

Grand Challenges India

Grand Challenges India (GCI), launched in 2012 is the flagship program managed by the PMU at BIRAC for the Department of Biotechnology and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation partnership. It was launched with the aim of directing funding and research to address some of the most daunting health and development challenges we face today in different areas such as maternal and child health, infectious diseases, vaccines, point-of-care diagnostics, agricultural development, food and nutrition, sanitation and hygiene among others.

GCI is committed to seeking and rewarding both established researchers, young entrepreneurs and other innovators, from academia and industry, with the ambition of expanding the pipeline of ideas for developing new preventive and curative therapies, piloting new technologies, and exploring new ideas.

Mandate

The Department of Biotechnology, Government of India and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation under Grand Challenges India seek proposals that address the challenges in immunization data systems in India that are different from current approaches and stretch the frontiers of the programme. The solutions submitted to this challenge may deal with integrated health information, or may focus specifically on immunization only. They should have the potential to be scaled up in multiple settings. We also encourage solutions that translate leading and best practices and solutions developed by the private sector as well as academic research, even from outside health sector.

This call is being launched with technical partnership from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, the Department of Health Research (DHR) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Scope

The overall goal of the program is to conceptualize and demonstrate innovations in data systems for immunization to aid in real-time visibility of consumption and coverage of immunizations. The approach may demonstrate inter-operability with the current health system of the country.

For further details, including details on suggestions of what we are looking for and what we are not, please refer to the detailed Request for Proposal, available on the BIRAC website at www.birac.nic.in

What we are looking for

Proposals must provide a strong rationale for the work proposed, demonstrating a clear understanding of India's context and needs, and present a defined hypothesis and associated plan for how the idea would be tested or validated. Proposed ideas should be potentially translatable to practical interventions in India's immunization programme.

Funding

This Grand Challenges India program will be for developing a Proof-of-concept for solutions.

Grant for developing proof of concept (12-18 months): Funded at up to \$200,000 USD per project, these awards require preliminary data and are meant to provide an opportunity to develop, refine, and rigorously test approaches that have previously shown promise in controlled or limited settings.

There is the possibility of Phase-II funding for 3-4 successful projects from Phase-I

Application instructions

Please visit the BIRAC website at www.birac.nic.in and follow the link to the registration and submission portal.

The application consists of an online form, which needs to be filled online and a Proposal summary, whose format is available on the online form. The Proposal Summary will have to be uploaded on the online portal in PDF form.

Please read the Request for Proposals carefully and ensure your eligibility before applying for the challenge.

Application Process

After an initial triage of the proposals submitted online, review panels established under the Grand Challenges India partnership will evaluate the proposals, after which selected proposals will be invited for presentations. Further selected proposals will require a technical and financial Due Diligence, pending which the final award announcement will be made.

Schedule

- **15th November, 2017:** Call opens
- **15th January, 2018** : Online portal for submissions closes at midnight on 15th January, 2018
- **August, 2018** : Award Announcement

Eligibility

This RFP is India-led; the program is open to academics, research institutions, medical research institutions, for-profit companies, not-for-profit organizations, trusts and foundations.

Grants will be made to researchers and innovators who are Indian individual or Indian entities*, we also encourage partnerships with researchers of national/international expertise.

- An Individual should be a Citizen of India
- Indian entities are defined as those established under any relevant statute, agreement, rule or regulation in India.

CONTACT US
Program Management Unit at BIRAC (PMU-BIRAC)

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council
(A Government of India Enterprise)

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FOR ENQUIRIES

Please email us at: **Mission Director, PMU-BIRAC** at: mdpmubmgf.birac@nic.in or call us at: +91-1124389600
with the subject line: **Grand Challenges India IDIA**

Funding Partners

Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India

The Department of Biotechnology was set up in 1986, making India one of the few countries in the world that has a government body dedicated solely to the advancement of biotechnology to improve the lives of people.

Today, the DBT not only encourages innovation in biotechnology, by funding research organizations and forming strategic partnerships with industry across the country, but also encourages research in social areas such as healthcare, nutrition and food security, environmental sustainability and energy security. DBT also works through international collaborations and partnerships with organizations in multiple countries across the world.

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)

BIRAC was set up by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India as an Interface Agency with the aim of strengthening and empowering emerging Biotech enterprises to facilitate them in undertaking strategic research and innovation that addresses nationally relevant product development needs.

BIRAC functions as an industry-academia interface and implements its mandate through a wide range of impact initiatives, such as by providing access to risk capital through targeted funding, technology transfer, Intellectual Property management and handholding schemes that help bring innovation excellence to biotech firms and make them globally competitive.

Since its inception, BIRAC has initiated several schemes, networks and platforms that help bridge the existing gaps in industry-academia innovation and research, and facilitates novel, high quality affordable products development through cutting edge technologies. BIRAC has initiated partnerships with several national and global partners to participate in various collaborations.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance

to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life.

Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Sue Desmond-Hellmann and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

The foundation's work in India started a decade ago with the purpose of developing a model HIV-prevention program. Since then, its work has expanded to include maternal and child health, health and nutrition services, vaccines and routine immunization, family planning, agricultural development, sanitation, control of infectious diseases, and financial inclusion. Together with its partners, the foundation aims to deliver results none of them could achieve by acting alone.

Implementing Agency

Program Management Unit at BIRAC (PMU-BIRAC)

The Program Management Unit at BIRAC (PMU-BIRAC) was set up under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to bring together global funders with national stakeholders to a single platform, with not only the aim of leveraging funding from these bodies to address some of the greatest challenges we face today, but to also promote best practices, share knowledge among partners, by bringing in international expertise into the country. Since its inception, PMU-BIRAC has been instrumental in managing the jointly funded programs and projects of the partnership, with Grand Challenges India as the flagship program.

PMU-BIRAC is responsible for executing, managing, and providing technical and financial oversight of collaboratively funded projects and initiatives. Currently, the team manages a wide-ranging portfolio of projects that are located across the country.

In 2016, Wellcome Trust UK joined this partnership and PMU-BIRAC provides technical and management support to the Affordable Healthcare in India portfolio of programs of the Trust.

PMU-BIRAC is housed at the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), in New Delhi and is also supported by USAID.

Grand Challenges India



Immunization Data: Innovating for Action

IDIA

Funding Partners



DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY
Ministry of Science and Technology

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

Technical Partners

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Government of India



Implementing organisation

Program Management Unit at BIRAC
A partnership of the Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India,
the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wellcome