

Frequently Asked Questions

Request for Applications (RFA) Leaving no one behind in the Digital Era in Nepal Inclusive Digital Innovations for women and youth

1. Who can apply under this request for applications (RFA)?

- The applicant must be a **registered** entity and incorporated in Nepal. Eligible applicants who can apply for this RFA include: mobile financial service providers, regulated Financial Institutions (Banks, Insurance, MFIs), regulated peer-to-peer lending providers, smart agriculture equipment providers, agricultural input suppliers/providers, agent banking aggregators, mobile network operators, technology providers, agricultural value chain companies, FMCG/ distributors/ wholesalers, and Fintech/Agritech/Insurtech companies and weather index-based crop insurance companies.
- The applicant should be operating in Nepal for at least 2 years and should have audited financial statements for at least 2 years.
- The solution proposed must be implementable in 2021, with a project ending by December 2021.
- Applicants must contribute at least 30 per cent of the project's cash costs (costs may include technical infrastructure, resources, and operations).
- Applicants accept the standard language of UNCDF's PBAs.
- Applicants shall not have been the subject of bankruptcy, liquidation, judicial settlement, safeguarding, cessation of activity or any other similar situation resulting from a similar procedure.
- Applicants and any of their staff or member of their board of directors shall not be included in the **United Nations financial sanctions lists**,¹ particularly in the fight against the financing of terrorism and against attacks on international peace and security.
- Applicants must not be involved in any of the following activities:²
 - Manufacture, sale or distribution of controversial weapons or their components, including cluster bombs, anti-personnel mines, and biological, chemical and nuclear weapons
 - Manufacture, sale or distribution of armaments and/or weapons or their

¹ See: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sanctions/information>.

² See UNDP Policy on Due Diligence and Partnerships with the Private Sector (2013):

https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/BERA_Partnerships_UNDP%20private%20sector%20due%20diligence%20policy%202013_FINAL.pdf&action=default

- components, including military supplies and equipment
- Replica weapons marketed to children
- Manufacture, sale or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products
- Involvement in the manufacture, sale and distribution of pornography
- Manufacture, sale or distribution of substances subject to international bans or phase-outs, and wildlife or products regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Gambling, including casino operations, betting, and so on (excluding lotteries with charitable objectives)
- Violation of human rights or complicity in human rights violations
- Use or toleration of forced or compulsory labour
- Use or toleration of child labour

We look very closely at the sustainability, scalability pricing and business model of the solution.

2. When is the application due?

Applications must be submitted by 23:59 hours (EST, the New York time zone) on 17 May 2021. The deadline has been extended to allow companies to complete their proposals despite the challenges brought by the lockdown and COVID-19 outbreak.

3. What languages should I use?

English.

4. How can I submit my RFA?

Applications must be submitted through the online form. Submissions via email will **not** be accepted.

5. Which forms I will need to fill?

Once your organization has passed the eligibility criteria in the apply system you will be prompted to fill in 3 forms: -technical proposal; -budget; -CV template.

6. Can I submit multiple applications?

You can submit multiple online applications (using different devices and/or email), as long as they relate to different projects/solutions. You can also participate in multiple consortia.

7. Can I modify my application?

Yes, you can 'save' your application if you want to complete it in different stages while using the same device. However, it is not possible to amend your application after using 'submit'. Please prepare all the required answers and documents before submitting.

8. How will my application be evaluated?

The first round of applications selection will be assessed by a panel of UNCDF staff and experts.

There will be two phases of selection, one desk review and one due diligence.

The following dimensions will be considered in the desk review in assessing both the proposal and the company:

- The stage of development of the proposed solution (e.g. if the proposed solution, product or service is ready to go to the market or already in the market) and the problem the solution is addressing
- The relevance of the solution, to what extent does the product or service solution address the needs of women and youth
- The outcome expected from the solution, including key performance indicators and targets, gender and/or youth strategy, market analysis and UNCDF's additionality
- The additionality and value for money of the project (e.g. enabling new or innovative approaches to be piloted that would not normally be financed through commercial financing routes)
- The sustainability and scalability of the proposed solution. How sustainable is the solution for long-term growth? To what extent can the solution be scaled in the target country market?
- The experience of the applicant in the proposed field. What is the team composition?
- Risk profile of proposed solution.

The due diligence will focus on the product development stage, relevance, scalability, team experience and risk profile of the proposed solution.

9. Can I apply alone or do I need partners?

Yes, an institution can apply alone, as long as it satisfies the requirements given in answer to question 1 above ('Who can apply under this request for applications?').

10. Can I apply in a consortium with other firms or start-ups?

Yes, an entity can apply as part of a consortium or joint venture.

11. When a consortium application has been selected, will the entire consortium sign the performance-based agreement?

If a consortium applies and is selected, only the lead applicant will be signing the performance-based agreement with UNCDF and will be considered accountable by UNCDF and responsible for the other partner members.

12. What kind of costs are considered as indirect costs?

Overheads are considered indirect costs, as the idea is that the grant funding provided by UNCDF will all be utilized all for the proposed project, therefore these costs are ineligible.

13. How many proposals will be awarded in the call?

The RFA indicates a minimum (USD 50,000) and maximum (USD 100,000) amount of grant from UNCDF. Depending on the amount proposed by the successful applicants we may award one or two or more applications.

14. What is the timeline that award decision is made/funding is disbursed given the requirement of completion of project by Dec 2021?

We are aiming to finalize the award decision in around one month. Regarding to the disbursements, the Performance Based Agreement allows for some flexibility in this regard. A first tranche of maximum 20% of the total grant amount could be disbursed in July upon submission of, for example, a revised project plan and then the other tranches upon completion of the other milestones that the partner will agree with UNCDF.

15. What is the percentage of women and youth to be targeted?

In case of a solution targeting women, the minimum should be 70% women; in case of a solution targeting youth the minimum should be 60% youth. The proposal needs to be very clear about the strategy employed to target and onboard youth and/or women to the solution or use women and/or youth in the distribution of the solution.

16. Solutions around the digitization of agriculture value chains can be considered for this call?

Any solution proposed needs to justify how the solution could benefit women and/or youth.