



Call for Proposals

SMALL INNOVATION GRANTS FOR PILOT MEDIA PROJECT IN AFRICA

BACKGROUND

Internews is an international media development organization whose mission is to empower local media worldwide to give people the news and information they need, the ability to connect, and the means to make their voices heard. Through its programs, Internews improves the reach, quality, and sustainability of local media, enabling them to better serve the information needs of their communities. Internews has worked in over 70 countries and trained more than 80,000 people in media skills. Together with local partners, our activities include establishing and supporting media outlets, journalist associations, and broadcast networks. Internews also has a special programs to improve reporting on the environment, humanitarian crises, public health and women's issues.

Internews activities in Africa are adapted to the media development needs and issues facing each country, and focus on locally relevant skills and information. They range from providing critical information to vulnerable populations in eastern Chad; to increasing accurate reporting on HIV/AIDS through training of local radio journalists in Kenya, Nigeria and Ethiopia.

In 2011, Internews Network launched a new Center for Innovation, Research & Learning aimed at maximizing the potential of digital technologies and innovative approaches to solve challenges in the rapidly changing global information and communication landscape, including humanitarian responses. This division is already supporting and coordinating field-based experimentation and research across the organization. One of the activities that will be carried out in all the different regions Internews works in under the new Innovation Center, is the development of innovative pilot projects.

A CALL FOR SMALL PILOT PROJECT PROPOSALS

Internews Africa Region will consider funding pilot projects proposed by local NGOs, software companies and/or mobile phone operators, local media outlets and individuals from various regions. Creative, innovative ideas that involve the sharing and exchange of information will be considered for funding. The incorporation of new media into project activities focused on the use of text messaging, social media, mobile phones, webcasting, podcasting, IVR systems, mBanking, mapping, crowdsourcing or other such methodologies is highly encouraged. A special effort will be made to ensure that the grant awarded is complementary to the overall Internews Africa Region.

The pilot projects should be no more than 4 months in duration, with the possibility of extending for an additional month to carry out a research on the innovation piloted. Examples of topics for the pilot project may include proposing technical solutions to issues around (but not limited to): health, Diaspora remittances, agriculture, mining and extractive industry, refugees and IDPs, and community media sustainability.

ELIGIBILITY

The fund is available for local NGOs, software companies and/or mobile phone operators, local media outlets and individuals from various regions. The pilot must be carried out in Sub-Saharan Africa. Organizations/Individuals may submit more than one proposal for various projects, but each organization is only eligible for one grant. These small innovation grants will range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. Internews reserves the right to fund parts or all of the activities of a particular proposal, to fund one or more than one proposal, or to fund no proposals under this call.

APPLICATION

Potential grantees should submit a brief project proposal of maximum 3 pages. Project proposals must be received by June 30th, 2011 via email at pilotafrica@internews.org. Shortlisted applicants only will be notified by July 10th, 2011 for follow up discussions to defend their proposal. After the interviews, selected grantees will be notified by July 20th. The pilot project should start on August 1st, 2011 and implementation must be completed by Nov. 30th, 2011.

Project Proposal Requirements for Grants:

- No more than 3 pages, as concise as possible.
- Organizational and key personnel background, including previous relevant experience if any
- What is the problem your innovation will address
- What solution do you propose to address this problem
- Demonstrate how the project is innovative and unique.
- Main objectives, activities and expected results.
- Project planned methodology.
- Project duration – clear start and end date
- Detailed budget and other potential sources of support.

Principle Selection Criteria:

- Must be an innovative project, in terms of technology used, or in terms of approach or methodology.
- Clearly defined project objectives that relate to the goals of Internews Network.
- Realistic and measurable project outputs and results.
- Success or failure of the innovation/technology is not a determining factor for selection. Proposals should indicate how the lessons learned will further refine activities, research etc.
- Proficiency of project staff and involved experts.
- Accuracy and effectiveness of project costs.
- Emphasis on media sustainability, diaspora, mBanking, crowdsourcing, extractive industries are favored; although other topics will be considered
- Emphasis on local media favored.
- Registered organizations, media outlets, media related associations, software companies/developers or local NGOs, web developer groups and experts with proven track records or individuals are encouraged to apply.
- Projects aimed at partisan political purposes will not be supported
- Proposals must be in English.
- Full contact information including representative individual's name, phone, address, and email must be included with the proposal submission.
- Costs incurred before the official grant period begins will not be reimbursed (including costs incurred for proposal preparation).

Research Component and M&E

Internews will implement a research project in tandem with and at the end of the pilot project with the aim of sharing lessons learned, making the pilot replicable in other countries or contexts and providing an overall evaluation of the pilot. An Internews researcher may conduct on-site field visits and complete an on-site monitoring report that will be part of the M&E of the project and of the research report. Due to the nature of the pilot project, it is envisioned that Internews Africa Region will maintain regular contact and grant follow-up with all of its grantees.