Mobile Enabled Community Services

UKaid from the British people

GSMA MECS Innovation Fund: Seed Grants

Mobile Enabled Community Services Fund Term Sheet[1]		
1	**The Goal of the Mobile Enabled Community Services (MECS) Initiative** is to improve access to basic energy and water services in underserved communities using mobile technology and infrastructure. The aim is to enable the creation of innovative[2] business models that use technology and the reach of the mobile communications industry to deliver underserved communities with improved access to energy and water services.	
2	**MECS Seed Grant Fund Objective**	The specific objective of the Seed Grant Fund ("the Fund") is to support the research and development of early stage innovations using mobile to support access to sustainable energy and water provision.
3	**Regions of implementation**	The Fund is open to support global applicants, but the primary focus is to support projects implemented in: • Sub-Saharan Africa; and • Indian sub-Continent and South east Asia;
4	**Sectoral/Industry Focus**	The Fund is targeted at Applicants that are planning to research and develop, or deploy early stage innovations using mobile to address access to energy and water services. Examples of eligible Applicants include NGOs, small entrepreneurs, academic organisations, mobile operators, tower companies and public and private service providers.
5	**Launch date**	June 2013
6	**Type of funding available**	• Grants for eligible organisations and projects. Funding decisions are made on a competitive, deadline-driven basis by an independent assessment panel. Only the best applications will receive funding. • Technical assistance (TA) provided at the discretion of the MECS Initiative to support the development of Applications, and implementation of projects. The type and extent of TA will be agreed between the applicant and the Initiative at the application stage.
7	**Size of grants available**	The target grant size for the Fund is up to £200,000.
8	**Fund and applicant contributions**	Applicants are expected to contribute a minimum of 25% of the total project costs of the project. These contributions can be made both in cash and in-kind, and preference may be given where applicants contributions are targeted towards capital expenditure items.
9	**Projects eligible for funding**	To be eligible for funding, projects must meet the following criteria: • The project will involve an individual or consortium of organisations that will implement the research and development of early stage innovations using mobile technology to support sustainable energy and/or water provision. • The project will include the use of mobile communications channels as a significant element of its delivery model; • The project will involve an innovative model that demonstrates the potential

[1] The Fund may adjust these Terms from time-to-time at its own discretion in order to sharpen the focus of the Fund, also to maximise the effectiveness of funded projects in achieving the purpose and objectives of the Fund.

[2] The following guidelines are intended to help bidders understand how the issue of innovation will be assessed. MECS applicants should make use of mobile retail and delivery channels, infrastructure, or technology to achieve one or more or the following outcomes: improved access to energy and water services; extended or increased access to energy and water services; or improved sustainability of energy or water services. Innovation in these cases may include: developing a service that is currently not available in the country of implementation; tailoring an existing service to meet the needs of groups that do not currently have access; and finding new ways (including through the use of technology) to support service delivery to underserved communities.

		to improve or increase access to energy and water. • The project will not be easily supported by other commercial sources of finance; • The funding provided by the Fund will be utilised within one year of project commencement, and all projects will have completed by November 2014; In addition, preference will be given to: • Projects that demonstrate equitable access to water or energy for underserved women; • Projects that demonstrate low carbon or renewable solutions to improving access to energy and water for underserved communities. Applications considered to be eligible will be provided to the Independent Assessment Panel for appraisal.

10	**Entities eligible to apply**	To be eligible, lead applicants must have the following characteristics:
		• be registered and operating in the country of project implementation (whether domestic or foreign owned or a joint venture) in compliance with relevant business licensing, taxation, employee and other relevant regulations;
		• be in satisfactory financial health;
		• have adequate internal capability to implement the project applying an innovative model for service delivery;
		• have adequate internal capacity to implement the project within the agreed timeframe;
		• in the case of a consortium, an MOU will be formed between the members (a document with a clear division of responsibilities between the members of the consortium and a statement of mutual commitment should be present in the final Application).
		• will take part in the MECS Initiative Annual Working Group;
		• be prepared to:
		  • participate in lesson learning and lesson sharing activities;
		  • participate in DFID's annual review process;
		  • participate in monitoring and evaluation activities;
		  • share project data with the MECS Initiative; and
		  • participate in the development of a case study of their experience for public dissemination;
		• within the consortium, demonstrate knowledge/experience working with underserved communities.

11	**Application procedures**	Applications for funding will be assessed through a **2-Stage application process**. The **first stage** will involve submission of a simple **Concept Note** which will outline the project. Concept Notes will be reviewed by the Fund Manager. Concept Notes that meet the objective of the Fund, and where the lead applicant is eligible, will be invited to develop an **Application** setting out the full business case for the proposed project. A successful Concept Note does not in any way imply that the subsequent Application will be funded. Applications will be appraised, inclusive of an interview process, and approved or otherwise for funding by an independent assessment panel whose decision

		is final, pending due diligence.
12	**Panel Appraisal of Applications**	Applications will be appraised by the panel on the extent to which they satisfy the eligibility criteria of the Fund, and on the following matters: • the relevance and quality of the innovation proposed to support/enable energy and/or water provision. • the quality of the business case and implementation plan including assessment of risks involved and appropriate mitigation plans; • the existing internal capability and capacity of the applicant and its personnel to implement the project in the timeframe set out in the Application; • level of resources mobilised (directly from the applicant, and indirectly as a result of the project) including funding, manpower, additional efforts; • theory of change or pathway to impact[3] (including inputs, outputs, outcomes impacts and assumptions) are clearly defined, measurable and achievable; and • the potential of the proposed model to increase access by underserved communities to sustainable energy and water provision.
13	**Fund Manager**	Coffey International Development
14	**Contact Details**	MECSgrants@gsma.com

[3] A theory of change or pathway to impact should clearly set out how the inputs, outputs, outcomes, impacts and assumptions of the project are linked to the overarching aim of the MECS initiative.