UK Aid Direct full application webinar for shortlisted applicants

Questions and answers

Application process

Can you apply for a Small Charities Challenge Fund (SCCF) grant whilst also completing a UK Aid Direct full application?
Yes, you can submit an application for an SCCF grant whilst also applying for a UK Aid Direct grant. Applications for the latest SCCF funding round close on 24 September at 17:00. Please note: you can only hold a maximum of five live UK Aid Direct grants at any one time.

How many Community Partnership and Impact grants are likely to be funded in this round?
There is no set number of grants that will be funded. It will instead be determined by a number of factors including the quality of the full applications received.

Can we use answers from the concept note that were not copied over to the full application? Some of our answers were copied over, some weren't.
Most questions in the full application differ to the concept note stage, hence not all your concept note answers appear in the full application. You can certainly build on answers submitted during concept note stage, and we would also recommend that you take on board the technical feedback provided.

How do we access the slides from this webinar?
The slides and recording of the session are available on the website.

Some of the answers from our concept note appear in the full application but are locked. Can we change these answers?
Responses for locked questions can be changed. To do so, you will need to send the amended answer to ukaiddirect@manniondaniels.com with a rationale for the change. You will also need to ensure that the new answer is within the character limit. The team will then confirm if this is acceptable and make the change for you.

Up until when, can we send questions relating to our full application?
You can contact ukaiddirect@manniondaniels.com with full application questions up until the deadline at 17:00 pm (UK time) on Tuesday 22 September. We would encourage you to ask questions as early as possible however, during the application window to give yourself sufficient time to make any changes.

Our organisation's email address has changed. How do we change this on the application portal?

If your log in details - including your email address or the primary contact person with access to the application portal (SMILE) changes - please contact ukaiddirect@manniondaniels.com quoting your application's reference number.

Should we expect future budget cuts on the amount awarded in light of the current economic situation? Or has the projected 25% budget cut for current projects already been calculated within the total grant amount awarded regarding this Community Partnership and Impact grant round?

At this stage, reductions to this funding round are not planned. It should be noted however, that given the likely economic outlook, further reductions may be required in later years.

We are awaiting due diligence outcome for another UK Aid Direct grant. Can we hold two grants at the same time?

Organisations can only hold a maximum of two live grants of the same grant type at any one time.

How long will it take for grants to be set up after notification in December?

It is planned that applicants will be notification on the outcome of the application process in December 2020. Following this, a full due diligence process will be required for all shortlisted organisations. Further information on this process is available on the UK Aid Direct website (opens in a new window).

Following successful completion of the due diligence process, provisional grant holders undertake a grant set-up process. This involves addressing 'special conditions' from the due diligence process and a review of project design documentation with the UK Aid Direct team. More information on the grant set-up process is available on the UK Aid Direct website (opens in a new window). The length of this process varies significantly between organisations, related to several criteria such as the number of special conditions to be addressed and the extent to contextual changes in the project locality.

Due diligence

The full application includes a request for identification documents including passports. We have some concerns around confidentiality. Are we able to provide basic details at this stage, for example full name, date of birth, and nationality?

Please rest assured that the application portal is secure to upload copies of such documents. If you have concerns, please provide full name, date of birth and nationality instead. Please note though that if you are successful, you will need to provide these documents during the due diligence stage and a member of our fiduciary risk team may contact you for further information if required during the full application review period.

Would submitting a citizenship card in a local language be sufficient if the individual does not have a passport?
Yes, that would be acceptable to submit.

Due to COVID-19 we have given up our office whilst the team work from home. Is it OK to change our registered address to one of our Trustees instead?
Yes, that is fine. Please send details of the change, along with your application's reference number to ukaiddirect@manniondaniels.com.

What is meant by physical evidence of the organisation's premises? Is a rent contract or a utility bill sufficient evidence?
A rent contract or lease would be an acceptable proof of address. If your organisation is permanently or temporarily based at a residential address, a utility bill or bank statement addressed to the organisation at this address is acceptable as proof of address.

The Egyptian law does not require having a board for an affiliate non-government organisation. Do we present the personnel details from the headquarters?
Yes, please share the details for the headquarters. If successful, during due diligence this will be explored further.

Can we refer trustees to the General Data Protection Registration (GDPR) notice on the UK Aid Direct website, with regards to how their data will be used beyond the due diligence check?
All personal data submitted as part of this application is handled in accordance with our privacy policy **(opens in a new window).**

We do not have a Deputy Chair on our management committee. Can we leave this section blank in the application?
Yes, if you have no Deputy Chair you can leave this section blank.

Technical questions

What is the difference between root causes and drivers?
The root causes relate to source (or cause) of the problem (which could be direct or indirect), whilst drivers are factors that perpetuate the problem. Both should be considered when conducting problem analysis.

Do you encourage additional consultation at the beginning of the project, or should it all have been concluded prior to the start?
Yes, consultation should be an ongoing activity designed into all elements of the project. It is important that applicants present strong approaches to adaptive management based on ongoing consultation.

Regarding question 4.2: 'Explain whether your project is an existing project that has been designed to pivot to respond to COVID-19 or whether it is a new project that has been designed specifically to respond to COVID-19'; what if it is a mixture?
As this is a text-based question, please outline in your response that your project is a mixture, whilst also explaining exactly how your project will address the impacts of COVID-19.

Regarding question 4.2; what do you mean by "to pivot to respond"?
In such cases you would be pivoting activities away from an existing project, and adapting them in order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic

In the case of a partnership project, do you need just the lead partner's Theory of Change or both partners?
The Theory of Change should be specific to your proposed project, and not the organisational Theory of Change of the proposed grant holder or that of their downstream partner(s). This should be developed in collaboration with any implementing partners.

Can additional downstream/implementing partners be engaged at this stage?
Yes, they can. That said, rationale for engaging new implementing partners at this stage will need to be provided. You should send your rationale by email to ukaiddirect@manniondaniels.com along with the details of the new implementing partners.

How much can the outputs/activities be amended from the concept note?
Whilst outputs and activities can be amended from the concept note, you will need to provide a clear rationale for making such changes.

Our responses to disability inclusion, gender equality, value for money and beneficiary feedback mechanism do not appear in the full application form. Should we use the same answers from the concept note?
The wording for these questions has changed at full application stage so we would recommend that you review these and revise your answers from the concept note accordingly, whilst also taking on board any relevant technical feedback you received.

What is the difference between 4.1: What evidence do you have that this is the most effective and appropriate approach and **4.10: What lessons have you used from your previous work, or that of others, in designing this approach?**
Question 4.1 looks to understand the evidence supporting why you have selected this approach to address the identified problem. This may come from primary or secondary sources, outlining why the approach is more appropriate. For instance, credible secondary data may indicate that there is a high prevalence of child stunting in the region which has been addressed in the neighbouring state through a similar approach as proposed.

Question 4.10 however, looks to understand how the project design has been informed by lessons from other programming work. For instance, having previously delivered similar interventions in a similar context, you may have learnt that it is best to engage men and boys in discussions on gender equality to address barriers faced by women in entering employment.

Do you expect the assumptions to be represented on the Theory of Change diagram, or can we upload additional text to describe the Theory of Change in detail? Is there a template Theory of Change?
There is no set template for the Theory of Change though guidance is available on the fund website (opens in a new window). You may upload additional text to describe the Theory of Change or include it in the diagram.

Do we need to submit a workplan?
No, at full application stage you do not need to submit a workplan.

Is it acceptable to provide percentage estimates for the requested breakdown of direct beneficiaries?
Yes, it is possible to provide reasonable estimates.

If successful, would we have to disaggregate data in reporting according to the categories in Q6.4?
All beneficiary data must be disaggregated by sex and disability status at a minimum. Further disaggregation's including beneficiary age, geographic locale, and other key population characteristics are strongly encouraged.

Regarding disaggregation by gender and disability; is this a requirement across all indicators (and baselines), or is it acceptable that we provide for some but not necessarily all depending on existence of data?
Please provide disaggregated data according to what data you have available.

What should we do if our beneficiaries fit into more than one population group in Q6.4? Should we count them multiple times?
The question is asking for the total number of primary beneficiaries in each population group. If a beneficiary fits into more than one group, please include them in each group's total.

At full application stage we need to provide the number of indirect beneficiaries. If successful, during reporting do we need to report on indirect beneficiaries and if so, are these just estimated?
Yes, successful organisations will be required to report on indirect beneficiaries. The approach to this would be discussed and agreed during the grant set-up stage. **Is it necessary to do the needs assessment at community level again as a part the full application?**

It is expected that you have already undertaken a needs assessment as part of preparation for the concept note. It is not required to undertake one again although if useful in further developing the project this is encouraged.

Is it seen as favourable if we select more than one UK Government priority areas (Q6.1)?
No preference will be given to projects which align with more than one FCDO priority area. Please only select one(s) that are relevant to your project.

For the short biography of the in-country team leader, should we provide the country office leader or the project team leader?
You should provide the biography of the relevant person who will be managing the proposed project.

Can we have two in-county team leaders?
Yes, you can have two in-country team leaders. You should provide biographies for both.

Q7.2 requires a biography for the in-country team leader. We also have a UK team leader; should we include their biography? What should this biography include?
You should only provide the biography of the person who will manage the project in country. The biography should demonstrate, using facts and figures, their previous success in delivering a similar project. If this person is not yet in place, it is acceptable to upload a short job description to demonstrate the type and level of experience you will be looking to hire.

Our project is delivered across four countries. Should we split the character count between leads in each of the four countries?
If you are working across multiple countries you should outline the lead for each individual country. However, please note that the character limit remains the same.

Can we change the target area(s) that the project will be delivered in?
The concept note was assessed based on the contextual analysis provided. At this stage we would not expect the location that the project is being implemented in to change.

For Q4.9 "How will you ensure that the rights and voices of beneficiaries have been strengthened as a result of the project? How will this lead to greater accountability?" Do you mean greater accountability of the implementer (us), or greater accountability of powerful actors in general (like government)?
Applicants are expected to work to strengthen the rights and voices of target beneficiaries in order to generate greater accountability within communities. This relates to accountability to the project and wider accountability. Applicants are encouraged to focus on strengthening accountability beyond the project lifecycle. You should outline what mechanisms and approaches you will put in place to capture and respond to feedback and how beneficiary accountability will be strengthened.

Are you expecting to just see one graph displaying one indicator, or one graph displaying multiple indicators, or multiple graphs?
The graph is intended to illustrate the key changes expected as part of the project. Applicants must consider the most appropriate elements of the project to illustrate, this may be more than one graph is required but it is recommended that applicants focus on one or two key priorities for the proposed project. Please refer to the guidance (opens in a new window) for further information.

Is it anticipated that the baseline is led internally or independent?
The baseline can be conducted internally. It is expected that the final evaluation is conducted independently.

Can we budget for a baseline if the actual numbers are not available?
Yes, in such cases credible estimates should be included in the budget.

Considering COVID-19, is there a possibility to collect data with reduced confidence levels and intervals to minimise social contact.
We appreciate the challenge that COVID-19 poses in terms of collecting meaningful data. To the best of your ability you should ensure credible data is collected whilst maintaining safe social distancing which follows local government guidelines.

There is a question on digital technology in the application form. Please elaborate on this.
This question is for monitoring and compliance purposes only and is not scored. Please indicate whether your project plans to develop and use digital technology in any way, and if so, please explain how you will do so, and why. This will not impact the assessment criteria.

We will be providing over the counter 'medical' supplies to our beneficiaries. Would our implementing partners need licences?
If procurement or distribution of medicines is taking place, you would need to ensure that you or your implementing partner(s) obtain any mandatory medicines licence prior to implementation. Further information will be provided to shortlisted organisations.

Budget

Do we have to include non-project attributable costs (NPAC) in the budget at this stage?
NPAC should be included within the full application budget, and thus within the value of funding being requested, if the applicant is looking to claim NPAC under the project.

In your feedback you suggested our staff costs seemed "high" and justification should be provided. Is justification enough or do we need to reduce these costs to improve our chance of success? Do you have a percentage that is considered acceptable?
There is no guidance on a specific acceptable percentage as this would vary depending on the

type of project and the context in which it is being delivered. If you feel you have sufficient justification for these costs then you should provide this, otherwise it would be recommended that such costs are reconsidered.

Should we budget for an independent evaluation?
You should include appropriate and realistic costs for an independent evaluation in your budget.

Should non-project attributable costs (NPAC) be calculated separately for each implementing partner, using their annual accounts?
We advise that the NPAC calculation is undertaken for each implementing partner to ensure a transparent and consistent approach to determine contributions to overheads. These should be completed on separate templates, with each partner's NPAC shown on a separate budget line.

Will all partners in an informal consortium be expected to fill in the NPAC tab or is it applicable to the lead organisation only?
The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) expects lead organisations to apply the same methodology and eligibility criteria for calculating allowable NPAC for all consortium partners. Consortium partners must complete their NPAC on a separate template and provide this to the lead organisation to collate the information. The lead organisation should identify the NPAC for each consortium partner as separate budget lines.

Do we need to break down each project activity between the cost included? For example, do we need to break our meeting costs between refreshment, travel and accommodation or should one budget line should be used for each activity?
The project activities sub-heading can be broken down by activity, rather than by individual costs. Please ensure budget notes are provided, which give details on the use of funding, including an indication of unit costs.

On the budget, is there any guidance on the variance allowed in the budget total from concept note and full application?
There is no specific guidance for this. Any changes in the budget total from concept note to full application must be justifiable.

If the budget amount slightly changes from the concept note stage, is that allowed?
The overall budget request for FCDO funding cannot change however changes within the budget are permitted. Any change must be justifiable.

We didn't complete NPAC at concept note stage, can we include it in the full application stage?
Yes, NPAC can be included at full application stage.

At concept note stage, match funding was included from 1 January 2021. If match funding is reduced at full application stage, will that be a problem?
Whilst match funding is encouraged it is not mandatory for this funding round. Any changes in match funding can be reflected within the full application budget and narrative.

Can we increase the match funding contributions from other sources at this stage?
Yes, the value of match funding can be increased at full application stage.

Is there any percentage allocation for monitoring and evaluation?
There no set percentage allocation for monitoring and evaluation costs. Such costs must be appropriate for the project, reasonable and demonstrate value for money.

If we have advocacy and evidence as a specific output, the costs would go under activities rather than monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) which makes it look like we are underbudgeting for MEL (3% in our budget). Can we revise the budget for final proposal?
If costs could sit in under multiple sub-headings (such as the example provided) please make this clear in the budget note.

Can we add baseline costs into our budget at full application stage?
Yes, costs excluded from the concept note can be added to the full application budget, but the overall requested value must remain the same.

What information needs to be included under each budget line?
Budget line narrative should be appropriate to the needs of the grant holder and present a level of granularity to assess the reasonableness of cost type.