



Larsen Lam ICONIQ Impact Award

Guidance for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

January 2020

Lever for Change approaches all of our work dynamically. Our plans are never static. As such, we anticipate that applicants to the Larsen Lam ICONIQ Impact Award will offer plans that are also dynamic. We place a high priority on monitoring, evaluation, and learning. We value monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities that are capable of adapting, as the context and project work evolves, yet sufficiently rigorous to document and measure results, learn from them, course correct, and adapt, as necessary. If you are selected as a Finalist, you will be required to submit a detailed plan that demonstrates the thinking for monitoring, evaluation, and learning

Please take time to understand how Lever for Change defines monitoring, evaluation, and Learning and familiarize yourself with the questions that a Finalist will need to address.

Monitoring is a process for systematically collecting data and information (e.g., ongoing documentation of project activities landscape tracking, organization performance/capacity assessment). Monitoring includes collecting information to assess your project's performance and the progress toward intended changes (outcomes) of your proposed solution.

If you are selected as a finalist you will need to outline your monitoring plan. This includes outlining the type of information that you expect to document, track, and assess over time to better understand how your project is proceeding such as the:

- *Quality of the services being provided, and who is being served*
- *Output metrics/indicators used to define and measure the progress of your project and intervention*
- *Following and understanding the landscape after your grant is awarded, and whether your solution has evolved over time to the local conditions. And, if relevant, to understand any public policy implications or potential threats to your solution that may arise*
- *Changes to the organization since the grant was awarded (e.g., structure, leadership, vision, and capabilities of your team)*

Here are some of the issues that we expect you to address in your monitoring plan:

- *What are the immediate results of your solution (your outputs)? Output metrics are the most direct measures of a process or activity (e.g., numbers served, frequency or duration of an activity etc.). Name the metric that you plan to track and explain why those outputs are important.*

- Explain how you intend to document or track your activities and results. What resources (beyond this competition's funding) are available to support your monitoring activities?
- What are your key milestones (i.e. important events or key points in your solution)?

Evaluation is a systematic and objective assessment of your work and is used to measure the outcomes and impact of the project over time. Evaluation is critical to determine if your project is on track to meet its targets, to understand "what works," and to identify if the project is meeting any expected changes and impacts. Additionally, evaluation should help you measure your results, learn, course correct, adapt and make better-informed decisions.

The Larsen Lam ICONIQ Impact Award recipient may conduct an internal and/or external evaluation. An internal evaluation is conducted by an internal evaluator which is an individual or group/team that is a member of your project team or organization/collaboration. The Larsen Lam ICONIQ Impact Award team **may ask** that the award recipient engages in an external evaluation. An external evaluation is conducted by an individual or group/team that is not a member of your project or organization/collaboration. The cost of your internal and external evaluation should be reflected in your Larsen Lam ICONIQ Impact Award budget as a line item. We understand that your evaluation plan may be subject to further refinement once you have identified your external evaluator.

- As part of the application process, you will need to outline your plan to evaluate your [theory of change](#). We also want to know how you will measure progress towards achieving the specified outcomes and impacts of your solution over time.
 - **Theory of change** is a narrative description of how this project expects change to happen, including the hypothesized pathways for change, who the players are, and expectations regarding their roles, influencing capacity, as well as an analysis of what is known and unknown.
 - **Outcomes** are the direct benefits of your intervention (solution) as well as other changes that may be a consequence of the intervention.
 - **Impacts** are used to understand the ultimate contributions or attributions of your intervention. Among the types of questions, we expect to be addressed in your evaluation are the following:
 - How has the theory of change for your project evolved over the course of the project?
 - What is the ultimate intended impact of your work? What do you hope to achieve? How?
 - What or who will be impacted? In what ways? To what degree?
 - In addition to the ultimate impact(s), what additional changes (outcomes) will result from this work?
 - How will you know what is working, why, under what conditions and for whom?

- *What are your data sources (e.g., primary or secondary)? What are the potential sources for data collection (e.g., survey, interview, or focus groups)?*
- *What methods and/or specific instruments will you use to ensure that your findings are recorded against a constantly evolving set of conditions?*

Learning involves the synthesis and application of information and insights from multiple sources (monitoring data, evaluation results about progress, your Theory of Change, engagement with impacted communities and experts) to build knowledge. Learning occurs incrementally and iteratively over time and is used to reflect on how a project is meeting its intended and unintended changes. Learnings from your project helps the organizations to understand what is and is not working and assist in determining if your solution is effective and remains relevant. Learning should be broadly shared to inform others working on similar problems.

If you are selected as a finalist, you will need to outline your plan for learning. Among the types of questions we expect to be addressed are the following:

- *What is the most important thing that you intend to learn from implementing your proposed solution?*
- *How do you intend to use learnings to examine and adapt your Theory of Change?*
- *How do you intend to use learnings to strengthen the implementation of your project over time?*
- *What will be your sources of information other than monitoring data and evaluation results?*
- *How do you intend to document and disseminate your findings and to whom?*