



EvalPartners Innovation Challenge:
Strengthening the Role of VOPEs in Democratizing Learning and Evaluation:
Democracy, Human Rights and Governance as a Showcase

Localizing Democracy, Rights and Governance Evaluation Practices

The EvalPartners Innovation Challenge in a snapshot

[EvalPartners](#), the global partnership to strengthen national evaluation capacities, received a grant from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor of the United States Department for State for 2018-2019. The grant helps EvalPartners continue its global engagement to proactively support VOPEs by funding a new round of Peer to Peer (P2P) grants and Innovation Challenge partnerships, in addition to the development of an e-learning module and of a VOPE toolkit section on strengthening the role of Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) in democratizing learning and evaluation using Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) as a showcase.

EvalPartners defines **innovation challenge** as a process that:

- i) Develops a product, process or service that yields new pathways to enhance an enabling environment for evaluation
- ii) Imaginatively reframes or recombines different points of view and different existing elements for sufficient action or impact,
- iii) Shows potential for implementation and replication
- iv) Is rooted in a methodology or process, and;
- v) Accounts and accommodates for risks and potential unintended consequences.

Innovation Challenge objective: The objective of this round of innovation challenges is to innovate local solutions for evaluating interventions for better democracy, enhanced human rights, and improved governance. EvalPartners seek proposals that strengthen local capacity, tools and guidelines adopted to local context for democracy, human rights and governance (DRG) evaluations.

To achieve the objective, the projects can consider following but not limited to:

Documenting methods and approaches to help activists, civil society organizations, and evaluation practitioners improve the monitoring and evaluation of DRG programs. Proposals should aim to develop publicly available reports, briefs, toolkits, manuals, frameworks or other deliverables. Projects and deliverables should aim to (1) outline research and evaluative evidence that show how DRG practitioners, human rights defenders and civil society can improve the implementation of DRG programs in restrictive environments, or (2) document how innovative methods and approaches can be used to improve M&E for DRG programs and (3) enhance the use of these reports for effective decision and policy making.

Building evaluation skills: EvalPartners encourages VOPEs to propose concepts that seek to support and build skills for those interested in evaluating democracy, human rights and governance programs, including, but not limited to activists, civil society organizations, and evaluation practitioners. As DRG funding often occurs in complex environments, and in situations that require innovation and re-design during program implementation, standard evaluation approaches, tools or methods may not be appropriate for monitoring and evaluating DRG outcomes. Support and training should focus on the ways in which creative, but rigorous, methods can be used to evaluate social change initiatives in complicated and complex environments. In this context, the use of the term “rigorous approaches and

methods” is not meant to limit proposals to training or advocacy promoting the use of randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

Documenting local solutions: Documenting and sharing local solutions to program implementation, monitoring and evaluation of DRG programs in complicated or complex environments is important. Successful applications will document (1) how activists and local organizations successfully implemented creative approaches to improve democracy, human rights and governance outcomes, or (2) how activists, local organizations and evaluation practitioners successfully monitor and evaluate democracy, human rights and governance outcomes. Project activities should aim to understand how and why certain program approaches may be seen as more feasible than others, as well as documenting the successes and challenges of using particular M&E approaches or methods in certain environments.

Enhancing the use of DRG evaluations: The EvalPartners Theory of Change is built on the assumption that high-quality and value-driven evaluation can improve the design and implementation of how development programs track their progress, make mid-course corrections and assess final outcomes and impacts with a view to social learning across policies, programs and initiatives. As such, promoting the use of DRG evaluations is central to this call.

This innovation challenge is about **localizing democracy, rights and governance evaluation practices**; the proposals should clearly address DRG evaluations by proposing innovative ideas in field building.

Due to the limited time frame (8 months) and the limited budget (up to 20,000 USD), EvalPartners will privilege out-of-the-box, agile and quick turnaround actions in response to this call.

EvalPartners is particularly interested in encouraging ideas that bring stakeholders together across national boundaries and in particular collaborative bids which involve both evaluators and users of evaluation outputs.

Eligibility: Only Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) from ODA-eligible countries which can be a national or regional evaluation association or society can apply for this call as long as they are registered in the online IOCE VOPE Directory. It is expected that they will partner with not-for-profit organizations, governmental, non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, academic institutions and private sector organizations with an interest in and/or mandate for evidence-based policy making. This might include as well cooperative partnerships with VOPEs, academia and think tanks from non-ODA-eligible countries. The proposals can also include EvalPartners Networks where relevant.

Process and criteria for the Innovation Challenge

Process

Interested applicants shall submit the entry form (Annex I) with a simple project proposal of no more than 1,000 words describing the innovative idea for evidence-based approaches that can help **localizing democracy, rights and governance evaluations** providing information on objectives, key activities, expected outputs and outcomes, and including a detailed budget of up to 20,000 USD. The proposed project activities should be completed by **August 31, 2019**. It is expected that four winners will be selected and awarded up to 20,000 USD each to implement their project.

Selection

All eligible entries received during the Entry Period will be screened by a special EvalPartners’ review committee for completeness and adherence to the Challenge Objective.

The criteria to judge the entries are the following:

Criteria		Maximum Points	Proposed range of points to be given			
1	Relevance of the project to Innovation Challenge theme	30	Excellent (30-22)	Good (21-15)	Adequate (14-8)	Poor (7-0)
2	Feasibility and internal coherence	20	Excellent (20-15)	Good (14-10)	Adequate (9-5)	Poor (4-0)
3	Probable sustainability of changes created by the project	20	Excellent (20-15)	Good (14-10)	Adequate (9-5)	Poor (4-0)
4	Spark (degree of innovation in the idea and its originality)	30	Excellent (30-22)	Good (21-15)	Adequate (14-8)	Poor (7-0)

How to apply

Kindly send the completed annex 1 to coordinator@evalpartners.org with copy to lynn@ioce.net and treasurer@ioce.net. The deadline for the submission of the entry form is **November 30 2018, midnight GMT**. Winners will be announced by **December 20, 2018**. **All winning projects must be completed by August 31, 2019**, with no possibility for extension.

EvalPartners will award a grant of up to US \$20,000 each to a maximum of 4 winners. No grants will be awarded to individuals. EvalPartners reserves the right, in its sole discretion, not to award a grant to any of the proposed projects. Grant contracts will be managed by the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation.

Applications should include:

- The signature of the main applicant
- Letters of endorsement from each party to the projects, including the managing VOPE
- The bank account details should be readily available once the selection is announced (not necessary to submit with the proposal)

Tips for budgeting

Grants cannot be used to cover salaries and expert fees of VOPE staff/ members, purchase of equipment, e.g. computers and IT equipment, and rent of offices for VOPE secretariats. No administrative fees can be included in the project budget. Partners are not allowed to benefit financially from the grant.

Although workshops, seminars are popular interventions, there may be more innovative activities to maximize results. Also the interventions should generate valuable knowledge products and/or benefit more people/organizations. Use of virtual opportunities for sharing at the international level would be cost effective. Please consider international travel if it is really necessary to achieve the objectives of the project. Priority will be given to innovative and sustainable interventions.

Support to Applicants

As DRG can be a new theme for VOPEs, EvalPartners in partnership with [DM&E for Peace](#) organized a webinar to clarify the theme and share experience from the field so that potential applicants have a better understanding on DRG evaluations. The webinar was held on 2nd May 2018 and the recording is available in this [link](#) for interested applicants to watch. Participation in the webinar is not compulsory but it will be helpful to design a winning proposal with DRG focus.

Please direct any questions to Asela Kalugampitiya at coordinator@evalpartners.org with copy to Lynn Burgess at lynn@ioce.net