

**Q&A for Submission of Proposals**

**Specific Questions on Calls for Proposals:** **“Improving access to lifesaving tools for prevention, diagnosis, and management of pre-eclampsia and maternal anemia”**

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| Question Answer | | |
| Does Call for Proposals 1 require consortia? | | Yes. Unitaid expects to see proposals with one lead implementer and a set of consortium members.  A consortium is a group of partners who have agreed to implement the project together on the basis of clearly defined agreements, which set out the basis on which all but the lead implementer is a sub-grantee with no direct legal relationship to Unitaid. More detail is provided in the General Questions below. |
| How many consortium partners can we involve in the proposal? | The number of consortium partners included is at the discretion of the lead implementer submitting a proposal. Unitaid recommends lean consortia with well defined roles and responsibilities. Consortia with more than 5 or 6 members should be well justified, given the management complexity this entails for the lead implementer.  It should be noted that the lead of a consortium has overall responsibility for project implementation, including coordination of consortium members and communications with/reporting to Unitaid. | |
| Are there any geographic limitations? | Implementation should target low and middle-income countries. Disease burden and impact potential should be considered during country selection as well as other specific criteria listed in the Call scope. | |
| My organization is solely working in one country, how can we address the requirement for multi-country proposals? | Unitaid recommends forming a consortium with other partners that would expand the geographic scope of a proposal to ensure it meets the multi-country proposal requirement. | |
| Is there a recommendation on the minimum or maximum number of countries or regions that should be considered? | Multi-country proposals are desired. Unitaid does not require a specific number of countries, but encourages applicants to consider many factors in country selection, including geographic diversity, disease burden, and potential for global impact. Implementation work in a range of settings will generate more diverse learnings and increase their transferability to other contexts. Please see call scope specifics on country selection, including the importance of demonstrating a consortium’s geographic footprint and ability to pivot to alternate settings, if requested. | |
| What type of research do you fund? | For these Calls for Proposals, the type of research requested is mainly implementation research and product validation studies. Please see the Call scope for more details. | |
| Can proposals include collaborations with industry? | Yes, we expect to see collaborations with industry in these proposals, particularly those applying to Call for Proposals 2. | |
| For Call for Proposals 1, does scale-up need to be nationwide or can it be more local as a first phase to demonstrate scalability? | Unitaid expects to see pilot scale-up in these proposals at the subnational level, with clear plans for advancing towards scalability at the national level in implementation countries. | |
| Are matching funds from other resources required for sustainability and scale approaches? | No matching funds are not required, but Unitaid expects that proposals will demonstrate a financial pathway to scale through project activities. Unitaid expects that proponents will select countries with demonstrated access to platforms for scale-up. Please see the criteria for country selection in Call for Proposals 1 for more details. | |
| In terms of pre-eclampsia is the provision of tools and devices for small or premature babies in scope? For example, in situations where a baby may need to be delivered early as a solution | Priority products are highlighted in the Call scope in bold. We anticipate that the programs resulting from this call will focus on delivery of products during the antenatal, and to some extent, the intrapartum period. Thus, it does not include provision of tools and devices for the care of small and premature babies, as those are well covered in other programs. However, small targeted efforts may be considered if country-level stakeholders consider them essential to comprehensive pre-eclampsia care packages, and they are well justified. | |
| Are proposals responding to Call for Proposals 1 expected to include supply and distribution of underutilized tools, such as prevention and diagnostic tools? | Yes, this is expected. During grant agreement development, there will be opportunities to strengthen complementarity and develop clear roles and responsibilities related to supply and distribution between grants selected for Call for Proposals 1 and 2. | |
| Are artificial or machine learning based digital tools eligible for the proposal? | Unitaid is targeting work on digital blood pressure measurement tools in Call for Proposals 2, including smart phone-based applications. Products that enhance care for pre-eclampsia and anemia, and are aligned to the scope of this Call, that incorporate artificial intelligence or machine learning are eligible. | |
| Are community organizations eligible for submission with a southern partner while involving public partners or health care departments responsible for primary health care? | Yes. | |
| Can I apply to the Calls for Proposals as an individual? | No. | |
| Are private institutions eligible to apply? | Yes. | |
| Are university-connected health systems eligible to apply (e.g., division of OB/GYN doing innovative work in preeclampsia) | Yes. | |
| Please clarify Unitaid’s preference for South-based lead implementers for Call for Proposals 1 and how proposals will be considered? | For Call for Proposals #1, Unitaid is explicitly seeking a project from a consortium that is led by a South-based implementer. We also support the meaningful inclusion of South-based sub-implementers, where feasible and relevant, in proposed project implementation consortia. To be clear, Unitaid’s objective of progressively retaining an increased number of lead implementing partners from the Global South does not preclude proposals that are led by or including partners from the Global North. Transitional leadership models that transfer leadership from a Global North- to South-based consortium partner during implementation are welcome as well, including capacity building activities. | |
| How does Unitaid categorize UN agencies in this call? Do you consider them as Global North partners? They are headquartered in the North, but what if one of their regional offices applied? | Unitaid defines a South-based lead agency as one that is headquartered in a World Bank classified low- or middle-income country. When an organization has a decentralized structure (e.g. autonomous country offices), the location where the signing entity is based determines its ‘nationality’.  As such, we would not typically consider a proposal from a country office of a UN agency that has its head-office in a high-income country as South-based. | |
| For Call for Proposal 2, is it expected that 50% of the budget also goes to South-based organizations? | Unitaid does not require that 50% of the budget go to South-based organizations, but the proportion of funding allocated will be considered during proposal selection. | |
| If our organization is an INGO with headquarters based in the US but the implementation country is based in LMIC, are we eligible to apply? | Yes, the organization would be eligible to apply, but to be clear, the organization would not qualify as a South-based implementer. Unitaid’s definition of a South-based implementer is an organization that is headquartered in a low-or middle-income country. | |
| Will Unitaid do any partner matching as part of the Call to ensure the connectedness of the different elements? | Unitaid prefers to allow proponents to construct their own consortia based on comparative advantage and the areas of work and skillsets required. Proposals will be evaluated on their individual merits as a comprehensive response to each Call for Proposals. | |
| Will Unitaid consider funding different elements of Call for Proposal 2, if different consortia are felt to be better suited for different parts? | Yes, proponents can apply to one or all outlined areas in Call for Proposals 2. Unitaid has a stated preference for proposals that include a consortium capable of comprehensively covering all areas. However, if a suitable comprehensive proposal is not identified, then Unitaid will consider funding different elements of Call for Proposals 2. | |
| Is there a specific format of the proposal required? | Yes, please see the proposal template available on the Call webpage for [Call for Proposals 1](https://unitaid.org/uploads/Unitaid-Grant-Proposal-Form_2024_MNH_CP1.docx) and [Call for Proposals 2](https://unitaid.org/uploads/Unitaid-Grant-Proposal-Form_2024_MNH_CP2.docx). | |
| Is there a minimum amount of funding the project must request? | No, there is no stated minimum funding the project must request. However, the indicative funding allocations are provided in the Call scope. | |
| The proposal must be in English or French? | The proposal must be submitted in English. | |
| Under the research component, do you accept step-wedge trials across countries? | Research approach should be designed in a way that can sufficiently enable increased uptake of recommended products. Research approaches should be strong enough to generate compelling evidence that responds to gaps identified by the international community. | |
| Is Point of Care Ultrasound eligible and within scope of the Call for Proposals. | Point-of -care ultrasound is not within scope of the Call for Proposals | |
| Which anemia biomarker activities are in scope for Call for Proposals #2 | For point-of-care biomarkers, proponents should undertake activities that enable accelerated development and market access of impactful devices. This could activities such as supporting development of a target product profile (TPP), final stage activities to enable market entry, establishing regulatory pathways for products, or market preparatory activities to accelerate availability | |

General Questions

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| Question Answer | | |
| What is the proposal process under the Unitaid Operating Model? | | 1) Once a Call is issued, applicants are invited to attend a webinar on a date specified in the call for proposals text. The webinar presents the call scope, content, and process and answers questions submitted ahead of time using the online webinar registration form. Webinar attendance is not a mandatory requirement, however is strongly encouraged as it allows proponents to obtain further information and ask questions. A webinar recording is posted on the call for proposals web-page for all those unable to attend real time.  2) Full proposals must be submitted electronically using the  Unitaid proposal form by the indicated closing date.  3) Proposals received are then assessed and eventually submitted to the Joint Review Committee (JRC), composed of representatives of the Unitaid Secretariat and the Proposal Review Committee (PRC).  4) The recommendations of the JRC must be endorsed by the Unitaid Board for a “go-ahead” to start developing a grant agreement. This endorsement does not mean and should not be perceived as involving any obligation on the part of Unitaid to fund the project.  5) Successful applicants receive a formal “go-ahead” for their proposal and will be requested to develop it into a full grant agreement.  6) The full grant agreement is reviewed by the JRC and submitted to the Unitaid Board for funding approval.  For further details please refer to the Unitaid Proposal Process document that can be found at <http://unitaid.org/calls> |
| Can a proposal that includes middle-income countries in scope be submitted? | | Yes. While the primary focus of Unitaid investments is in low-income countries, proposals that include middle-income countries in scope are eligible. In principle, Unitaid looks for proposals that accrue benefit to those most in need (e.g., those in low-income countries, vulnerable populations). To this end, proposals should clearly demonstrate the use of innovative and sustainable approaches and are expected to outline a concrete and clear pathway to results and impact. Applicants should also demonstrate that their proposal is feasible and that they have the capacity to implement it.  Across its portfolio of projects, at least 85% of Unitaid funds dedicated to commodity purchase must be spent in low-income countries. Middle-income countries are also eligible for inclusion in Unitaid-funded projects, however for any proposed project that includes a greater than 15% proportion of funding for commodity purchases in middle-income countries, the justification should be clearly stated, in line with the objectives of the Call for Proposals. Wherever possible, funding in middle-income countries should be used to increase access to commodities for vulnerable groups. Proposals focused on middle income countries will need to explain how low and lower-middle income countries will benefit from the interventions, at least indirectly, and what efforts will be made to ensure these indirect benefits materialize. |
| Can a proposal that focuses only on one or two countries be submitted? | Yes, in certain circumstances. Unitaid works through market-based interventions to have global market and public health impact. This may require work in more than one or two countries. However, an intervention in a single country (or in a very limited number of countries) can be supported when the proponent can make the case, with clear supporting evidence, that such an intervention could have global impact or when the problem addressed is regional in nature. | |
| Who can submit a proposal? | Unitaid interventions are delivered through implementers; that is, Unitaid does not implement interventions directly and has no in- country presence. For proposals that include country implementation, proposal submitted should demonstrate that the organization has the capability and capacity to deliver the proposed work in project countries and that the intervention will have a global/regional effect. | |
| Are NGOs and civil society organizations eligible to submit a proposal? | Yes. Unitaid can provide grants to NGOs and civil society organizations. All Unitaid implementers must demonstrate their established capacity to manage their project. | |
| Can a consortium submit a proposal? | Yes, a consortium approach may be considered for the project implementation purposes. However, projects should be as lean as possible. Any consortium approach should have a strong lead organization with overall responsibility for project implementation. | |
| What constitutes a consortium? | A Consortium is a group of partners who have agreed to implement the project together on the basis of clearly defined agreements, which set out the basis on which all but the lead implementer is a sub-grantee with no direct legal relationship to Unitaid. Entities or  individuals providing services to the project on a commercial basis are service providers and not Consortium Members. Partners collaborating on the implementation of the project but that are not active part of the project design and execution are not to be considered members of the consortium but will be identified as collaborating partners. | |
| Which organization would Unitaid prefer to have in the lead for a consortium project proposal? | Should the establishment of a consortium for the project implementation purposes be necessary and substantiated, the selection of the lead agency/ organization in a consortium application is at the discretion of the consortium members. It should be noted that the lead of a consortium has overall responsibility for project implementation, including coordination of consortium members and communications with/reporting to Unitaid. They are also often the main route of funding. In determining the most suitable lead, consideration should be given to each of these factors to identify | |
|  | which organization is best suited to deliver on each of them and assume overall responsibility for project activities. The capacity of the lead organization to manage the consortium and to report will be key at all stages of the project implementation. | |
| Can an organization respond with more than one proposal in the capacity of lead organization? | Yes. Organizations can certainly respond with more than one proposal as lead organization. However, the organization must have the capability to deliver on any proposal they submit. Organizations must provide robust justification for the configuration of any consortium proposed, including the relative roles and responsibilities of members in achieving the goals detailed in each proposal. | |
| Can a consortium member, a service provider or a collaborating partner participate in several proposals under the same call for proposals? | Yes, consortium members, service providers and collaborating partners can participate in several proposals under the same call for proposals. | |
| Does Unitaid support R&D projects for pharmaceuticals and diagnostics? | Subject to call scope, Unitaid can support some late-stage R&D activities. Unitaid interventions typically focus on formulation or final product field validation where a product is about to reach the market. However, Unitaid carefully monitors the pipeline for innovative new products that may be “game changers” in the market in order to support entry, enable future scale-up and have public health impact. Note: Late-stage R&D activities are not within the call scope of this current call for proposals. | |
| Can I contact Unitaid for further guidance on proposal development? | Unitaid provides guidance on the application process and the application forms. Questions should be addressed to Grant Applications Manager at [proposalsunitaid@who.int](mailto:proposalsunitaid@who.int)  In the interest of fairness and transparency, Unitaid does not provide guidance to individual organizations on substantive issues for responding to each particular call beyond what is available in the call text, associated documents published on the Unitaid website or through webinars announced in the call text. | |
| What is the typical timeframe for Unitaid projects? | Unitaid makes catalytic investments. The timeframe is typically 3 to 5 years, including transition and sustainability plan. | |
| Is there a limited grant size? | Unitaid considers funding size in light of Unitaid's strategy, available funds, investment required for impact, and existing portfolio of projects. As a general principle, Unitaid aims to fund projects that are targeted and ‘lean’ – that is, scoped at the minimum size required to achieve the desired market impact and public health effects and demonstrate value for money. | |
| Do Unitaid grantees automatically benefit from tax exemption for the importation of goods? | Unitaid encourages the grantees to take all measures to secure tax and customs duty exemptions for all expenses incurred, especially regarding purchase of commodities with delivery to project countries. It should be noted that many of our grantees are successful in  securing such exemptions. | |
| Products must comply with Unitaid Quality Assurance Policy to be eligible for procurement. Are there any other conditions to be met? | Conditions on procurement within Unitaid grants may vary according to the commodity purchased, and detailed procurement conditions are typically finalized during grant development. Regarding quality assurance, as a general rule, Unitaid has harmonized its policy with those of other major partners, such as the Global Fund or PEPFAR. As a result, Unitaid typically requires that product be WHO Prequalified, authorized for use by a Stringent Regulatory Authority (SRA), or | |
|  | reviewed and permitted for use by the Expert Review Panel (ERP) as described in the Unitaid Quality Assurance guidelines https://unitaid.org/assets/UNITAID\_QA-of-health- products\_August2014.pdf | |
| A high-burden country makes and buys its own local medicine, which is not WHO- prequalified or registered by  a recognized stringent regulatory authority (SRA). Would Unitaid require that any project work it funds be used to increase demand only for product that is WHO- prequalified or SRA- registered? | Unitaid welcomes efforts to improve access to better, quality-assured treatment. Unitaid requires that any product procured with its funds conform with the Unitaid Quality Assurance guidelines as stated in https://unitaid.org/assets/UNITAID\_QA-of-health- products\_August2014.pdf - i.e., that products are WHO-prequalified or approved by a recognized SRA. In addition, in funding activities not directly related to product procurement, Unitaid still emphasizes the importance of quality assurance to 1) ensure that people in need receive appropriate, quality-assured medicines and diagnostics and 2) contribute to improving market health and stability for quality- assured health products. | |
| What about rights-based projects, like patent law reform? | While Unitaid considers rights-based approaches important, Unitaid works through a market-based approach. The two approaches are not mutually exclusive, but the language used to present the issues, and the way to estimate and articulate impact can be considerably different. Nevertheless, one may wish to consider including elements related, for example, to the use of intellectual property flexibilities to bring down prices in quantifying impact. | |
| •Can one country apply or does it have to be multi-country application?  •Is there a minimum or maximum number of countries required for the proposal? Should the proposal prioritize specific geographies or include countries from multiple regions? | Unitaid is looking for catalytic projects with potential for global impact and thus single country applications are often not funded. Unitaid works through market-based interventions to have global market and public health impact. This may require work in more than one or two countries.  •Proponents are encouraged to consider implementation in countries in a range of geographies, prioritizing settings with a high burden of maternal and newborn mortality. | |
| Give an example of the minimum grant you can give, if : the project is focusing on the country coverage , or Regional coverage of the country , or District coverage | •Unitaid does not generally specify minimum grant sizes – the expected maximum grant size and scale is outlined in the call scope.  •Unitaid will consider funding size in light of our strategy and reach required to accelerate uptake.  •Unitaid aims to fund projects that are ‘lean’ – that is, scoped at the minimum size required to achieve the desired market impact, respond to key outstanding knowledge gaps, and deliver public health effects, while demonstrating value for money. | |
| Do you fund constructions under that proposal under scalability and sustainability approach ?? | •Unitaid does not fund health system strengthening activities beyond those required to introduce new and underused commodities and interventions - such as health worker training.  •Unitaid does not generally fund heath infrastructure - such as construction of hospitals or purchase of ambulances. | |
| Does Unitaid fund the medical diagnostic equipment's for proper diagnosis and Treatment and Management of such conditions | •It is expected that grant budgets will include commodity procurement - including diagnostics - as highlighted within the call scope.  •Conditions on procurement within Unitaid grants may vary according to the commodity purchased, and detailed procurement conditions are typically finalized during grant development. It is expected that this procurement is a catalytic and should unlock access barriers and catalyse broader uptake.  •It is not expected that this grant would fund outright procurement of health products outside of the demonstration activities. Meaning, if you plan to implement a new approach to ANC to demonstrate how health products for diagnosing and treating maternal anemia can be optimally used, the commodities for that implementation learning could be purchased. If you simply want to use the funds to purchase the needed commodities for a district for a year, that would not be funded. | |
| •Can 1 organization apply for both proposal 1 and 2 | •Yes. Organizations can certainly respond with more than one proposal as lead organization. However, the organization must have the capability to deliver on any proposal they submit.  •Organizations must provide robust justification for the configuration of any consortium proposed, including the relative roles and responsibilities of members in achieving the goals | |
| Give an example if the project covers the whole district. how much can an applicant apply for Country level , how much can one apply for | •Unitaid does not fund scale-up of commodities but rather has an intention to deliver projects at a level that is appropriate to address key access barriers and catalyse uptake at a national level.  •Unitaid anticipates that implementation projects from the call for proposals will help set the conditions for scale-up funders (such as domestic financing, GFF, UNFPA, Unicef), to continue to fund the interventions beyond the life of the project.  •We hope that these mechanisms will be identified and secured within the life of the grant. | |
| •Can UN agencies apply for the funding with MOH endorsement to proceed with the application? | •Organizations that have the capability and capacity to deliver the proposed work in the Call scope are able to apply. | |
| Can CSOs by sub grantee – | Yes. All organizations that have the capability and capacity to deliver the proposed work in the Call scope are able to apply. | |

Questions Related to Submission of Proposals

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| Question Answer | |
| Does Unitaid provide samples of proposal submissions? | No; however, the submission form provides a useful guidance on how proponents should approach each section of the proposal form. |
| Does GANTT chart need to include monthly planning for the full duration of the project? | At the proposal stage proponents are requested to provide quarterly planning and monthly planning only for the first year of the project. The monthly planning can be indicative at this stage and if the proposal receives “Go-Ahead” decision, a more detailed planning will need to be done during the grant agreement development process. |
| What level of detail should the budget contain? | At the stage of submission of a proposal an indicative but realistic budget estimate will have to be prepared using the budget template that can be found at <http://unitaid.org/calls> |
| What are the rules regarding the, indirect or overhead costs? | Unitaid agrees to fund a fair share of general administrative expenses linked to the general running of the head office administration of the different consortium members. Such expenses should primarily include expenses associated to head office corporate functions which support the entire operations (e.g. general management, human resources, finance, accounting, legal, internal audit, risk  management) as well as expenses linked to the general running of headquarter infrastructures (e.g. facility, information systems). Unitaid has established the following maximum levels:  - 2% on commodity expenses;  - 13% on other project expenses.  Any expenses linked to fundraising and lobbying activities are excluded from such general administrative expenses and are not funded by Unitaid. When projects are implemented through a consortium of organizations, Unitaid only accepts general administrative expenses of either the lead grantee or the sub-grantee and does not support overlapping layers of general administrative expenses.  There is no differentiation in the funding approach based on the type of entity. |
| Is there a list of cost category allowable/non-allowable for inclusion in the proposal budget? | Yes, Unitaid uses a standard expense classification. It can be found in the proposal budget form (Annex 3) that is available on Unitaid website ([http://unitaid.org/calls).](http://unitaid.org/calls)) |
| Should budget be segregated by sub-grants? | Budgets of sub-awards to partners should be detailed using the proposal budget form (section 1, table Budget by organization). |
| Is there an audit requirement (do we have to plan some budget for audit or  evaluation that would be contractually requested)? | Unitaid requires the grantees to engage with an audit firm to carry out annual financial audits during the project implementation and until the end of the project. The lead applicant should therefore include financial audit costs in the annual budgets. Such financial  audit would normally include reasonable assurance engagements and agreed-upon procedures on specific areas. The estimated value of audit costs should be based on prevailing market rates. |
| Is co-funding, required or recommended and if yes, at which level? | Co-funding is not a mandatory requirement; however, proponents are encouraged to include this information in the proposal.  Please note that Unitaid defines co-funding as funding secured from other funding sources in addition to the Unitaid project funding to accomplish the Unitaid project outputs. Other funding source that will be used to finance activities which will support but not directly contribute to the achievement of the outputs should not be treated, and therefore not included, as co-funding.  Please note that the budget form asks you to indicate the co-funding source (Section 2 of the form), if applicable, and if the co-funding is confirmed or anticipated. |
| What analysis on impact and value for money needs to be included in the proposal? | The proposal must plausibly demonstrate a clear analysis of the expected market and public health impacts and how the proposal would contribute to goals and targets set in respective disease strategies by WHO and other partner organizations. A more detailed guidance on impact assessment can be found at <http://unitaid.org/calls> |
| The goal and outcome in the log-frame template (Annex 1) is already pre-populated with a standard goal. Can this be changed? | Yes, proponents are free to change the goals and outcomes. The pre- populated goals and outcomes are only included to be a guide for the level and type of statements Unitaid is expecting. |
| Can more than 5 risks be listed under the Section 4 of the application form? | Unitaid would like to encourage proponents to identify the most critical risks for the implementation of the project instead of presenting a large list of potential risks. |
| Do Annexes 5, 6, 7 and 8 need to be completed for all members of consortium? | The Annexes 5, 6, 7 and 8 need to be filled for the lead agency only. |
| What type of governmental bodies can sign the “Country engagement support letters”? | These letters can be signed by any relevant government body based on the proposed work and target countries. |
| Does Unitaid provide feedback on the JRC deliberations at the end of the proposal review process? | Unitaid proposal processes do not include the process of appeal. Letters are sent to inform each proponent of the result of the review and indicate decisions and rationale. In some cases, Unitaid may provide additional feedback at its discretion. |