



Innovating the Future Through Partnership

LINK: Learning and Innovation Network for Knowledge and Solutions

Collaborating to Solve the World's Toughest Development Challenges

INTRODUCTION TO BENEFITS OF LINK



August 2013

Introduction to LINK Round IV

Overview of LINK:

The Global Knowledge Initiative's LINK (Learning and Innovation Network for Knowledge and Solutions) program catalyzes partnerships aimed at delivering solutions to development challenges pertinent to scientific and technical research, science and math education, and innovation and entrepreneurship. At the most basic level, LINK answers the question: **How do those who need critical knowledge, technology, and other resources find and collaborate with those who have them?** LINK focuses on development issues that have three key components—(1) a call to action from policy makers; (2) a population of motivated actors in various institutes, including universities; and (3) a demand for solutions in civil society.

LINK is a competition that works with one Winning team—which receives a full suite of LINK activities over one year, valued at approximately \$205,000 USD—and a number of teams of Finalists, who receive trainings, coaching, and other benefits. We invite researchers in East and Southern Africa who require international collaboration to solve their challenges to apply for LINK.

If you win LINK, you will receive support from GKI in three distinct stages:

- (1) **Locating** partners and resources that you can tap to develop, refine, and implement solutions to your challenges. In this first stage, your team will define a development challenge in terms of its potential to be tackled through collaboration, identify resources available to you, as well as the gaps that hinder progress. GKI will train you to clarify your challenge and identify potential pathways to a solution. Trainings include creating a shared vision for collective action; mapping challenges to inform potential solutions; analyzing the context of challenges; understanding potential beneficiaries; and others.
- (2) **Enabling** you as you identify possible solutions and begin to build your purpose-driven network. This includes training you and your partners in collaborative innovation skills such as creating a roadmap for collective action; prototyping possible solutions; aligning network members' incentives; and others—and using design intensives/strategy sessions to help you develop possible solutions to your challenge.
- (3) **Connecting** your efforts with the efforts of potential partners. Through introductions to potential solvers, as well as events such as [Collaboration Colloquia](#), LINK connects you to partners needed to ultimately solve your challenge. GKI monitors and supports communication with partners around the world throughout this stage, identifying potential additional partners and knowledge to enhance ongoing research.

LINK Winner Benefits

- Training on collaborative innovation skills for the LINK team
- \$5,000 USD cash prize to assist with project expenses
- In-depth context analysis of political, business, and economic factors relevant to the LINK challenge
- Challenge mapping sessions to identify specific aspects of the project where partnerships may be especially valuable
- Development of a comprehensive Collaborative Innovation Strategy to guide partnership and identify partners and resources needed
- Exposure to GKI's worldwide network of potential partners
- Additional benefits to be identified after a LINK Winner is selected

Overview of Benefits Provided to LINK Winner

The activities listed below apply to the LINK Winner and his/her team. GKI will also announce a limited number of LINK Finalists, who will be eligible for certain other benefits.

Training on collaborative innovation skills for the LINK team

Through at least two in-country sessions, GKI will train you and your team on the skills necessary to successfully collaborate internationally.

Cash prize to defray project expenses

LINK Winners will receive \$5,000 USD to cover some costs associated with solving their specific challenge.

In-depth context analysis of political, business, and economic factors relevant to the LINK challenge

GKI will research the context of your challenge, producing a synthetic analysis that will greatly inform your decision making. This analysis is also especially helpful as a tool to quickly get potential partners from around the world up to speed on the background of your challenge.

Challenge mapping sessions to identify specific aspects of the project where partnerships may be especially valuable

Development challenges are complex; by breaking them down into their sub-components, GKI can help you identify areas in which you need specific resources or partners. Challenge mapping can also show you where you might be very close to a breakthrough!

Development of a comprehensive Collaborative Innovation Strategy to guide partnership and identify partners and resources needed

Once you have identified the challenge you seek to solve, GKI will help you develop a strategy to solve it through collaboration. This strategy will guide you and your partners' actions as you move from developing to implementing your solutions.

Exposure to GKI's worldwide network of potential partners

GKI is connected to universities, research centers, governments, private sector actors, and others around the world who have a stated interest in collaborating on challenges such as yours. Throughout the process of understanding your challenge, training you on collaboration skills, and identifying interventions that can be developed to solve your challenge, we will scout for partners who can work with you to implement a solution and help solve your challenge.

Additional benefits to be identified after a LINK Winner is selected

To request more information about applying for LINK Round IV, contact:

Andrew Gerard, GKI Program Officer

Email: andrew.gerard@gkinitiative.org

Click [here to download a detailed overview of LINK Round IV](#), including instructions on how to apply

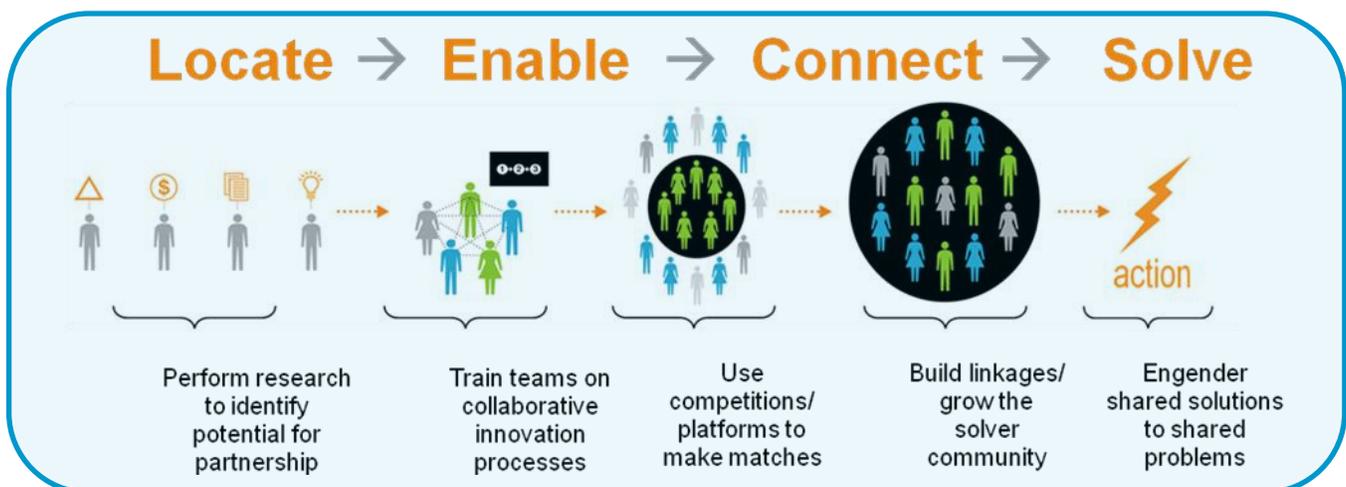
Annex I: Background on the Global Knowledge Initiative

The need for a new approach to science, technology, and innovation (STI) collaboration between developing and developed countries has never been greater: STI collaborations often exclude scholars in the poorest countries. A widening STI gap separates the rich and poor globally. STI capacity in the developing world often proves insufficient to address most local economic and social development issues. Collaborations that solve STI challenges straddling geographic, disciplinary, and industrial divides offer hope. Such collaborations are possible today in ways never achievable before. Technologies are advancing our global connectedness at unprecedented rates. Researchers are demanding higher levels of openness and availability of knowledge resources. The rise of silo-smashing, multi-disciplinary research is changing the structure of and financing models for contemporary science. Universities, companies, and governments are realizing the higher return on investment that collaborative science can render.

In response to these trends, GKI seeks to forge, optimize, and sustain knowledge partnerships between the people and institutions of higher education and research. We define a knowledge partnership as one that builds individual or organizational capacity to create new knowledge or introduce relevant knowledge where it is needed. Aligning the resources of developing and developed country universities to address shared challenges pertinent to STI guides our work.

The Global Knowledge Initiative arose from the 2008 Higher Education Summit for Global Development convened by the US Secretaries of State and Education and the Administrator of the US Agency for International Development. Attended by more than 200 University Presidents, heads of technology firms, and philanthropists, the Summit identified the need for a “clearinghouse for resources and information to help build knowledge partnerships that can tackle development challenges.”

We respond to this need by helping people **locate** critical resources required for scientific research, teaching, and innovation to address developing country-based challenges. We then **enable** partners to collaborate through competitions, trainings, and capacity building initiatives. Finally, we **connect** resource seekers together with the global network of problem solvers to bring solutions to scale. Our work responds to direct requests from a broad coalition of institutional and individual stakeholders in both developing and developed countries



For more information on the Global Knowledge Initiative, see our website at: www.globalknowledgeinitiative.org or our blog at: globalknowledgeblog.wordpress.com.