

# TOOLS FOR INNOVATION PROGRAMMING

Step 5: Manage Awards & Accelerate Innovations



LIFECYCLE STEPS



TOOLKITS

# About the USAID U.S. Global Development Lab

USAID's legacy of developing and implementing innovative breakthroughs—from the seeds of the green revolution, to microfinance and oral rehydration therapy—has saved lives, created economic opportunity, and advanced human development. For the first time in history, we have the scientific and technological tools to put an end to extreme poverty and its most devastating consequences within the next two decades.

Building on the belief that science, technology, innovation and partnership can accelerate development impact faster, cheaper, and more sustainably, USAID established the U.S. Global Development Lab (The Lab) in April 2014. The Lab is designed to experiment and test new ideas, models, interventions, and approaches and to accelerate the ones that work across the Agency and in Missions around the world.

The Lab's mission is twofold:

- To produce breakthrough development innovations by sourcing, testing, and scaling proven solutions to reach hundreds of millions of people.
- To accelerate the transformation of the development enterprise by opening development to people everywhere with good ideas, promoting new and deepening existing partnerships, bringing data and evidence to bear, and harnessing scientific and technological advances.

To learn more about The Lab, visit: [www.usaid.gov/GlobalDevLab](http://www.usaid.gov/GlobalDevLab)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *USAID Tools for Innovation Programming* were written and developed by Rebecca Askin, of Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI). The tools offer insights, processes, and guidance based on USAID's experiences designing and implementing open innovation programs in The Lab and technical bureaus in USAID/Washington.

This collection of tools was informed by in-depth interviews and discussions with the champions and the managers of the following USAID programs: *Securing Water for Food: A Grand Challenge for Development*; *All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development*; *Saving Lives at Birth: A Grand Challenge for Development*; *Powering Agriculture: A Grand Challenge for Development*; *Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN)*; and *Development Innovation Ventures (DIV)*.

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# Step 5: Manage Awards & Accelerate Innovations



## KEY LEARNINGS

*Define success early. If your team knows what success looks like for both the program and for innovators, you will have an easier time managing awardees. A strong monitoring and evaluation plan and meaningful metrics/ indicators is at the core of effective management*

*Selection of the award type should be an ongoing discussion, not an assumption. Carefully assess who your innovator is and develop milestones or reporting requirements which are both easy to comply with and useful in tracking your innovator's progress.*

*Keep stakeholders and partners engaged in the design, launch, and selection of the winning innovations. Opportunities for participation and close engagement go a long way toward continued support and enthusiasm about the program.*

USAID's procedures and regulations may occasionally seem rigid, but the Federal Acquisition Regulations and the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) provide a concrete structure with which to implement awards. As an award manager, understanding the regulations and what award types are available to you can be extremely powerful in developing and implementing agreements that fit the needs and competencies of your innovators.

This document offers guidance for and outlines the steps and activities involved in each of the following:

- **Managing Awards.** Program awardees will likely be new to USAID grants and the requirements of funding obligations. Grant managers can help awardees through capacity building and effective communication.
- **Selecting the Award Type.** A number of variables impact the selection of the award, including the stage of the innovation, the capabilities of the awardee, and the size of the award. Program teams should think carefully about how these variables relate to the structure of the subsequent award.
- **Accelerating and Promoting Innovators.** Beyond award funding, the program can support innovators through acceleration activities and by promoting awardees' story and innovation.

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN INNOVATOR

Whether an awardee is a company, an academic institution, a company, a social enterprise that has never before interacted with the U.S. government, or an NGO with a long-standing relationship with USAID, the awardee becomes an "innovator" once they are selected as a winner and receive an award from a USAID innovation program. The benefits of being an innovator extend beyond simple financial reward. In an open innovation program, there are many ways to amplify the value for innovators that go beyond the award:

- **More than just an award.** Innovators may not realize that program goals go beyond making an award. Consider how to educate innovators about the program's goal of tracking progress of an innovation and supporting those that demonstrate potential

to achieve broad scale. Also consider how to help innovators communicate with their network to amplify the goals of the program and tell the story of their innovation.

- **Awardees constitute a cohort.** USAID program teams have an opportunity to inspire innovators to see that they are part of a larger, ground-breaking movement. Consider activities and communication tactics will help awardees to view themselves as part of a cohort, unified in the pursuit of piloting and deploying innovations to solve a development problem. The value of their successes and failures may not always be visible in day-to-day implementation so your team should take efforts to make common connections visible and tangible.
- **Grant Managers do more than oversee awardees.** Grant Managers are responsible for a cohort of innovators and portfolio of innovations, not just individual awardees. Think of USAID's role as one similar to an "interested board member" who cares about the success of the innovator and whose direct engagement includes opportunities and resources to help them achieve their milestones and performance indicators, such as a technical assistance facility or awardee operations manuals.

## Managing Awards

### ROLE OF THE GRANT MANAGER

A Grant Manager refers to the individual responsible for administering and managing grant awards (in USAID parlance, an "Agreement Officer"). In cases where the USAID team has outsourced grant management to an implementing partner, the term *Fund Manager* is used. In cases where USAID keeps grant management in-house, a USAID staff member will serve as the *Grant Manager*. This person is typically responsible for:

- Managing and reviewing grant reporting requirements, including approving all submitted reports;
- Negotiating and making decisions about M&E indicators and data collection;
- Reviewing and approving work plans and the monitoring and evaluation plan;
- Ensuring compliance with grant disbursement rules; and
- Understanding awardee needs and how to best invest in acceleration services.

The Grant Manager should coordinate with the awardee in the following categories as well. However, note that Contracting Officer (CO) approval is necessary to complete these actions, although they may delegate some of these responsibilities to the Grant Manager:

- Make contractual agreements.
- Make commitments.
- Modify the Grant Agreement terms, including: program description, schedule, provisions, budget changes, sub award approvals, and obligate government funds.

There are several stakeholders involved in the implementation of a successful grant agreement both on the awardee side and the funder side: the Agreement Office, the Financial Office and the Technical Office.

**Agreement Office:** Applications, negotiations, and award receipt is through USAID's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA). OAA is responsible for managing issues related to compliance with the terms of the award agreement. Many major administrative issues with and changes to the agreement will need to be approved in writing by the Agreement Officer (AO) housed within OAA.

**Financial Office:** The Office of the Chief Financial Officer, located in the Bureau for Management, is responsible for establishing and maintaining sound financial management practices through the timely collection and dissemination of accurate financial information, advisory, and analytical services to USAID, partners and other constituents. Thus, the program team will submit financial reports to the Office.

**Technical Office:** In most cases, the technical office (sponsoring the program) will be the primary, day-to-day point of contact. The technical office deals with all the program aspects of the award and is where the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) is located. Many administrative level approvals related to the award (e.g., key personnel changes, international travel approvals) may be delegated from the AO down to the AOR.



#### CRITICAL CONSIDERATION

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In cases when USAID outsources the management burden, it will be critical to maintain multiple touch points with the Fund Manager and to establish direct communication points with awardees to ensure that needs and opportunities are responded to and utilized. Should a contractor be selected to manage these activities, the contractor will be able to review and approve all deliverables but USAID prior approval would be required to make modifications to contractual agreements or modify the grant terms.

USAID's Powering Agriculture: An Energy Grand Challenge for Development (PAEGC) decided to outsource the Fund Management and acceleration activities support through a Request for Proposals (RFP). The Statement of Work (SOW) covered the following seven key areas.

1. Advising on and strengthening PAEGC awardees' ability to comply with USAID policies and procedures
2. Monitoring awardee performance:
  - Quality control of awardee progress reporting
  - Field visits to verify achievements and assist with addressing any shortcomings
  - Development and maintenance of an Award Management Online Platform
3. Designing and conducting performance and impact evaluations
4. Organizing and facilitating PAEGC events
5. Facilitating outreach and communication
6. Facilitating travel by PAEGC awardees and experts
7. Integrating Powering Agriculture Projects into Partner Programs



#### TIP

Teams that are designing an open innovation program that includes outsourcing technical assistance support or acceleration activities can use the above as a starting point for crafting a SOW. Both the Powering Agriculture and Securing Water for Food (SWFF) Grand Challenges for Development (GCD) program teams can also be consulted for valuable lessons on crafting an SOW and how to avoid mistakes.



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR AWARDEE CAPACITY BUILDING

For some organizations, participation in USAID's program may be the first time that the organization has taken on any type of external funding. This increases the importance of integrating resources and opportunities for building capacity. Organizations new to USAID or external funding will need help navigating unfamiliar grant reporting processes and requirements in order to utilize funds appropriately and to ensure that both the award funding and non-financial support is of maximum value. The following areas should be considered for building capacity of awardee organizations:

- **Policy and Procedure Compliance.** Help awardees to understand and comply with USAID operational policies and procedures.
- **Process.** Work with awardees on pre-award surveys, establishing appropriate accounting and financial management practices, supporting targeted business development services, and providing guidance in technical/financial reporting.
- **Reporting.** Offer standard awardee operation manuals/guidelines, provide individualized assistance to awardees (e.g., hosting training workshops/webinars and establishing an awardee "hotline" through which tailored assistance may be remotely provided).
- **Monitoring and Evaluation.** Assist awardees with developing individual project monitoring and evaluation plans that include targets and indicators tailored to the awardees' individual projects, acceleration milestones, and inclusive of USAID standard indicators in the program subject area (See *Step 6 Evaluate Program*).

### **Starting Early**

Because there is a need for innovators to constantly refine approaches and update implementation plans, awardees should familiarize themselves with USAID policy as soon as possible. Incorporating capacity building into grant agreements requires planning and resources but there are significant payoffs:

- **Time-savings for Grant Manager** who would otherwise give repeated and case-by-case basis guidance.
- **Self-sufficiency for awardees** who can use USAID-created tools to first try to answer questions for themselves.
- **Better budget estimates** that account for management responsibilities to ensure that awardees' reporting activities do not unduly affect program implementation activities.
- **More strategic use of technical assistance/acceleration support** that focuses on implementation of the innovation rather than training awardees on how to be compliant with USAID's award terms and requirements.

### **Preparing for Changes**

Innovation is often a process of trial and error. As grants are implemented, organizations may learn things that require changes in implementation. Having an understanding with an awardee organization about grant requirements and processes will make course corrections easier for all and create fewer problems for grants management, work planning, and reporting.

### **Engaging the Right People**

Every awardee organization will have a point of contact for grant management but it is unlikely that this individual holds sole discretion over how funds are used. The CEO/Executive Director of a small organization or someone from the program implementation team or financial management team is likely to have this authority. Because the responsibilities of the awardee's point of contact for grants management vary from organization to organization, it is **best to educate entire teams on important compliance issues related to grant funds, management, and reporting**. Ensuring that an accurate understanding of USAID grants rests in more than one individual in the awardee organization will enable more informed decision-making across the awardee organization.

Tactics for providing this type of capacity building can include:

- Kick-off meeting for a new innovator cohort (in-person or virtual)
- Ongoing phone calls or webinars to assist with particularly complex but common issues
- Peer-to-peer learning to enable innovators to help each other navigate compliance issues/processes in ways that do not distract from implementation activities

### **Building for the Future**

Educating entire teams on how to carry out the appropriate processes may seem like a great deal of effort when capacity building is done prior to or concurrent with grants administration, but these efforts support the larger goal of helping innovators attract and take on additional funding from other sources. Whether funding comes from government grants or private sources or investment, innovators will require increased capacity to manage multiple sources of funding in variable sizes. Helping an innovator's management team understand these requirements will help them to prepare and position for non-USAID funding down the road.

For example, the Saving Lives at Birth (SL@B) and Powering Agriculture GCDs chose to start acceleration support and capacity building for grant management concurrently with negotiating the award, allowing the USAID teams to immediately engage innovators around their priority needs.



RESOURCES &  
REFERENCES

The Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) program team developed an Operations Manual for the universities that received grants from the program. The Table of Contents of that manual is provided in the Resources section. To obtain a full copy of the Operations Manual or hear first-hand lessons about how and why this was developed, consult directly with the HESN team.

The All Children Reading (ACR) GCD held a Grantee Workshop for their winners in September 2012 as part of awardee capacity building for their cohort. A modified, generic version of the agenda is available in the Resources section.

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## **COMMUNICATING CLEARLY & CONSISTENTLY**

Receiving a grant from USAID is exciting and may dramatically shift the course of growth for an innovator. While grants enable organizations to design and implement new initiatives, test new innovations, or expand to new geographies, they also create organizational stress in order to comply with USAID policies. Regular, clear, and consistent communication between the program team and innovators is especially important. Teams should consider:



- **Who will be the point(s) of contact for innovators?** If there are multiple points of contact on the grantor side (e.g., technical team, program partners, Fund Manager, technical assistance facility, Missions), clearly communicate to the awardee why multiple points of contact are necessary. Also ensure that there is a single point of contact for each of these groups to improve accountability.
- **When will communication occur?** Tell the awardee in advance what the critical junctures are (e.g., grant negotiation, reporting, evaluation, as well as learning opportunities or networking opportunities) and when USAID and others will want to engage with them.
- **What information will be requested?** Make decisions early, even prior to awarding grants, on the kinds of information that awardees will need to provide and how this information will be collected, reported and managed. Early decisions will enable USAID to communicate consistently with awardees about collection requirements and schedule.
- **What information will be disseminated?** Make choices on dissemination. For example, what are the major pieces of information that will be published or promoted by USAID and program partners about the innovators? Making this information clear and comprehensive from the start, for both formal and informal information gathering, will help innovators be responsive and timely in their reporting.

## CONNECTING M&E TO ACCELERATION SUPPORT CHOICES

Ensuring that the best possible indicators/measures are captured in the M&E plan – for example, new market entry, growing the number of users/consumers, or raising other sources of capital – will allow program teams to capture and analyze data about whether an innovation is being successful in its implementation goals. By connecting the M&E plan of a grant agreement with acceleration support elements, program teams will have better positioned to support awardees; teams will have information about how the grant can support and incentivize activities that help the innovation meet its goals of growth, scale, and impact.

To connect the M&E plan to a framework for acceleration support, consider the following:

- How will you ensure the information you collect helps build an understanding of the innovator’s needs and challenges along the path to scale?
- How will you use the M&E plan to determine whether an innovation will receive acceleration support? And subsequently, what kind of support and during what point in implementation?
- How will the information you collect help you to report on your program’s innovation portfolio within USAID? How will this information help you market your program and individual innovators?

## Selecting the Award Type

Award type has nuanced implications for award terms and for the nature of engagement with the awardee. Program teams should consider what is most appropriate for awardees during the solicitation design process, as the solicitation mechanism and narrative may determine the award type ultimately selected. The types of solicitation mechanisms are covered in detail in *Lifecycle Step 4 Design and Implement the Program*.

When developing the requirements and structure of your awards, several agreement types are available to your team. In order of level of capacity required for the awardee, these include:

- **In-Kind Grants:** While these have not yet been used for programming in the Lab, in-kind grants are frequently used on overseas projects to provide a specific product or service to awardees who may not have sufficient capacity or familiarity with USAID procurement requirements to purchase the necessary item in a compliant way. USAID or an implementing partner will purchase the good or service for the awardee and provide appropriate approvals in advance, eliminating the need for the awardee to have USAID compliance systems.
- **Fixed Obligation Grants:** The fixed obligation grant is the Honda Civic of USAID award mechanisms: simple, straightforward, and easy to manage. By allowing payment for milestones instead of reimbursement for cost, a Fixed Obligation Grants (FOG) can be awarded under a BAA, an RFA or an APS. Milestones can be structured to incorporate:
  - Standard reporting deliverables, such as work plans, quarterly or monthly reports, performance monitoring plans, and final reports;
  - Business development indicators, such as development of an acceptable business plan or deployment of an innovation to market; or
  - Performance indicators, such as number of products sold, or number of distinct markets reached.
- **Cooperative Agreements:** Cooperative agreements can be designed to implement a more diverse structure of reporting requirements than fixed obligation grants. The major differentiating factor available under cooperative agreements is "significant involvement," which allows USAID to more directly oversee activities implemented by the awardee. This may include working alongside the awardee to ensure work plan activities are being carried out effectively, or input regarding key personnel under the agreement when submitted. Two types of cooperative agreements are available:
  - Cost-reimbursable: This is the de facto arrangement for a cooperative agreement, in which an awardee provides receipts for costs or time sheets for labor during implementation. It typically requires a high level of management capacity and should be reserved for awardees that are familiar with US government reporting requirements.
  - Milestone-based: This would be the same structure as FOGs and may include any or all of the milestones detailed above.
- **Contracts:** Contracts have not to date been effectively implemented on USAID innovation programs. While it is possible that there is a place for them in future programming, current guidance says this mechanism would typically require a Request for Proposals and a more detailed solicitation process than those implemented for innovation programs at USAID to date.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR SELECTING AWARD TYPE

Choose the award that is most appropriate for the innovator, not the award that is easiest to manage. Several considerations will impact your decision on how to structure the award. Early-stage awardees may not have financial or reporting systems sufficiently designed in order to carry out a Cooperative Agreement effectively, whereas a cost-reimbursable cooperative agreement may be more appropriate if there is the possibility of high cost variability in the awardee's implementation plan. The program team should engage OAA in setting these terms, but be prepared with a justification document that explains to OAA the type of award mechanism your team thinks is best based on the following considerations.



### ***Awardee Financial Constraints***

Managing early-stage innovators means managing cash-conscious awardees. To be sensitive to an innovator's bank account balance, the USAID team may want to structure milestones in smaller, more manageable tranches to ensure that the awardee receives funding on a regular basis. USAID's 30-day standard payment terms can lead to cash concerns from innovators, so the team can consider front-loading the milestone disbursements by assigning a higher value to early deliverables. However, teams should ensure that adequate funding is available to later milestones in order to incentivize the awardee to complete the project in a timely fashion.

### ***Award Size***

The value of the award is a key consideration when selecting one of the above award types. For larger-value awards, programs have preferred to issue cost reimbursable agreements because this allows more flexibility to modify deliverables and performance benchmarks. Under cost reimbursable agreements, modifications to milestones and performance benchmarks would not halt payment of vouchers because disbursements are tied to expenses and labor, not to achievement of milestones. Under milestone-based agreements, a modification to the milestones may delay payment as this requires the Grant Manager and Contracting Officer to modify the agreement formally. Finally, note that cost reimbursable arrangements only allow payment for costs that an innovator has already incurred, so up-front payments are not an option.

### ***Awardee Capacity***

Awardee capacity may impact the award type. Innovators with more developed management systems should be capable of managing the terms of a cooperative agreement, which are more complex than a FOG. Innovators with less formal management systems may benefit from the simpler reporting requirements and light-touch management oversight of a FOG. Moreover, milestones under either a milestone-based cooperative agreement or a FOG can be customized to the existing management and reporting practices of the awardee.

### ***Level of Oversight Desired***

As noted above, cooperative agreements allow more direct involvement in the awardee's program than a FOG. The Grant Manager for a cooperative agreement may directly guide the awardee regarding how to achieve work plan targets, while this is not the case for a FOG. Early stage innovators are still in an experimental stage and therefore likely to have less ambitious goals for growth and scale. They should therefore be given a longer leash to pursue experimentation with less management oversight. This is especially true because early-stage innovators' award values are smaller and thus a lighter-touch oversight burden is more appropriate. Later-stage innovators, on the other hand, may require more collaboration on the steps needed to achieve goals for viability, growth, and scale.

### ***Level of Staff Support Available***

Though program teams may wish to provide close oversight, they may face staffing and resource constraints when it comes to engaging with awardees. It may be preferable to make fewer awards or smaller awards to ensure sufficient management oversight. Program teams should consider the following levels of staff support for each type of grant:

- **FOGs up to \$250,000:** approximately 50% of a USAID staff member's time per \$100,000 in grant value. Milestones may be simplified in order to allow each Grant Manager to manage more awardees; however because this can result in compromises in implementation this practice is strongly discouraged.
- **Cooperative Agreements above \$250,000:** One full-time Grant Manager per year, either a USAID staff or an outside contractor.

If you have a limited number of Grant Managers or limited bandwidth, consider reducing the overall value of the grants rather than attempting to manage too much money with too few people. If you feel that the total value of grant funding will not affect awardees' ability to implement, then you may choose to reduce the number of deliverables, the frequency of reporting, and/or the frequency of engagement between grant manager and awardee. However, USAID should seriously consider the consequences of having a lighter staffing footprint prior to deciding upon the staff to awardee ratio.

## DESIGNING MILESTONES

The structure of the milestones and payment disbursements are as important as the type of agreement selected. There are several points for consideration when developing your agreement terms with your awardees:

### ***Should the awardee be held to performance benchmarks?***

Performance benchmarks can be the best means of achieving a 'pay for performance' effect when using a FOG or cooperative agreement. The team may work with the awardee to structure performance-based milestone disbursements that are ambitious but achievable. Note that utilization of a technical assistance facility or acceleration support may not be compulsory in an agreement's terms. However, performance benchmarks may be structured to assume utilization of such a facility, incentivizing awardees to make appropriate use of resources available to them.

USAID has recently begun to use more creative award designs to address the goals of their innovation programs. For example, the Securing Water for Food GCD has developed two interconnected mechanisms to provide better support to awardees.



CRITICAL  
CONSIDERATION

- SWFF designed their program using a **performance-based milestone** funding model, in which performance is linked to grant disbursements. Depending on the stage of innovation, awardees have a fixed amount of funding available to them over the course of the 4-year GCD program. Awardees and SWFF determine milestones for the grant agreement and during each 6 month progress review, milestones are reviewed (e.g., marketing, legal/regulatory, investment, partnership brokerage) and their achievement triggers the next tranche of funding.
- The SWFF team issued a competitive procurement for a **technical assistance (TA) facility** in order to outsource acceleration support for innovators. Through the TA Facility, an awardee's performance milestone achievements are used as a basis for determining what type and amount of acceleration support they will receive.

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### ***What regular reporting requirements should be required of the awardee?***

Performance benchmarks alone do not provide regular information about the progress of the awardee in pursuit of those indicators. In order to provide sufficiently regular reporting on awardee progress, teams have found that it is important to request that they provide some reporting on a regular basis, so that the USAID team can assess whether a grantee is implementing their innovation in accordance with the work plan outlined at the outset of implementation.



# Accelerating and Promoting Innovations

As detailed in the *Acceleration Toolkit*, acceleration activities are intended to build operational and organizational capacity of the innovator in order to help the innovator realize its goals and grow its business. Incorporating acceleration activities from the beginning of program design, versus adding acceleration activities later on in program implementation, can increase benefits to the awardees by ensuring the best support is provided at the most opportune time.

Note that acceleration activities should be considered separate from grantee capacity building, which focuses on the grantee's ability to comply with the terms of the grant agreement.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACCELERATION ACTIVITIES

Evaluating the needs of an awardee, before, after, or throughout the course of the award requires that a program team gain the trust of the awardee in order to ask the right questions to identify needs that may not have been anticipated or previously considered and receive truthful and accurate information.

When deciding what support to provide, be sure to consider the following:

- **Juncture and Duration?** When and how will acceleration activities be integrated in the program?
- **Critical or Optional?** Are acceleration activities demand driven? Do they provide real value to the innovators?
- **Access?** Is there differentiated support based on needs, stage of innovation, or geography?
- **Funding?** What level of resources does the USAID program team have to provide support? Will costs be covered by a portion of the award, through cost-share, or through additional funding from USAID or partners?

The *Acceleration Toolkit* provides in-depth guidance on designing acceleration activities, including the types of support that may be most appropriate for certain types of innovators and their specific needs.



TIP

Outsourcing acceleration services to a Fund Manager, technical assistance, or acceleration service provider may be the most efficient way to access relevant expertise. However, the timing for such outsourcing (through a SOW, RFP for implementation support, etc.) must coincide with the program timeline, specifically the announcement of the winners. The relationship between the expert and the winning grantee is critical and thus best established at the onset of the grantees' work plan.

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## CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROMOTING INNOVATIONS

Promoting winners requires communication efforts that extend beyond the winner announcement, especially because the newsworthiness of the innovators' stories will become more interesting to the media, innovation communities, acceleration partners, and the general public once the program begins to yield results. Communicating the work of awardees as a cohort, rather than as individual awardees, can amplify each group's work and create a wider variety of communications opportunities.

## **Telling the Story**

With each new Call and cohort of new awardees, the story about an innovation can evolve and appeal to new audiences and gain traction in new venues. After winners are selected, revisit the communications strategy and consider if a new aspect of the campaign is needed or if the current efforts are sufficient.

The *Communications Toolkit* provides in-depth guidance on how to engage innovators to craft a story that suits the outreach and promotional goals of the program as well as the needs of the innovators in their target markets.

## **Mapping Promotion Activities**

To ensure visibility of the program with the public, incorporate critical dates and events directly related to program implementation and engagement with awardees into the communications strategy (e.g., winner selection, Development Exchange events, pilot and prototype testing events). Use these dates as a roadmap to identify opportunities to promote the program and innovations with target audiences, key stakeholders, and the media.

Within USAID channels, there are newsletters, blogs, and websites that can be used to promote stories. Collaboration with Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) or the Communications teams in bureaus and can result in talking points about the program and winners into speeches of USAID leadership when they have speaking engagements that are relevant to the science, technology, innovation, and partnership (STIP) agenda. Consider what kinds of support can be accessed through USAID Missions or other parts of USAID to promote winners as well.

For further detail, see *Step 4 Design and Implement the Program* and the *Communications Toolkit*.

## **Building Community**

Just as awardees of the program should be treated as cohorts of innovators, non-winners are also an important part of the open innovation communities that USAID's innovation programs are trying to engage. All applicants should be treated as valuable assets. Non-winners may be future winners, influencers capable of attracting new applicants to future Calls for Innovations, or even the organizations that will take an innovation forward by adapting it for another part of the world. Creative, unanticipated, collaboration is what open innovation is all about.

Engaging non-winners can and should be included in the communication strategy. Non-winners can play a vital role in current and future programs by:

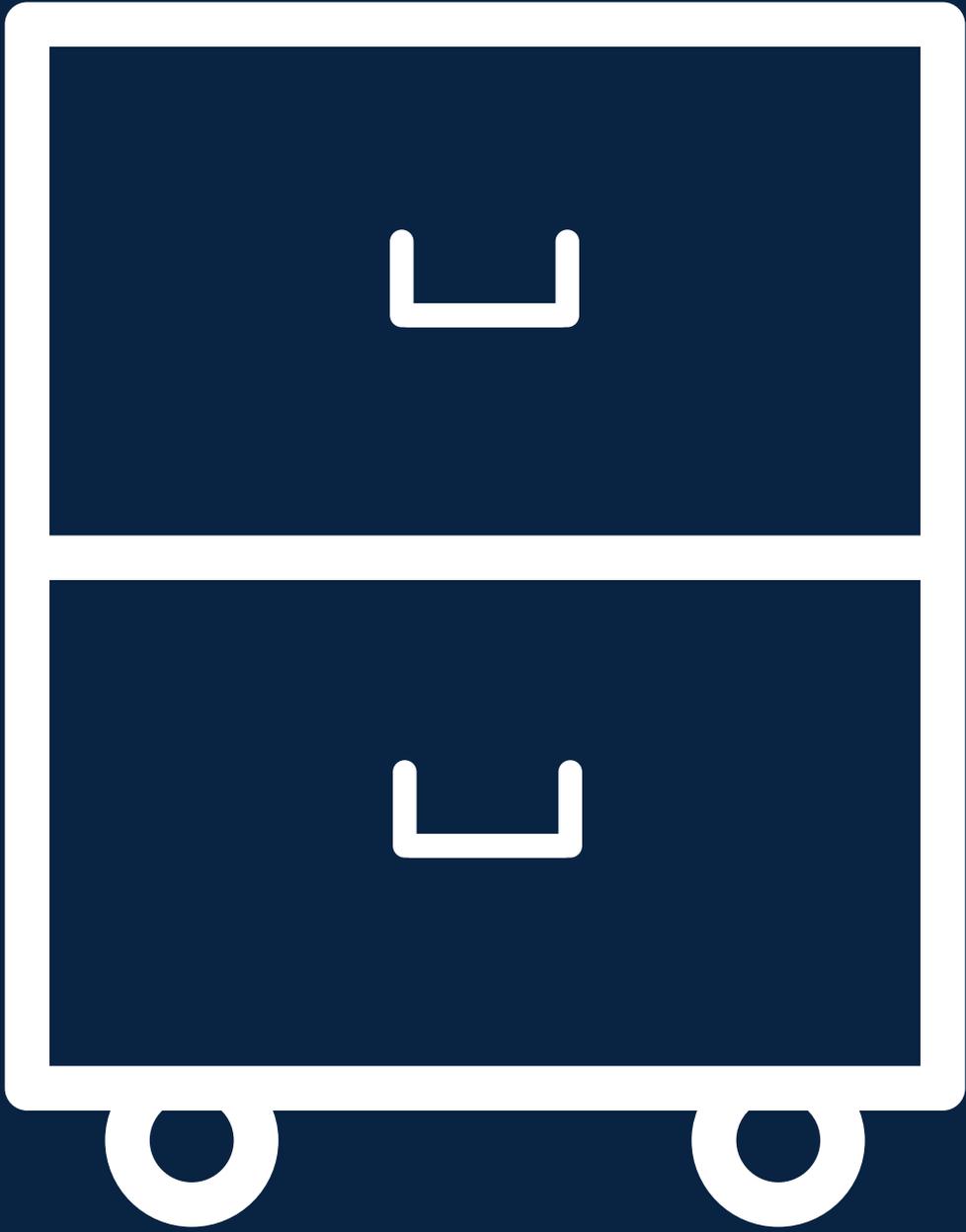
- Serving as nodes in a network for promoting future Calls for Innovations and amplifying the messages of the campaign.
- Being sources for feedback on the Calls and application process so that program teams can make design decisions in the future that better serve non-traditional actors.
- Being information resources about problem definition and the state of innovation in target markets or by enlarging the peer-to-peer learning pool.
- Constituting the pool of applicants for subsequent rounds or other USAID innovation programs.



TIP

### **Create Ways for Missions and Partners to Engage Winners and Non-Winners Alike**

An unsuccessful application to a Call for Innovations can be the beginning or end of a relationship. To make sure that future program Calls reach the target audience and maintain opportunities for future partnerships in other USAID programs, foster relationships with all applicants. For example, enable colleagues at Missions or other relevant programs to log into the online application platform and view the application pool. Missions can then identify organizations (winners or non-winners alike) that they want to engage.





# Resources & References

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## Resources

- Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) Operations Manual Table of Contents
- The All Children Reading GCD Grantee Workshop Agenda template



# Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) Operations Manual Table of Contents

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  - III.5.3. AO and AOR Summary Table
  - III.5.4. Workplans
  - III.5.5. Cost Share
    - III.5.5.1. Counting and Documenting Cost Share
    - III.5.5.2. Reporting Cost Share
  - III.5.6. Financial Responsibilities & Monitoring
  - III.5.7. M&E Plan Approval
    - III.5.7.1. M&E Plan Modifications After Approval
  - III.5.8. Key Personnel Changes
  - III.5.9. Reports Submitted
  - III.5.10. Written materials
  - III.5.11. Changes/Modifications to Agreement
  - III.5.12. Subawards
    - III.5.12.1. Identifying and Selecting Subawardees
    - III.5.12.2. Executing Subawards and Managing Subawardees
  - III.5.13. Expenses and Procurement Information

- III.5.13.1 Allowable and Unallowable Costs
- III.5.13.2 Ineligible Goods and Services
- III.5.13.3 Prohibited Items
- III.5.13.4 Equipment
- III.5.13.5 Restricted Commodities
- III.5.13.6 Ineligible Suppliers
- III.5.13.7 Source of Commodities
- III.6 Communicating with USAID
  - III.6.1. Communication Protocol
  - III.6.2. Carbon Copying
  - III.6.3. Mission or USAID/W Outreach & Collaboration
- III.7. Event Planning
  - III.7.1. Meeting Expenses
- III.8. Special Requests
  - III.8.1. Leadership Requests/ Special Requests Protocol
  - III.8.2. Events where USAID Administrator is participating
  - III.8.3. Consultation/facilitation of agenda for events involving USAID leadership
  - III.8.4. Consultation/facilitation of agenda for events involving HESN Program Director
- III.9. Online Collaboration Platform (Learning Lab)
  - III.9.1. Overview
  - III.9.2. Instructions for Access
- III.10. Intellectual Property

## IV. Travel

### IV.1. Travel Protocols

- IV.1.1. Approval Process
- IV.1.2. Immigration Requirements for International Travel
- IV.1.3. Visitors to the US
- IV.1.4. Recommendations for International Travel
- IV.2. Tips for Traveling to Countries with USAID Missions
- IV.3. Common and Uncommon Example Scenarios Related to Travel

## V. Financial Information

- V.1. U.S. Government Funds
- V.2. Invoices (William & Mary, Duke)
- V.3. Letter of Credit
  - V.3.1. Grantees' Letter of Credit Drawdown Procedures
- V.4. Advance Payments
  - V.4.1. Guidelines for Advance Payments
- V.5. Audits

## VI. Communications

- VI.1. Leveraging Communications Channels



## VI.2. Materials

- VI.2.1. Internal and External Communications Plans
- VI.2.2. One-Pagers/Fact Sheets
- VI.2.3. Talking Points
- VI.2.4. Collateral Documents
- VI.3. Communications Team Contact Information
- VI.4. Role of USAID/LPA
- VI.5. Development Lab/University Communication Contacts
- VI.6. Tips for Dealing with the Media
- VI.7. Topline HESN Messages
- VI.8. Presentations
- VI.9. Social Media
  - VI.9.1. General
  - VI.9.2. Twitter
  - VI.9.3. Facebook
  - VI.9.4. Message Boards and Blog Posts
- VI.10. Websites
- VI.11. Video Content
- VI.12. Protocols on Photo Credits/Disclosure and other “From the Field” Information
- VI.13. Branding & Marking
  - VI.13.1. Important Things to Remember
  - VI.13.2. Helpful Links

## **VII. Reporting**

- VII.1. Instructions, Deadlines, Templates
  - VII.1.1. Overview
  - VII.1.2. Quarterly Reports
  - VII.1.3. Annual Reports
  - VII.1.4. Monitoring & Evaluation Reports
  - VII.1.5. Financial Reports
  - VII.1.6. Reporting Host Government Taxes
  - VII.1.7. Cost Share Reporting
  - VII.1.8. Property Reports
    - VII.1.8.1 Tangible Property
    - VII.1.8.2 Intangible (Intellectual) Property
  - VII.2. Subawardee Reporting
  - VII.3. Uploading Documents to the DEC
  - VIII. Project Close-Out

## **IX. Resources and Regulations**

# All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development— Grantee Workshop Agenda Template

## All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development Grantees Workshop Agenda Template

### Meeting Objectives:

1. Winners feel affirmed and excited about their award, recognizing the status of the award.
2. Winners are ready to commence implementing with sound contract and project management and monitoring and evaluation.
3. Winners feel part of an informal community of practice, get to meet their cohort, and gain insights about each other's work
4. Winners and program sponsors confirm M&E plans; program sponsors create a shared program measurement framework.

TIME	SESSION	LOGISTICS	CONTENT	OUTCOME
9:00-9:20	<p><b>Welcome from Partners &amp; Getting Started</b></p> <p>Play ACR video to get everyone's attention. Formal Welcome (5 min)—Introduce hosts, partners</p> <p>Speaker 1—USAID welcome Speaker 2—GCD overview Facilitator – schedule, logistics, rules, explain filming table</p> <p>Segue to next sessions—opportunity to introduce our innovators, meet others, and start relationship building.</p> <p>Provide instructions on lunch, materials in lobby, social media handles.</p>	<p>Theatre style seating for opening plenary.</p> <p>No slides.</p>	<p>Each agency gives warm congratulations, welcome and greeting, and highlights one hope for the day.</p> <p>Overview of GCDs, ACR goals, objectives for engagement with all partners.</p> <p>Incorporate key stats.</p> <p>Facilitator explains intent of the day and agenda, facilities, ground rules, etc.</p>	<p>Grantees feel sense of achievement, and 'part of the GCD bigger objective', understand plans for the day and expectations of them.</p> <p>Smooth logistics.</p> <p>Instill "community" notion: collectiveness of the awardees as part of a one larger initiative rather than 30 individualized projects.</p> <p>They should hear from us that we would like them to remain in touch, exchange lesson learned and share evidence based results.</p>

TIME	SESSION	LOGISTICS	CONTENT	OUTCOME
9:20-10:15	<p><b>Getting to Know the Winners!</b></p> <p>Thematic networking activity.</p> <p>3 rounds of discussions at 5 Stations.</p> <p>Participants to self-select their stations.</p> <p><b>Round 1 and 2:</b> Why do you think this theme is so critical for solving literacy? What is the biggest obstacle that will keep this theme from having the impact it should?</p> <p><b>Round 3:</b> What special challenges does your country face? What special assets does your country have that should be utilized more?</p>	<p><b>Room layout:</b> # Tables # Seats Flip Charts PPT slides</p> <p>Music system and selection. Projector.</p> <p>Each individual moves to the station with the theme most interesting / relevant to them and their project.</p> <p>Encourage people to mix with people they don't already know.</p> <p>Discourage switching groups mid-session.</p> <p>No report out, but capture feedback and notes.</p>	<p>15 minute rounds 5 Themes</p> <p>Facilitator will use the slide projection to explain each theme and cue each round.</p> <p>15 minutes for groups to get to know each other and discuss the theme.</p> <p>No report-out.</p>	<p>Networking among organizations.</p> <p>Identification of shared interests.</p>
10:30 – 11:30	<p><b>Early Grade Reading: Why and What Works</b></p> <p>Bios + contact information+ resources</p>	<p>Plenary –theatre seating</p> <p>Computer, projector, screen</p> <p>Flip Chart for facilitator notes</p>	<p>Presentations and discussions on rationale behind focus on early grade reading</p> <p>Discuss global efforts to improve early grade reading</p> <p>Discuss elements of effective program design.</p>	<p>Grantees should understand and be able to argue convincingly that early grade reading is important.</p> <p>Understand the overall design of effective reading programs.</p> <p>Enthusiasm about joining communities of practice in their countries and globally.</p>

TIME	SESSION	LOGISTICS	CONTENT	OUTCOME
11:30-12:00	<p><b>Building a Community</b></p> <p>Start with the Faces video.</p> <p>There is a community in this video, in this room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you need going forward to keep this alive</li> <li>• How do you want to connect?</li> <li>• How can you build a movement at the local level?</li> <li>• Global?</li> </ul>	<p>Plenary- theatre style seating Social media directions</p> <p>Display tweets</p>	<p>Start with 3-min video</p> <p>What would be useful for them?</p> <p>What are some possible ways to facilitate continued exchange with other solvers, with grantees and partners, other resource actors, volunteers?</p> <p>End with a request for each participant to tweet or to write out their tweet.</p>	<p>Networking among organizations.</p> <p>Identification of shared interests.</p>
1:00-1:30	<p><b>Answering Your Grant Management Questions</b></p>	<p><b>Plenary:</b> Intro only</p> <p><b>Room layout:</b> # Tables with # Seats Flip Charts</p> <p><b>Breakout:</b> 25 minutes</p>	<p>Explain break out groups.</p> <p>10 min: overview of the partners and goals.</p> <p>10 mins: overview of milestones, Marketing / branding plan and narrative and financial reporting guidelines.</p> <p>5 mins: participants write one Q&amp;A on index cards.</p> <p>10 mins: FOG and milestone overview</p> <p>10 mins: general overview of marketing / branding plan and narrative and financial reporting guidelines.</p> <p>5 mins: participants write one Q&amp;A on index cards.</p>	<p>Intention is to bring focus, cover essential elements of grant mgmt.</p> <p>More questions will be expected from the 14 new to USAID and grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grantees will have clarity on GCD program expectations including program reporting</li> <li>• Grantees will understand the linkage to an Area Development Program</li> <li>• Grantees will have an opportunity to have their questions shared and answered.</li> </ul>

TIME	SESSION	LOGISTICS	CONTENT	OUTCOME
11:30-12:00	<p><b>The Importance and Challenges of M &amp; E</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Introduce the overall session and its objectives. Elaborate the importance of validating approaches that impact the bigger shared goal of ACR.</p> <p><b>USAID Speaker:</b> offer some insights on the importance of M&amp;E for these innovation grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Training</li> <li>• Mother Tongue Instruction and Materials</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Engaging Families and Communities</li> <li>• Data</li> </ul> <p>Participants will break into the 5 groups they have signed up for during lunch; continuing themes from the AM session.</p>	<p>Projector PowerPoint</p> <p>Theme Signage for each table.</p> <p>One flip chart and markers for each group.</p> <p>Group selects a scribe.</p> <p>Partners will use information gathered to inform a later partner meeting to discuss and decide on the evaluation questions to be pursued across the life of these grants.</p> <p>During the discussion, the facilitator writes down key ideas and contentious points.</p>	<p><b>M&amp;E for a GCD (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present one GCD slide to determine if GCD approach works and where are successes to scale</li> <li>• Present on the importance of M&amp;E and an overview of the questions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Questions for Groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the gaps in our knowledge about this theme and how will your project address these?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal of the group work:</b> To gather evaluation questions that will help us understand how each theme contributes to improved reading outcomes</p> <p>Grantees gain an understanding of the importance of M&amp;E for the ACR GCD and share a commitment to determine the impact of their efforts on the bigger shared sector and GC goal.</p>
2:30-2:50	<p><b>Parting Thoughts</b></p> <p>The earlier Tweets from the participants at lunch will be displayed on the screen.</p> <p>Two grantees will be selected to provide their observations on the Workshop on week and on the GCD.</p>	<p>AV will display tweets made earlier</p>	<p>The tweets can serve as testimonials on the workshop and how they feel being a part of a GCD</p>	<p>Provide insight into what the participants find valuable about being part of the GCD.</p>
2:50-3:00	<p><b>Farewell and Workshop Closing</b></p>	<p>Plenary</p>	<p>Offer a reflection on the day, sense of what's been achieved, where we've arrived as a group, extend best wishes to grantees implementation, commit to next steps.</p> <p>Discuss what grantees should anticipate next for connecting with USAID, each other, etc. using the GCD platform, website, etc.</p>	<p>Thank you remarks.</p> <p>Logistics about materials collections.</p>



