



GRANTS TO SUPPORT GRASSROOTS INNOVATION SCOUTING FOR YOUNG AFRICA INNOVATES (YAI) PROGRAMME

1st CALL FOR PROPOSALS – CENTRAL, WESTERN AND WESTERN NORTH REGIONS

A: SUMMARY INFORMATION ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) [Strategic Plan](#) (2022-2025) embraces the complexity of development and commits the organization to help countries find faster, more durable solutions to development trends like urbanization and climate change, which are presenting new and complex challenges. UNDP has been rolling out strategic initiatives to ensure it is 'fit for purpose' to help countries to find solutions to these challenges. In Ghana, youth unemployment is one of these challenges. Despite investments by government, private sector, civil society and others to create employment opportunities, significant problems remain. Some young Ghanaians have innovative solutions to the country's development challenges but struggle to develop and leverage these solutions to unlock economic opportunities and create employment.

Young people (aged 15-35) constitute 38% of the population, but about 25% of them are not in employment, education or training. Women and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) face particular difficulties in securing employment. Entrepreneurship by the youth is one route out of unemployment, but about 74% of Ghanaian start-ups fail (the African average is about 50%), often due to the lack of systems and pathways to develop and scale-up.

To support youth-based innovation and entrepreneurship, UNDP with funding from Mastercard Foundation is implementing a [Young Africa Innovates \(YAI\) Programme](#) to generate, select and scale innovative youth-led solutions, which should contribute to employment and strengthen the innovation ecosystem. There is a particular focus on young people, particularly targeting those who do not usually benefit from traditional innovation initiatives (atypical actors), and marginalized young people including women, persons living in rural communities, and persons with disabilities. The programme will utilize a low-value grant model to stimulate innovation and scale up impact towards inclusive development.

The [YAI programme](#) aims to engage over 5,000 innovators across Ghana. These will be individuals actively working on innovative solutions and will facilitate the rapid validation, testing, and scaling of more than 500 unique solutions.

To reach out to these atypical youth, women and marginalized individuals from the grassroots, UNDP is launching this call for proposals from qualified Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) or Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) to assist with the scouting of grassroots innovators in the Central, Western and Western North Regions of Ghana. The



successful organizations should have strong grassroots community mobilization experience, project management skills; relevant work experience (including with the grassroots communities and often marginalised groups such as youth, women, rural communities and PWDs) and fair understanding of Ghana’s start-up and entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The United Nations Development Programme is announcing this call for proposals to award low-value grants to locally registered Non-Governmental organizations, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and community groups. The 2024 grant award seeks to:

- i. Inspire and promote innovative solutions at the grassroots level across the three (3) regions.
- ii. Systematically develop capacity and platforms among local communities, civil society groups, and other stakeholders as a key driver of innovation;

This Programme aims to cover the following regions:

- Central
- Western and
- Western North

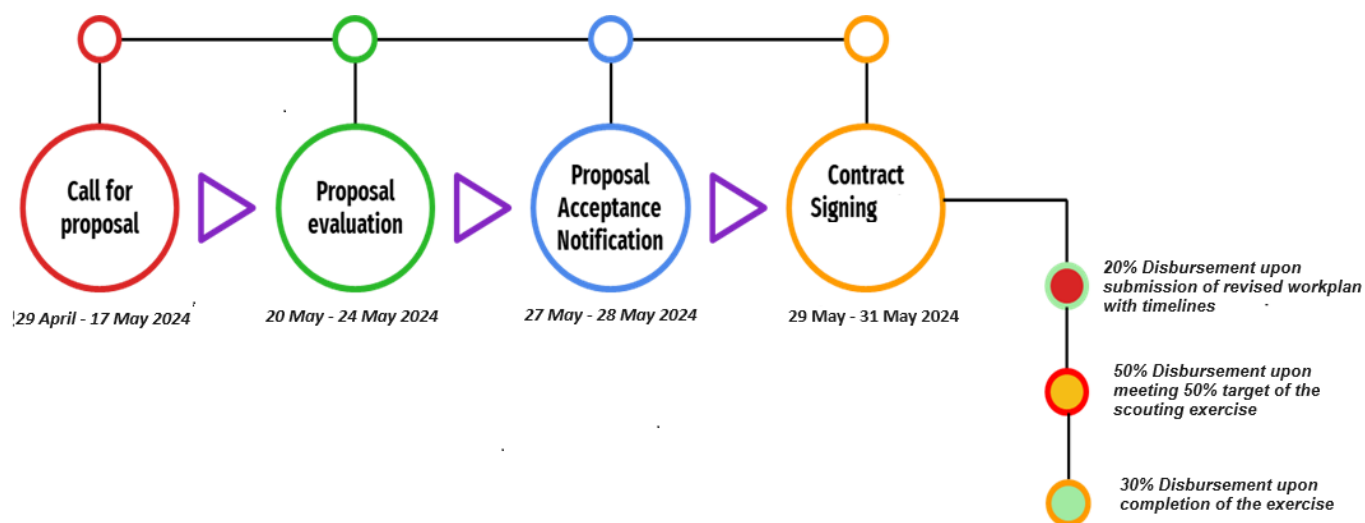
The table below shows the breakdown of expected innovators in each region:

Regions	Expected Number of Innovators to Scout
Central	200
Western	200
Western North	200

B: THE APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

The proposal submission is the first step of the application process to the Grants Programme. The process to be followed for a successful grant award with UNDP, and subsequent fund disbursements is as illustrated below:

1. Call for Proposal
2. Proposal Evaluation (Desk Review of Proposals and Interviews)
3. Proposal Acceptance and Notification
4. Contract Signing
 - 20% disbursement upon signing of contract/submission of inception report with revised workplan and timelines.
 - 50% disbursement upon meeting 50% of the targeted number of innovators for scouting.
 - 30% disbursement upon completion of the project, including recruiting 100% of the targeted numbers of innovators and a final report which is accepted by UNDP.



Proposal Submission: Interested and qualified applicants (duly registered and legally recognised associations, NGOs, CSOs, CBOs), can download, complete and submit the application form and proposal template available at the UNDP website.

The exercise is expected to scout innovators from only the three regions (Central/ Western/ Western North). **Organizations are to submit a proposal for only one region.** Each intervention proposal submitted should target not less than 200 beneficiary innovators to be scouted from either Central Region, Western Region, or Western North Region with at least 70% of the scouted innovators being females and 30% males, and representation of innovators who are PWDs and also innovators from rural communities. All submissions should be made before the deadline stated in this call for applications and accompanying guidelines. UNDP will conduct a preliminary review of the proposals using the criteria below:

CRITERIA FOR PRELIMINARY REVIEW	SCORE
Forms fully completed	Pass/Fail
Strong grassroots community mobilization experience with groups such as youth, women, rural communities and PWDs involved in innovations with the potential to score highly on value, impact and scale	Pass/Fail
Fair understanding of Ghana’s start-up and entrepreneurial Eco-system	Pass/Fail
Good Project Management Skills	Pass/Fail

1. **Proposal Evaluation:** Only applications that are awarded ‘Pass’ in the criteria above will be fully assessed by an evaluation panel made of personnel from UNDP. The proposal is a detailed document which, amongst other things, will highlight in much greater detail:

- how the project will be implemented in terms of activities and proposed timelines;
- how the project will address the challenges identified in the sector;



- how the project will promote innovative solutions at the grassroots level, as a catalytic measure to systematically develop capacity and platforms among local communities, civil society groups, and other stakeholders for innovation;
- and provide a detailed financial proposal.

The criteria for the full evaluation including scores per question is clearly defined in the application form.

Only proposals assessed with a minimum score of 70 out of 100 will qualify to the next stage.

2. **Proposal Acceptance Notice:** An applying entity will be informed at this stage of the successful selection of their proposal based on the outcome of the proposal evaluation. The successful entity shall at this stage, be invited to present to a team of experts, the key highlights of the proposal including drawing out linkages to the SDGs. From this exercise, personnel of UNDP will finally select the convincing proposal(s). As part of the process to select successful application(s), UNDP will conduct a due diligence assessment of entities under consideration.
3. **Contract:** A contract will be signed between UNDP and the selected entities. Please note that first payment of 20% will be made after contract has been signed, and a revised satisfactory workplan and inception report have been submitted. The next 50% payment will be based on accepted proof of scouting of 50% of the targeted number of innovators. The final tranche of 30% funds will be transferred upon satisfactory completion of the scouting exercise meeting the targeted number and a positive review by UNDP.
4. **Reporting:** The contracted entity will periodically monitor and report on all activities undertaken to UNDP as part of the contract signed with UNDP.

C: THE INTERVENTION

The Grants Programme will award grants to:

The adjudged best business case(s) to effectively scout for grassroots innovators whose innovations are poised to excel in adding value, impacting communities, scaling to expand their reach among other criteria. The entity should have a good management structure; clearly identified geographical areas of interventions; should have identified the number of groups targeted and total number of individuals to be impacted; and should lead in bringing onboard innovators that fit the criteria of the YAI programme.

D: ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS

Applications must be submitted by duly registered and legally recognised entities; including associations, NGOs, CSOs and CBOs. Applying entities must have a solid management team, demonstrate strong evidence of credibility and experience in working with grassroots innovation.

To qualify for the grant award, the applicant must:

- be a non-governmental or non-profit organization with legal mandate to operate in Ghana;
- have at least a good financial standing and a sound safeguarding policy.
- have a dedicated human resource capacity for the assignment.
- have relevant experience and proven records of working with communities and marginalized groups (including women and persons with disabilities) and should be based or already have a working presence in the respective geographical areas;
- be the lead organization that should propose a plan of engaging communities, and other key stakeholders.
- have experience designing and facilitating programmes with a focus on grassroots innovation and upskilling youth to gain decent employment.
- have experience of working with other grassroots community organizations in Ghana, particularly in organizing community engagement events and related activities.
- have a strong ability to scout and identify potential innovators, (innovations with the potential to score highly on value, impact, scale) coupled with excellent networking skills to build relationships within grassroots communities.
- Demonstrated commitment to ethical practices in scouting and recruiting, ensuring fairness, transparency.



E: SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

Ensure the use of the appropriate **official template** provided (attached separately).

As the first stage of the competition is judged solely on the content of this form, it is critical that applications are submitted within the deadline established and communicated in this call. The timeline for submission of proposals is from 6th May to 17th May 2024 at 5.00 pm GMT.

Proposals should be delivered electronically to: helpdesk.gh@undp.org

Proposals of applicants that fail to meet the deadline, will not be accepted and thus, not assessed by the panel.

All enquiries should be directed to Allen Anie at allen.anie@undp.org or to Jude Kwegyir-Aggrey at jude.kwegyir-aggrey@undp.org

F: TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

In keeping with UNDP's goals to achieve the broadest positive impact for all, the process, outputs, and learnings will be made public on open exchanges.