

FAQ: Lab Proponents

Q: Who can submit an idea? What institutions are eligible? Can I submit an idea as an individual?

A: Individuals, public institutions, development finance institutions, private sector, and civil society (NGOs, think tanks, academics) are all welcome to submit ideas. Successful past proponents have included large institutions from the public and private sectors, as well as start-ups, entrepreneurs, boutique fund managers, and NGOs. The Lab's call for ideas is open to all innovators in the sustainable finance space.

Q: What stage should my idea be in to submit it to the Lab?

A: Since one of the main objectives of the Lab process is to help develop and fine tune innovative ideas, we typically seek well-defined concepts that are in a pre-pilot or early pilot stage, which could benefit from instrument design and technical support, in addition to the potential access to capital through the Lab's network.

Q: How do I know if my idea is eligible?

A: The idea must be a financial instrument (description below) that targets developing countries. In addition, it should also be able to show that it meets the Lab's four criteria: the idea is innovative, actionable, has catalytic potential, and can show financial sustainability. For more on these criteria, see the Lab Guidelines [HERE](#) or on the Lab's site [HERE](#).

Q: What is a financial instrument?

A: The overarching goal of the Lab is to bring in private financing for climate-related projects, so we look for financial tools that facilitate these transactions and investments, and that can provide these financial services. Previous types of instruments have included various types of funds, bonds, structured equity vehicles, insurance products, guarantees, lending platforms, pay-per-service models, and securitization structures among others. To get an idea of what we are looking for, take a look at some of the past instruments [HERE](#).

Q: My idea does not fit into one of the Lab's geographic or sector categories. Can I still submit my idea?

A: Yes, we welcome other innovative mitigation/adaptation ideas, even if it may not fit into one of this year's priority regions or themes. Priority regions represent dedicated chapters of the Lab, which have a fixed number of ideas per year – each year the Lab takes forward several ideas that focus on other developing countries. In addition, the Lab reserves slots for high-quality ideas that do not fit into either thematic or regional categories, but display especially high potential according to Lab criteria.

Q: What degree of information and development must I be able to show in the submission form?

A: Submissions should be able to give a short description of the idea, its purpose and how it works. It should also show that it fits the Lab's criteria, outlining the main barriers it addresses and timeline for implementation. Do not worry if specific details are still unclear; for instance, while it is helpful to have a sense of the types of finance needed for idea implementation, part of the Lab process is further developing and define the finance needed for implementation. Some level of development is useful but the ability to describe every detail of the flow of finance is not required.

Q: How much time will I as a proponent need to dedicate to the Lab if my idea is selected?

A: The amount of days dedicated to the Lab process varies from proponent to proponent. Past proponent teams have typically dedicated at least 2-3 days per week to the Lab process, in a period over seventh months (from March to September). This time is often split across multiple team members from the proponent side. We suggest that successful proponents dedicate one or two individuals to work as Lab focal points throughout the process. CPI dedicates two staff members from our team to each instrument, at roughly ~60% full-time.

Q: How long is the Lab process?

A: After being selected at the end of February, successful proponents will work for six-seven months to design the instrument and identify its implementation pathway. After this time, the instrument will receive light-touch assistance for 25 days over a 12-month period, including bespoke launch support to get the idea off the ground.

Q: Can I submit more than one idea?

A: Yes, you can submit more than one idea. We do suggest though that you confirm that the ideas do meet the Lab's eligibility criteria to make sure your ideas are a right fit for the Lab before filling out the questionnaire.

Q: Would the Lab be willing to sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA)?

A: Typically, 2-way NDAs are signed between successfully selected proponents and CPI at the beginning of the Lab process to ensure that proprietary / commercially-sensitive information remains confidential. With that in-mind, key learnings from the Lab process, including the instrument design, implementation pathway, and potential for impact are made publicly available at the conclusion of the Lab process, in order to share outcomes of our research with the broader climate finance communities, so proponents need to be comfortable with this level of transparency. However, public outputs do not include financial models, or other sensitive items.

Q: What countries are eligible for target pilots?

A: The idea must be targeted at one (or more) ODA-eligible countries (you can find a list of these countries [HERE](#)). While the project/idea needs to be implemented in an ODA-eligible country(ies), the proponents and sources of capital can be based out of developing countries and non-ODA countries.

Q: Will successful proponents be provided with funding or seed capital?

A: The Lab does not offer a fixed amount of seed capital as a part of the program. Proponents are provided with in-kind support equivalent to USD 200,000 from CPI. Concurrently, Lab Member institutions often directly invest in Lab instruments, with over USD \$370 million in investment coming from Lab Members in the first five years of the Lab.

Q: Do proponents have to have public partners to submit an idea?

A: Idea proponents do not have to be tied to a national or public partner; they can be individuals, institutions, or private firms. To get an idea of successful proponents from previous years, you can browse through the Lab-endorsed instruments [HERE](#). Although those submissions that already have an implementing partner identified are often more likely to fulfil the "actionability" criteria, this is not a requirement and it does not have to be a public partner, as the Lab can help connect proponents with implementing entities and potential partners.

Resources for information on the Lab and Call for Ideas:

[Past successful instruments](#)
[Lab Guidelines for the 2022 Cycle](#)
[2022 Cycle Call for Ideas Webinar](#)