

BASIC EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS IN LAO PDR
BEQUAL EDUCATION INNOVATION FUND (BEIF)
Application Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR (BEQUAL) Program is an initiative of the Australian government, the European Union (EU) and the Lao PDR government with the goal of supporting the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) to deliver quality basic education.

BEQUAL is a ten-year program with a first phase that began on 1 May 2015 and which will end in mid-2019, leading into Phase II. The first phase of BEQUAL targets 66 of the most disadvantaged districts in the Lao PDR.

2. What is the goal BEQUAL Education Innovation Fund?

The goal of the BEIF is to:

pilot new and innovative activities and analysis to help strengthen provincial, district, school and community capacity to manage, coordinate and implement education activities at a local level.

Proposals for BEIF grants should focus on new approaches and practices which can deliver both quality and access to primary-level education for children in disadvantaged communities, focusing on ethnic students, girls and children with disabilities.

Activities can be implemented in any of the 66 BEQUAL targeted districts. The activities should be, carried out in close cooperation with MOES representatives at provincial, district or school levels (including related institutions such as the participating Teacher Training Colleges – TTCs).

Applications for the BEIF grant proposals can be submitted by:

- Lao PDR Government units at the Central, Provincial or District levels
- INGOs
- NPAs, and other specialist local or international organisations.

Partnerships are encouraged where value is added to the innovation by a partnership, for example, between Government units, INGOs and NPAs.

3. What are the requirements for all applicants?

To apply for a BEIF grant, prospective partners must meet the following criteria:

Organisation Requirements	Must be a legally recognised to operate in Lao PDR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lao PDR Government units at the Central, Provincial or District levels • INGOs • NPAs, and other specialist local or international organisations. • NGO
	If the organisation is an NGO or NPA a written agreement from a PESS or DESB is required

	<p>If the application is made by a consortium:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all members of the consortium must individually meet the criteria, with one member of the consortium taking responsibility for the financial allocation and for the achievement of results
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Organisation Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partner organization or agency has the capacity to implement the proposed innovation. This should include any required facilities, staffing, and the appropriate standards of financial accountability and the supporting administration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The systems and staff have the proven capacity to manage financial grants and to report against the activities, expenditure and outcomes in a reliable, effective and accurate manner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation has proven experience in successfully working and cooperating in communities and/or primary schools in the Lao
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation and can demonstrate understanding of the constraints and context in urban and remote primary schools

4. Selection criteria for proposed activities

A BEIF application cannot be for additional funding for existing programs, plans, or activities.	
Innovation, Impact and Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be innovative. That is, they introduce something new, different and inventive for basic education in the Lao PDR. The proposal must show it has a measurable and positive impact on educational outcomes for ethnic and/or disabled girls and boys. The proposal must have relevance to the BEQUAL KRAs and goal of the BEIF; as well as having a direct relevance to the needs of the local communities, districts or provinces.
Preference will be given to proposals for activities in BEQUAL- targeted districts where currently there is little or no INGO/NPA activity underway	
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals must demonstrate the credibility of the intervention by demonstrating that there is a logical link between the inputs and both the short-term outcomes and long-term goals. The activities should include the participation of PESS or DESBs, communities, and/or local groups, in order to ensure the longer term sustainability of any positive outcomes for basic education
Scalability and Cost Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The innovation must be designed to pilot activities and demonstrate success, then allow for implementation to be introduced on a wider scale. This will increase its potential for broader support and impact across MOES and the schools. Scalability includes the aspect of ongoing cost effectiveness, in order to promote and disseminate the importance of low-cost interventions in the local context. In this way, the proposed BEIF pilot activities will provide an innovative, affordable model of successful change,

	from which the MOES and supporting organisations can learn from and replicate more broadly across basic education
Ownership and Commitment of Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed BEIF supported innovations must have a strong level of ownership from PESS/DESB and commitment from partner organisations and agencies. This would best be demonstrated by the commitment of a proportion of partner organisations' and agencies' own resources to the proposed innovation. Organisational or agency contributions can include staff time, vehicles, facilities and other support costs, as well as monetary contributions towards the funding of the proposed activities. PESS/DESB commitment can be "in-kind" support.

5. Weighting of BIEF Selection Criteria for Assessment of Applications

BIEF Technical Selection Criteria			Percentage Weighting
1. Innovation, Impact & Relevance	a. Innovation	10%	35%
	b. Impact	15%	
	c. Relevance	10%	
2. Credibility & Sustainability			25%
3. Scalability & Cost Effectiveness			20%
4. Ownership & Commitment			20%
Total			100%

6. How much can be applied for?

Grants can range from Australian Dollar (AUD) 10,000 up to a maximum of AUD 160,000. The BEIF grant application is a competitive process and the funding will be awarded to those organisations whose proposals best reflect the goals of BEQUAL, and of the BEIF, and that have the best potential to improve basic education delivery and outcomes. The maximum duration of any grant implementation is two years from date of approval.

7. Application Process

To support applicants applying for BEIF grants BEQUAL is first asking applicants to submit a concept note. This is an outline of your innovation.

- (1) Concept Note: All applicants must submit a Concept Note using the official template that is available at www.bequal-laos.org.
- (2) Shortlist: All Concept Notes will be reviewed against the selection criteria.
- (3) Full Proposal: Applicants whose Concept Notes meet the selection criteria will be invited to write a full proposal.
- (4) Assessment: Full proposals will be assessed for innovative thinking, quality, cost and sustainability.
- (5) Offer: The best proposals will be offered grants.

(6) Grant Agreement: Successful applicants will sign Grant Agreements with BEQUAL and will be provided with funds to implement their activities.

The deadline for submission of Concept Notes is **5:00 pm 24 April 2017**.

The BEIF application timeline

Applicants whose Concept Notes meet the selection criteria will be notified by 8 May 2017 and will be invited to write full proposals.

Full proposals will be due on 2 June 2017. Final approval for grants under the 2017 BEIF are expected to be approved at the end of June and funds released in late July 2017.

BEIF Guidelines and an application for can be downloaded from: www.bequal-laos.org.

Applications for BEIF funding may be submitted in either Lao or English.

Additional information may be obtained by emailing BEIF@bequal-laos.org.

Selection Process

The BEIF Selection Panel

The membership of the selection Panel will be approved through the normal BEQUAL governance processes and will comprise male and female representatives from MOES, DFAT and BEQUAL.

The grants will be awarded using clear guidelines and through a competitive application process.

The decision of the BEIF selection Panel will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. However, unsuccessful applicants for BEIF grants can if they request be provided with written summary comments on their proposal.

Additional Support

BEQUAL regional staff (Regional Education Specialists and Regional Program Managers) and BEQUAL staff in MOES Vientiane can provide advice to applicants to ensure that proposals are complete and are able to meet all criteria.

Their contact details are as follows:

Contact Person	Position	Email
BEQUAL - Northern Region		
Carol McGowan	Regional Education Specialist	carol.mcgowan@bequal-laos.org
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BEQUAL - Central Region		
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BEQUAL office Vientiane		
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APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: The BEQUAL program has five main aims, or Key Result Areas (KRAs) as outlined below:

KRA 1: Education Policy, Planning and Coordination: the aim is to strengthen the capacity of central, provincial and district Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) educational entities to better manage administrative and financial resources for education delivery in Lao PDR. It also focuses on gathering and using basic education data for evidence based decision making and policy development.

KRA 2: Increased Participation: the aim is to ensure more girls and boys (including those with disabilities) from remote and ethnic communities are able to enrol and complete their primary education.

KRA 3: Teacher Education and Support: the aim is to ensure primary teacher trainees, including ethnic women, are receiving modern and pedagogically appropriate pre-service training from qualified teacher trainers so that they can return to their villages to teach using inclusive practice and having access to good teaching and learning materials.

KRA 4: Teaching and Learning Resources: the aim is to ensure educators, teachers and students have access to (and using) relevant gender inclusive teaching and learning resources, through the new curriculum being developed by MOES, including materials; lesson plans and learning resources; with wide distribution of textbooks; notebooks and student materials.

KRA 5: School Infrastructure: the aim is to ensure teachers and students in remote and disadvantaged communities are accommodated in schools and classrooms that are safe, hygienic, and inclusive and provide a well-equipped physical learning

Appendix 2

Some examples of activities that could attract funding

Following are examples of activities that could be considered eligible for grants under the BEIF. This is not an exhaustive list:

- Piloting new approaches to teaching Lao Language to boys and girls who do not have Lao as their mother tongue with an emphasis on those Districts where Grade 1 repetition and dropout rates are high
- Action at community level to increase acceptance of, and demand for, girls' education This includes new approaches to help ensure that girls from disadvantaged backgrounds are more fully supported by their families, communities and education authorities in order that they attend and stay at primary school, and also activities that involve adult and adolescent women in remote areas acting as mentors and champions for girls' education.
- Piloting of new local curriculum content designed to strengthen learning outcomes at the school level and is conducted in cooperation and partnership with provincial or district education authorities
- The potential to use different methodologies in order to teach Lao language at grade 1 in predominantly ethnic schools in ways that improve literacy outcomes
- Interventions that can improve learning readiness, mentoring and counselling activities, strategies for improved nutrition, as well as activities involving parent-child interactions.
- Activities that promote a culture of reading and learning
- Activities to support disabled girls and boys and those with learning difficulties to attend and succeed at school. Can include community activities or innovative resources that encourage greater inclusion of these disadvantaged girls and boys in basic education
- Teaching and learning activities that improve literacy, numeracy and conceptual understanding through involving students in researching and recording local customs, village oral history, flora and fauna, with the lesson plans developed and linked with the quality of curricular learning outcomes