

Final countdown for Grand Challenges Canada

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The proposed deadline for 'The Stars in Global Health' program from Grand Challenges Canada, which enables innovators to develop bold ideas with big impact to improve global health conditions is now only two days away. The program was developed to tap innovative ideas from leaders in global health and consists of proof-of-concept awards of \$100,000 CAD (or \$100,000 USD) as phase I grants, and phase II transition to scale funding to successful applicants for up to \$1,000,000 CAD. The proposal deadline is February 6, 2013.

The proposed innovations must address complex real-world challenges using an integrated innovation approach that is the coordinated application of scientific/ technological, social and business innovation to develop solutions to complex challenges.

Past awardees include innovative Indian companies such as Bangalore-based Achira Labs and Bigtec Labs in 2011 in a challenge to invent and deliver low-cost devices to rapidly diagnose diseases in developing countries. Bigtec recently launched their mini PCR, a point-of-care diagnostics for infectious diseases in the overseas market.

Innovators who are eligible to apply include those from low-income countries, lower-middle-income countries, upper-middle-income countries of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Canadian International Development Agencies (CIDA) Countries of Focus Canada.

Since July 2011, Grand Challenges Canada has approved over 100 phase I proof-of-concept grants, each at \$100,000 CAD. These projects run across the whole spectrum of global health, from drug discovery, vaccine development, health and medical education, maternal and child health, non-communicable diseases (including cancer), health-related water and agriculture, information communication technologies and behavioral change.

Phase I grantees who have completed a minimum of nine months of their Grand Challenges Canada grant, completed their proof-of-concept projects and will have solutions that are ready to transition to scale are invited to submit phase II transition to scale proposals. Phase II transition to scale grants will require 50 percent matching through partnerships to be eligible for

Grand Challenges Canada funding.