GSMA mWomen Innovation Fund
Round Four: NGO Grants
Overview

September 2013

Introduction

The GSMA mWomen Programme is pleased to announce the launch of the next round of Innovation Fund grants for Non-Governmental Organisations ("NGOs"). Please note that, in order to be eligible, NGOs must be legally permitted to operate in the country of project implementation and must have at least two years of unqualified, audited financial history.

This round comprises three to four grants, valued up to US$ 140,000 each for projects up to six months long. The grants are intended to provide seed funding for NGOs to design and launch an economically sustainable product/service, distribution model or marketing campaign (an 'offering') that increases women's access to and use of mobile phones and value-added services ('VAS'). There are two main ways of doing this:

1. Develop content or a service that is life-enhancing for resource-poor women, which can be widely disseminated via mobile. This could take place in the domain of health, agriculture, access to finance, entrepreneurship, education, etc. OR:
2. Support a mobile network operator ("MNO") in the design and launch of an offering that will increase resource-poor women's access to and use of mobile. The NGO's contribution could be done through generating actionable consumer insights, using grassroots networks to access the target communities, running educational campaigns, etc.

In both cases, it is required that the NGO is in partnership with an MNO. The concept note should outline who the MNO partner is, the role it would play and its economic incentive for doing so. By application stage, the operator partnership must be formalised and the Selection Panel will require written evidence of the commitment of the proposed MNO partner to the project.

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 mobiles:

1) MNOs: 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 (described in this document): 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 MNO 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 for NGOs are to provide seed funding in order to:

- Accelerate the use of mobile technology to achieve development-related goals, specifically the empowerment of resource-poor women
- Provide solutions to the barriers to women's adoption and use of mobile phones and VAS
- Generate lessons and models of success which can be shared with the wider development community, as well as mobile operators

The definition of success for the Innovation Fund is:

- An increase in the number of women who have access to mobile services
- An increase in the availability of relevant, life-enhancing VAS for women
- A larger set of proven approaches for addressing the needs of resource-poor women and reducing the barriers to the adoption of mobile phones

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

- Design and launch of an economically 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

Key attributes: economically sustainable, at scale and replicable

Given that the Fund aims to build evidence about sustainable models for serving women, each project should not only generate evidence of social value, but also demonstrate a clear plan for sustainability beyond the grant period. Applicants must hence outline the operator's economic incentive for participation in the project (for example, through revenues generated by mobile money transfers or the sending of SMS messages, reduced churn, etc.)

It is also crucial that projects have the potential to reach resource-poor women at a large scale (i.e. regional, national or global) and contain elements which can be replicated in other geographies.

The application process

The Fund employs a two-stage application process:

1. Concept Note Stage
   The first stage includes preparation of a brief concept note outlining the proposed project, the MNO partnership, the target number of women reached and the plan for sustainability. An independent Fund Manager then reviews concept notes to assess 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 unable to provide individual guidance and feedback during concept note stage.

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:

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 NGOs 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!