



EvalPartners Innovation Challenge

Strengthening Evaluation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

THEME: Evaluation as an Agile Tool for an Appropriate Response in Uncertain Times

The EvalPartners Innovation Challenge in a snapshot

[EvalPartners](#), received a grant from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland for 2020-2021. The grant helps EvalPartners continue its global engagement to proactively support VOPEs (Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation) by funding a new round of Innovation Challenge Grants.

The grant from Finland MFA also includes supporting the strengthening of national evaluation systems, as well as global evaluation good practice through its Flagship 1 program for strengthening national evaluation capacities. In addition, EvalPartners, with other national and international stakeholders aim to engage in an “**Evidence Matters**” **flagship program** for evaluations in the context of the 2030 Agenda. This will include a global forum in 2021, and a series of preparatory events, bringing together multiple nations and stakeholders to celebrate EvalYear +5 and to generate a new Global Evaluation Agenda (2020-2030).

The **Innovation Challenge** projects focus on innovative approaches to strengthening the enabling environment for evaluation.

EvalPartners defines **innovation challenge** as a process that:

- i) Develops a product, process or service that yields new pathways to enhance an enabling environment for evaluation
- ii) Imaginatively reframes or recombines different points of view and different existing elements for sufficient action or impact,
- iii) Shows potential for implementation and replication
- iv) Is rooted in a methodology or process, and;
- v) Accounts and accommodates for risks and potential unintended consequences.

Innovation Challenge objective:

The objective of this round of innovation challenges is *to innovate local and national solutions to promote evaluation as an agile tool for an appropriate response in uncertain times*; including the current global pandemic caused by **COVID19**. EvalPartners seek proposals that develop products, processes and/ or solutions for enhancing enabling environment for evaluation, promoting evidence in public policymaking and decisions, and strengthening evaluation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To achieve the objective, the projects can consider following but not limited to:

- a) **Creating coalitions of evaluation champions:** for example, using regional parliamentary networks and think-tanks, and academic institutions to drive collaborative development and adoption of national evaluation policies in the ODA-eligible countries.
- b) **Creating peer pressure on decision-makers:** for example, working on an index measuring the status of evaluation use at project/ program as well as national and sub-national levels and allow compare and rank agencies at sub-national, national and regional levels
- c) **Creating action:** for example, the project “Evaluations that Make a Difference: Stories from Around the World” is collecting short stories from around the world about evaluations that have made a difference.
- d) **Innovating Products, Solutions and/or Services:** Creation of products, tools, guidelines and toolkits that promote the use of locally adapted methods and approaches to promote evaluation as an agile tool for an appropriate response in uncertain times; or evaluation in the context of COVID19 and global pandemics, and; use of evaluation as evidence in policymaking and decision making, and in evaluation of the SDGs.

It is worth mentioning that **Innovation Challenge ideas** often become the backbone for wider projects and programs.

This innovation challenge is about promoting **“Evaluation as an agile tool for an appropriate response in uncertain times”**. The current global pandemic caused by COVID19 has been a great challenge to the development, it caused severe economic recessions and could drag millions of people to poverty.

Evaluation and use of evidence in policy and decision making are crucial at these times; and evaluation has a great potential to support creating better, and to driving progress towards the SDGs.

Due to the limited timeframe (6 months), and the limited budget (up to 10,000 USD), EvalPartners will privilege out-of-the-box, agile and quick turnaround actions in response to this call.

EvalPartners is particularly interested in encouraging ideas that bring stakeholders together across national boundaries and in particular collaborative bids which involve both evaluators and users of evaluation outputs.

Eligibility:

Only Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) from ODA-eligible countries which can be a national or regional evaluation association or society can apply for this call as long as they are registered in the online IOCE VOPE Directory. It is expected that they will partner with not-for-profit organizations, governmental, non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, academic institutions and private sector organizations with an interest in and/or mandate for evidence-based policy making and evaluation of the SDGs. This might include as well cooperative partnerships with VOPEs, academia and think tanks from non-ODA-eligible countries. The proposals can also include EvalPartners Networks where relevant.

Process and criteria for the Innovation Challenge:

Process

Interested applicants shall submit the entry form (**Annex I**) with a simple project proposal of no more than 1,000 words describing the innovative idea for promoting evaluation as an agile tool for an appropriate response in uncertain times; such as the current global pandemic; and to strengthening evaluation of the SDGs, and use of evidence. **VOPEs are expected to provide information on objectives, key activities, expected outputs and outcomes, and including a detailed budget of up to 10,000 USD.** The proposed project activities could be started from **October 1, 2020** and should be

completed by **March 31, 2021**. It is expected that two winners will be selected and awarded up to 10,000 USD each to implement their project.

Selection

All eligible entries received during the Entry Period will be screened by a special EvalPartners' review committee for completeness and adherence to the Challenge Objective.

Table 1: The criteria to judge the entries are as following:

Criteria		Max Points	Proposed range of points to be given			
1	Relevance of the project to Innovation Challenge theme	30	Excellent (30-22)	Good (21-15)	Adequate (14-8)	Poor (7-0)
2	Feasibility and internal coherence	20	Excellent (20-15)	Good (14-10)	Adequate (9-5)	Poor (4-0)
3	Probable sustainability of changes created by the project	20	Excellent (20-15)	Good (14-10)	Adequate (9-5)	Poor (4-0)
4	Spark (degree of innovation in the idea and its originality)	30	Excellent (30-22)	Good (21-15)	Adequate (14-8)	Poor (7-0)

How to apply

Kindly send the completed **annex 1** (Entry form) to coordinator@evalpartners.org with copy to lynn@ioce.net

The deadline for the submission of the entry form is **Monday, August 31 2020, midnight GMT**. Winners will be announced by **September 25, 2020**. **All winning projects must be completed by March 31, 2021**. In case of some formal and justified delays (bank transfers, finding appropriate experts, COVID19 situation, etc.), the grants could receive a no-cost extension.

EvalPartners will award a grant of up to US \$10,000 each to a maximum of 2 winners. No grants will be awarded to individuals. EvalPartners reserves the right, in its sole discretion, not to award a grant to any of the proposals it receives. Grant contracts will be managed by the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE).

Applications should include:

- The signature of the main applicant
- Letters of endorsement from each party to the projects, including the managing VOPE
- The bank account details should be readily available once the selection is announced (not necessary to submit with the proposal)

Tips for budgeting

Grants cannot be used to cover salaries and expert fees of VOPE staff/ members, purchase of equipment, e.g. computers and IT equipment, and rent of offices for VOPE secretariats. No administrative fees can be included in the project budget.

-bank transfer fees can be included, for which documentation is needed.

Partners are not allowed to benefit financially from the grant.

Although workshops, seminars are popular interventions, there may be more innovative activities to maximize results. Also, the interventions should generate valuable knowledge products and/or benefit more people/organizations. Use of virtual opportunities for sharing at the international level would be cost effective. Priority will be given to innovative and sustainable interventions.

Support to Applicants

EvalPartners will organize a **pre-applications webinar** for potential VOPE applicants on **August 14, 2020 at 10:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) / 2PM GMT** to answer any questions related to this call, and provide more contexts on the purpose and objectives of the Innovation Challenge projects. Recording of the webinar will be shared for applicants who may not be able to attend. **Registration is required** for the pre-applications webinar. Please [register by clicking here](#)

Please direct any questions to Samandar Mahmodi at coordinator@evalpartners.org with copy to Lynn Burgess at lynn@ioce.net