



# USAID/NIGERIA COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY CHALLENGE

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### About the Prize

#### 1. What is the USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenge?

Nigeria is facing a food security crisis compounded by the COVID-19 global pandemic and its effects on the food value chain in the country. The pandemic has significantly disrupted already fragile value chains across the country, including people's ability to produce, process, and distribute food. The disruption to agricultural productivity and markets has a knock-on negative impact on livelihoods, especially among the most vulnerable households.

As such, USAID/Nigeria created the **USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenge** to spur, recognize, and reward outstanding business plans from both commercially viable youth-led enterprises (up to age 29) and mid-stage enterprises (with an existing customer base of more than 1,000 people) in Nigeria that can rapidly expand their activities to improve food production and/or food security, thus improving the resilience of vulnerable households to the negative impacts of COVID-19.

#### 2. What kinds of innovations are you looking for?

USAID/Nigeria is seeking to partner with youth-led companies and medium-sized companies (with an existing customer base of more than 1,000 people) that are already working in food production, processing, and/or distribution. The Challenge seeks innovations that address the following priority themes: innovation in food production that maximizes water usage; efficient use of water resources for food production; sustainable use of energy and water for increased productivity; innovations for food processing, preservation and marketing of safe, nutritious foods and/or logistics; food production with efficient energy use; leveraging the use of water as multiple means of food production; or innovations to increase consumers demand, purchase, and consumption of safe, nutritious foods.

Some potential solutions that the Challenge funds are looking to award may include, but are not limited to, promoting digital platforms such as digitized logistics, improved power/agriculture nexus solutions, increased on-farm mechanization, enhanced skills development/youth employment in agricultural value chains, and expanded urban farming, and developing innovative locally available, affordable, and scalable food-based models for prevention or treatment of malnutrition in Nigeria.

### **3. What are the incentives for entering this competition?**

Up to 30 youth-led companies will be awarded between \$25,000 and \$75,000 in funding and technical assistance to expand their activities to improve food production and/or food security.

Up to 15 mid-stage enterprises will be awarded between \$75,000 and \$150,000 in funding and technical assistance to expand their activities to improve food production and/or food security.

All successful applicants will be invited to join an Acceleration Workshop and receive relevant technical assistance following the announcement of the winners.

## **Entering the Prize**

### **4. Who should apply to the USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenge?**

Mid-stage enterprises and youth-led enterprises that are registered, for-profit companies with a local presence in Nigeria are encouraged to apply and amplify their impact in the Nigerian agricultural value chain.

### **5. Who is funding the USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenge?**

The USAID Mission in Nigeria is providing the funds for the USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenge.

### **6. Am I eligible to apply as a mid-stage enterprise?**

To be eligible for the mid-stage enterprises award, applicants must have existing services or products in the Nigerian food security value chain with a minimum of 1,000 existing customers. Additionally, applicants are required to demonstrate commitment of 50 percent leveraged funds. The final amount of leveraged funds will be determined on a case-by-case basis for each applicant.

### **7. Am I eligible to apply as a youth-led enterprise?**

Applicants seeking the youth-led enterprise award must:

- Have a founder under the age of 29 at the time of application submission;
- Have a pre-revenue or post-revenue business model innovation in the Nigerian food security value chain; and
- Have a working prototype or minimum viable product, along with a demonstrated BoP market segment being targeted.

There is no requirement for leveraged funds for youth-led applicants, but youth-led applicants are encouraged to demonstrate leveraged funds when possible.

### **8. Can I apply to both the Mid-Stage and Youth-Led Enterprise Awards?**

No. Applicants may apply to only one of the USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenges.

### **9. I am originally from Nigeria but currently living elsewhere. Can I still join?**

Yes. You may join as long as the enterprise being entered into the challenge is registered in Nigeria and authorized by the national government in Nigeria or has at least one registered Nigerian local partner.

### **10. I am not of Nigerian descent, but my enterprise is for the Nigerian market. Can I still join?**

Yes. You may join as long as the enterprise being entered into the challenge is registered in Nigeria and authorized by the national government in Nigeria or has at least one registered Nigerian local partner.

### **11. Can I get some advice on how to best enter the competition?**

We will be hosting a webinar to provide guidance on our goals, the submission process, and to resolve any questions you may have. The webinar will take place on Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at 2:00 PM WAT. Please [register here](#) to join the webinar.

If you have inquiries about how to enter the competition, you may submit them via email to [NigeriaCOVID19challenge@resonanceglobal.com](mailto:NigeriaCOVID19challenge@resonanceglobal.com). We will publish all questions and answers about the competition on the application platform to ensure transparent communication.

### **12. When is the deadline for entries?**

Entries must be submitted by 5:00 PM WAT on May 9, 2021. Late entries will not be accepted.

## **After Entering the Prize**

### **13. What do I do after I enter the competition?**

You do not need to do anything after you have entered the competition. The USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenge team will be in touch if you are selected as one of the finalists. If so, you will have a teleconference or videoconference interview with USAID staff and partners. You will be given advance notice to prepare for the interview and submit additional evidence in support of your entry.

### **14. Can I remove my entry once I have submitted it?**

Yes. If you want your entry to be removed after you have submitted it, you can send an email to [NigeriaCOVID19challenge@resonanceglobal.com](mailto:NigeriaCOVID19challenge@resonanceglobal.com) and request for it to be removed.

### **15. What happens to entries that do not make it to the finalist stage?**

Even if your solution is not selected, we will inform you via email.

## **Finalists and Winners**

### **16. What can I do with the award money if I win?**

You will be required to use the award money to implement the activities included in your award agreement. Awardees will be required to submit monitoring and evaluation data to verify program progress and impact.

**17. Is it mandatory to join the USAID/Nigeria COVID-19 Food Security Challenge Acceleration Workshop?**

Yes. Attending the Acceleration Workshop is a critical part of the technical assistance and acceleration support that the Challenge offers. However, we recognize that attending the workshop may not be possible for some individuals, and we can make special arrangements on a case-by-case basis.