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HOUSEHOLD SOLAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Photo Credit: Rachel Couch for Power Africa

These questions and answers are intended as a supplement to the [Call for Proposals](#) and represent clarifying questions submitted via the solarworkforce@ranlab.org email inbox. Additional questions may be submitted to that inbox if the answers are not found in the content below, until the closing date for questions on 29 November 2019. This document will be updated as needed to reflect additional questions asked and answered.

Last updated: 8 November 2019.

1. *Who can apply for the Household Solar Workforce Development funding?*

Companies, nonprofits, and university vocational programs with demonstrated capacity for workforce development in the off-grid solar sector across sub-Saharan Africa. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

2. *How do we submit a project proposal?*

Applications must be submitted through the relevant [online application platform](#). Please carefully read through the guidelines.

3. *Can we submit a proposal in collaboration with another organization(s)?*

Yes. Applicants are encouraged to partner with like-minded organizations. When preparing the application, please include information on the primary applicant, any secondary partners, and a detailed description on the proposed partnership, including roles and responsibilities.

4. *Are applicants from Francophone countries eligible to apply?*

Yes, we encourage applicants supporting the growth of the off-grid market across sub-Saharan Africa, including Francophone and Lusophone countries. However, business proficiency in English is required, as the submitted application, subsequent communication, and reporting between the applicant and USAID/RAN staff will be in English.

5. *When does the funding period start / what is the expected start date?*

Please refer to the timeline on the website and in the Call for Proposals. We expect to make awards in the first half of 2020.

6. *What is the period of performance for this grant?*

As indicated in the Call for Proposals, all project activities must take place within one year of the award.

7. *Would an organization specifically focused on developing female talent and training programs be eligible for this grant award?*

Yes, an organization specifically focused on developing female talent and training programs is eligible under the Challenge.

8. *How many projects does the call anticipate to fund?*

As highlighted in Section 6 of the call, the total grant pool is \$350,000 USD. Depending on the size of each grant, we estimate between 1-3 grants may be awarded, and USAID/RAN reserves the right to determine the number of projects to be funded and the subsequent size of potential grant award(s).

9. *Can you please provide a list of all eligible countries as the countries included within “sub-Saharan Africa” can differ across entities?*

All countries in Africa that are not in North Africa are eligible. North Africa is defined as Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. All other African countries are included in sub-Saharan Africa.

10. *Can we submit more than one proposal per organization? Each proposal would be for different countries.*

Yes. Feel free to submit more than one proposal as long as the models/approaches/innovations are unique/different per country. In case the approach/methods are similar, it is highly encouraged to package it as one proposal and show the multinational operations (e.g. the country specific target groups) to be undertaken during implementation.

11. *Will this project consider workforce development targeting the training of individuals living in refugee camps or the surrounding host communities, also for home solar business/service within refugee camps and surrounding host communities?*

Yes, projects targeting the training of individuals living in refugee camps or the surrounding host communities, and for home solar business/service within refugee camps and surrounding host communities is eligible under the Challenge.

12. *Can organizations include indirect costs (their NICRA) within a project budget?*

Grant funds are for direct programmatic costs associated with the development of a household solar workforce. Please see details on allowed expenditures under Section 4 in the call document.

13. *Is the Household Solar Workforce Development Challenge opportunity available to mini-grid developers?*

This call scope is limited to workforce development programs specific to the household solar sector.

14. *To whom do you need the training to be given?*

The capacity building should focus on the off-grid household solar workforce including but not limited to: household solar company managers, technicians or sales agents.

15. *Is it allowed in the cost breakdown to include allowances for trainees to cover living costs?*

Yes, although we encourage and recommend that the grant be budgeted for direct costs for the capacity building of the household solar workforce. Please refer to Section 5 in the Call for Proposals for details on eligible expenditures, per programmatic regulations.

16. *Do you accept partnerships between SHS suppliers and third-party training providers?*

The primary applicant must be a brand agnostic vocational program that serves the market as a whole. If secondary partnerships are established with specific SHS companies as part of the program pilot, these activities would be considered within scope, but the primary applicant and funding recipient must be to a standalone vocational training provider.

17. *Can a for-profit organization and non-profit organization apply for the same grant as partners?*

Yes. Please see Question #3.