

Google.org Impact Challenge

Bay Area

Frequently Asked Questions

About

What is the Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area?

The Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area is an open invitation to local nonprofits asking them to share their vision for innovative ways to make our neighborhoods stronger—and how Google's support can help them grow. We call on the public to vote from among ten selected projects for the project they believe will have the greatest potential for impact in their community. Winning organizations receive grant funding and other Google support to help turn their ideas into reality.

Why is Google hosting the Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area?

The Bay Area is the home for many of our employees and their families and we want to support the nonprofits that make our communities better. Since 2011, we have volunteered thousands of hours with local organizations. The Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area is about fueling innovation to support our communities and the great work of local nonprofits.

What will the selected grantees receive?

The top five winners (including the People's Choice winner) will each receive \$1,000,000 grant, support from Google volunteers, and capacity building support from a social impact advisory firm. Five finalists will receive a \$500,000 grant and support from Google volunteers. The remaining twenty-five (25) runners-up organizations will receive a \$100,000 grant and an opportunity to receive support from Google volunteers.

Where can I read a full copy of the rules?

You can find the rules [here](#).

What if I still have questions?

Please contact us at bay-challenge-2021@google.com. We will review every email and post responses to commonly asked questions on our FAQ here to ensure that all interested applicants have access to the same helpful information.

Criteria

What are we looking for?

Applicants are invited to submit a project that will be reviewed by a team at Google and a panel of external judges based on these criteria:

Impact. How will the proposed project improve the lives of local residents?

Innovation. Does the project tackle the issue it seeks to address in a new and creative way?

Reach. How many people will be affected if successful and to what extent?

Scalability. If successful, what will your project achieve in 5 years? Can this proposal serve as a model for other communities?

Feasibility. Does the team have a well-developed, realistic plan to execute on the proposal? Have they identified the right partners for implementation?

Opportunity. Does your project positively and equitably impact people and their chances to experience healthy, playful, and thriving lives.

Entry

Is there a registration fee?

No. Applying for the Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area is free.

How do I know if my organization is eligible to participate?

Review the rules [here](#).

What if I am not a registered nonprofit or in the process of registering now? Can I still apply?

You must be registered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit at the time the application is submitted. If you are a fiscally sponsored organization, your fiscal sponsor can apply on your behalf, provided it is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit at the time the application is submitted. Please see [here](#) for more details.

What if I have a great idea, but my nonprofit isn't based in the Bay Area?

The Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area is open to 501(c)(3) nonprofit or fiscally-sponsored organizations with a registered office and/or material presence in the Bay Area. If you believe your organization has a material presence in this area, we would encourage you to apply. Please see the [rules](#) for details.

What if we're a local affiliate of a national organization? Can we still apply?

As long as you're a US 501(c)(3) nonprofit or fiscally-sponsored organization with a registered office and/or material presence in the Bay Area area at the time you submit the application, you are eligible to apply.

What does it mean to have a material presence in the Bay Area?

It is up to your organization to determine whether you feel that your presence in the Bay Area area is material. If in doubt, please [apply](#). Per the [rules](#), all projects will be partially evaluated based on the impact they can have on the Bay Area area.

Can we apply if we're a for-profit business with a social impact?

Unfortunately, no. The Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area is only open to qualified registered 501(c)(3) nonprofits (or fiscally-sponsored organizations) with a registered office and/or material presence in the Bay Area area.

What if I work for a large organization, like a university, that has many departments - can we submit multiple applications?

Colleges and universities are permitted to submit more than one application, provided only one application per faculty or staff member authorized to represent the university or college is submitted. See the [rules](#) for full details. If not a college or university, each eligible organization is only allowed to submit one application, so please be sure to coordinate with others in your organization who might apply.

Can my organization submit a joint application with another organization?

Only one organization can apply per application, but it is fine if that application references collaboration with another organization. If your organization is selected as a winner, it may work with other organizations to complete your proposed project, as long as your organization complies with the [rules](#) and the terms of the grant agreement.

Can I still apply if I'm already a Google.org grantee?

Yes, you can apply. We are looking for the best submissions from organizations with a registered office and/or material presence in the Bay Area area..

Projects

What do you mean when you say “project”?

A project is your organization's proposed concept and implementation plan for how you will create a better, more thriving Bay Area. If selected for a grant, we'll be supporting the implementation of this project -- so we need to know exactly how the grant will help you realize your plan.

If another organization is currently implementing a similar concept, can we still submit the idea?

Yes, but please note that projects will be judged in part on their innovative approach and potential to scale. So you'll need to tell us how and why your implementation is innovative for the community, why your organization is uniquely suited to implement the concept in a way that will be more successful, or how you plan to partner with other organizations to achieve success.

Does this have to be a new idea for my organization?

It need not be brand new. In fact, it may already be a work in progress. If so, we would like to hear exactly how a grant will change the trajectory of your progress toward implementation, scale, and impact.

Over what time period should the grant funds be spent?

We expect the grant to be spent over the course of one to three years.

Can the grant be used to fund overhead and staffing costs?

Yes, but the large majority of the award should be devoted to the implementation of the project.

Will details of our project idea be kept confidential?

Google will not treat your project as confidential or proprietary, and the details of your project will be shared with judges and possibly others to evaluate your proposal, so please do not submit any proprietary or confidential information in your application. Please keep in mind that if your organization is selected as a winner, your project summary will be made available to the public on the [website](#).

What is a fiscally-sponsored organization?

A fiscal sponsor is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides oversight for a project by another organization or group that is not a 501(c)(3). We encourage you to reach out to your legal counsel if you have questions about the fiscal sponsorship legal structure. In the case of the Google.org Impact Challenge Bay Area, the fiscal sponsor must apply on behalf of the sponsored project or group.

Process

Can I get a copy of the application questions before I fill out the application?

Yes, you can find a copy of the application questions [here](#).

Can we include appendices or additional information to the application?

The application includes an opportunity to provide links to additional resources. Unfortunately, we are not able to accept any attachments beyond those linked as additional materials in the application form.

Can I save a draft of my application on the site if I want to edit it later?

No. Applications can't be saved for later completion, so we recommend drafting your responses in a separate document first and only completing the application form when the entire application is ready for submission.

How do I make sure my application is successfully submitted?

Make sure all required fields are populated and within the given word limits, then click the "Submit" button. If the application has been successfully submitted, you should see a screen with a message confirming that we received your application, and you should also receive a confirmation email to the email address you provided. If you have any questions about your application submission, please contact us at: bay-challenge-2021@google.com.

I've submitted my application. What do I do now?

That's great news! No further action is required. We'll reach out if we require any additional information, and will announce the finalists per the timeline on the [website](#).

Does my submission have to be in English?

Yes, please submit your application in English.

Do I need a Google account to apply?

No, you don't need a Google account.

How will the entries be judged?

All applications received will be reviewed by a team at Google and a panel of judges based on the criteria described in the [rules](#). In addition, the public will pick one People's Choice Winner from the 10 finalists during a public vote running in late 2021.

Who are the external judges?

See our panel of judges on the [website](#). The judges are selected based on both their demonstrated commitment to improving their communities and their ability to rally public support for the best ideas.

What if a judge has an affiliation with an organization who applies?

We ask judges not to be involved in scoring applications from any organization they are personally affiliated with (for example, if a judge or their family member is on the board of the organization). The application's score will be determined only by the remaining judges.

Will every single application be reviewed?

Yes, we will review all eligible applications received.