Tips & Strategies for Developing a 100K Innovation Fund Proposal

The 100K CLIMA Grant Competition to Build Inclusive, Climate-Action, Student Exchange Programs between the United States and Colombia (2023)

November 28, 2023
Please Note:

- Recording & materials available within a week
  - List of attendees from today’s webinar
- Submit questions via the “Q&A” box in the Zoom window any point during the presentation
- Please don’t use the “Chat” to submit questions

www.100kstrongamericas.org
Agenda

- 100K Donor-Partner Introductions (GEB, FSD, C4D)
- How to Apply
- Competition Eligibility & Requirements
- Proposal Evaluation Criteria
- Build A 100K CLIMA Proposal: Tips & Considerations
- 100K Grantee Panelist
  - Professor Sondra Schreiber – DMU
- Questions & Answers (Q&A)
The 100K Innovation Fund is the public-private sector partnership and collaboration among the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at the U.S. Department of State (WHA/DOS), U.S. Embassies, and Partners of the Americas, working with companies, foundations, regional government entities, and academic networks throughout the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

The goals of the 100K Innovation Fund align with DOS priorities to build institutional capacity, increase access to inclusive education opportunities, stimulate economic prosperity, and contribute to workforce development.

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100K Innovation Fund Highlights

2013 - 2023

- 315 grants awarded to teams of 578 HEIs
- 25 countries and 49 U.S. states
- Almost 10,000 students and counting
- Over 1,200 grant proposals submitted (since 2014)
- 2,300 HEIs in Innovation Network -- and counting
- over $20 million from public / private sectors to support the Innovation Fund since 2013
How to apply
www.100kstrongamericas.org
Join the Innovation Network

www.100kstrongamericas.org/join/

Where to Start:
Step 1: Visit our Application Portal.

www.100kstrongamericas.org/application-portal/
Step 2: Create an account and profile.

Please click "Create a Profile to Get Started" to begin. You cannot move forward to the Application until you have completed your Profile. You can always edit your Profile by clicking "Edit" or view your Profile by clicking "View".

If you are a current grantee, scroll to the bottom of this page to access your grant materials and complete required tasks.

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Important Note about your registered email...

Choose an email that is accessible to proposal team and regularly monitored.
- All communications will be sent to this email
- A proposal can only be associated with one email account.

An email account = multiple submissions BUT... a proposal ≠ multiple emails
Step 3:
Complete Required Tasks

Test University -

Please complete the following tasks. When you have completed all steps, it will no longer state "Action Required." Instead, it will show "Complete".

- **Grant Application**
  When all required information is provided and all steps completed, the "Submit" button to the right will turn green, which means that your Application is ready for submission.

  **The Application will not be completed until you click the "Submit" button.**

  **Warning:** Once you click "Submit", your Application will no longer be available for edits.

  - **Application Form**
    To begin or continue with the Application, please click the "Edit" button to the right.
    Once you have completed the Application, you may return here to view or print your submission by clicking the "View" button to the right.

  - **Partner Information Request**
    As part of the Application, you must provide at least one contact person at your partner institution(s), who will be collaborating with you on the implementation of your proposed project. This will be done by sending a request to your contact(s) to complete the required form.
    To begin, please click the "Open" button to the right.
How to Apply for a 100K Innovation Fund Grant

Watch webinar recordings and access materials under “Past Webinars” at:
100kstrongamericas.org/events/webinars/

01 Competition eligibility & requirements

02 How to build your proposal team and identify the right institutional partners

03 Overview of the Application Portal

04 The submission process
JOIN THE #100KSTRONGAMERICAS INITIATIVE FOR INNOVATIVE TRAINING AND EXCHANGES

Note: See Request for Proposals (RFP) for requirements and themes.

Application Period: 
October 5, 2023 - January 31, 2024

Apply at: www.100kstrongamericas.org
Eligibility
Eligible countries & institutions

Higher education institutions (HEIs) located and registered

Available awards

17 grants

$25,000 - $50,000

#100KSTRONGAMERICAS
**Elegible Thematic Areas**

- Biodiversity or Environmental Protection
- Bio-Economy and Sustainable Value Chains Conservation and reforestation
- Climate Justice or Technology
- Conservation and Reforestation
- Endangered/Threatened Species Management and Protection
- Green/Climate Finance
- Conservation and Reforestation

- Endangered/Threatened Species Management and Protection
- Green/Climate Finance
- Public Health and Climate
- Sustainable Design, Architecture, and Construction
- Sustainable/Regenerative Agriculture and Food Security
- And more**
**Additional requirements & considerations**

**Required:**
In-person scientific exchange of students.

**Programs can also include:**
- Researchers
- Scientific & technical personnel

- Bi-directional preferred, but not required
- No minimum/maximum number of students
- No minimum/maximum duration of stay

* In-person student mobility is required in at least one direction
Program Design

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

Special consideration will be given to proposals focused on programs that benefit underserved, non-traditional, and/or diverse student populations. *Student Diversity Plan should be included in proposal.

Level of Study
- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- Doctoral

Student Credit
- Required: Students must receive some level of credit from their home institution during or as a result of the proposed program.
## Competition Timeline

<table>
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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TIME PERIOD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Application Deadline</td>
<td>January 31, 2024 by 11:59 pm EST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of status of proposal</td>
<td>Mid- April 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Award of Grant Funds to Winners</td>
<td>May - June 2024</td>
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<td>Period of Performance</td>
<td>June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025</td>
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*Please note that these dates are subject to change*
Build Your 100K Proposal
Evaluation Criteria

Technical Narrative (80%)
- Cover Page - 1 page
- Table of Contents - 1 page
- Executive Summary & Program Description 40%
- Sustainability Plan 15%
- Capacity, Challenges & Opportunities 10%
- Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Plan 15%

Budget (20%)
- Budget Summary Table
- Descriptive Budget Narrative
- Low Indirect Costs

Supporting Documents
- Letters of Support (required)
- Biography/résumé of Project Team (required)
  - 2 pages max per person
- Additional Materials

Program Description
- 40%
- Sustainability Plan
- Institutional Capacity
- Mgt and Evaluation Plan
- Budget and Budget Narrative

Budget and Budget Narrative
- 20%

Mgt and Evaluation Plan
- 10%

Institutional Capacity
- 15%

Sustainability Plan
- 15%
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

• Executive Summary of the Project

• Need for program explained/justified

• Clear program goals, specific objectives, and key activities
  ○ Student learning objectives, student diversity plan

• Detailed activities of students
  ○ Activity A: Student/Faculty Exchange
    ▪ Timeline of exchange activities, including travel
  ○ Activity B: Climate Action Project
    ▪ Timeline of CAP activities

• Define # of students that will travel in either/both directions

• Credit for students at either/both institutions

• Clearly identify the innovations/new components to the program.

*Make sure reviewers are not left with any questions about the design and purpose of your proposal.
SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

• What concrete plans/actions do you have to ensure the continuation of program?

• How will you secure institutional “buy-in/support” from all involved institutions to continue the program?

• Have you identified any local, national or international funding sources?

• How will you receive additional funding?

Highlight financial commitments from institutions, community partners, government agencies, etc.

REQUIRED: Letters of support from your institution and partner institution(s) – from individuals outside of project team

15%

How will your proposed program continue after the initial year of 100K funding?
CAPACITY, CHALLENGES, & OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Discuss...

- Capacity to administer international research exchange programs and climate action-related projects
- Awareness of institutional challenges that prevent students from going abroad
- Opportunities provided by the 100K grant that will allow you to overcome the challenges of student mobility

The capacity, challenges and opportunities of all collaborating institutions should be discussed.

REQUIRED: Biography/résumé of all project team members from each HEI involved.
MONITORING & EVALUATION (M&E) PLAN

- **What** will you measure? Quantified target goals, benchmarks, indicators of progress, etc.
- **How** will you measure program progress & indicators? Tools & technology for data collection
- **When/How** often will you collect data? i.e., baseline, throughout, post-activity, etc.
- **Who** is responsible for collecting the data? PIs, separate department, etc.

The capacity, challenges and opportunities of all collaborating institutions should be discussed.

*Use the M&E plan template provided in the 100K website: 100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/*
Clarity (5%)
• Make sure all calculations are correct
• Be as specific as possible

Indirect/Administrative Costs (5%)
• Consider placing the indirect costs under your cost-share
  ◦ If not, the recommendation is no more than 20% of the grant
• Low indirect costs = better

Cost-Share (5%)
• In-kind or cash contributions from partnering HEIs and/or external resources
• Required, but no minimum amount
  ◦ It is recommended to match the grant 1:1.

Include contributions from all involved HEIs to match the grant.

Examples:
◦ Personnel time, consultants
◦ Faculty/staff travel
◦ Equipment/lab/facility use
◦ Student scholarships/stipends provided by the HEIs or external sources
◦ Remaining/all indirect costs

Expenses covered by students out-of-pocket do not count as cost-share.

Use the Budget Summary template provided on the website:
100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/
Are there any directions on how the grant funds can/cannot be spent?

- Funds should support students.
- Personnel, fringe, consultants
- Travel (e.g., flights, hotels, transportation, meals, etc.)
- Student stipends/scholarships
- Communications, marketing materials, translation, etc.
- Use/rental of equipment/facilities
- Purchase of course materials, software, etc.
- Program monitoring/evaluation tools
- Conference fees
- Indirect (no more than 20% of grant)

Narrative (5%)

- Explain and justify each item and activity referred to in the budget summary
- Provide breakdown of cost estimates
  - How are costs calculated?
- Be as specific as possible.

Refer to the sample budget narrative on the website:

100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/
A REVIEWER’S PERSPECTIVE

Program Description
- Does it provide clear program goals and detail the objectives & activities to accomplish them?
- Can you envision what the program will look like and how it will be managed by the HEIs?

Sustainability Plan
- Have the HEIs put thought into a plan for how will they continue to implement the program after the grant?
- Does it show commitment toward the program & partnership?

Supporting Documents (Annexes)
- Do the HEIs have the capacity to implement the program successfully?
- What study abroad challenges are they trying to overcome with the help of 100K grant funding?

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan
- In addition to program success, will the HEIs measure student learning?
- Does it include outcomes, and not only outputs?

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A REVIEWER’S PERSPECTIVE

BUDGET

Summary
- Is the table detailed yet clear and easy to comprehend?
- Does it show how the total costs are calculated/broken down?

Narrative
- Does the narrative explain what the cost items/activities are and how they are relevant to the program?
- Are all cost items/activities in the budget mentioned in the technical narrative?
- Do they clearly identify which HEI will cost-share what?

Institutional Capacity, Challenges & Opportunities
- Do they include letters of support from all partnering HEIs (required)?
- Do they include the résumé/biography of the project team from all partnering HEIs (required)?

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**FINAL TIPS**

**Use the 100K templates provided**
- M&E Plan
- Budget Summary

**Refer to sample documents.**
- Budget Narrative
- Sample 100K Proposal

**Make sure that all proposal documents are in English**

**Don’t wait!**
- Begin writing your proposal as soon as possible.
- Ask your partners for a letter of support now.
- Request them to complete the HEI Partner Profile form. Sent via the Application Portal.

Available at [100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/](100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/)
Tips and Suggestions from a Previous 100K Grantee

Sondra Schreiber – Des Moines University
Sondra.Schreiber@dmu.edu
More Questions on Application Guidelines?

Visit Our Website
https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/

Attend Upcoming Webinars
https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/events/webinars/
or Join the Innovation Network to stay up-to-date
Questions?

Please submit questions via the Q&A box in your Zoom window.

Any questions not addressed in this webinar will be answered in a Question & Answer Report, which will be sent to the email you used to register for this webinar within 5-6 business days.

You can also refer to our Grant FAQs page for answers to the most commonly asked questions.
Contact us

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Partners of the Americas

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100kstrongamericas@partners.net

The recording and materials will be sent to all participants.
Thank you!

For questions or clarifications, contact the Innovation Fund team: 100kstrongamericas@partners.net