

## SUSTAINABILITY INNOVATION GRANT FUND

### *FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)*

- **How many Sustainability Innovation Grants (SIGs) will be awarded during the INFRONT project?** To date, twenty four (24) SIGs have been awarded in Phases I, II, III and IV. Please visit [www.infront.cc](http://www.infront.cc) for details of these initiatives. It is anticipated that up to twelve awards will be made in Phase V. *Note that it is likely that Phase V will be the last Phase of the SIG due to limited funding.*
- **If our company applied and was unsuccessful in a previous round, can the company apply in future rounds?** Yes, as long as the company fits within the eligibility criteria. Please review the Application Guidelines, Section 4.
- **If our company is unsuccessful in receiving a SIG, will MEDA provide feedback?** Yes. Based on comments from the SIG Evaluation Committee, each applicant will receive an email with feedback.
- **Will information on SIG recipient initiatives be shared publicly?** Yes. MEDA will share information about SIG initiatives on the INFRONT website.
- **What costs will the SIG fund cover?** The SIG fund will support sustainability initiatives related to ESG policies and practices that positively impact SME employees, customers, suppliers and/or the wider community/environment. Annex 1 in the Application Guidelines provides a table with a variety of sample initiatives – applicants will be expected to tailor to fit within the context of their businesses, or propose alternate ideas. Based on these initiatives, the SIG Fund will support activities directed to:
  - Consultants with specific expertise related to the initiative;
  - Development of training material;
  - Workshops / training sessions;
  - Product development;
  - Equipment

- **What costs are not eligible for coverage?** Disallowable costs to consider when creating the budget for the initiative include:
  - Costs incurred before *both* MEDA and the recipient have signed the SIG contract
  - Overhead
  - Bonuses
  - Membership fees
  - Patents
  - Activities related to R&D
  - Carrying charges, interest expenses and late payment charges
  
- **Can the funds be used for a sustainability initiative that the SME was already planning to carry out?** Yes. However, in this case applicants must clearly demonstrate how the SIG funds will be used and provide specific details on the additional impact the funds will allow, above and beyond what was already forecasted.
  
- **What are the required qualifications of external consultants that are included in applications?** External consultants must have demonstrated experience related to the proposed initiative and their CV must reflect experience that will add value to the project. MEDA will allow the match for external consultants related to performance management and sustainability to be reduced to 1:1 in favour of the business. All proposed external consultants must be approved by MEDA as part of the application process.
  
- **Why are partnerships with others organizations included in the selection criteria?** Most challenges related to sustainability issues require a business to look beyond their individual capabilities, and think about changes at a systematic level. In such instances, partnerships between a business and relevant stakeholders (i.e. customers, local communities, politicians, NGOs, universities, business partners) can be valuable to addressing sustainability issues and can also help a company to manage environmental and social risk better. When selecting partners for the SIG initiative, it will be important to ensure there are clear incentives for collaboration and that roles are clear.

- **What are examples of partner organizations?** These can include partnerships with NGOs who provide training to local communities, universities who carry out research on a relevant topic, government bodies who promote relevant regulation, or other organizations that are valuable to the execution of your initiative.
- **Our company has an innovative idea, but is not sure how to measure the results. Will the company receive support from MEDA?** Yes. Applicants are required to develop Anticipated Targets (Section XV) as part of the proposal to demonstrate their ideas related to impact measurement. Successful applicants will receive support from the MEDA Performance Measurement Specialists to fine tune these indicators and targets, with the purpose of demonstrating the business case for the integration of sustainability.
- **How much detail should I include in the application form?** Applicants must follow the submission details listed on page 3 of the Application Guidelines document. Please note that members of the Evaluation Committee have diverse backgrounds and may not be familiar with contexts in specific countries or technical language across a range of sectors. When writing proposals, applicants are strongly advised to ensure that adequate contextual information is provided, and language is not overly technical.
- **Who should submit the application?** Applications can be submitted by either the SFMF 2 LP fund manager or directly by the SME and should be addressed to **Katie Turner** ([kturner@meda.org](mailto:kturner@meda.org)) and **Majid Mirza** ([mmirza@meda.org](mailto:mmirza@meda.org)). Please note that in the case of successful applicants, the contract will be directly between MEDA and the SME.