

Results in Education for All Children (REACH) Trust Fund

Global Book Alliance/REACH for Reading Call for Proposals

Background Information

The **REACH for Reading** Call for Proposals is a joint initiative by the Results for All Children (REACH) trust fund, housed at the World Bank and the Global Book Alliance, a multi-partner alliance led by USAID. Funded by NORAD, USAID, and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, REACH supports efforts toward more and better education services, especially to those most excluded, by helping country systems focus more sharply on results. The Global Book Alliance brings together partners from donors, multilateral institutions, NGOs, and the private sector to work together to transform the development, procurement and distribution of books for reading instruction and practice, particularly in underserved languages for the primary school. Our shared vision is an education system in which all children have access to a quality education where they are able to develop the key skill of literacy. Currently, 250 million children of primary school age around the world have not acquired this foundational skill. To address this global learning crisis, the Global Book Alliance/REACH for Reading Call for Proposals will fund a series of innovative interventions in low and middle income countries, using results-based financing mechanisms to increase efficiency and align incentives.

Objectives of the Global Book Alliance/REACH for Reading Call

This is the fifth call for proposals for activities to be financed under the REACH Trust Fund and second REACH for Reading proposal request. A total of up to US\$4million (up to US\$500,000 per proposal) is available under the Knowledge, Learning, and Innovation (KLI) stream, and will be competitively awarded.

The objective of the KLI Grants is to strengthen the evidence-base for the impact results-based financing can have on the education system by improving access to, the quality and utilization of textbooks and reading books. The Global Book Alliance and REACH, through REACH for Reading, will fund activities at any of the following stages of development:

- a) **Proof of concept:** Piloting of a concept that targets beneficiaries in a developing country context to gain an early, real world assessment of the technical and financial viability of the proposed concept.
- b) **Testing impact and delivery:** Testing a proven concept for social impact, improved outcomes and/or market viability, as well as operational refinement to build paths to sustainability and scale.
- c) **Scaling-up:** Adaptation of a rigorously evaluated innovation to new contexts, geographical areas.

This call will only accept applications that transform the quality, availability and utilization of textbooks and reading books through results-based financing models.

What is Results-Based Financing?

Results-based financing is an umbrella term that refers to any program that rewards the delivery of one or more outputs or outcomes by one or more incentives, financial or otherwise, upon verification that the agreed-upon result has been delivered. Incentives may be directed to ministries, provinces, districts or service providers such as publishers (supply side), program beneficiaries such as students (demand side), or both. It can refer to donor financing, government financing, or both.

What type of solutions will be considered?

REACH for Reading will fund high quality, robust, cost-effective experiments, designed to transform the book supply chain, procurement, quality assurance and utilization of books through results-based financing models. The solutions we support will demonstrate and be evaluated against the following criteria:

a) **Technical Strength**

An intervention which reforms one or more aspects of the way books are developed, procured, produced, distributed, or used, using results-based financing. A focus on books (Pre-Primary - Basic Education) for reading instruction and practice in underserved languages will be given more weight. Interventions that are applicable to other types of textbooks and supplementary books are eligible only if they address the pre-conditions for improving book development, procurement, and production system-wide to the measurable benefit of beneficiary students. A clearly defined theory of change and mechanisms for evaluating and measuring the impact of proposed activities will be strongly favored.

b) **Client Commitment**

Applications will only be considered from countries with existing reading programs and/or reforms. Priority will be given to teams (including government, partner representatives, public private partnerships) working in or across countries where the government can demonstrate support for using results-based financing mechanisms. If applicant is selected as an awardee, a letter of endorsement from the government is required to secure funding from this call for proposals.

c) **Impact on Country Systems**

Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed intervention strengthens or improves existing country or complementary systems.

d) **Equity**

Proposals should be able to measure the equity impact of RBF, with particular attention to minimizing the risks of pulling focus away from the most difficult to reach and underserved populations (e.g. girls, rural, children with disabilities) in an effort to produce results.

Examples of eligible activities include (but are not limited to):

- **Book Supply Chain and Planning:**

- **Book Supply Chain:** Management and coordination of the book supply chain are often the source of significant inefficiencies. While supply chain and distribution issues vary by country, common challenges include limited demand forecasting, poor management systems and loss and damage of books. Proposals might focus on the development of a results-based monitoring system that focuses on known points of vulnerability along the book value chain (I.e. within the functional areas of supply planning, forecasting and/or distribution), and that incentivizes more efficient performance through results-based financing. Results-based financing could then be targeted towards improvements along the chain and, ultimately, making texts accessible to children.
- **Innovative approaches that make existing content more accessible** to relevant populations through creative commons licensing or other mechanisms.

- **Data for tracking and delivery:** The lack of data on children’s book provision limits the ability to evaluate progress, pinpoint inefficiencies, and mobilize appropriate resources. A potential grant might condition financing on the creation of an open-data system and/or other mechanisms/technology solutions that support and incentivize improved use of available country data and administrative systems for children’s book provision.
- **Pooled procurement** or other activities that aim to leverage the resources of multiple stakeholders and increase efficiency in the scale of book production. For example, collaboration between schools and other stakeholders to procure supplemental reading materials.
- **Quality and Access focused approaches:** Provide technical assistance to support countries in developing results-based financing approaches to revolutionize their literacy programs by increasing the quality, accessibility, or affordability for national or regional approaches to books and reading.
 - **Develop results-based financing oriented components within operations** that strengthen country systems to improve book design, inventory, production, or procurement.
 - **Quality Assurance/Monitoring Systems** in book development and along the supply chain.
 - **Production of Books:** A potential response to this call might pilot a book production intervention that increases collaboration amongst NGOs, donors, Ministries of Education and other stakeholders involved in the content development process. The aforementioned intervention could test whether results-based financing has the ability to increase access to mother tongue language books regionally or within countries where improved children’s book provision is a critical need. Proposals that demonstrate informed content design, grounded in research and new insights on how children best learn, are preferred. For example, a proposal might include new research that explores the use of illustrations in books as an aid to vocabulary acquisition.
 - **Fund implementation/process evaluations** or provide funding for impact evaluations or longitudinal follow-up for results-based financing mechanisms already underway in book design, inventory, production, procurement, or distribution systems.
- **ICT and digital interventions** that increase efficiencies along the book chain, from content delivery to production to supply chain logistics
- **Development of publishing collaboratives** or other partnerships that aim to catalyze the strengths of multiple stakeholders
- **Market Shaping Activities:** The dynamics of demand and supply that drive the markets for book production and provision in many country contexts are imbalanced and function as drivers of high costs and insufficient quantity, particularly in the case of underserved languages. Proposals that provide concrete approaches for analyzing, and then adjusting these dynamics at any point along the supply chain, using results-based financing to accelerate progress, will be considered. Proposals in this category must advance the use of evidence-based techniques for market analysis and shaping, and must identify clear and realistic milestones that will be achieved in the market shaping process in the country context to which the proposal applies.

Examples of past REACH grantees can be found [here](#). Proposals will be accepted for activities in all [Bank client countries](#).

Who will we fund?

REACH for Reading will consider applications from (1) Non-governmental organizations; (2) Teams within multilateral organizations; (3) Academics; and (4) Civil Society organizations.

How will funding be managed?

The maximum budget for an activity financed through this call for proposals is expected to be \$500,000. A World Bank Task Team Leader (TTL) must be identified for each proposal selected for financing. For teams applying within the Bank, the TTL will be responsible for the activity implementation and budget and for delivering the results specified in the proposal. Successful teams from outside the World Bank will be matched with a World Bank task team leader.

Eligible Expenditures

For Bank-executed activities, the Trust Fund funds may be used to finance:

- (a) Associated Overheads
- (b) Consultants Fees Individuals with Indirect Costs and Firms
- (c) Contractual Services
- (d) Equipment and Office Premises Lease Cost
- (e) Equipment Purchased
- (f) Extended Term Consultants - with Indirect Costs
- (g) Media, Workshops, Conference and Meeting
- (h) Staff Costs - with Indirect Costs
- (i) Temporary Support Staff Costs - with Indirect Costs
- (j) Travel Expenses

Anticipated Timeline

The deadline for submissions is 6 PM EST November 17, 2017.

Select applicants will be invited to interview in late January 2018.

Funding is expected to be available starting March 2018.

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