



Request for Grant Proposals for

The 2021 U.S.-Brazil Innovation Fund Grant Competition

Launch Date: October 14, 2021
Question/Answer Period: October 14, 2021– March 15, 2021
Submit questions at 100kstrongamericas.org/questions
Closing Date: March 28, 2022 / 9:00 AM EST

The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) at the U.S. Department of State (DOS), the U.S. Mission in Brazil and Partners of the Americas (POA) invite higher education institutions (HEIs) from the United States and from Brazil to partner and submit proposals in this Brazil-U.S. focused *100,000 Strong in the Americas* (100K) Innovation Fund grant competition.

This new 100K Innovation Fund opportunity, supported through generous contributions from Brazil’s National Service of Industrial Training (SENAI), along with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at U.S. Department of State and U.S. Mission-Brazil, is designed to stimulate and support innovative partnerships between HEIs that will lead to innovative student exchange and training programs between the United States and Brazil.

The **100K Innovation Fund** is the public/private sector collaboration among the U.S. Department of State, U.S. embassies, Partners of the Americas, and companies, foundations, government entities, and academic networks throughout the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

- In eight years (2013-2021), with commitments across sectors, the Innovation Fund has awarded 266 grants to teams of 520 higher education institutions (HEIs) working across 25 countries and 49 U.S. states. Currently, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Chile, and Guatemala are the leading 100K grant-recipient countries to partner with U.S. universities, colleges, community colleges to create and implement innovative models of student exchange and training programs. Currently, the Innovation Network has grown to over 2,300 regional HEIs – with nearly 1,250 in the United States.
- The 100K-funded partnerships and training programs align with DOS priorities of inclusive education opportunities, regional exchanges, and workforce development in this hemispheric-wide initiative. More importantly, 100K partnerships between HEIs in the U.S. and rest of the Western Hemisphere provide students with critical access to new models of exchange and training programs so they can work in teams at their home and host institutions, solve real-world problems, and gain technical, linguistic, intercultural skills imperative for workforce development.

Teams of HEIs between the United States and Brazil are invited to submit grant proposals that show how they will use these 100K Innovation Fund grants to design and carry out new models of academic exchange and training programs for students—both virtually and in-person. We encourage grant proposals focused on developing new models of academic training and exchange



programs that will benefit diverse student populations. Please refer to Section III: Description of 100K Grant Opportunity for the list of themes, academic areas, and other proposal requirements.

The intent of this Innovation Fund grant competition is to award up to **six (6) Innovation Fund Grants of up to \$34,250** each to selected proposals developed by teams of eligible institutions in the United States and Brazil, *pending the proposal evaluation and selection process.*

NOTE: The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Mission in Brazil, and Partners of the Americas, in coordination with SENAI, reserve the right to fund any or none of the Innovation Fund grant proposals submitted for consideration in this competition.



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Section I: Partners in this Innovation Fund Grant Competition

Brazil's National Service of Industrial Training (SENAI) was founded in 1942 as a private non-profit institution. It provides technical education aimed at promoting industrial innovation. Its mission is centered on technology transfer, leveraging innovation for promoting industrial innovation. As the largest private technical training network in Latin America, SENAI seeks to add value to products and processes of private sector companies and industries. Currently, SENAI has 1040 vocational training units, 26 innovation institutes, 60 technology institutes, and 189 technological services labs. In 2020, SENAI had more than 2.3 million enrollments at the national level, and SENAI Institutes were responsible for more than 1.5 million lab tests and services. For more information about SENAI, visit www.portaldaindustria.com.br/senai/en/.

The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) at the U.S. Department of State (DOS) supports and manages the *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund in collaboration with Partners of the Americas and U.S. embassies. Since 2013, the commitments from WHA/DOS in this hemispheric-wide education initiative have ensured dynamic, regional public-private sector cooperation between the U.S. State Department, U.S. embassies, NGOs, regional private sector, foundations, government entities, and higher education networks throughout the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. 100K-branded partnerships and programs align with regional policy goals of inclusive education opportunities, exchanges, and economic prosperity.

Section II: Eligibility Information

The Innovation Fund seeks the broadest diversity of institutions to compete for grants and to develop exchange program innovations that will have the greatest possibility of replication throughout the United States and rest of the Western Hemisphere. As such, the following types of higher education institutions (HEIs) are eligible to apply for the 2021 U.S.-Brazil Innovation Fund Grant Competition.

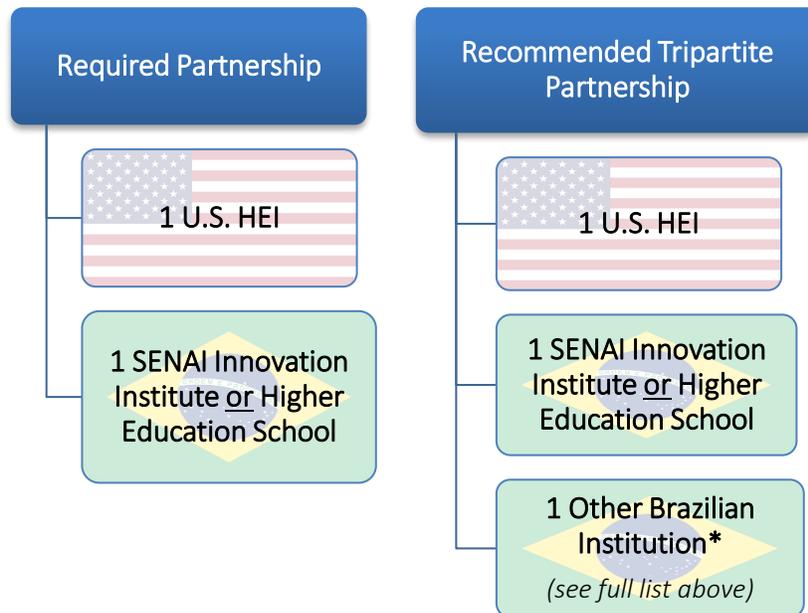
Mandatory: Proposals in this must include a team of at least one eligible institution from each category below:

- **HEIs in the United States:** HEIs located and legally registered in the U.S., including four-year degree-issuing institutions (public and private); community colleges; Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), including Historically Black College & Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs); technical/vocational schools; and other post-secondary institutions with credit-bearing programs.
- **Eligible institutions in Brazil:** SENAI Innovation Institutes (*Institutos SENAI de Inovação*)¹ and SENAI Higher Education Schools (*Escolas de Ensino Superior do SENAI*).

¹ SENAI Innovation Institutes: <http://institutos.senai.br/english.html>

Recommended additional Brazilian Institutions as a 3rd Partner: Proposals may also present a tripartite alliance between a (1) U.S. HEI, a (2) SENAI Innovation Institute or SENAI Higher Education School, and a (3) Brazilian higher education institution located and legally registered, including:

- Private and public universities (*universidades privadas e públicas de todos as esferas da federação – estaduais/federais*),
- Federal institutes/centers for technological education (*Institutos Federais de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia - IFETs e Centros Federais de Educação Tecnológica - CEFETs*)²,
- Professional technical institutes (*institutos técnico-profissional*),
- Research centers (*centros de pesquisa*), and
- Other post-secondary institutions.



***Note:** *Non-SENAI higher education institutions in Brazil are eligible to be a part of a tripartite alliance; however, they cannot be the prime applicant in the proposal. They may only participate as a partnering institution, alongside a U.S. HEI and a SENAI Innovation Center or SENAI Higher Education School, any of which could serve as the prime applicant of the grant.*

Proposals may involve new institutional partnerships or build on existing partnerships, but in all cases, should demonstrate strong institutional support and should focus on creating sustainable exchange programs among the partnering institutions.

In order to increase the diversity of participating institutions, the Review Committee reserves the right to give preference to institutions that have not previously received 100K Innovation Fund grants. However, all HEIs (*including previous grant winners*) are encouraged to apply.

² Brazil Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/rede-federal-inicial/instituicoes>

Section III: Description of this Innovation Fund Grant Competition

A. Thematic Requirements

The purpose of the 2021 U.S.-Brazil Innovation Fund Grant Competition is to provide funding to increase **partnerships and innovative models of student training and exchange programs** between HEIs in the U.S. and SENAI Innovation Institutes, SENAI Higher Education Schools, and other legally registered higher education institutions in Brazil. HEIs in Brazil and the U.S. are invited to work in teams to create and implement new student exchange and training programs in various academic areas. Thematic areas include, but are not limited to the following:

ELIGIBLE THEMATIC AREAS FOR GRANT PROPOSALS & PROGRAMS	
GENERAL THEMES	SAMPLE FOCUS AREAS of STUDY
Internet of Things (IoT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Communication Devices • Devices for Automatic Data Collection in Industrial Systems • Software (Applications) for Mobile Devices • Middleware for System Interoperability • IoT Hardware Energy Efficiency Management • Solutions (Applications) for Wearable Devices • Solutions with Embedded Systems and Sensing • Monitoring and Automated Control of Processes • Development of Innovative Content for Professional Education • Innovative Applications in Industrial Production Processes
Cloud Computing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Cloud • Private Cloud • Hybrid Cloud • Software as a Service (SAAS) • Platform as a Service (PAAS) • Infrastructure as a Service (IASS) • Development of Innovative Content for Professional Education • Innovative Applications in Industrial Production Processes
Big Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Mining • Machine Learning • Modeling and Optimization • Uses in Industry 4.0 • Innovative Content for Professional Education • Innovative Applications for Industrial Production Processes

<p>Cybersecurity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical Hacking • Cyber Defense • Risk Assessment in Cybersecurity • Cloud Computing Security - Devops and Devsecops • Innovative Content for Professional Education • Innovative Applications for Industrial Production Processes
<p>Artificial Intelligence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictive Maintenance • Data Analysis • Employee Management • Supply Chain • AI for Computational Design and Manufacturing • AI Application in industry • Innovative Content for Professional Education • Innovative Applications for Industrial Production Processes
<p>Environment and Climate Solutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Resource Management • Environmental Protection • Sustainable Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Renewable Energy Engineering ○ Energy Economics ○ Solar/Wind/Hydro/Thermal Power Generation and Strategies ○ Power Storage ○ Energy Conservation ○ Industrial Innovation ○ Sustainable Business ○ Renewable Energy Finance • Sustainable Design, Architecture, and Construction • Sustainable Agriculture • Conservation and Reforestation • Endangered Species Management and Protection
<p>Human Rights and Public Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Law • Public Health and Human Rights • Climate Change and Human Rights • Business and Human Rights • Conflict Resolution • Rights and Justice • Social and Economic Rights • Indigenous Peoples Movements/Rights • Public Policy and Human Rights
<p>Health Sciences and Public Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on student training programs that address major public health issues; including responses to impact/needs related to (COVID-19) pandemic & public health challenges. • Health Programs in Rural Communities

<p>Education (Technology and Distance/Virtual Education)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Equality • Use of Digital Technology for Academic Exchanges • Promotion of Technology Use for Students • Advancement/Empowerment of Student Learning and Exchanges through Virtual Technology • Collaborative Online International Learning • English as a means of instruction – EMI U.S. Studies <p><i>NOTE: Virtual activities should enhance or complement, <u>not</u> replace, in-person student exchange mobility components.</i></p>
<p>Food and Agricultural Sciences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Nutrition Sciences • Agricultural Economics • Ecosystem Science/Management • Food Security • Water Management & Food Production • Small Business Development • Agroecology/Agronomy • Agricultural Engineering • Rural Development Programs
<p>Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Pollution Prevention • Water Resources Engineering • Water Treatment/Management • Environmental Sciences • Municipal/Urban Engineering • Waste Management/Recycling
<p>Biotechnology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bio-health and technology • Immunology • Public Health • Epidemiology • Chemistry
<p>Business Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development • Community Development • Entrepreneurship • Empowerment of Young People and/or Women • Small Business Development
<p>Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)</p>	<p>All related academic areas</p>

IMPORTANT: Please note that the list of themes and fields of study serve as recommendations and guidelines. Proposed partnerships and exchange programs must fall under one or more of the *general themes* above but proposed academic discipline/s are flexible (as long as it/they can be justified in the proposal).

- 1) Proposed 100K programs must promote exchange and training programs – using both virtual and in-person modalities – for students in one or more of the above themes ***and*** incorporate one of the following programmatic elements:
 - Development of innovative products and services for the industrial sector; and/or



- Innovative educational solutions (e.g., methodologies, teaching resources, programs, etc.) to meet issues related to the agenda of the *Future of Work*, as described in the World Economic Forum’s 2020 publication, “Jobs of Tomorrow: Mapping Opportunity in the New Economy.”³
- 2) Proposals involving a SENAI Innovation Institute ***must*** involve applied research actions for technological innovation aimed at the industrial sector.

Special consideration will be given to proposals that include programming to:

- Incorporate entrepreneurship skills and training; and/or
- Promote women in science careers.

The Innovation Fund also encourages proposals that include effective practices and strategies discussed at *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund workshops and webinars, as well as at regional higher education conferences (i.e., NAFSA, CCID, HACU, FAUBAI, AIEA, LACHEC, etc.). Related topics may include credit transfer, community engagement, entrepreneurship, language training, local private sector support/engagement, program assessment, student recruitment, technical skills training, and use of technology/virtual platforms to enhance traditional academic exchange programs.

B. Proposal Timeframe (Grant Period)

All proposed activities, including planning and implementation, should take place during between September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023. Grant proposals may include information on activities that have occurred prior to this period that provide background to laying the groundwork for the proposed partnership/program. Proposals may also include projected activities beyond these dates, such as additional student exchanges to demonstrate sustainability and continuation of the 100K program beyond the grant period.

C. Other Requirements & Considerations

1. Academic Credit

Students must receive some level of credit from their home institution during, or as a result, of the proposed program.

2. Student Mobility

Innovation Fund grant proposals should include the use of innovative practices and models that will increase academic exchange and training opportunities for students in selected academic areas in the United States and Brazil. Proposals should include activities that enhance student academic learning through practical training, such as engagement through

³ a) https://www.reskillingrevolution2030.org/reskillingrevolution/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/WEF_Jobs_of_Tomorrow_2020.pdf

b) https://www.reskillingrevolution2030.org/reskillingrevolution/initiatives/forum-led/skills_accelerators/index.html

c) <https://www.weforum.org/press/2021/03/world-economic-forum-holds-first-brazil-skills-accelerator-initiative-co-chair-meeting/>



service-learning, field-based activities, or other methods that will enhance course work. Proposals may include **virtual activities** to support **in-person mobility** programming between partnering institutions and support sending and/or hosting students and faculty between institutions during the grant period.

3. *Sustainability*

Applicants should also highlight how a grant from the Innovation Fund would impact HEI teams' ability to secure additional resources from other sources to sustain the proposed exchange and training programs between the United States and eligible countries beyond the grant period.

4. *Student Recruitment Plan*

Special consideration will be given to proposals focused on programs that benefit underserved, non-traditional, and/or diverse student populations. Grant proposals should **provide a recruitment strategy/plan** for engaging and benefitting diverse groups of students.

5. *Carbon Offsets*

It is encouraged, but not required, that HEI applicants commit to offsetting carbon⁴ produced by flights involved in the proposed program, using a reputable provider of carbon offset services. MyClimate is one provider of carbon offsets which makes it very easy to determine the carbon cost of any given flight⁵ and offers a number of options to invest in carbon savings in communities in Latin America. Proposals that contain a commitment to offset the carbon produced by flights during the program will be viewed favorably in the review process.

D. Expected Results

Higher education institutions that are successful in implementing Innovation Fund grants will:

- Plan, promote, and implement new exchange/training opportunities for students in the U.S. and Brazil;
- Increase numbers of students working in teams to gain skills in the U.S. and Brazil;
- Create/strengthen HEI partnerships through bilateral academic exchange programs; and
- Engage/collaborate with the Innovation Fund during and after the grant period to share lessons learned, effective practices, and new models of academic mobility and training programs.

⁴ How Carbon Offsets Work: <https://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/green-science/carbon-offset.htm>.

⁵ https://co2.myclimate.org/en/flight_calculators/new



Section IV: Award Information

A. Awards Available

The intent of the 2021 U.S.-Brazil Innovation Fund Grant Competition is to award up to **six (6) Innovation Fund grants of \$34,250 each to selected proposals** developed by teams of eligible institutions in the U.S. and Brazil, *pending the proposal evaluation and selection process*. The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, Partners of the Americas, and SENAI reserve the right to fund any or none of the grant proposals submitted for consideration in this Innovation Fund competition.

B. Notification of Award Recipients

Partners of the Americas will notify applicants of the status of their proposal by May 31, 2022. Please note that this date is subject to change.

C. Award Period of Performance

Following the award notification, grant-winning teams will receive details and documents related to formalizing and receiving the award funds. The grant period will be from September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023, with the possibility of extensions pending analysis of the 100K program at the time of the request and in coordination with Partners of the Americas.

D. Innovation Fund Award Responsibilities

1. Innovation Fund Staff at Partners of the Americas

Partners of the Americas, based in Washington, D.C., will work in close coordination with Award Recipients in the following areas:

- Technical support of grant activities and oversight of award terms/contract;
- Review of the recipient's progress reports;
- Approval of changes in grant budget, personnel, timeline, and activities;
- Request for additional information on grant activities and student/faculty engagement;
- Facilitation of communications between recipients and WHA/DOS, sponsors, and where appropriate, U.S. Embassies; and
- Outreach regarding sharing of lessons learned from program implementation and participation at visibility events and conferences, among others

2. HEI Award Recipients

Award recipients will be responsible for sharing information on a regular basis with the Innovation Fund staff on program activities through report mechanisms provided by Partners of the Americas. Project reports will provide:

- Progress on program goals and objectives, including the development of grant activities



- and student and faculty travel;
- Successes, challenges, and lessons learned in program implementation and evaluation;
- Testimonials on how the grant benefits/impacts students and institutions; and
- Program expenditures and cost-sharing.

Section V: Proposal Format and Submission

A. Proposal Format

Proposals must utilize 12-pt Times New Roman font, single-spaced, typed in standard 8 ½” x 11” paper with one-inch margins, and each page numbered consecutively. Keep in mind the page limitations and document types for each section of the proposal as listed below. Any additional pages that exceed the page limitations will not be reviewed by the Review Committee.

All proposal components below **must be submitted in English.**

- **Proposal Narrative** in PDF
 - Cover Page (1 page)
 - Table of Contents (1 page)
 - Technical Narrative (10 pages max)
- **Budget** (5 pages max)
 - Summary in Excel format
 - Narrative in Word format
- **Supporting Documents** in PDF (no total page limit)
 - Letters of Support
 - Résumés/CVs (1-2 pages per person)
 - Additional materials

Note that Applicants will be required to upload each of the three sections above separately in the Application Portal. **For a detailed description of the proposal format and requirements, including the evaluation criteria, visit www.100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/.**

B. Online Submission Process

Proposals must be submitted online through the **Application Portal** found on the *100,000 Strong in the Americas* website (www.100kstrongamericas.org/application-portal/) by the deadline indicated on the cover page of this RFP. Proposals that are received late or are incomplete will not be considered in the review process. No proposals will be accepted via email unless otherwise instructed by Partners of the Americas.

Applicants seeking information or clarification about this competition should complete the online form at www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions. For a comprehensive list of questions received from applicants of previous grant competitions, please visit www.100kstrongamericas.org/100k-competition-faqs.



Section VI: Anticipated Grant Competition Timeline

ACTIVITY	TIME PERIOD*
Launch of 100K Grant Competition	October 14, 2021
Close of 100K Grant Competition	March 28, 2022
Proposal Evaluation & Selection Process	March 28 – May 31, 2022
Notification of Status of Proposal	Late June 2022
Award of Grant Funds to Winners	July – August 2022
Period of Performance for 100K Grants	September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023

**Dates are subject to change.*

Section VII: Innovation Fund Contact at Partners of the Americas

Questions about this RFP must be submitted by completing the online form at www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions. Questions should be received prior to the deadline stipulated on the cover page of this RFP. No phone calls please.