

MujerProspera (WomanProsper) Challenge
Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA Number	2021-02 Issued Under Catalyst Project USAID Contract No. 7200AA18C00072
Challenge Name	<i>MujerProspera (WomanProsper) Challenge</i> (Regional Challenge to Advance Gender Equality in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras)
Challenge Website	https://www.usaid.gov/mujer-prospera-challenge
Challenge Email	mujerprospera@resonanceglobal.com
Important Dates & Deadlines	
Issue Date of RFA	January 3, 2022
RFA Questions Webinars	English Webinar: Held on January 18, 2022 at 11am Eastern Standard Time. See recording here . Spanish Webinar: January 19, 2022 at 11am Eastern Standard Time. See recording here .
Deadline for Application Submission	New extended deadline is February 14, 2022 at 12:00pm Eastern Standard Time (Washington, DC Local Time)
Anticipated Grant Award Date	April 2022

Dear Prospective Applicant:

Pursuant to the authority contained in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) [Catalyst Project](#), implemented by SSG Advisors d/b/a Resonance, invites eligible applicants to respond to this Request for Applications (RFA): *MujerProspera* (WomanProsper), a regional challenge to advance gender equality in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The Catalyst Project, implemented by Resonance, is a flexible buy-in mechanism that provides institutional support and technical assistance in the design and implementation of USAID-funded innovation and challenge programs. This RFA describes the purpose of the challenge and the types of activities that it will fund; it indicates the process for preparing and submitting applications; and outlines criteria that will be used to evaluate the applications.

Catalyst anticipates funding up to 14 grant awards. Each award is expected to be between \$150,000 - \$500,000. The period of performance for each individual award is anticipated to be up to 16 months with implementation from April 2022 through August 2023. The specific amount and period of performance for each award will be determined at the time of the award. Awards made through this RFA will be Fixed Amount Award (FAA) grants and are subject to the availability of funding.

To be eligible for an award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this solicitation and meet eligibility standards in **Section F: Eligible Criteria**. Those interested in submitting an application should read this funding opportunity thoroughly to understand the application process, the type of intervention sought, submission requirements, and the evaluation process.

DUE DATE for RFA 2021-02 Applications: Completed Applications are due February 14, 2022 (new extended deadline!) at 12:00pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) (Washington, DC Local Time) via the online application platform: [Google form here](#). To fill out an application, please sign in with an existing Google account. If you do not have a Google account, you can create one using an existing non-Google email address [here](#). There is no cost to setting up an account. Applicants should retain a copy of their applications and accompanying documents for their records.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Catalyst, nor will Catalyst, Resonance, USAID, or any of its funding partners pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of applications. Further, Catalyst reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in this challenge!

Sincerely,



Ben Amick
Chief of Party
USAID Catalyst Project

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Acronyms

ADS	Automated Directives System
CDCS	Country Development Strategy
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
EST	Eastern Time
FAA	Fixed Amount Awards
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GenDev	USAID's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Hub
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex
LOE	Level of effort
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
PPR	Past Performance Record
RFA	Request for Applications
SAM	System for Award Management
MSME	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
UNSC	UN Security Council
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollars
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment

Overview

Women and girls, in all their diversity, often face extreme violence, limited economic opportunities, and social norms that adversely affect their security and livelihoods in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. USAID and the U.S. Government prioritize economic security, safety and health as a basic right.¹ Research shows that when women have agency, safety, access to power, resources, and stable long-term incomes, they are well positioned to be change agents in their home countries.

As part of the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to address the root causes of irregular migration, USAID is launching *MujerProspera* (WomanProsper), a regional challenge to advance gender equality in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The challenge is seeking holistic and impactful solutions that advance women's economic security, employment, and/or entrepreneurship. *MujerProspera* is looking for both innovative new approaches, as well as those that scale-up successful existing efforts to promote women's agency, safety, access to economic power, resources, fair and stable long-term income, and advances in labor protections in the formal and informal sectors.

Through the challenge, USAID's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Hub (GenDev) expects to issue up to 14 awards, each valued between \$150,000 and 500,000 United States dollars (USD), by April 2022.

A. The Problem

Women and girls, in all their diversity, often face barriers to accessing and controlling power and resources that influence the way that they make decisions to support themselves and their families in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Weak government institutions, widespread poverty,² corruption, violence—particularly gender-based violence (GBV)—and impunity result in sparse national and local policies to support women's employment, agency, and/or entrepreneurship. Moreover, the global pandemic resulted in economic downturn, reduced remittances, restricted supply chains, increased domestic and gender-based violence, and increased care labor and domestic responsibilities for women, particularly due to public health measures that result in children being unable to attend school in person. This issue is further heightened by intensifying environmental crises exacerbated by global climate change, including extreme hurricanes and droughts in the region.

¹ The Biden-Harris Administration, under the [White House Gender Policy Council](#), has prioritized gender equity and equality, with the first [National Strategy](#) on Gender Equity and Equality, and recognizes these issues as fundamental to economic security, safety, health, and the ability to exercise basic rights. The Administration supports private sector engagement, as indicated when U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris launched a [Call to Action](#) with commitment from twelve international private-sector companies to invest in systemic change in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, addressing the root causes of social problems and supporting sustainable and scalable solutions. Within that, women's economic empowerment (WEE) and security are central to women's right to full and equal participation in public and private life, and thus a key feature of gender equality more broadly. USAID missions in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras highlight WEE's importance in their Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS), encouraging non-violent masculinities, with men as agents of change, and women as leading beneficiaries in education, accessing credit, victims' assistance, and violence reduction in public spaces. See [El Salvador](#), [Guatemala](#), and [Honduras](#) CDCS.

² According to 2018 World Bank data on gross domestic product.

Women, especially indigenous and Afro-descendent, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+), youth, the elderly, and those with disabilities, suffer a disproportionate lack of access to capital, markets, and skills training. Throughout El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, women are more likely to be employed informally in sectors that expose them to harmful gender norms and violence, and lack of social security services. In the formal sector, women are often limited to low-paying jobs,³ particularly domestic work, retail, *maquilas*,⁴ farming,⁵ and niche tourism and services. Years of discrimination in education and expectations exacerbate occupational differences and gender-normative employment opportunities. Moreover, poor digital and financial inclusion present significant barriers in the informal and formal sectors. Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), where women are often employed, put women at higher risk of criminal extortion as their businesses grow. Further, there is a lack of value for work associated with women, and a subsequent lack of social protections in the workplace, home and community, especially when it comes to violence and sexual harassment. These factors contribute to irregular migration, particularly to the United States.⁶

B. *MujerProspera* Challenge Statement and Goals

MujerProspera (WomanProsper) is a USAID regional challenge to advance gender equality in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. **USAID is seeking holistic and impactful solutions that advance women’s economic security, employment, and/or entrepreneurship. *MujerProspera* is looking for both innovative new approaches, as well as those that scale up successful existing efforts to promote women’s agency, safety, access to power, resources, fair and stable long-term income, and advances in labor protections in the formal and informal sectors.**

Successful applications will encompass the nexus of advancing women’s economic security and addressing harmful gender norms (Objectives I and II) as detailed below.

Challenge Objectives

The objectives of *MujerProspera* are to:

- I. **Advance Women’s Economic Security** by improving working conditions and labor protections, recruitment, retention, promotion, and the advancement of women in dignified, stable work that results in increased access, productivity, and a fair and stable income in the workforce. *Examples of potential local and/or international applicants and solutions may include but are not limited to:*
 - *Non-profit organizations with a forward thinking policy-agenda or platform that supports gender equity, equality, and empowerment, and access to social protection in the workplace, home and community.*

³ In [Guatemala, New Research on Gender Equality Shapes Government and USAID Investments in Taxation \(dai-global-developments.com\)](#)

⁴ Factories that tend to operate in duty and tariff-free zones.

⁵ [USAID-Guatemala-Gender-Analysis-Final-Report.pdf \(banyanglobal.com\)](#)

⁶ See the [Root Causes of Migration Strategy](#).

- *For-profit companies, business associations, women’s associations, foundations, or unions developing, promoting, incentivizing, and implementing workplace policies and procedures to encourage women’s engagement in leadership roles, including equal pay for equal work, professional development and training, flexible/remote work schedules, child-care options, and parental leave.*
- *Financial institutions that see women as valuable customers key to their business model and their bottom line, and thus are enhancing women’s access to credit⁷ capital and acceleration opportunities, including providing technical assistance for women to be more finance-ready, as well as supporting the development and growth-potential of successful women-owned, women-managed, and/or gender-balanced MSMEs.*
- *Non-profit organizations, innovation hubs, incubators, women’s associations, private sector companies, and other service providers who bring cutting edge methodologies for skill-building to women in or entering the workforce, including those focused on financial management, legal and tax requirements, foreign exports, product development, and strategy supportive of opening new women-owned businesses.*
- *Private sector or other initiatives that promote or establish new and promising value chains to increase opportunities for women, in all their diversity, as everyday employees, MSME owners, as well as leaders and mentors in male-dominated fields, particularly in urban centers or regional centers of growth.*
- *Enterprises that engage employers in coaching, policy, and mentorship activities, with particular emphasis on ensuring women’s safety in and around the workplace, as well as in transportation to and from work.*
- *Strategic partnerships that put women in the driver’s seat on innovative technology, products for export, and new market opportunities.*
- *Entities that enable equitable access to safe and decent economic opportunities for returning migrant women and girls, in all their diversity, while concurrently ensuring that their psychosocial needs are met in the home, workplace, and community.*

II. **Address Harmful Gender Norms and Enable Safe Work Environments** through promoting positive gender norms, egalitarian attitudes and behaviors, a holistic safe working environment, and safe transportation to and from work, supportive of women’s economic security and agency. *Examples of local and/or international potential applicants and solutions might include but are not limited to:*

- *Women’s networks, professional associations or other organizations advocating for the establishment and/or implementation of GBV and gender-inclusive laws, advocacy, policies, codes of conduct, and effective operational practices (particularly in the area of GBV and/or sexual harassment); or implementing activities to support increased labor protections and the formalization and/or unionization of domestic, street vendors, and other informal workers.*
- *Women’s networks and associations, private sector, or other organizations implementing training initiatives with proven or promising approaches to change gender*

⁷ Note: MujerProspera cannot fund loans (unallowable expense).

attitudes, norms, and behaviors, particularly by encouraging men to support women's professional advancement; innovative initiatives that support and increase women's self-esteem, psychosocial support, or empowerment; or promoting behavior change of men and boys towards less violent and positive masculinities, particularly focused on more equitable divisions of household labor and resources.

- *Institutions, unions, local private sector businesses promoting safe environments, routes, and lighting in, around, and to and from work, including innovative gendered urban planning initiatives; developing and implementing gender-transformative policies and practices that address hostile public thoroughfares and transit, work environments,⁸ ensuring affirmative action, transparent selection and promotion policies for workplace safety, and/or implementing social behavior and media campaigns to encourage new ways of thinking about gender norms and women as protagonists in the workplace, engaging men and boys in positive masculinities and other efforts to support women.*
- *Non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, or other entities that seek to promote social norms that inspire confidence in women using technology, including those that enhance access to and increase safe, inclusive, and open digital ecosystems by closing the digital gender gap, increasing digital literacy, reducing technology-facilitated gender-based violence, and ensuring safe use of smartphones or tablets, data, and phone networks.*
- *For-profit organizations that support workforce development training and protection of women in traditionally male-dominated (and potentially higher paying) industries, particularly those with solutions that address violence and sexual harassment in the workplace.⁹*
- *Organizations or companies that ensure economic opportunities are available to women that safeguard against trafficking in persons (TIP).*
- *Organizations and entities that engage men and boys to serve as allies for women and girls in the workplace, home, and the community by playing an active role in: advancing gender equality; promoting positive and egalitarian gender norms; and enabling safe work environments.*

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate an intersectional approach that addresses the multiple layers of discrimination and inequality faced by women and girls, in all their diversity. Solutions should root out systemic barriers and discrimination, ambitiously pursue equity and equality for all people, and intentionally address the needs of women and girls, particularly those from marginalized and underserved populations, such as indigenous women and girls.

International and local private sector for-profit enterprises, non-profit organizations, civil society, umbrella consortia, and other registered organizations may submit applications in English or Spanish that propose solutions to support women's economic empowerment, agency, and security in one or more of these countries - El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Solutions should broaden the types of available, long-term, stable, and safe opportunities for women. They should use innovative approaches to shift gender and cultural norms and imbalances of power to promote behavioral and social norms change that

⁸ See Engendering Utilities, WildAct under RISE: <https://www.usaid.gov/engendering-industries>.

⁹See ILO C190 [Violence and Harassment Convention](#).

engage both men and women in support of women's agency and security. Fundamental to this shift is programming that looks at the impact of GBV and sexual harassment on women's economic security, and the positive role men and boys can play as allies and in promoting women in the workplace.

USAID encourages applicants from non-traditional local organizations with a demonstrated presence in one or more of these countries - El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Within this, organizations with ideas that address the impact of COVID-19 and/or global climate change in their solutions are encouraged. Of interest are applications that use innovative tools, approaches, incentives, and/or technology¹⁰ and a context-specific approach to partnering with local or municipal-level and national-level host-country governments, as well as the private sector and local organizations, to integrate high-impact, innovative and sustainable solutions. USAID expects successful initiatives to enhance access to available opportunities to women in new local industries and sectors. Please see [workwithusaid.org](https://www.workwithusaid.org) for more information on working with USAID.

C. The Awards

In response to this Request for Applications (RFA), the challenge plans to issue up to 14 fixed amount award (FAA) grants, each between USD \$150,000 and \$500,000. Each FAA will be funded based on milestones and an implementation plan that are mutually agreed upon at the time of the award. Please note:

- Funding requested in applications must be appropriate to the size, scale, and scope of proposed solutions;
- All proposed interventions must conclude by August 31, 2023 after a maximum duration of sixteen months;
- All awards are subject to the availability of funding; and
- Funded activities must align with the prevention of irregular migration as outlined in the relevant country development cooperation strategy (CDCS) for El Salvador, Guatemala, and/or Honduras, as per the selected countries of implementation.¹¹ They should also be supportive of the Administration's broader [Root Causes of Migration Strategy](#).

Please note the following funding limitations based on organization type:

- *MujerProspera* cannot make awards exceeding \$250,000 to U.S.-based organizations. However, it can make awards up to \$500,000 to organizations or a consortium led by an organization that is registered outside of the U.S. US-based members of the consortium are eligible to share in the requested funding up to \$250,000.
- International organizations who have locally registered offices are eligible for up to \$500,000 in funding, provided that the organization meets the [definition](#) of local entity or locally established

¹⁰ Technology is not limited to online solutions, but instead is broadly defined as equipment, tools, strategies or other specialized resources that support a multiplier effect of women's participation in the workplace and broader professional networks.

¹¹ See [El Salvador](#), [Guatemala](#), and [Honduras](#) CDCS.

partner, the activity originates from the locally registered office, the organization has a local bank account, a local DUNS number that ties to the local registration and local entity, and the activity takes place in that geography.

D. Challenge Structure and Timeline

Prize Call Launch and Submission Deadline - The MujerProspera Challenge launches on January 3, 2022. The submission deadline has been extended by two weeks due to the high level of interest in the challenge. All applications for the challenge must be submitted via the [online application platform](#) by **12:00pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) (Washington, DC Local Time) on February 14, 2022**. To fill out an application, please sign in with an existing Google account. If you do not have a Google account, you can create one using an existing non-Google email address [here](#). There is no cost to setting up an account.

Application Review Process

Applicants will be required to participate in three stages, as needed, to be selected as a winner.

- 1. Stage 1: Eligibility Screen** - All submitted applications will be reviewed and screened against the eligibility criteria in Section F. Applications that do not meet the minimum eligibility criteria will not proceed to the expert judging stage.
- 2. Stage 2: Expert Judging Panel and Evaluation Criteria** - After the eligibility screening, all eligible applications will be evaluated by an expert judging panel composed of personnel from USAID's Missions and Bureaus and affiliated partners. Each application will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria outlined below. It is recommended that applicants read and understand the judging criteria to appropriately complete the answers in the entry form.
- 3. Stage 3: Finalist Interviews** - Finalists may have the opportunity to participate in a 30 minute video interview by a panel of USAID staff and affiliated partners. Only applicants in the final stages of review may move to the interview round.

These interviews are an opportunity for finalists to respond to any questions, feedback, or concerns highlighted during the judging panel stage. The interviews will be evaluated using the same evaluation criteria as the full application. Prior to the interview, finalists will be required to submit a short PowerPoint presentation on their project, environmental assessment form, organizational assessment form, and initial gender analysis form. This interview must be completed to become a challenge winner. All decisions will be final and not subject to review.

Award Announcement - Awards will be announced to successful applicants via email by April 2022. Those applicants which do not receive funding will also receive notice at or around that time.

Timeline Summary

Event	Date
Challenge Launch	January 3, 2022
RFA Questions Webinars	English Webinar: Held on January 18, 2022 at 11am Eastern Standard Time. See recording here . Spanish Webinar: January 19, 2022 at 11am Eastern Standard Time. See recording here .
Application Close Date	New extended deadline is February 14, 2022 at 12:00pm EST (Washington, DC Local Time)
Stage 1: Eligibility Screen	January 2022
Stage 2: Expert Judging Panel and Evaluation Criteria	January - February 2022
Stage 3: Finalist Interviews	March 2022
Awards Announcement	By April 2022
Award Implementation	April 2022 - August 2023

Judging Process and Finalist Interviews

After an internal eligibility screen (please review the eligibility criteria below), a panel of expert judges will review the eligible applications and assess them against pre-established criteria:

- Problem statement (what);
- Problem solution (how);
- Target audience (who and where);
- Activity plan and detailed narrative;
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) plan;
- Organizational capacity; and
- Partnerships and collaboration.

Only applicants in the final stages of review may move to the interview round via video conference, if chosen to do so by a panel of USAID staff and affiliated partners.

Judging Criteria

Reviewers will assess and score each eligible application across the following criteria areas:

Criteria	What we are looking for	Value
<p>Problem Statement (What). Provide a short description of the issue that your solution addresses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Why is the problem relevant? B. How it is important to the challenge. C. Who the problem is affecting and how. 	<p><i>Applications must clearly demonstrate how the problem is relevant and fits in the context of the regional challenge goal to address gender equality through women’s economic security, employment and/or entrepreneurship.</i></p>	15%
<p>Proposed Solution (How). Describe your proposed solution as a goal statement. Note that this should be (i) specific, (ii) measurable, (iii) achievable, and (iv) relevant to the region and (v) timebound. It must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. How your proposed solution addresses the problem or issue identified in the problem statement. B. Detailed evidence or data you have to validate why your approach will contribute to solving the problem. C. Information on what makes your organization’s individual approach to the problem stand out from other efforts. Be specific about the innovative approaches, tools, technologies, or solutions your efforts bring to the table. D. How the proposed solution is designed so that development results are systemic and continue after the funding from USAID has ended, such as through a policy, enterprise or market-based approach. E. Information on how the proposed solution incorporates an intersectionality lens and the “do no harm” principle. 	<p><i>Using evidence, applications need to provide a clear link and relevance between the problem statement and details of the proposed solution. The solution should be unique, innovative, measurable, and demonstrate potential for direct positive impact and longer-term scale. It should be intersectional, do no harm, and designed for systemic change. It must be achievable in the proposed implementation period.</i></p>	20%
<p>Target Audience (Who and Where).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Include a clear description of who your target audience is (e.g. rural, urban, particular socioeconomic status, minorities, indigenous, etc.). B. Explain why this group of people is important, what gender gap is it contributing to closing, and how supporting this group will address women’s economic security, employment and/or entrepreneurship. C. The geographic area where the group currently lives or stays. Your proposal should mention the target country (or countries), regions within each country, and/or municipalities or cities where your 	<p><i>Successful applications will provide a precise description of the target audience, their geographic location and the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries. For full points, they should include marginalized and underrepresented communities.</i></p>	15%

<p>organization proposes to reach the target population.</p> <p>D. State the number of beneficiaries. Please include both the number of direct beneficiaries that your project will attempt to reach (those who are direct recipients of project activities), as well as the indirect beneficiaries (those who, while not direct recipients, are positively impacted).</p>		
<p>Activity Plan and Detailed Narrative for Each Activity Component your activity proposes to implement. For each component, please describe quantitatively and qualitatively what it will entail. Note that each activity should also be included in the overall activity budget, tied to cost-related milestones.</p> <p>Each component in the plan should have an accompanying narrative.</p>	<p><i>The activity plan should be logical, timely and relevant to the proposed solution and goals. There needs to be a clear link between the proposed activities and the overall problem statement.</i></p>	<p>20%</p>
<p>Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan (Demonstrating Success). Summarize the activity’s plan to monitor performance and measure results. Include: (i) 3-5 indicators to measure key outputs and outcomes; (ii) data sources and collection methods (e.g. service records, surveys, focus group discussions, photos); (iii) methods of recording and reporting the data (e.g. administrative records, databases, progress reports); (iv) plan to evaluate the activity and apply evidence to make the activity more effective.</p>	<p><i>The monitoring and evaluation plan should summarize the key output and outcome indicators, data collection and reporting methods, and proposals to evaluate the activity and utilize findings to make the activity more effective.</i></p>	<p>10%</p>
<p>Organizational Capacity. Describe your (i) team members, (ii) their individual experience, and (iii) the overall staffing technical and operational structures that demonstrate your organization’s institutional capacity to implement the project.</p> <p>Include the names of key personnel that have particular technical experience and a specialized role in the activity, as well as all relevant staff focused on management and administration.</p>	<p><i>The application should provide the names and a brief profile of each relevant team member’s experience. The staffing structure should show that the organization has prepared a team structure for effective management, administration and technical implementation.</i></p>	<p>10%</p>
<p>Partnership and Collaborations. Name the designated partners and stakeholders, their role in the activity, and how the organization will consult and work with different groups (e.g., host-country government ministries and municipalities, non-profit organizations, industry alliances and coalitions,</p>	<p><i>The application should provide the names and a brief description of all relevant partner and stakeholder organizations. This should include the role for each organization and how</i></p>	<p>10%</p>

<p>faith-based groups, private sector businesses, complementary donor support, or working groups).</p> <p>Include the names of key organizations that have an important role in the activity, describing that role, their qualifying background and added value in detail. If available, attach any Memorandum Of Understanding (MOUs), letters of agreement or other documents you have that describe the collaboration, as well as future funding for the activity after USAID support ends.</p>	<p><i>they will work together to advance the proposed activities. Also, it is important to highlight how working with these groups will help the activity's sustainability overtime, i.e. how the municipality or government ministry will continue implementing similar activities.</i></p>	
<p>TOTAL</p>		<p>100</p>

E. Eligibility Criteria

Prospective applicants must meet the following requirements to be eligible to participate in the *MujerProspera* Challenge. All applications will undergo an initial eligibility screening to ensure they comply with the eligibility criteria.

A. Organization type: The challenge is open to U.S. and non-U.S. organizations, and all registered organization types around the world, including but not limited to non-profit organizations, for-profit companies, business associations, women’s associations, foundations, national, regional, community, and Indigenous peoples organizations, etc. The challenge is especially keen to partner with:

- Organizations that have a track record of promoting gender equity and equality and women’s agency and power, and/or evidence of having launched and implemented policies and practices supportive of women’s needs. Of particular interest are women-led and owned organizations, or gender-balanced organizations with women in positions of leadership.
- Organizations, such as consortiums or umbrella groups, that serve as convening forces for dialogue and promotion of equitable gender norms and addressing harmful social norms are encouraged to apply.
- In the private sector, companies that demonstrate the capacity to develop and implement employer policies and practices that increase gender equality, support women to be recruited, retained, promoted, and thrive in the workplace, and encourage an influential dialogue around gender norms are preferred. Those with established gender-transformative human resource policies and approaches and/or those that promote them to other companies and a leadership team that is committed to promoting these will be best placed under the challenge.
- Competitive applicants, particularly private sector companies, able to leverage or match with financial or in-kind opportunities for implementing the proposed solution.

- Non-profit organizations, feminist groups, service providers, and other organizations that have implemented programs or activities of similar size and/or technical scope.

B. Local presence: All applicants must use the funds to implement interventions in El Salvador, Guatemala, and/or Honduras. Applicants must already have a presence in that country, or be a local entity or have a local partner. The Challenge will require supporting documentation to demonstrate legal status to operate where the intervention is taking place.

C. Topical: Applicants should present interventions that address the objectives of the challenge outlined in the **Overview, Section A: The Problem** and **Section B: Challenge Statement and Goals** sections.

D. Language: Applicants must submit their entries in English or Spanish.

E. Completeness and timeliness: Applications will not be assessed if all required fields of the application have not been completed. This applies to any stage of submission and relates to missing documentation that may have been requested. Late entries will not be accepted.

F. Eligibility to receive USAID funds: Catalyst will conduct pre-award due diligence prior to award to ensure that the applicant has the organizational and technical capacity to manage a USAID-funded sub-award activity. Applicants must pass this process to receive a grant (which is a sub-award) under the challenge.

G. Gender analysis: All awards are required to complete a gender analysis. We strongly encourage all applicants to complete a [gender analysis](#) (identifying major gender gaps that the activity will address) prior to applying, but this is not mandatory. Successful awards who have yet to complete a gender analysis will be required to do so as one of their initial activities under the grant.

Ineligible applicants:

The following organizations are not eligible for the *Mujer Prospera* Challenge:

- Political parties, groupings, or institutions, or their subsidiaries or affiliates;
- Any government organization or public entity cannot apply to receive funds through the challenge (although they are strongly encourage to apply as non-financed consortium members or engaged partners);
- Organizations that appear on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-procurement Programs, [U.N. Security Council \(UNSC\)](#), [U.S. Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control \(OFAC\)](#) or have an active restriction or exclusion on the [System for Award Management \(SAM\) list](#);
- Organizations that advocate, promote, or engage in illegal activities or anti-democratic activities;
- Any entity that has been found to have misused USAID funds in the past;

- Financial institutions, foundations, or other organizations seeking to use the challenge funds to support making loans;
- Interventions or activities that are strictly research-focused, in the ideation phase, and/or narrowly focused on a technical area that does not clearly demonstrate the potential for significant impact;
- Interventions focused solely on the provision of free equipment, construction, or building new infrastructure;
- Any entity affiliated with USAID, Resonance, Ladysmith Collective Inc., its officers, directors, employees, the Catalyst Project, or their family members; and
- Individuals.

F. Pre-Award and Due Diligence Process

All anticipated winners will be required to pass the pre-award and due diligence process prior to receiving any grant funding. This process helps determine whether the organization's financial management and internal control systems are adequate to manage, control, and account for the use of USAID funds. This process also evaluates the project's potential environmental and social impact. The pre-award process will assess the following:

- Organization's legal structure, including documentation or licenses to operate in the country of registration.
- Financial management and internal controls and policies.
- Procurement systems.
- Human resources systems.
- Project management capacity.
- Organization sustainability.
- Potential environmental, social, and gender impacts of proposed activities.
- Evidence of a [Data Universal Numbering System \(DUNS\) number](#).
- Proof of registration with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#).
- Ability to comply with USAID requirements, policies, and procedures.

G. Application Instructions

Applications must be submitted via the online platform ([Google form here](#)) by February 14, 2022 at 12:00pm EST (Washington, DC Local Time). The deadline was extended by two weeks due to the high level of interest in the challenge. Applications must be submitted in English or Spanish. To fill out an application, please sign in with an existing Google account. If you do not have a Google account, you can create one using an existing non-Google email address [here](#). There is no cost to setting up an account. The full application requirements can be found in **Annex A**. Below is an overview of the type of information that will be requested in the application.

I. Basic applicant information:

- *Organization information:* Organization address, contact information, point of contact, size, and country where registered;
- *Activity information:* Country of implementation, project title, short project description, project duration (cannot exceed 16 months), and project partners (if any); and
- *Requested funding amount:* between \$150,000 to \$500,000 USD.

II. Application technical narrative:

In an 8-12 page concept note (12-point font, single spaced, with one inch margins), please describe your idea. Please describe the problem, your activity (using specific, measurable, achievable and time bound metrics), who you will be serving, what partners you have, what impact you anticipate and how you intend to measure it, and any risks and challenges you may foresee and how you intend to mitigate them. Descriptions should be detailed, data-driven, and include the intended duration and total budget of the activity, the location(s) of the activity, and logical explanation for why you believe your activities will have their intended impact. You are encouraged to include references and citations which may be added as an appendix to your concept note. Expressions of interest will be evaluated against the metrics outlined under the Judging Criteria section

III. Application cost proposal:

Applicants will provide a detailed budget that ensures sufficient resources to implement all proposed grant-funded activities. All costs should be in USD. Please include comments on each budget line to clearly explain the cost. The budget should include:

- Labor/personnel
- Activities & Travel
- Other Direct Costs
- Indirect Costs: The budget should not include any indirect costs, unless the applying organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or if the applicant does not have a federally approved rate. Indirect costs may be justified by current indirect cost rates as determined by a Resonance-approved independent auditor or a certified statement of indirect cost rates by the applicant's independent auditors. Alternatively, applicants can apply the minimis indirect rate of 10% per [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).

The Challenge will assess whether the overall costs are realistic for the work to be performed, whether the costs reflect that the applicant understands the requirements of project implementation, and whether the costs are consistent with the technical application.

IV. Required annexes:

- Detailed budget and activity plan
- Three past performance references
- Curriculum Vitae of key personnel on the project
- Others as relevant

H. Additional Considerations

Authority/Governing Regulations

Awards are made under the authority of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act and USAID's Automated Directive System (ADS) 302.3.5.6, "Grants Under Contract." Awards will be administered in accordance with USAID ADS 303 and the Standard Provisions and applicable U.S. Government regulations that are available online at <https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-300>. They should consider USAID's [Policy on Countering Trafficking in Persons](#), as well as the [Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse \(PSEA\) Policy](#). Resulting awards to U.S. non-governmental organizations will be administered in accordance with ADS 303, CFR Title 22, applicable OMB Circulars, and ADS 303mat_033121: Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards for Non-Governmental Organizations.

- ADS 303 is available at <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303>
- CFR Title 22 is available at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-22>
- Applicable OMB Circulars are available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/information-for-agencies/circulars/>
- 48 CFR 31.2 is available at <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=cbb7305b43e022815d30aeaf7b642744&node=pt48.1.31&rgn=div5>
- ADS 303mat_033121 Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards for Non-Governmental Organizations are available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mat.pdf>

Geographic Code

The Authorized Geographic Code for the procurement of goods and services under this RFA is 935, which means any area or country including the recipient country, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source.

Prohibition on Transactions with Terrorists

Applicants are reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits 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 these Executive Orders and laws.

Branding and Marking:

The Catalyst project will provide guidance to Grantees on Marking Plan and Branding Strategy requirements under their grant agreements. The Grantee, as directed by the Catalyst project, shall cooperate, facilitate, and support these requirements as needed. USAID Branding and Marking policy and frequently asked questions are available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/branding/fa>.

Annex A: Application Form

MujerProspera Challenge Privacy Act Statement

MujerProspera: Regional Challenge to Advance Gender Equality in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras is a forthcoming open innovation challenge, announced by Administrator Power and set to launch this fall. The challenge is seeking holistic and impactful solutions that advance women's economic security, employment, and entrepreneurship. MujerProspera is looking for both innovative new approaches, as well as those that scale up successful existing efforts to promote women's agency, safety, access to power, resources, and stable long-term income in the formal and informal sectors.

The challenge is sponsored by the USAID GenDev team, with advisory support from DDI/ITR/Innovation. The challenge has been designed and will be managed by Resonance, a USAID/DDI/ITR/Innovation contract capable of delivering grants under contract. Resonance intends to release an RFA for applicants to respond to the challenge as soon as we receive ADS 508 compliance (complete), forms (complete), Privacy (pending), and PRA approvals to move forward. What follows is our Privacy Act Statement:

Authority: USAID is conducting this activity pursuant to authority in Section 635(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, as implemented by the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR), 48 CFR Pts. 1-51. AIDAR Section 701.470 further authorizes USAID to allow a deviation that in turn authorizes the contractor to provide assistance.

Purpose: Resonance will be requesting this information via a Request for Applications to determine, in conjunction with USAID, which organizations are compelling, technically capable, and qualified for receiving development assistance funds. Organizations will submit their business contact information, project information, and a project concept note via Google Forms.

Prior to being asked to submit any data, applicants will be apprised of the following:

Email:*

Can you confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, you comply with all the Eligibility Criteria for the MujerProspera?*

- Yes
- No

This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside of the MujerProspera Challenge and will not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part– for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this Applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, MujerProspera shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit MujerProspera's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from business references and provided without restriction. Please affirm your consent to data collection.*

- Yes

- No

I understand that the MujerProspera Challenge is implemented by Resonance, an implementing partner of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).*

- Yes
- No

Applicants should not submit unsolicited personally identifiable information in response to open text questions and/or as part of the narrative statements. Please affirm your understanding that you will not submit unsolicited personally identifiable information as part of open text questions or narrative statements.*

- Yes
- No

I understand that USAID may share this concept note, internally or externally, as part of the due diligence process or if USAID identifies opportunities to strengthen or fund your idea by connecting with other USAID mechanisms, other potential funders, and/or external partners for appropriate consideration.*

- Yes
- No

By submitting this concept note, I certify that the information herein is accurate to the full extent of my knowledge.*

- Yes
- No

Organization Information

Organization Name*:

Organization Type*: [*Picklist selection: International and local private sector for-profit enterprises, non-profit organizations, civil society, umbrella consortia, and other registered organizations*]

ORGANIZATION ADDRESS

Country*: [*Country List*]

Street Address*:

City*:

State/Region*:

Zip Code/Postal Code*:

In which country is your organization legally incorporated?* [*Country List*]

CONTACT INFORMATION

Primary Point Of Contact (Founder/Ceo/Principal Investigator):

First Name:*

Last Name:*

Title:*

Work Email:*

Work Phone:*

Secondary Point Of Contact (Optional):

First Name:

Last Name:

Title:

Work Email:

Work Phone:

DETAILED ACTIVITY INFORMATION

Please check one or more of the following technical areas, as they apply to your project:*

- Entrepreneurship
- Women's Economic Security & Growth
- Gender-Based Violence
- Supply Chains
- Fair Labor Protections, Unions and Practices
- Informal Markets
- Violence in (and on the way to) the Workplace
- Positive Gender Norms, Attitudes and Behavior
- Indigenous and Minority Populations
- Farming and Agriculture
- Retail and Service Industries
- Domestic Work
- Tourism & Niche Tourism
- Factories
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)
- Digital and Financial Services & Literacy

Development of Gender Policies

In an 8-12 page concept note (12-point font, single spaced, with one inch margins), please describe your idea. Please describe the problem, your activity (using specific, measurable, achievable and time bound metrics), who you will be serving, what partners you have, what impact you anticipate and how you intend to measure it, and any risks and challenges you may foresee and how you intend to mitigate them. Descriptions should be detailed, data-driven, and include the intended duration and total budget of the activity, the location(s) of the activity, and logical explanation for why you believe your activities will have their intended impact. You are encouraged to include references and citations which may be added as an appendix to your concept note. Expressions of interest will be evaluated against the metrics outlined under the Judging Criteria section, on page 13 of this [document](#).*

Please upload all other documents required by the RFA here (e.g. past performance [references](#) and a [detailed budget](#)).*

Annex B: Glossary

Award - A form of implementing mechanism through which USAID transfers funds to an implementing partner, generally selected through a competitive process, resulting in a contract, grant, or collaboration/cooperative agreement.

Evaluation - A periodic, systematic assessment of a project's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact on a defined population. Evaluation draws from data collected during monitoring, as well as data from additional surveys or studies to assess project achievements against set objectives.

Gender Analysis- A socioeconomic analysis of available or gathered quantitative and qualitative information to identify, understand, and explain gaps between men and women which typically involves examining— (A) Differences in the status of women and men and their differential access to and control over assets, resources, education, opportunities, and services; (B) The influence of gender roles, structural barriers, and norms on the division of time between paid employment, unpaid work (including the subsistence production and care for family members), and volunteer activities; (C) The influence of gender roles, structural barriers, and norms on leadership roles and decision making; constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering women; and (D) Potential differential impacts of development policies and programs on men and women, including unintended or negative consequences; and includes conclusions and recommendations to enable development policies and programs to narrow gender gaps and improve the lives of women and girls. For more information, please review ADS 205.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) - Gender-based violence (GBV) is a pervasive violation of unalienable human rights and a barrier to civic, social, political, and economic participation. It undermines not only the safety, dignity, overall health, and agency of the millions of individuals who experience it, but also the public health, economic stability, and security of nations. GBV impacts individuals across the lifespan, can take many forms, and has direct and indirect costs to families, communities, economies, global public health, and development.

Fixed Amount Awards (FAA) Grants - FAA is a grant agreement where payment is based on the achievement of milestones as opposed to the actual costs incurred by the recipient. This type of award reduces some of the administrative burden and record keeping requirements for both the recipient and the donor. Accountability is based primarily on performance and results. It is essential that the program scope is specific and that adequate cost, historical, or pricing data is available to establish a FAA with the assurance that the recipient will realize no increment above the actual cost. An FAA should be awarded when programmatic accomplishments and results are easily quantified into benchmarks or deliverables.

Intersectionality - Perspective of gender equality and equality. It entails rooting out systemic barriers and discrimination, and ambitiously pursuing equity and equality for all people. This includes those who

face multiple forms of discrimination. Programs with intersectionality should intentionally include and address the needs of women and girls from marginalized populations with the understanding that, if we do not intentionally and proactively include, we may unintentionally exclude.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning - Activity monitoring, evaluation, and learning emphasizes the systematic process of collecting and analyzing performance data and other information to track progress toward planned results. Monitoring and evaluation is used to influence decision making and resource allocation and to make changes as needed.

Monitoring is the ongoing and systematic tracking of data or information relevant to USAID strategies, projects, and activities. Relevant data and informational needs are identified during planning and design and may include output and outcome measures that are directly attributable to or affected by USAID interventions, as well as measures of the operating context and programmatic assumptions.

Women's Economic Empowerment - Women and girls, in all their diversity, can meaningfully participate in, contribute to, and benefit from economic opportunities.