besides direct funding, D-Prize can assist in helping your venture attract future funding if the pilot proves successful. We will also provide you access to the D-Prize network of past winners and will do our best to support you in other ways.

First Round Judging Criteria

Judging Process

All proposals will receive an initial read, and if advanced will receive up to two additional independent readings.

We strive to send decisions within four months of your submission. However, this timeline may be extended based on the volume of submissions, as we want to give every proposal due consideration. Judges may request additional information via email before deciding.

Judging Criteria

The D-Prize judging panel is composed of individuals with professional experience distributing life-changing technologies in the developing world.

Contestants are evaluated based on:

- Passion and potential for candidate's success, as evident by their academic and professional background, relevant skills, and quick leadership trajectory.
- Focus on distribution. Proposals must focus on distributing a proven poverty solution that needs greater access in the developing world.
- Potential for scale, based on the organizational model proposed in the concept note and the entrepreneur's desire to commit and grow.

Proposal Tips

- *Be succinct.* Successful proposals are objective and to the point. Orient your proposal towards an educated judge who is relatively knowledgeable about the key issues.
- *Scale, impact, cost-effectiveness.* Successful entrepreneurs will build a plausible case that their intervention is highly scalable, cost-effective, and will lead to enormous impact.
- *Keep within scope.* The most successful startups have a narrow focus and avoid spending resources on too many areas. A tightly scoped idea will perform best in this competition.

First Round Proposal

Part 1: Concept Note

Please prepare a concept note which responds to the following prompts. Concept notes are limited to two pages. We do not read anything submitted that is longer than two pages.

How does your new organization or venture idea improve the distribution of your selected intervention? We recommend writing:

2-3 sentences summarizing the main activities of your new organization. For example, you could walk us through step-by-step how you connect a proven intervention to people in need.

Bullet points to further explain:

- What are the main barriers that currently prevent people from accessing your proven intervention, specific to your pilot region? For example, one common barrier to accessing a product might be a high upfront cost.
- How does your distribution model specifically overcome these barriers?
- What is the most fundamental part of your new organization that you need to prove will work during this pilot program? (We think the purpose of a pilot is to test the fundamentals of your business / the basis of your value proposition on a small scale, and we want to know which part of your model you will focus on).

Note: Our team is already familiar with D-Prize challenge topics at a macro level, so there is no need to provide a broad explanation of why this is an important problem to solve. For instance, including large statistics, such as the potential global market size, are not necessary.

What is the expected impact of your work? We recommend writing:

1-2 sentences summarizing your marginal impact (ie, the impact you will make compared to the status quo) at a high level, and at an individual or household level. For example, your work might reduce the rates of HIV infections by X% countrywide; and for an individual, could save 7 DALYs (disability adjusted life years, which is a way to measure the cost-effectiveness of a poverty intervention).

Outcome table: Over the next 3 months, 1 year, and 2 years, how many proven interventions do you plan to distribute? And how many people will you directly help? We recommend sharing this as a simple table.

2-3 sentences summarizing a rough draft of how much money you need for your pilot program, and what the 3-5 major expenses are expected to be.

1 sentence summarizing your long-term vision for the new organization you will launch.

Who is your team? We recommend writing:

Team table that lists:

- All of the people on your team; their job titles; their responsibilities
- Each person's location during the pilot
- Any other professional commitments they have during the pilot
- If not local to your operating region, please note any developing country experience and specifically, any time you've spent in the pilot region.

Part 2: Resumes / CVs

Please include a resume for each person on your team, limited to one page per person. Resumes should highlight the most relevant past leadership roles and accomplishments.

Part 3: Additional Information

Custom Challenge: are you submitting to a Custom Challenge category? If so:

- When submitting, we will ask you to provide a URL that links us to one website with credible evidence that supports your intervention.
- We also recommend you include 1 additional page to your concept note elaborating on your intervention, and citing evidence that it is *proven* and *in need of greater distribution*. This will bring the concept note to a total of three pages.
- If you do not cite a credible source validating the impact of the poverty solution you plan to distribute, your proposal will be declined.

Existing organizations: has your organization already launched? If so, we will ask you to include a summary of your activities since launching, and your current budget/income statement in the submission webform.

Ready to Apply?

Proposal Instructions

- Prepare your concept note and resume(s), and clearly name your files. Concept notes and resumes can be separate documents. Files must be PDF and are limited to a size of 4MB each.
- Proposals must be written in English. However, your English does not need to be perfect to apply, and grammar and vocabulary errors will not be penalized. We only want to understand your idea.
- Input your contact details and upload your documents to www.d-prize.org/submit

Questions?

Email the D-Prize team at help@d-prize.org.

A Note on AI Tools and Grant Writing Services

D-Prize understands that some people use services and technology to help with their writing. While this is fine, we think it is probably unnecessary. Our evaluations are not at all based on the quality of your writing and grammar. Instead, we evaluate the quality of your idea - and we think the only path to a great idea is when a smart person (you) has spent time thinking deeply about a problem and designing a solution. We don't think ghostwriters or AI can replace this.