

Randomized Controlled Trial on Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and Reproductive Tract Sequelae in Non-Pregnant Women

Grand Challenges

Rules & Guidelines

Applications due no later than July 7, 2025, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time

Supporting Materials

- 1) [Full RFP](#)
- 2) [Rules and Guidelines](#)
- 3) [Application Instructions](#)
- 4) [Budget Template and Narrative](#)
- 5) [FAQ Document](#)

Key dates and deadlines*

Key Dates	Event
June 2, 2025	Application period opens
June 6, 2025	Application materials updated
July 7, 2025, 11:30 a.m. US PDT	Application period closes, deadline to submit
August 2025	Review of Letters of Intent (LOIs) completed, finalists invited to submit full proposal.
Q3/Q4 2025	Full proposals due
Q4 2025	Finalists selected
Q4 2025 / Q1 2026	Estimated grant start dates

*Note, any changes to the Key Dates or Events, to include the request for additional information, will be directly communicated to invited applicants.

Eligibility Criteria

- This initiative is open to nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, international organizations, government agencies, and academic institutions.
- Proposals must feature a randomized controlled trial (RCT) or a comparably rigorous prospective study design conducted in sub-Saharan African settings. Global applicants are encouraged to apply if the research focuses on populations and settings within sub-Saharan Africa.
- We encourage groups to build upon existing and/or complimentary projects/studies/trials and to collaborate with other institutions.
- We particularly encourage applications involving projects led by African PIs, women, early-career researchers, and practitioners seeking to innovate in women's health measurement, or from women-led organizations and applications from institutions based in LMICs.

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.

How to Apply

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

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

We will consider applications requesting awards ranging from \$8 million to \$10 million USD per project, with a grant duration of up to 48 months. Budgets should align with the scale and complexity of the proposed work. Indirect costs are allowable and should be included within the total requested funding. (subject to the [Gates Foundation's indirect cost policy](#)).

Review Process

Handling of Applications

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 [Foundation's Privacy Policy](#), 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 application 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 LOIs address the key needs described in the topic. We screen for responses that are completely unrelated or specifically excluded description. 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 LOIs that are considered incremental advances, appropriate responses that are similar to work in which the foundation or other GrandChallenges programs are already investing, or avenues of inquiry we deem ill-suited to the Grand Challenges initiative. Applicants with LOIs

removed from consideration during the screening process will be notified that their LOIs 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 expert 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 application.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Potential for Impact:** Likelihood that the project will lead to meaningful and substantial outcomes related to the specific topic.
 - **Scientific and Technical Excellence & Innovation**, including:
 - Creativity and originality of the proposed approach, with clear differentiation from existing methods.
 - A strong and coherent conceptual framework guiding the project activities.
 - **Project Plan**, including:
 - Capabilities of the investigators and host organization, as well as potential for effective participant recruitment and collaboration.
 - Budget and timeline appropriateness, assessed relative to the project's complexity, risk, and anticipated impact.
 - **Study Design:** Rigor and quality of the proposed study design in relation to the program's primary aims.
 - **Experience:** Demonstrated track record of successfully conducting similar work.
 - **Team Capacity:** Evidence of a high-quality team with the necessary expertise and resources.
 - **Feasibility:** Practicality of the proposed design and recruitment strategy, including justification based on STI prevalence and required sample size.
 - **Readiness:** Ability to launch the study quickly without compromising quality.
 - **Capacity Building:** Where applicable, the strength and clarity of the organizational approach to supporting in-country capacity building.
3. The third step is the validation and selection of the LOIs to proceed to the next stage in the process. The most competitive concepts will be invited for a second round of review. Organizations invited to submit full proposals will be provided with additional technical instructions at that time. Applicants selected for a second round of submission will be requested to consult experts on gender data and study ethics to guide collection and use of data on gender and related social markers and to ensure that the proposal adheres to rigorous ethical standards. Finalists will be asked to consider incorporating additional measures of interest to the foundation during protocol development, such as care-seeking behavior and measures of gynecologic and menstrual health.
 4. The fourth and final step, following an additional set of reviews, finalists will be notified that they are moving forward with a due diligence review and will be asked 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 applications 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 application that you consider proprietary.**

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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 (FAQ) document.

Inquiries

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