# GSMA mWomen Innovation Fund
# Round Four: MNO Grants
# Overview

September 2013

## Introduction

The GSMA mWomen Programme is pleased to announce the launch of the next round of Innovation Fund grants for mobile network operators ("MNOs").

This round comprises two to three matching grants, valued up to US$ 70,000 for projects up to six months long. The grants are intended to provide seed funding for operators, with or without partners, to design and launch tariff plans, marketing campaigns and/or distribution mechanisms ('offerings') that will increase women's access to and use of mobile on a large scale. For example, these could include tariff plans which are tailored to women's needs and behaviours, marketing campaigns which involve BTL techniques to increase penetration amongst rural women, or innovative distribution mechanisms to reach underserved female populations.

Please find below highlights about the Innovation Fund and this round of grants, including key dates and instructions on what to do next.

Please note that there are two streams of grants in this round, both aiming to provide seed funding for the design and launch of an offering to increase women's access to and use of mobile:

1) MNOs (described in this document): two to three matching grants for mobile operators, each with a value up to US$ 70,000, for use in projects up to six months long, delivered with or without partners.
2) NGOs: three to four non-matching grants for NGOs, each with a value up to US$ 140,000, for use in projects up to six months long, delivered with a mobile operator partner.

For more information on the NGO grants, please visit www.mwomen.org.

## 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 recognise and realise 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.

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 product or service, distribution model or awareness campaign (an 'offering') that increases women's access to and use of mobile phones and VAS
- Generation of evidence of the social and economic value of the offering which can be shared
- Generation of insights into how to reduce women's barriers to adoption on a large scale

## 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 on a large scale. 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. **In this round, the most competitive projects will be those with the potential to substantially increase an MNO's female subscriber base.**

## The application process

The Fund employs a two-stage application process:

1) Concept Note Stage
   The first stage includes preparation of a three-page concept note outlining the project objectives, definition of success, high-level approach, anticipated deliverables and outcomes, internal participants and external partners, the target number of women reached and the plan for sustainability. An independent Fund Manager then reviews concept notes to consider their alignment with Fund objectives and fulfilment of project and organisation eligibility requirements.
2) Application Stage
   The Fund Manager then invites a small number of applicants to the Application Stage to prepare full applications, containing comprehensive details about the project. An independent Selection Panel evaluates these applications and awards grants to those best positioned to deliver on the Fund objectives. Historically, applicants who worked closely with the GSMA mWomen team to develop their applications have been considered more competitive by the Selection Panel than those who did not.

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

## Assistance provided by the GSMA mWomen Team

1. Concept note stage
   GSMA mWomen will host webinars to provide additional detail about the Innovation Fund and to answer questions about how to design a project and prepare concept notes.
   Details of the webinars are to be found at: www.mwomen.org. The slides and recording will also be made available on the website after the webinars have taken place.
   The GSMA mWomen team is also available to provide light-touch advice and support to all applicants during the concept note stage. Please write to the team at mWomen@gsma.com if you would like to avail of this opportunity.

2. Application stage
   The GSMA mWomen team will provide in-depth support to those organisations invited to submit applications. Historically, the applicants who avail of this and work closely with the team have been more successful than those who have not.

3. Grant implementation stage
   The GSMA mWomen team will provide on-going support and oversight during grant implementation. The type and extent of this assistance will be agreed once the grant has been awarded.

## Next steps and key dates

Key dates for this round are as follows; all deadlines are 5pm UK time:

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| Deadline for concept note submission: | Friday, 1st November, 2013 |
| Invitations to submit applications distributed: | Friday, 15th November, 2013 |
| Deadline for Application submission: | Friday, 10th January, 2014 |
| Grant awards announced to applicants | early February, 2014 |
| Grant agreements signed: | mid-February, 2014 |

Please refer to the Innovation Fund for Mobile Network Operators term sheet for more details. Do not 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!