CALL FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST

BUILDING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS TO DISSEMINATE SOCIAL INNOVATION IN HEALTH IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

Deadline for submission: 11 October 2019

TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, co-sponsored by UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank and WHO, is pleased to announce a call for Letters of Interest for Building research partnerships in low- and middle-income countries to disseminate social innovation in health. The selected partnerships will build upon, contribute to and synergize with the Social Innovation in Health Initiative’s work to contribute to universal health coverage.

Background

SIHI, the Social Innovation in Health Initiative¹, is a network of individuals and institutions sharing a common goal to advance social innovation in health through research and to transform health care delivery. Since 2014, SIHI has identified and studied more than 40 community-based social innovations across 17 countries that are improving access, so that no-one is left behind. SIHI country research hubs in China, Colombia, Malawi, Philippines, South Africa and Uganda have been playing a leadership role in advancing social innovation in health through research, advocacy and capacity strengthening. Research institutions are well positioned to provide a unique platform to convene social innovators, government and community representatives, researchers and other stakeholders to work together, provide evidence of what works and what does not, and nurture social innovations. The SIHI country research hubs work with governments and other stakeholders to create an enabling environment for social innovation to thrive. With this call, TDR collaborates with SIHI partners² to expand the SIHI network in low- and middle-income countries, particularly in relation to infectious diseases of poverty, and to disseminate the use of social innovation in health approaches and research.

SIHI vision

SIHI’s vision is to create an enabling environment for social innovations to thrive and where an increasing number of research institutions in low- and middle-income countries are playing a leadership role in advancing social innovation through advocacy, research and capacity strengthening to transform health care delivery.

SIHI’s aim is to “plant the seeds for dissemination” by playing a catalytic role and fostering growing engagement.

¹ For more information please visit: https://socialinnovationinhealth.org/ and https://www.who.int/tdr/research/social-innovation/en/
² SIHI partners include grassroots innovators, international organizations, governments, funding agencies, academic institutions and other stakeholders. For the full list of partners, please visit: https://socialinnovationinhealth.org/about/what-is-sihi/
Purpose and scope of this call

Disseminating social innovation in health in low- and middle-income countries - The purpose of this call is to build upon the work of the SIHI research country hubs and support research institutions in other low- and middle-income countries to embed social innovation in their programmes. This will be done through creating research partnerships in low- and middle-income countries between (i) research institutions having the capacity and experience in advancing social innovation in health through advocacy, research and capacity strengthening and (ii) research institutions focusing on infectious diseases of poverty that are willing to engage and embed this approach in their organizations. These research partnerships will actively enhance and facilitate the networking, sharing and learning among SIHI partners.

Activities will be undertaken and completed during the 2020-2021 biennium. Success will be measured by (i) the level of institutionalization and dissemination of social innovation approach and research in countries, and (ii) the level of collaboration with SIHI partners to enhance coordination, synergy and expansion of the SIHI network. Approaches will include preferably: (i) introduction and promotion of social innovation approach in countries interested to engage with SIHI; identification and showcasing of social innovations in health in countries where social innovation is introduced, (ii) collaborative research to advance social innovation and related capacity strengthening e.g. case study research on selected social innovations, research on lessons identified so far in the SIHI case studies such as factors influencing engagement with key stakeholders (communities, governments etc.), research to scale up or replicate successful social innovations; and/or (iv) embedding social innovation in the health educational and research system and embedding research in social innovation practice.

Intended recipients of this call

Research partnerships focusing on enhancing health care delivery will include at least two research institutions based in low- and middle-income countries, to work together and disseminate the social innovation approach and research in other low- and middle-income countries:
- One research institution with the capacity and experience in supporting social innovation in health in their countries through research, convening of health system actors to work together and engage in multi-disciplinary research, and/or related capacity strengthening.
- One or more institutions in other countries, focusing on infectious diseases of poverty and willing to engage and embed social innovation in their respective organizations’ programme and health (research) system.

Eligibility criteria

1. Applicants are part of a partnership that may be established for this grant and that includes at least two universities or research institutes based in different countries in low- and middle-income countries. They will apply in collaboration with various health system actors as relevant.
2. South-South-North collaborations are encouraged. However, grant holders must be institutions in low- and middle-income countries.
3. Applicants demonstrate interest and commitment to promote and support social innovation in health through research and in collaboration with SIHI network.
4. At least one of the universities or research institutes has the capacity and experience to advance social innovation in health and the commitment to support other institutions to engage in and embed social innovation in their organizations and their country health systems.

3 SIHI case studies: https://socialinnovationinhealth.org/researching-social-innovations/
5. At least one of the universities or research institutes is committed to engage and embed social innovation in their organizations and their country health systems; these institutions have a strong engagement in research for infectious diseases of poverty.

6. Support from government at appropriate level (e.g. letter of support), as relevant

**Evaluation criteria**

This is a two-stage evaluation process:

**Stage 1: Letter of Interest**

For the evaluation of the first stage (Letters of Interest), only criteria on relevance and scientific and technical merit will be evaluated. Only the aspects highlighted in bold in the list below will be considered.

**Stage 2: Full proposals**

For the evaluation of the second stage (Full Proposals), all criteria listed below will be evaluated.

**Criteria**

1. **Relevance**
   - Responsiveness of the proposal to the call, level of institutional interest and commitment to (i) social innovation in health and related research and (ii) work in collaboration with and enhance SIHI network
   - Level of support from relevant health authorities and local social innovators and communities

2. **Scientific and technical merit**
   - Quality/suitability of the partnership institutions/team (composition, expertise) for the proposed tasks
   - Potential positive impact of deliverables and outcomes in which low- and middle-income country institutions play a leadership role
   - Sound and innovative approach to ensure a successful partnership
   - Leverage provided by applicant institutions or through their collaborations

3. **Feasibility**
   - Coherence and effectiveness of the workplan to meet objectives on time
   - Potential to be implemented smoothly with identified resources
   - Sustainability of outcomes
   - Risk management approach to the project

4. **Budget**
   - Soundness and appropriateness of budget
   - “Value for money” of the proposal – efficiency and results (outputs and potential impact) expected for the proposed budget

**Financial support**

Selected proposals are expected to be implemented in 2020-2021. They will be funded as per availability of funds.

Applicants are requested to provide a lower budget scenario and a higher budget scenario. Indicative budget requested to be supported by this call: maximum US$ 80,000 for the lower budget scenario and maximum US$ 140,000 for higher budget scenario of each partnership, and for 2020-2021 period; leverage from applicants’ institutions and partners is a great asset.
How to apply?

This is a two-stage application procedure:

- **Deadline for submission of Letters of Interest: 11 October 2019**
- Development of full proposal for selected Letter of Interest applicants: Nov 2019
- **Deadline for submission of full proposal: 30 November 2019**

Letters of Interest will be reviewed on a competitive basis by a panel of independent experts and will be evaluated according to the scientific merit and relevance to the call. Applicants of selected Letters of Interest will then receive a request to provide a full proposal.

Download the Letter of Interest application form [here](#).


Application forms must be completed and signed appropriately. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Letters of Interest should be emailed to Dr Beatrice Halpaap halpaapb@who.int with a copy to Elisabetta Dessi dessie@who.int