GSMA mWomen Innovation Fund Grants
Overview of Round Two for Mobile Operators

March 2013

Introduction

The GSMA mWomen Programme is pleased to announce the launch of the second round of Innovation Fund grants for mobile network operators.

This round is comprised of three grants, valued up to US$ 70,000 for project up to nine months long. The grants are intended to provide seed funding for operators, with or without partners, to design and launch products, value added services, marketing campaigns and/or distribution mechanisms ('offerings') that will increase women's access to and use of mobile and life-enhancing services.

Please find below highlights about the Innovation Fund and this round of grants, including key dates and instructions on what to do next. Note that Innovation Fund grants for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will be launched in mid- to late-April 2013.

GSMA mWomen Innovation Fund introduction and objectives

The goal of the GSMA mWomen Programme is to promote greater mobile access and usage by resource-poor women in low- and middle-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, and Asia Pacific. The programme does so by encouraging industry to serve women, increasing availability of life-enhancing value-added services and promoting solutions to women's technical and cultural barriers to adoption.

The objectives of the Innovation Fund are to provide seed funding and technical assistance to:

- Accelerate planned efforts to recognize and realize the commercial potential of serving underserved women
- Foster success by equipping and supporting operators and NGOs as they launch relevant offerings
- Encourage further investment by providing lessons and documenting demonstration models of success.

There are two streams of grants, both aiming to provide seed funding for the design and launch of an offering to increase women's access to and use of mobiles. The first stream is comprised of seven matching grants for mobile operators, each with a value up to US$ 70,000, for use during a three to nine month-long project delivered with or without partners. The second stream is comprised of seven grants up to US$ 140,000 for NGOs working in conjunction with industry in nine to twelve month-long projects.

The definition of success for the Innovation Fund is:

- An increase in the number of mobile operators who research, design and test opportunities to serve resource-poor women in their markets
- A larger set of proven strategies and business models for serving resource-poor women
- An increase in the number of women who have access to mobile services and relevant value-added services.

The definition of success for a grant-supported project is:

- Design and launch of a commercially sustainable offering that increases women's access to or use of mobile phones
- Evidence about the commercial and social value of the innovation is generated and shared.

Determining whether a grant makes sense for your project

Grants are intended to serve as seed funding for innovation, enabling operators to design, launch and test the value of offerings that will increase women's uptake of mobile. Given that the Fund aims to build evidence about business models for serving women, each project is intended to generate evidence of its commercial and social value. Projects that are purely corporate social responsibility- based are unlikely to be competitive, as they tend not to generate sustainable, scalable and replicable commercial solutions.

The application process

The Fund employs a two-stage application process. The first stage includes preparation of a three-page concept note describing an applicant's mWomen strategies, the specific project objectives, definition of success, high-level approach, anticipated deliverables and outcomes, internal participants and external partners. An independent Fund Manager reviews concept notes to consider their alignment with Fund objectives and fulfilment of project and organization eligibility requirements. A small number of applicants are then invited to prepare full applications, containing full details about the project. An independent Selection Panel evaluates applications and awards grants to those best positioned to deliver on the Fund objectives.

Please read the term sheet for full details of the Innovation Fund objectives and the organization and project eligibility requirements, as well as management, data and knowledge sharing, and performance monitoring requirements.

The GSMA mWomen team is available to provide advice and support to all applicants during the concept note stage, as well as to provide more in-depth support to those operators invited to submit applications. The team also will provide ongoing support and oversight during grant implementation.

GSMA mWomen will host a webinar to provide additional detail about the Innovation Fund and to answer questions about how to design a project and prepare concept notes and applications.

Next steps and key dates

Key dates for this round are as follows:

Webinar on the Fund and how to prepare grants:	Tuesday, 12 March, 9-10am GMT
Concept notes due:	Monday, 1 April, 2013
Invitations to submit applications distributed:	Monday, 8 April, 2013
Applications due:	Friday, 17 May, 2013
Grant awards announced to applicants	No later than mid-June, 2013
Grant agreements signed:	Ideally by 15 July 2013

Please refer to the Innovation Fund for Mobile Network Operators term sheet for more details. Don't hesitate to contact the team at mWomengrants@gsma.com with any questions and/or to enquire about support during the application process. We look forward to hearing from you!