

Being



Request For Proposals: Ecosystem Catalyst Opportunity for Ecuador

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

We're seeking Ecosystem Catalyst proposals from mental health organizations, civil society organizations, social enterprises, research institutions, consortiums, and others who work with and can influence decision-makers, public sector representatives, community advocates, public and private funders, young people, and other key stakeholders in **Ecuador**.

WHY ARE WE FUNDING ECOSYSTEM CATALYST PROJECTS IN ECUADOR?

Mental health innovators face countless challenges in navigating the systems in which they operate to achieve the impact that they seek. That's why we're investing in Ecosystem Catalyst (EC) approaches that overcome these barriers and allow mental health innovations to flourish. **EC funding aims to build supportive environments that create the right conditions for mental health initiatives to succeed and grow.**

In **Ecuador**, stakeholders consulted in our [landscape analysis](#) highlighted that a lack of collaboration among national mental health actors is a key barrier to the sustainable implementation and demand for early interventions supporting youth mental health.



AVAILABLE FUNDING

Ecosystem Catalyst (EC) Funding



In Ecuador, EC funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD over 24 months will be awarded to an organization that can improve alignment and collaboration among mental health stakeholders to advance youth mental health and their safety on the national agenda.

WHY FOCUS ON IMPROVING STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION IN ECUADOR?

In Ecuador, the stakeholders who are actively supporting youth mental health include civil society, young people, NGOs, religious institutions, the private sector and the education system, with many focusing on improvement in education, child and adolescent rights, health, politics, and other areas. **A well-coordinated network is crucial for integrating promising mental health approaches into national frameworks and resource planning.**

WHAT CAN AN ECOSYSTEM CATALYST PROPOSAL FOR ECUADOR LOOK LIKE?

EC proposals will need to align with Ecuador's Ecosystem Focus outline above and can include but aren't limited to the following:

- Proposals that build strategic alliances for advancing the mental health agenda and safety on the national agenda
- Proposals that enable better alignment, coordination, and collaboration among key stakeholders and networks.
- Proposals that work with governments and other key stakeholders to support mental health and safety integration into adjacent areas.

Successful EC proposals should demonstrate the capacity to leverage existing networks and infrastructure in Ecuador to mobilize various stakeholders. We will favour proposals that involve partnerships across relevant groups, such as civil society, government, research, etc.

Grand Challenges Canada is open to different strategies and approaches to achieve the collective goal (listed in this section) and Ecuador's Ecosystem Country Priority Focus (listed in the next section), including the funding of consortia of organizations.

WHAT WE WON'T FUND THROUGH ECOSYSTEM CATALYST:

Projects that focus on implementing an intervention/innovation are not eligible for EC funding. (Please see our seed and transition-to-scale funding for these projects).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All legally incorporated (or the equivalent) organizations based in any country can apply for funding.

Please note: Only organizations implementing their project in Ecuador will be considered.

Preference will be given to eligible organizations based on the following order of criteria:

1. Youth-led organizations (50% or more of staff in key leadership roles are youth aged 35 and under) based in Ecuador.
2. Organizations based in Ecuador.
3. Organizations based in any low- and middle-income country partnering with a local organization based in Ecuador.
4. Other eligible organisations.

HOW TO APPLY

The deadline to apply for Ecosystem Catalyst funding in Ecuador is August 20, 2025, at 11:59 PM ET.

All applications will involve a two-stage application process:

1. Completing a screening questionnaire and submitting a project summary (stage one); and
2. Submitting a full project application (stage two). **Only those applications that pass screening (stage one) will be invited to submit a full application (stage two).**



Applications will only be accepted through our online application form only accessible via Grand Challenges Canada's Fluxx Portal <https://gcc.fluxx.io>. **Existing users should login to their account and new users must register for an account on Fluxx by August 13, 2025, at 11:59 pm ET to secure their chance to apply.**

For questions or technical issues related to the Fluxx portal, contact Grand Challenges Canada's Fluxx Technical Support team at: <http://www.grandchallenges.ca/fluxxsupport/>.



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WHAT IS THE EC APPLICATION PROCESS?

As part of stage one applications, applicants must submit a robust **Theory of Change (TOC)** that clearly outlines how proposed activities will lead to envisioned outputs; short-, medium-, and longer-term outcomes. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider Ecuador's Ecosystem Country Priority Focus area and ecosystem context in the development of their TOC. The TOC should also include a description of key assumptions underpinning how change will occur, and any major risks that may affect progress.

The series of activities, outputs, outcomes and related assumptions will ideally inform the key metrics that will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project. Several public resources to construct a theory of change can be found on the internet. A few examples of resources are listed here from the [UN Development Group](#), [Global Affairs Canada](#), [Think NPC's Ten Step Process](#) and [Center for Theory of Change](#).

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE EC REVIEW PROCESS?



Stage 1: EC Eligibility Screening

Grand Challenges Canada will screen all funding applications on the basis of the eligibility criteria outlined below. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will be removed from the review process. The eligibility criteria are listed below:

1. Eligible applicants include legally recognized organizations (e.g. social enterprises, non-profit, for-profit, limited liability companies, research/academic institutions) that:
 - a. Are formed and legally incorporated
 - b. Can successfully perform activities in their technical area
 - c. Can receive and administer funding
 - d. The following are ineligible: Individuals, Sole proprietorships, Unincorporated trusts and partnerships, Government organizations, United Nations country offices
2. Projects must be implemented in Ecuador
3. There can only be one (1) Project Lead for each project and they must be affiliated with the applying organization. The Project Lead should be the person with the highest level of responsibility working directly on the project and will be the point of contact for Grand Challenges Canada.
4. A Project Lead can only be listed on one (1) application. Single institutions can submit multiple applications but each needs a different Project Lead.
5. The Review Committee will only consider applications that include all required information and answers to all questions.

6. Your innovation must align with the General Scope (funding amount and funding period), the Collective Goal and Priority Outcomes and Ecuador's Ecosystem Country Priority Focus.

Note: Section 2.3 of the broader Request for Proposal outlines what Grand Challenges Canada will not fund. Please be aware that EC funding information has been updated to reflect that applications are no longer accepted from the other 11 priority countries.

7. Applicants must obtain any legal and/or regulatory approvals, consents or reviews required to accept foreign grant funds and/or conduct the project activities, before concluding a funding agreement. Applicants are responsible for understanding and complying with these regulations and laws before receiving funding from Grand Challenges Canada.

8. Grand Challenges Canada may, at any time and at our sole discretion, change the eligibility criteria for applicants, Project Leads and/or eligible countries, as long as it doesn't substantially undermine the review process.

Please note:

- Grand Challenges Canada must approve any change in Project Lead or applicant organization from the originally submitted application.
- While it's not required, we do encourage applicants from outside of Ecuador to collaborate meaningfully with innovators from Ecuador
- Project Leads must get their affiliated institution's sign-off before submitting any application.

EC Relevance Screen

1. Applications that are deemed eligible will move forward to the Relevance Screen as part of stage one of the review process. During this stage, the Project Summary will be assessed by Grand Challenges Canada staff and Being Partners based on the below criteria.

- Assessment of Analysis and Alignment (Yes/No)
- Does the application demonstrate an understanding of the current state of the youth mental health ecosystem in Ecuador?
- Is the proposed project aligned with the EC Collective Goal and Priority Outcomes?
- Does the proposed project align with the identified ecosystem barriers for Ecuador?

2. Potential for Impact and Influence (Scored 1-5)

- Do evidence and common sense suggest that the activities, if implemented will lead to proposed outcomes?
- Are underlying assumptions articulated and fair?

- Is there a clear plan for collaborating with other stakeholders in the mental health ecosystem to maximize project impact?
- Does the organization demonstrate a proven track record in successfully implementing similar projects?



Stage 2: External Peer Review

An independent expert peer review committee of external youth, scientific, social and business experts will advise on the merit of full applications and evaluate each one against the criteria below. Reviewers will also consider the criteria used in stage one (analysis and alignment with the RFP, and potential for impact) from the Project Summary.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Relevance

- Does the proposed project include appropriate and meaningful involvement of young people and young people with lived experience of mental health challenges?

2. Leadership Capability to Champion Change

- Is the organization and project majority locally led?
- Are the project team and collaborators appropriately connected to and able to influence the target ecosystem? Do they have significant relationships with public sector and/or other relevant stakeholders?
- How well does the team reflect the experience to execute on the proposed plan of work?

3. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

- Does the monitoring and evaluation plan identify clear success metrics that will allow for performance measurement and tracking or progress towards priority outcomes?
- Are the proposed indicators appropriate for measuring the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes selected and is there a clear rationale for why these measures are positioned to effectively illustrate success and progress toward the priority outcome?
- Does the team have the capacities to report on the outcomes of the proposed work?
- Has the team articulated a clear plan for managing iteration and learning?

4. Proposed Plan of Execution

- Is there a fair level of detail on the proposed plan of work that can be suitably assessed?
- Are proposed activities reasonable to achieve outcomes within proposed timelines?
- Does the team identify potential risks and barriers?
- Does the application propose specific and realistic steps to overcome these barriers?
- Is there evidence that the proposed activities and outcomes align with government and key stakeholder priorities in Ecuador?

5. Value for Money

- Are funds requested reasonable, commensurate and sufficient to achieve proposed outcomes?
- Does the proposal represent a particularly thoughtful and efficient use of resources?

FOR MORE INFORMATION



For questions, reach out at info@being-initiative.org.

