

The Agency Fund 2026 Spring Open Call: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

I. Organizational Eligibility

Q: Are for-profit social enterprises eligible to apply?

A: Yes, we accept applications from for-profit social enterprises. However, because our funds must be directed strictly toward charitable and social impact goals, we cannot provide general operating support to for-profit entities. Instead, funding must be restricted to a specific project.

In practice, this means your funding agreement would be structured in one of two ways:

- **Restricted Project Grant (Cost-Reimbursable):** The grant is restricted to specific project and pre-approved project expenses. TAF will require a financial report at the end of the award period to attest that all funds were used exclusively for those agreed-upon costs.
- **Deliverables-Based Contract:** The agreement is set up as a standard contract (rather than a traditional grant), where payments are issued upon the successful completion of fixed deliverables.

Note: All restricted project grants and service contracts must demonstrate that funded activities and outputs align with the charitable mission of The Agency Fund.

Q: Are existing grantees allowed to apply under the Open Call?

A: Yes, existing grantees are welcome to apply. However, we are generally unlikely to fund incremental improvements or expansions of projects we are already supporting. To be competitive in the Open Call, an existing grantee must propose a distinctly new innovation, a significant strategic pivot, or a new approach to expanding human agency that falls outside the scope of their current TAF-funded work.

Q: Can a consortium of organizations apply jointly?

A: Yes. Generally, a single lead applicant must submit the Stage 1 Expression of Interest (EoI) on behalf of the consortium, along with a list of other consortium members. We recommend that the lead entity be the organization responsible for accepting and disbursing the grant amount within the group.

Q: Are individuals eligible to apply, or do applicants need to be affiliated with an organization?

A: Individuals are welcome to apply; you do not need to be affiliated with an organization to be considered.

Q: Are there any specific requirements for non-profits based in India?

A: Yes, all Indian non-profit organizations must have an active FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) registration to be eligible to receive funding.

II. Scale and User Criteria

Q: The call requires "at least 1,000 users." Does this threshold apply at the organization level or at the individual project level?

A: Ideally, the 1,000-user threshold applies to the specific project being proposed. However, The Agency Fund is also open to considering organizations that meet the user threshold collectively across all of their projects. This would mean the organization reaches at least 1000 unique users across their programs.

Q: Our current user base is slightly below 1,000. Should we still apply?

A: The 1,000-user threshold is a firm requirement for this round. We highly recommend waiting to apply in a future open call once your program has had more opportunity to scale.

Q: If an organization has already achieved a community strength of over 1 million users, are they still eligible?

A: Yes, organizations that have already achieved this scale are still eligible. Since you have met the scaling goal, you should respond to the "Primary Mechanism for reaching 1M+ users in 2023" question in the EoI by detailing the primary path your organization used to reach this scale.

III. Project Scope & Focus

Q: The call features a special thematic window for AI-powered mental health solutions. Can we apply with a project in another sector?

A: Yes! While there is a thematic window for mental health innovations this cycle, the Open Call is **sector-agnostic and enthusiastically welcomes submissions across all domains of work**. Applicants should simply review the "What We Fund" section in our announcement [here](#) to ensure alignment with our core scale and approach criteria.

Q: Does technology need to be central to the solution, or can we apply with a tech-based pilot within a larger program?

A: It is perfectly acceptable to apply with a tech-based pilot operating within a larger program. It is not necessary to currently have an at-scale technology platform, as long as there is a clear intention and viable pathway to eventually scale the intervention through government systems, other partnerships, existing user bases, or some combination of these.

Q: Are standalone, researcher-led projects eligible, or must proposals be submitted in partnership with an implementing organization?

A: Both standalone, researcher-led studies and studies in partnership with implementation organizations are welcome. A research team with strong partnerships for eventual scale is considered a highly valid Open Call candidate. Most research studies previously funded under

Open Calls were evaluations (e.g., RCTs or other randomized evaluations) of new or existing interventions in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). The interventions must demonstrate a solid path to scale post-evaluation through existing user bases, policy connections, or other mediums.

IV. Evidence and Evaluation

Q: We only have quasi-experimental evidence (e.g., baseline-midline comparisons or cross-geography data), not randomized evaluations. Is this sufficient?

A: Yes, baseline-midline analyses and internal pilot data are considered acceptable quasi-experimental evidence for this stage. Additionally, we are very open to (and encourage) applicants including plans for more rigorous testing within their proposed program design.

Q: When linking to our evidence and theory of change, is there a preference for externally validated research, or are internally developed reports acceptable?

A: We strongly prefer externally validated research papers and rigorous third-party evaluations. However, if these are not available, internally developed reports are acceptable. If you upload or link an unpublished internal report, please clearly state in the document that it is pending publication.

V. Funding and Financials

Q: How much funding can we request?

A: Open Call grants typically range from \$75,000 to \$500,000, with an average award size of roughly \$230,000.

Q: What is the typical duration for a funded project?

A: Grant duration differs from project to project, but Open Call grants typically last between 10 to 24 months. If your EoI is shortlisted, you will be asked for your preferred grant/project duration in the full application.

Q: What is the allowable indirect or overhead rate for proposals?

A: The typical indirect cost rate for universities and for-profit entities is 9%. Because our funding is flexible, non-profits and projects with exceptional needs requiring a higher overhead allowance can discuss adjusting this rate with us during the finalist/contracting stage. For non-profits, the indirect cost rate can be negotiated.

VI. Application Process & Submission Guidelines

Q: Can one organization submit multiple project proposals for consideration?

A: Yes, an organization can submit multiple project ideas. However, each unique project must be submitted via its own separate Expression of Interest (EoI) form.

Q: When are Open Call applications reviewed, and when will the next application window likely be announced?

A: The Agency Fund typically runs Open Calls once a year, usually around March or April. Please subscribe to our newsletter at the bottom of our homepage [here](#) for updates on the next Open Call and other upcoming funding opportunities.