



USAID Ibitabo Kuri Twese

*Implemented by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)
Funded by The United States Agency for International Development*

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS Catalytic Grant Funding Opportunity RFA Number: 2024-01

RFA Release Date: December 20, 2024

Deadline for Questions: January 10, 2025

Deadline for RFA Submission: January 27, 2025

Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) is announcing the opening of a Request for Applications (RFA) for applicants to submit business concepts for the co-funding of catalytic, market-based initiatives that accelerate the growth of the private open market for teaching and learning materials (TLM) in Rwanda.

This RFA is open to private sector entities, civil society organizations, and/or those independently registered as Rwandan entities. Applicants will include (but not be limited to) private organizations operating in or supporting the book publishing sector such as: publishers, printers, booksellers/retailers, industry associations, non-governmental organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), financial service providers, as well as providers of business development services or education and training.

All queries in regard to this RFA announcement should be directed by email to the IKT HR and Operations Specialist at ryp@edc.org by January 10, 2025, 16:00 EAT. Answers to questions will be published on the same platform that this RFA is published. In addition, applicants will be invited to an Informational Session on January 15, 2025 open to all interested applicants, for an opportunity to seek clarification on the nature and requirements of this RFA.

EDC will only consider applications submitted electronically by email to the IKT HR and Operations Specialist at ryp@edc.org by January 27, 2025. All applications will be acknowledged by email response to the sender. All email communication including the submission of the application should have the subject: RFA Catalytic Grants Fund.

EDC expects to award multiple grants to the Applicants whose applications conform to this RFA and offer the best value for money.

This RFA is being issued under the USAID Ibitabo Kuri Twese (IKT) Activity, implemented by EDC under Cooperative Agreement Number AID- 720-696-23-CA-00003, in support of the USAID Mission in Rwanda. Applicants will have no relationship with USAID under the terms of any grant resulting from this RFA. All questions regarding this RFA must be

directed to EDC. All costs for the preparation and submission of an application are at the applicant's expense. Application preparation costs are not reimbursable.

This RFA has the following sections:

- I. Purpose of the RFA
- II. Scope of Work – Catalytic Grants Fund
- III. Funding Parameters and Project Timeline
- IV. Eligibility Requirements
- V. Proposal Submission Timeline and Instructions
- VI. Grant Application Instructions
- VII. Cost Proposal Preparation Instructions
- VIII. Disclaimers
- IX. Evaluation Process and Evaluation Criteria
- X. Terms of Application
- XI. Certifications and Assurances
- XII. Mandatory and as Applicable Standard Provisions

RFA attachments include:

Attachment 1. Technical Application Form

Attachment 2. Budget Template, inclusive of: budget summary spreadsheet, budget detail spreadsheet

I. PURPOSE OF THE RFA

Education Development Center (EDC) is one of the world's leading nonprofit research and development firms. Established in 1958, EDC designs, delivers and evaluates innovative programs to address some of the world's most urgent challenges in education, health, and economic opportunity.

Education Development Center (EDC) seeks applicants to submit co-financing proposals for catalytic, market-based initiatives that will accelerate the growth of the private open market for teaching and learning materials (TLM) in Rwanda. This co-funding opportunity is being offered as part of the 3-year USAID-funded Ibitabo Kuri Twese Project (IKT) project. A major component of the IKT project is to encourage the growth of a home-grown Rwandan book publishing sector that increases the quantity, quality, affordability, and accessibility of TLM in schools, homes, and communities.

For the purposes of the IKT project, the definition of teaching and learning materials (TLM) includes both physical and digital learning materials and are comprised primarily of: textbooks and other supplementary materials such as storybooks, chapter books, decodable readers, leveled readers, supplementary readers, interactive e-learning materials, and other reading materials for use by children.

This RFA focuses on teaching and learning materials provided by the **open private market**,¹ which involves the private production and sales of all supplementary materials demanded by private schools, families, NGOs, churches, hospitals, and other private institutions. The open TLM market involves private actors who produce, publish, print, distribute, and/or sell TLM on the open private market. (Note: This RFA does not apply to activities related to the provision of textbooks that are funded and produced by the Rwanda Education Board (REB) and distributed to public schools.)

II. SCOPE OF WORK: CATALYTIC GRANTS FUND

A. Objectives of the IKT Catalytic Grants Fund

The Catalytic Grants Fund is a co-funding mechanism intended to accelerate the growth of the private open market for teaching and learning materials (TLM) in Rwanda. The IKT Activity will provide co-financing to private actors in the TLM market system—including publishers, printers, booksellers/retailers, industry associations, non-governmental organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), financial service providers, as well as providers of business development services or education and training.

The Catalytic Grants Fund intends to support business concepts that advance one or more of the following four objectives:

¹ The open TLM market channel is distinguished from the school-based TLM market channel, which focuses largely on the production of government textbooks, and to a lesser extent other supplementary materials, for distribution to public schools. The school-based TLM channel is driven by public funding, and the value chain is largely controlled by the Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) which is responsible for all school textbook production in Rwanda.

- 1) **Increase the availability of high quality and affordable TLMs** for primary and pre-primary level learners through market-driven approaches;
- 2) **Expand access to TLM by primary and pre-primary level learners**, including expanding **distribution and retail channels** to districts outside of Kigali;
- 3) **Increase availability of adapted materials** to meet the needs of primary- and pre-primary level learners with disabilities, including learners with visual or hearing impairments (e.g., through the subsidized procurement of specialized equipment, the development of new products, or for the adaptation/ development of curriculum); or
- 4) **Spur increased private sector investment** in the TLM open market.

B. Core Principles of the Catalytic Grants Fund

- (1) **Co-Financing:** This is a co-financing mechanism. This Catalytic Grants Fund requires at least a 50% minimum matching investment, either in-cash and/or in-kind contribution, from applicants. For example, if a partner submits a budget indicating it wishes to receive an IKT grant of \$10,000; they must also demonstrate a unique commitment of \$5,000 of their own funds (cash or in-kind) to be considered for the partnership. Cost applications must address their ability to leverage resources as follows:
 - Amount of co-financing investment by the applicant;
 - Amount of co-financing investment by other partners (if applicable); and
 - Amount of grant funding requested from IKT
- (2) **Evidence of Impact:** All applicants must be able to estimate the expected quantifiable impact of the catalytic grant funding in terms of: (1) increased availability of high quality and affordable TLM for primary and pre-primary level learners; (2) Expanded access to TLM by primary and pre-primary level learners, including expanding distribution and retail channels (especially those in districts outside of Kigali); (3) Increased availability of adapted materials to meet the needs of primary and pre-primary level learners with disabilities, including learners with visual or hearing impairments; and/or (4) Increased private sector investment in the TLM open market. Refer to Table 1 for details. Selected applicants will be expected to report the progress towards impact during grant implementation, and the impact following the completion of the project.
- (3) **Potential for Market Viability and Scale:** All applications must be able to demonstrate market viability, that is, how likely the proposed innovation, product, or service will be profitable and sustained in the TLM market. Applicants are highly encouraged to strengthen linkages across the value chain as a means to ensure market viability. For example: publishers may enter into long-term sales agreements with retailers; booksellers may partner with teachers or parents' associations to reach new companies or increase sales; OPDs may form partnerships with publishing companies; financial institutions may partner with associations from the TLM sector to reach new clients; or other linkages may be formed. To the extent possible, applications will demonstrate how successful projects will be able to scale its impact, e.g. to other geographic locations, customer segments, or other end-markets.

- (4) **Cost-Effectiveness:** Winning applications will demonstrate value for money, in terms of: (a) the amount of funding required by USAID IKT Activity, (b) the relative contributions in matching funding offered by the applicant and its partners, and (c) the expected impact, sustainability, and scaling that result from the grant funding.

C. Expected Outcomes

All proposals must be able to demonstrate their contribution to one or more of the following outcomes provided in Table 1:

Table 1. Measurable Outcomes to be Achieved by the Catalytic Grants

Increased sales (RwF value, volume of products) of TLM products for primary and pre-primary level learners that are gender sensitive, reflect Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and/or that reach young learners with disabilities
Increased number of new TLM products developed that are targeted to for primary or pre-primary level learners and are gender sensitive, reflect Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and/or that reach learners living with disabilities
Increased number of new customers served ²
Increased sales (RwF value, volume of products) by Rwandan publishers, booksellers, retailers, and/or printers in the private open TLM market
Increased number of retail or distribution channels ³
Improved capacity of the private sector to publish, sell, or distribute TLM products targeted to primary or pre-primary level learners that are gender sensitive, reflect UDL principles, and/or are inclusive of learners with disabilities
Increased private sector investment in the TLM sector
Increased number of new financial products developed to serve the financial needs of the TLM sector

Scope of Activities

Types of Activities that IKT might fund: The following bullets provide illustrative examples of market-based solutions that IKT may support to different actors. While the following are acceptable examples, applicants are not limited to this list and are encouraged to propose other creative market-based solutions to address one or more of the outcomes listed above.

Publishers of Books/TLM, including NGOs or OPDs:

- Technical assistance services for the development of high-quality TLM that are gender sensitive and meet Universal Design for Learning guidelines⁴, that meet demand by learners with visual and hearing impairments, and/or that are tailored to needs of an under-served niche market showing high demand for such materials
- In-depth market research to better understand the kinds of TLM that are in high demand, demand by different customer segments, pricing strategies, etc.
- Training courses, including trainers, course materials, site costs, etc., for the purpose of publishing high-quality TLM that are tailored to the needs and context of the Rwandan book market and align with international standards

² Applicants that seek to expand their customer base are encouraged to consider expansion to underserved customers such as those living in rural areas or learners with disabilities.

³ For proposals that seek to expand retail channels, IKT strongly encourages grantees to consider expanding to districts outside of Kigali.

⁴ Refer to: <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/>

- Co-financing or subsidization of equipment and machinery needed to produce specialized, adapted TLM that are accessible by learners with disabilities
- Grants to OPDs for the development/adaptation of more inclusive materials, for example by subsidizing the cost of equipment such as mass braille machines.
- Funding for the adaptation/development and marketing of new digital TLM products

Retailers/ Booksellers⁵

- In-depth market research to better understand customer demand for different types of TLM
- Co-financing for the testing of innovative and market-viable sales and distribution strategies that expand sales into new markets and get more TLM in the hands of Rwandan children, especially those living outside of Kigali (considering a range of traditional and more innovative sales channels, including but not limited to: brick and mortar shops, stationery shops, pop-up shops, community central markets, supermarkets, intermediary buyers, backpack booksellers/ direct sales agents, micro-franchising, online platforms, or other cost-effective sales and distribution channels)
- Co-financing of innovative partnerships (e.g., with libraries, events, public spaces, online platforms) that increase public accessibility to educational materials
- Co-financing the introduction of new TLM products in a bookseller's inventory, as a way to pilot test the potential of a new or more diverse market

Printers:

- Co-financing or subsidization of equipment and machinery needed to produce/ print specialized, adapted TLM that are accessible by learners with disabilities
- Co-financing for the testing of innovative distribution strategies that improve last-mile printing, packing, and distribution of TLM and get more TLM in the hands of Rwandan children, especially those living outside of Kigali

Financial Service Providers:

- Funding for technical assistance and/or market research that leads to the development and roll-out of a new financial product or service that meets the financial needs of TLM market actors
- Other mechanisms that buy down the risk for financial institutions to develop and roll out a new financial product or service for the book sector

Business Service Providers or Education and Training Providers:

- Subsidies to test out cost-effective, market-based models for delivering ongoing business services, education, or training to TLM market actors, sustainably and at scale (in-person training, online courses, group-based coaching, etc.), that lead to increased volume of TLM sales or to the production of higher quality or more inclusive TLM
- Subsidies for delivering sustainable services that strengthen publisher, printer, and RCBO capacity to conduct market analysis, featuring inclusive market research
- Grant financing to a higher education institution to develop business courses tailored to the needs of the book sector

Any or all TLM actors:

⁵ Only in certain special cases, a portion of management and staff salaries and other operating expenses will be covered, provided that those expenses are for temporary purposes.

- Marketing events, learning seminars, workshops, conferences or other events organized by the applicant that directly increase access, affordability, quality, or inclusiveness of TLM
- Any other allowable direct costs that may be approved by IKT⁶

What IKT would not consider: The following list provides some types of projects that are not a good fit for the objectives of the Catalytic Grant funding opportunity:

- Funds to cover ongoing operational costs for normal day-to-day business activities;
- Investments in physical infrastructure with limited potential to scale or unable to demonstrate cost-effectiveness (e.g. construction of a building, infrastructure upgrades);
- Basic research with no evidence of how the findings will be taken to market;
- General training or professional development opportunities that do not directly connect to measurable outcomes listed in Table 1;
- Investments that directly support the government of Rwanda;
- Development of planning, diagnostic, and other tools that are difficult to link directly to measurable impacts on expanding the quality, affordability, accessibility of TLM.

III. FUNDING PARAMETERS AND TIMELINE

Anticipated Investment Funding: IKT will issue performance-based grants ranging between \$100 - \$25,000 United States Dollar (USD) each (equivalent amount in RWF), to establish partnerships with eligible organizations for meeting the objectives stated in Section II of this RFA. Priority will be given to proposals that demonstrate cost effectiveness, in accordance with section II.B. IKT anticipates granting approximately 25 awards with an average size award of roughly USD \$10,000 each. IKT welcomes proposals with budgets of all sizes within the USD \$100 - \$25,000 range; it anticipates awarding a sizeable number of grants to proposals below the average budget range, and it will award relatively fewer grants on the higher end of the budget range. EDC reserves the right to change these proportions based on the type and nature of applications received.

Timeline: The grants program will fund activities that vary in duration, ranging on average of 3-6 months and up to a 12-month duration. Funds will be provided in tranches, dependent on successful completion of milestones to be agreed upon during grant negotiations. Grant funding is further subject to availability of IKT funds.

EDC recognizes that grants may not fully achieve all measurable outcomes within the period of the award. For example, a retailer selling a new TLM product may experience an increase in sales only after several months, but may expect a continued increase in sales over time, beyond the project period. To the extent possible, applicants must estimate the expected outcomes during the immediate project period; outcomes beyond that period may be projected outward as a separate calculation.

IV. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Organization Type: Applicants must be private organizations (private businesses, associations, non-governmental organizations, or other) that are legally recognized and registered to operate in Rwanda at the time of award. In order for applicants to be eligible to

⁶ Only in certain special cases, a portion of management and staff salaries and other operating expenses will be covered, provided that those expenses are for temporary purposes.

receive USAID funds, they must have adequate financial controls, policies, and procedures. No funds shall be paid as a profit to any recipient that is a commercial organization.

Requirement for Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): EDC is unable to make a subaward to an entity unless the entity has provided its UEI to EDC. Subrecipients are not required to complete full registration in SAM.gov to obtain a UEI. Applicants who do not have a UEI at the time of application should plan to obtain it before awarding process in case they are selected for the grant. For information on registering a new entity or obtaining a new UEI in SAM.gov visit https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0038643.

Geographic Location/ Districts of Intervention: Grant-funds shall be used for activities within Rwanda. Grant applications may cover more than one district.

V. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants will submit their proposal in two parts: (1) Technical Application, and (2) Cost Proposal. Applicants must read the RFA in its entirety and complete and submit Attachment 1: Technical Application Template, and Attachment 2: Budget Template, as per the instructions provided in this RFA. Grant Applications that are not completely filled out may result in rejection of the application.

All costs for the preparation and submission of an application are at the applicant's expense. Application preparation costs are not reimbursable.

Applications submitted after the closing date/time will NOT be considered. Receipt of an application to this request does not constitute an award or commitment on behalf of USAID or EDC. EDC and USAID reserve the right to not provide funding to any or all of the applications received without explanation.

Applicants may submit more than one proposal.

RFA Timeline

Line	TIME	DATE	STEP
A	4:00pm, Rwanda Time	December 20, 2024	Date of Releasing RFA
B	4:00pm, Rwanda Time	January 10, 2025	Deadline for request for any clarifications from EDC. Questions must be submitted in writing via email to ryp@edc.org
C	10:00 am Rwanda Time	January 15, 2025	Informational Session for any interested applicant
D	4:00pm, Rwanda Time	January 17, 2024	Estimated date for issuance of any clarifications by EDC. All Questions will be answered in one document and published in the same platform that this RFA is published.

E	4:00pm, Rwanda Time	January 27, 2024	Deadline for submission of proposals, submitted in writing via email to ryp@edc.org
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TECHNICAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Technical Application Template

Applicants are required to submit a technical application using the Grant Application Template provided in Attachment 1. Applications may be submitted as a Microsoft Word document, or as a slide deck in Microsoft PowerPoint format.

The Technical Application comprises of four (4) parts, i.e. Parts A through D. Failure to complete all four parts of the Grant Application Template may result in rejection of the application. The Grant Application Template provides a set of maximum pages (or slides) for each part. If any parts of the applicant's proposal exceed the maximum number of pages or slides, EDC will not review the pages that go beyond the maximum page- or slide-length. The Grant Application Form requests the following information:

Part A: General Information Cover Sheet (maximum of 1 page, or 1 slide): Name and address of organization, contact information, type of organization, total grant proposal budget, total matching funds, duration of grant, districts of intervention.

Part B: Proposed Business Concept (maximum of 5 pages, or 5 slides): Explain the objective of the business concept, and how it will contribute to one or more of the four objectives of the Catalytic Grants Fund (listed in Section II.A. of the RFA). Describe the interventions that will take place under the grant funding. Explain how these interventions will lead to the expected results. Provide a brief implementation plan that indicates the sequence of interventions and the timeframe for each of those interventions. This section must also include a funding justification: why the applicant cannot execute the proposed concept on their own, without IKTs participation.

Part C: Development Impact (Result), Sustainability, and Scaling Potential (maximum of 2 pages, or 2 slides): Indicate at least one specific and measurable result that will be achieved under the program. Each result should directly refer to one of the corresponding objectives listed in section II.A. of the RFA; each result should also directly link back to one of the indicators listed in Section II.C. of the RFA. The proposal will also describe the exit strategy of the business concept. That is: how will the activities successfully continue without additional donor assistance beyond the life of the Catalytic Grant Funding? To the extent possible, describe the potential pathway to scaling the activities, including when the investment or approach will expand and by how much.

Part D: Organizational Qualifications (maximum of 2 pages, or 2 slides): Describe the organization's relevant experience in the TLM sector, and its experience or knowledge of the services needed to perform the activity. Provide the names of the key personnel (1 person recommended) who will be managing and implementing the activities, a brief description of their role and responsibilities on the project, and a brief description of their relevant experience or other qualifications that make them qualified to perform that role.

2. Technical Proposal Attachments

The following attachments are to be completed and attached to the Technical Application:

- Valid certificate of registration
- A recent institutional financial report that illustrates the operating budget of the organization. For small entities, this can be replaced by an internal cash flow report.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the key personnel (1 person) listed in your Grant Application Form
- Fully signed and dated certifications and assurances (see Section IX)
- Fully completed Excel budget and budget notes using the template provided in Attachment 2 to this RFA.

B. COST PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applicants must submit their cost proposals by providing a summary budget spreadsheet and a detailed budget spreadsheet, using the Microsoft Excel budget template provided in Attachment 2 to this RFA. Applicants must submit their cost proposal as a separate Excel file along with the Grant Application. All cost information should be in Rwandan Francs.

Budget Summary: The budget summary spreadsheet will present the total costs of the project along the following budget categories:

Budget Summary Categories

Salaries
Fringe Benefits
Consultants
Travel Transportation and Per Diem
Equipment, Materials and Supplies
Other Direct Costs

TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED FROM IKT

Co-Financing

TOTAL PROJECT COST

Use only the major budget categories presented above. If you do not need funds for any particular category, for example “consultants”, you can remove this budget line from the summary budget. **No profit or fees may be included.** Each major budget line item should include detailed line items, as described below.

Preparing the Detailed Budget:

Salaries– This category should include salaries for full or part-time employees. The proposed compensation rates should approximate the current salary for the same (or similar) positions. The individual’s name for each position, if already identified, should be mentioned, and the salary rate and level of effort against number of days or months). Please note that per USAID regulations, compensation for Personnel included in the Offeror’s proposal cannot exceed the USAID Contractor Salary Threshold (CST).

Fringe Benefits – In addition to salaries and wages, an organization may provide: Fringe benefits such as vacation days, health insurance, and retirement benefits. These may be presented as direct costs, or as a percentage of total direct costs as per the organization’s authorized overhead rate. Fringe Benefits or other compensation are calculated separately from the base salary and the budget details should present the amounts in a similar manner. If fringe benefits are paid, the types of fringe benefits and their individual costs should be disclosed. Fringe benefits vary by country, so make sure you are compliant with local labor laws.

Consultants – A consultant is a technical expert or specialist who is not your regular employee. A consultant is also a subcontractor. This section should itemize the consultant labor costs.

Travel, Transportation and Per diem – The Proposal should indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated costs. Specify the origin (city, country) and destination (city, country) for each proposed trip, duration of travel, and the number of individuals travelling. Per Diem, if paid, should be based on the Offeror’s normal travel policies and USAID travel regulations. The following cost categories should be covered and budgeted for under this line item: airfare, other travel fares (specify), lodging, per diem, vehicle fuel, vehicle repairs, taxi/other ground transport, etc. If “standard” rates are used, the source of the standard should be mentioned. **International travel is not envisaged for the grant.**

Equipment and Supplies– “Equipment – defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the recipient or subrecipient for financial statement purposes, or \$10,000. “Supplies” defined as all tangible personal property other than those described in the equipment definition. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is below the lesser of the capitalization level established by the recipient or subrecipient for financial statement purposes or \$10,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. List the item, quantity, estimated unit cost, projected source, and origin. (Note: For all equipment purchases, the “USAID Eligibility Rules for Goods and Services” will apply to any award. These rules can be found in the following website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303maa.pdf>, and mainly pertain to the “source and origin” of the items to be purchased. The geographic code is “935.”)

Other Direct Costs – Programmatic costs may include costs such as communications, supplies, postage, printing, equipment under \$10,000, etc. The narrative should provide a breakdown and support for all other direct costs.

Indirect Costs – Only non-government organizations may include indirect cost complying with the following instructions. Other applicants should direct charge indirect expenses stating the type, amount and calculation of each cost. Non-governmental organizations may include indirect costs that reflect a currently approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). In the absence of a NICRA, grantee can elect to apply the 15% de minimis rate, otherwise we will accept a rate calculation that has been certified by a public accountant or public accounting firm. Alternatively, applicants can choose to direct

charge indirect expenses. Indirect costs must be clearly stated including the basis on which they will be applied. These costs are administrative expenses related to overall general operations and are shared among projects and/or functions. Examples include executive oversight, accounting, grants management, legal expenses, utilities, and facility maintenance. In so far as possible, identifiable (allocable) costs should be requested and justified in the proposal as direct costs, including those for dedicated ongoing management, facilities, and support.

Co-Financing – Co-financing refers to a financial arrangement when a recipient contributes its own resources (cash or in kind) to the total cost of the project. These contributions may include: volunteer services, donated employee time, donated supplies, cash contributions, donated equipment, building or land, or project co-funding.

Budget Notes:

Budget notes must explain each line item indicated in the detailed budget spreadsheet, including the cost per item, quantity of items, and rationale. The budget narrative should be of sufficient detail so that someone unfamiliar with your organization or the activity could review and adequately understand and grasp the assumptions, reasonableness and calculation method used. All applicants must follow the budget template provided in Attachment 2 of this RFA, in which budget notes will be presented as a separate tab on the Excel spreadsheet.

Other Cost Proposal Instructions:

Applicants must take note that:

- The grantee cannot budget or purchase any ineligible or restricted goods such as vehicles or pharmaceuticals.
- Indirect costs are not allowed to be budgeted unless the Applicant has an approved NICRA or a rate calculation that has been certified by a public accountant or public accounting firm.
 - If neither a NICRA nor a rate calculation certified by a public accountant or public accounting firm is available, Grantee may elect to direct charge their indirect expenses. These would be budgeted within the line items in which they were incurred.
- Grants may not be used to fund construction.
- Grants may not be used to compensate or reimburse personnel who are currently employed by the Government of Rwanda without prior approval from USAID. Requests for waiver approval must be made through IKT.

All proposed costs and estimates must be reasonable, and allowable following the U.S. Government's Cost Principles established in 2CFR200, Subpart E. All proposed costs must be directly applicable to performing the work under the award and budgeted amounts should not exceed the market cost/value of an item or service.

Although the budget is an estimate or prediction and the assumptions contained in the budget may change, for EDC to issue an award, the budget must contain fairly detailed assumptions regarding rates and expected quantities/levels of effort. Reasonable and minor changes in rates or quantities due to circumstances beyond the control of the organization will be considered and generally will be allowable.

VI. EVALUATION PROCESS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will undergo a preliminary review by the EDC evaluation committee for completeness and responsiveness. Responsive applications will be submitted on time and include all information and attachments requested in the RFA.—Non-responsive applications may be considered ineligible and may be rejected from further consideration.

Applications deemed responsive will go through a pre-qualification stage. Proposals will be evaluated based on 100 possible points. The relative weighting of the various sections of the grant application will be according to the the following evaluation criteria and their corresponding values below, listed in Table 2:

Table 2. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Considerations	# of Points
Strength and clarity of the concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposal clearly respond to the objectives outlined in the Scope of Work (Section II of the RFA)? • Do the proposed interventions clearly link to the objectives and expected results? • Is there a realistic, well thought-out implementation plan, with the right sequence of interventions and timeframe needed to achieve results? 	25 points
Impact, Sustainability, and Scaling Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the applicant clearly state the expected impact, with quantifiable targets and benchmarks that align with Table 1 of the RFA? • Does the proposal offer a plan for longer-term market viability? Is there a demonstrated plan to sustain the project activities beyond the duration of the grant? • Does the applicant sufficiently describe how the impact of the grant-funded activities may be replicated or scaled beyond the duration of the grant? • Is there sufficient justification of why the applicant cannot execute the proposed concept on their own, without IKTs participation? 	25 points
Organizational Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the applicant (and any proposed partners) demonstrate relevant experience in the TLM sector, and experience in or knowledge of the services needed to perform the activity? • Is the proposed key personnel sufficiently qualified to implement and manage the activity? • Does the applicant demonstrate financial management capability to manage an award with the budget amount requested by IKT? 	10 points
Cost-effectiveness* and Budget Realism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposal offer value for money in terms of the amount of funds requested from IKT compared to the level of co-financing contributed by the applicant, and compared to the expected impact? • Is the activity budget realistic and reflect the costs for implementing similar activities in Rwanda? 	40 points

Total	100 points
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** Applications should meet U.S. Government cost principles of reasonableness, allocability and allowability. Awards will go to the proposal that offers the best value for money, and the final award amount will be negotiated between EDC and the prospective grantee.*

At the conclusion of the initial evaluation process, EDC will notify all applicants of their review status. Successful applicants will enter a co-creation and negotiation phase. Should an applicant move on to the co-creation phase, it does not guarantee that a grant will be obtained. During the co-creation phase, EDC will engage the applicant in the clarification and fine-tuning of the proposal concept and implementation plan. This process will involve web calls, email correspondence, and/or site visits and one-on-one discussions with the applicant. EDC will make all efforts to minimize the burden on applicants during the co-creation phase.

At any stage of the review process, unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of decision in writing.

Successful applicants who pass the co-creation and negotiation phase will receive a draft grant agreement document for review. Once the grant agreement document has been prepared to the satisfaction of both parties, the grant will be awarded, marking the start of the project.

VII. DISCLAIMERS

EDC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to modify the request, to alter the selection process in any way, ask for additional information from applicants, reject any and all applications and/or modify or amend the scope of the proposals submitted. The release of this RFA is not a commitment to award a grant.

Each Applicant acknowledges and agrees that the preparation of all materials for submission to EDC and all presentations made by the Applicant are at the Applicant's sole cost and expense EDC shall not, under any circumstances, be responsible for any cost or expense incurred by an Applicant. All documentation and/or materials submitted with a proposal shall become and remain the property of EDC.

Responsive applications should be submitted on time and include all information requested.

VIII. TERMS OF APPLICATION

1. Application Validity

Your application must remain valid for a minimum of 120 days. Applications should be signed by an official authorized to do so.

2. Language

The application, as well as correspondence and related documents should be in English.

3. Negotiations

The Project reserves the right to request additional information and conduct negotiations with any potential applicant prior to awarding a grant.

4. Representations and Certifications

The application shall be accompanied by any requested representations, assurances and certifications (section IX) completed and signed by an official authorized by the applicant.

5. Executive Order on Terrorism Finance

The applicant is reminded that U.S. laws prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the recipient to ensure compliance with such laws. The Treasury Department's list of Specially Designated Nationals appears at www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sdn.

IX. CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

I. CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal Cooperative Agreement, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this

Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned must require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients must certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

"The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure."

I. PROHIBITION ON ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS FOR COVERED COUNTRIES AND INDIVIDUALS (ADS 206)

EDC reserves the right to terminate this Agreement, to demand a refund or take other appropriate measures if the Grantee is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140. The undersigned must review USAID ADS 206 to determine if any certifications are required for Key

Individuals or Covered Participants.

If there are COVERED PARTICIPANTS: EDC reserves the right to terminate assistance to or take other appropriate measures with respect to, any participant approved by EDC who is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140.

2. CERTIFICATION REGARDING SUPPORT TO TERRORISTS

(1) The undersigned represents, to the best of its knowledge, that:

Except as otherwise disclosed to the Agreement Officer in writing and included with this application, the applicant did not, within the previous three years, knowingly engage in transactions with, or provide material support or resources to, any individual or entity who was, at the time, subject to sanctions administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) within the U.S. Department of Treasury pursuant to the Global Terrorism Sanctions Regulations (31 CFR Part 594), and the Foreign Terrorist Organizations Sanctions Regulations (31 CFR Part 597), or sanctions established by the United Nations Security Council, collectively, "U.S. or U.N. sanctions." Note: USAID intends to retain the information disclosed to the Agreement Officer pursuant to this paragraph in any award file and use it in determining whether to provide the applicant with an assistance award. USAID will not make such information available publicly unless required by law.

(2) The representation in paragraph (1) does not apply to:

- a. Transactions entered into or material support and resources provided pursuant to an OFAC license;
- b. The furnishing of USAID funds, or USAID-financed commodities or other assistance, to the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID-funded humanitarian or development assistance, such as the recipients of food, non-food items, medical care, micro-enterprise loans or shelter, unless the applicant knew or had reason to believe that one or more of these beneficiaries was subject to U.S. or U.N. terrorism-related sanctions; or
- c. The procurement of goods and/or services by the Recipient acquired in the ordinary course of business through contract or purchase, such as utilities, rents, office supplies, or gasoline, unless the applicant knew, or had reason to believe, that a vendor or supplier of such goods and services was subject to U.S. or U.N. sanctions.

This certification includes express terms and conditions of the award, and any violation of it will be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID. This certification does not preclude any other remedy available to USAID.

(3) For purpose of this certification:

- a. "Material support and resources" means currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safehouses, false documentation or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials.

- i. “Training” means instruction or teaching designed to impart a specific skill, as opposed to general knowledge.
 - ii. “Expert advice or assistance” means advice or assistance derived from scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge.
- b. “Entity” means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group, or subgroup.

3. Commitment to Safeguarding and Ethical Workplace

EDC affirms its steadfast commitment to uphold the highest standards of conduct, ensuring the protection of all individuals from misconduct, which encompasses harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards any violation of these rights. Grantee must have or adopt, and have available for review, a written policy for preventing sexual exploitation and abuse that, at a minimum aligns with the standards and prohibited conduct outlined in EDC’s Safeguarding Policy available at <https://www.edc.org/legal>.

Grantee is also expected to work with honesty and integrity and adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct in accordance with EDC’s The Speak Up!: Integrity Reporting and Whistleblower Policy available at <https://www.edc.org/legal>.

Investigations, Reporting, and Compliance Obligations

Grantee is required to immediately report any observed, reasonably suspected, or alleged incidents of misconduct in connection with the “[Project_Acronym]”—including but not limited to fraud, abuse, neglect, harassment, or exploitation—through EDC’s designated reporting platform, IntegrityCounts, accessible at <https://app.integritycounts.ca/org/edc>. Failure to do so may result in early termination of the agreement for failure to adhere to reporting provisions.

4. OTHER CERTIFICATIONS

As the duly authorized representative of the Grantee, I certify that the Grantee will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

5. THE GRANTEE, BY CHECKING THE APPLICABLE BOX, REPRESENTS THAT

The Grantee is a non-U.S. entity and:

has has not expended \$750,000 or more in U.S. federal funds in their last fiscal year.

does does not expect to expend \$750,000 or more in U.S. federal funds in their next fiscal year.

6. CERTIFICATION OF RECIPIENT

By signing below the recipient provides certifications and assurances for (1) the Certification Regarding Lobbying, (2) the Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for

Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206), (3) the Certification Regarding Support to Terrorists detailed above.

These certifications and assurances are given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts, or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipient by the Agency, including installment payments after such date on account of applications for Federal financial assistance which was approved before such date. The Grantee recognizes and agrees that such Federal financial assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in these assurances, and that the United States will have the right to seek judicial enforcement of these assurances. These assurances are binding on the Grantee, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign these assurances on behalf of the recipient.

Signed: _____

Name and Title: «SIGNATORY», «SIGNATORY_TITLE»

Name of Organization: «ORG_NAME»

Date: _____

X. MANDATORY AND AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS

USAID Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards to Nongovernmental Organizations can be found at

<https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mat>

Attachment 1. Grant Application Template

(Note: Applications may be submitted in Microsoft Word, or as a slide deck in Microsoft PowerPoint.)

Part A: General Information Cover Sheet (maximum of 1 page, or 1 slide):

Name of Organization:

Organization Address:

Contact Information (Name, Title, email address):

Type of Organization:

Total proposed budget requested from IKT (in RWF):

Total Matching Funds:

Duration of grant (number of months):

Districts of intervention:

Part B: Proposed Business Concept (maximum of 5 pages, or 5 slides):

- Explain the objective of the business concept, and how it will contribute to one or more of the four objectives of the Catalytic Grants Fund (listed in Section II.A. of the RFA).
- Funding Justification: Explain why the applicant cannot execute the proposed concept on their own, without IKTs participation.
- Describe the interventions that will take place under the grant funding. Explain how these interventions will lead to the expected results.
- Provide a brief implementation plan that summarizes the set of interventions, the sequence of interventions, and the timeframe for the completion of each of those interventions. (Applicants may submit a GANTT chart if they choose to do so; the GANTT chart will be considered as one of the five allotted pages.)

Part C: Development Impact (Result), Sustainability, and Scaling Potential (maximum of 2 pages, or 2 slides).

- Measurable Result(s): Indicate at least one specific and measurable result that will be achieved under the program. Each result should directly refer to one of the corresponding objectives listed in section II.A. of the RFA; each result should also directly link back to one of the indicators listed in Section II.C. of the RFA.
- Sustainability: Describe the exit strategy of the business concept: how will the activities successfully continue without additional donor assistance beyond the life of the Catalytic Grant Funding?
- Scaling Potential: To the extent possible, describe the potential pathway to scaling the activities, including when the investment or approach will expand and by how much.

Part D: Organizational Qualifications (maximum of 2 pages, or 2 slides).

- Describe the organization's relevant experience in the TLM sector.
- Describe the organization's experience or knowledge of the services needed to perform the activity.
- Provide the names of the key personnel (recommended 1 person) who will be managing and implementing the activities, and their current title and organization. For that key personnel, briefly describe their respective role and responsibilities in implementing the Catalytic Grant Fund project.

- For each key personnel proposed, briefly summarize their relevant experience or other qualifications that make them qualified to perform that role.

Attachment 2. Budget Template

Refer to the Microsoft Excel template, provided as a separate attachment to the RFA.