

Humanitarian Innovation Fund Frequently Asked Questions

1. General Information

1.1 What is an innovation?

As outlined in ALNAP's study:

"Innovations are dynamic processes which focus on the creation and implementation of new or improved products and services, processes, positions and paradigms. Successful innovations are those that result in improvements in efficiency, effectiveness, quality or social outcomes/impacts. They consist of 5 broadly defined stages: recognition, invention, development, implementation and diffusion."

1.2 Is it enough that my proposal is a "new or improved product or service, process, position or paradigm"?

No. Novelty on its own is not a virtue, and innovations should clearly have the potential to improve operational humanitarian performance.

1.3 Can you provide further guidance points on innovations?

- Innovations also suggest fresh thinking, novel combinations, creation of added value to humanitarian aid and affected populations
- Although innovation and technology are often linked, they are not synonymous, and the adoption of new technology is not sufficient
- The cross-application of established ideas or technologies into humanitarian settings is not in itself innovative
- Not all innovations are of the same magnitude, and the transaction costs of an innovation must be commensurate with its potential impact
- While innovation suggests fresh/creative thinking, it also implies a rigorous approach to the creation and testing process

1.4 What types of innovation exist?

Innovations can be one of 4 types:

- Product or Service
- Process
- Position
- Paradigm

More information on the 4Ps model can be [found here](#):

1.5 What are the five stages of innovation?

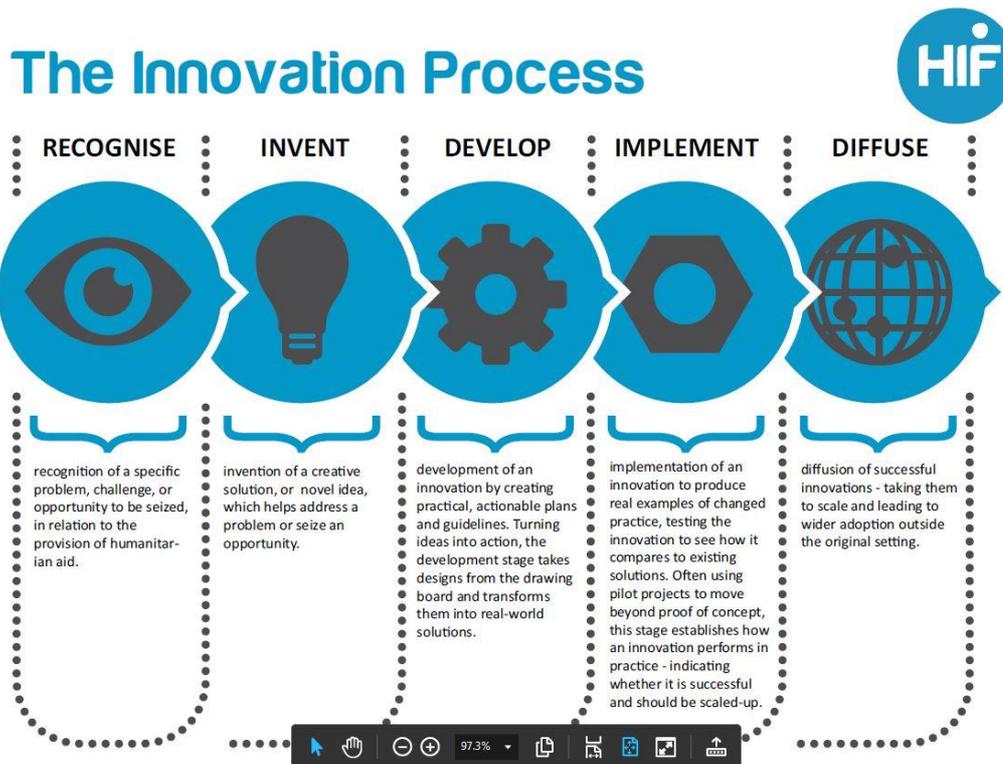
The five stages of innovation are:

1. **Recognition** of a problem, a challenge, or an obstacle to be overcome; with a corresponding opportunity for innovation.
2. **Invention** of a solution, or an idea, which helps to address the problem or seize the opportunity.

3. **Development** of the innovation by creating practical, actionable plans and guidelines.
4. **Implementation** of the innovation to produce real instances of changed practice, often initially using pilots and then scaling up promising innovations.
5. **Diffusion** of the innovation leading to its wider adoption, outside the original setting. This might include various formal and informal communication channels, and may involve the original innovation being continually developed and refined.

1.6 What type of projects will be funded?

The HIF will fund innovations that are at any of the 5 stages in the innovation process: 1-recognition, 2-invention, 3-development, 4-implementation and 5-diffusion (note: Diffusion grants are only open to application by previously successful HIF grantees) and that will contribute to improving the relevance, appropriateness, coverage, efficiency and/or effectiveness of humanitarian aid relative to existing practices.



1.7 What type of humanitarian interventions are targeted by the HIF?

The definition used for humanitarian aid is taken from [Global Humanitarian Assistance](#). This excludes any long-term development assistance. The definition provides some useful examples of traditional responses to humanitarian crises:

- Material relief assistance and services (shelter, water, medicines etc.)
- Emergency food aid (short-term distribution and supplementary feeding programmes)
- Relief coordination, protection and support services (coordination, logistics and communications)
- Reconstruction relief and rehabilitation (repairing pre-existing infrastructure as opposed to longer-term activities designed to improve the level of infrastructure)

- Disaster prevention and preparedness (disaster risk reduction, early warning systems, contingency stocks and planning)

1.8 Does the HIF also target long term development innovations?

No. The HIF exclusively supports innovations within a humanitarian response setting.

1.9 How much funding can I apply for?

1.10 Can my project be located anywhere?

Yes. There is no geographic restriction as to the project location. Note however that the HIF will only support innovation in a humanitarian response setting as per the definition at:

<http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/data-guides/defining-humanitarian-aid>

2. Eligibility

2.1 Do I need to be registered in the UK to be able to apply?

No. There is no geographic restriction as to the origin of an applicant.

2.2 Does my organisation have to provide any contribution to the project cost?

No, however the matched contributions are seen as a positive indication of an organisation's commitment to an idea and its potential benefit.

2.3 Our organisation was only set up last year. Can we still apply?

If you cannot present signed audited financial statements and reports, we may need other information to satisfy us that you are able to manage the innovation grant.

2.4 Can you help me identify a relevant partner to collaborate with?

For those seeking potential partners from either the academic or humanitarian community or those already working in a consortium or partnership, we offer support for building effective partnerships such as bespoke partnership workshops. Please see our [effective partnerships website](#) for more detail.

3. The Proposal

3.1 Can my organisation submit more than one proposal?

Yes. You can submit up to 2 Development and Implementation proposals as a lead (or single) applicant per round. We ask you to please coordinate within your organisation so that no more than two are submitted, if your organisation does submit more than two applications at Expression of Interest stage it is your organisation that must choose which two are to be submitted and which to withdraw. You can also be part of any number of consortia applying to the HIF.

Applications to the Early Stage Innovation facility will not count towards the maximum application allowance. You can submit any number of applications to this facility.

3.2 I applied in the previous round for the implementation and development facility and was invited to submit a full proposal. Do I need to re-submit an Expression of Interest for this round?

Yes. Even if you were invited to submit a full proposal, we would kindly ask you to resubmit an Expression of Interest.

3.3 Can I send my proposal in any language

No. Proposals have to be written in English.

3.4 Can I send a proposal by post?

No, we do not accept applications by post.

3.5 Do I have to use the online application system?

Yes; we will only review applications made online. We are no longer accepting applications by email.

3.6 Can I have some help with regard to the online application system?

If you have any questions about using the online application system, please contact the Common Grant Application directly. Their contact information can be found by going to <http://www.commongrantapplication.com> and clicking on the [contact](#) button.

3.7 What information is expected to be collected and analysed throughout the project?

It is important that grantees address two areas related to information collection and analysis.

- (1) Monitoring and reporting on the project deliverables and systems, answering questions about the progression of the project on an output level.
- (2) Establishing an approach to make evidentially robust statements about the performance of the innovation (and particularly how the innovation compares with current practice).

The Grants Panel will look for evidence that both areas have been addressed in the proposal. The extent to which the project team is seen as capable of effectively delivering on the project activities on time and to budget will be assessed under the 'feasibility' criteria. The 'approach / methodology' criteria will be used by the Grants Panel to assess the way in which the project plans to collect credible evidence of the innovation's performance, and in particular how this will be measured against existing practice (this will include an assessment of the appropriateness of the chosen criteria against which performance will be measured).

3.8 Is there any further guidance on allowable costs?

With regards to non-eligible costs / eligible costs, there are a number of budget items which we do not allow:

- Land purchase
- Property purchase or construction costs
- Major capital expenditure
- Inflation must not be included as a standalone, separate budget line
- Core costs (both UK and overseas): these are costs which are not directly related to the implementation of the project, e.g. costs for staff and office rent beyond what can be associated with the project
- Contingencies
- Depreciation: this is a book-keeping transaction rather than an actual cost and must not be included
- Debt repayment



- Pre-project implementation costs i.e. any costs which you have incurred in preparing the proposal e.g. design costs, baseline surveys etc.
- For Large Grant Proposals only a maximum of 7% of direct costs can be claimed as overheads

4. Application Process

4.1 What happens to my proposal once I've submitted it online?

You will receive an automatically generated email from the common grant application system confirming receipt and providing a reference number.

4.2 When will I receive a decision on my proposal?

All process outline documents are downloadable of the funding section on the HIF website and provided on the common grant application site.

The Implementation and Development facility is a two stage application process initially submitting an Expression of Interest then invited to submitting a Full Application if invited. It has a full review timeline of 6 months. Details of the process can be found on the [funding pages](#) of the HIF website.

The Early Stage Innovation facility is a one stage application process open throughout the year. The review timeline can be found at the bottom of the Recognition and Invention pages of the HIF website.

4.3 Can I appeal if my proposal is unsuccessful?

ELRHA works hard to ensure that grant making takes place in a fair, consistent and transparent way. You can complain if you think that we have made mistakes or not followed the procedures in our application process.

An individual or organisation can make a complaint about

- the decision making or application processes
- our management of a grant

Organisations may be disappointed if we turn down a funding application but you cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against a decision on a grant if we have followed the decision making process correctly.

4.4 What happens if my proposal is accepted?

The HIF team will contact you to clarify any outstanding questions. We will also undertake a due diligence review of your organisation, which could include a visit to your office, prior to funding being agreed. All offers of support will remain provisional until the grant arrangement is signed. We may withdraw our offer of support at any time based on the findings of the review or if any outstanding issues are unable to be resolved.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@humanitarianinnovation.org