

COOKING INDUSTRY CATALYST – *Venture Catalyst*

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

COOKING INDUSTRY CATALYST OVERVIEW

The Cooking Industry Catalyst (“CIC”) is a new global industry development program being launched by the Clean Cooking Alliance. Its aim is to demonstrate that financial returns and impact can be achieved through technological and business model innovation, and that, combined with a conducive enabling environment and consumer demand, these impacts and financial returns can be achieved at scale. The program reflects years of lessons learned by companies, investors, governments, and the Alliance itself.

Over the next several years, the CIC will deliver a range of company-, consumer-, and ecosystem-level interventions to catalyze investment into scalable businesses through three components:

- 1) **CIC-Venture:** Venture-level engagements to support companies to increase their capacity to raise capital, expand and grow their operations, and develop or improve their products.
- 2) **CIC-Market:** Ecosystem-level engagements, including financing vehicles and structures; advice for investors, policymakers, and other players; sector promotion and convening through Alliance- or 3rd party-hosted events; market intelligence and analytical tools; and other public goods or semi-public resources.
- 3) **CIC-Demand:** Consumer-focused awareness and demand creation initiatives to promote the purchase and usage of clean cooking technologies in specific geographic markets.

CIC-VENTURE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

This RFI is to solicit information from companies interested in being qualified for future support under the CIC-Venture program. Besides being eligible to develop proposals for technical assistance and grant funding, companies admitted into the program will form the initial pipeline for Alliance-supported investment facilities and benefit from the Alliance’s endorsement, as well as matchmaking and referrals to commercial and impact investors within its network.

CRITERIA

The CIC-Venture program has been designed to identify, select, and support companies with commercial, financially viable business models to deliver products with social and environmental impacts to underserved communities in developing countries. It aims to enable such businesses to accelerate their investment-readiness and the likelihood that they become successful, replicable case studies in the still nascent clean cooking industry.

There are four primary criteria against which we will evaluate any information submitted, in order to short-list companies for due diligence. None of these are fixed requirements, but rather indications of what is important in our selection process.

Model: The program seeks for-profit entities with business models to design, manufacture, sell, and finance cleaner and more efficient cooking solutions. Multi-product last-mile distributors, microfinance institutions, off-grid solar companies, and other players seeking to expand their consumer offering to

include clean cooking solutions are welcome to submit information. Companies with models reliant on grants for long-term viability are unlikely to be selected.

Organizational Maturity: The program seeks companies beyond the “proof-of-concept” stage. Companies should have a technology and business model, with revenues generated and a full-time management team and existing operations. However, highly innovative solutions still in development may be considered, either for the CIC-Venture program or referral to partners with a focus on early-stage research and development.

Product: While information will be accepted from any company delivering a high-impact solution through a scalable model, the program will prioritize higher performance solutions per [the IWA framework](#) and its four indicators - efficiency, indoor emissions, total emissions, and safety, each along 5 Tiers – 0: lowest performing to 4: highest performing. We will prioritize solutions that meet Tier 2+ for efficiency and Tier 3+ for indoor and overall emissions.

Geographical Focus: Global. We welcome submissions from companies operating in any country.

CIC-VENTURE BENEFITS

Companies that are ultimately selected, the first step of which is to submit information to this RFI, will form the first cohort of CIC portfolio companies with the opportunity to access:

Advisory support and grant funds: Projects co-developed by the Alliance and companies may relate to a range of needs including support on market scoping and feasibility, sales and marketing strategy and implementation advisory, support on HR and personnel issues, advice on supply chain management, or support on financial and operational management processes and systems. They may also relate to company structuring and legal services, due diligence/data room material development, fundraising strategy development, transaction advisory, and impact assessment. Finally, support may be provided for product innovation, including on research and development or market testing and commercialization of new products and services.

Enhanced visibility and credibility with investors and sector decision-makers: Companies admitted into the program will comprise the pipeline that the Alliance will promote as industry pioneers in conferences, webinars, and other public fora, and in bilateral engagements with the investment community, donors, policymakers, and other decisionmakers. Participation in the program will be an important asset for all companies seeking to raise significant commercial investment.

Due diligence with accredited investors: Admission into the program will require participation in an Alliance due diligence process. In addition to utilizing the data and insights gathered for its own decision-making, the Alliance will work with companies to generate deliverables that reduce investor risks and transaction costs, increasing the universe of financiers evaluating CIC-Venture portfolio companies. In particular, information related to markets, products and technologies, and the competitive landscape will be shared on a confidential basis with qualified, trusted investors.

Influence in the design of CIC-Demand interventions: CIC-Demand, which aims to increase consumer awareness and motivation to purchase and adopt clean cooking solutions, will be closely linked with CIC-Venture companies. CIC-Venture companies will provide input into the CIC-Demand design process including the technologies being promoted and targeted markets.

Other initiatives and offerings: The Alliance plans to launch various additional initiatives and offerings targeting, and in many cases be limited to, CIC-Venture portfolio companies. These additional offerings may include proprietary market research, marketing tools, strategy analyses, databases and tools, and targeted investor fundraising opportunities.

CIC-VENTURE PROCESS AND TIMELINE

1. **By January 31:** RFI submissions are received.
2. **February:** Additional requests for information or clarifications are made by the Alliance.
3. **By February 15:** Shortlisted companies are notified.
4. **February/March:** Due diligence (DD) is undertaken by the Alliance team.
5. **By March 30:** Companies that successfully complete DD are admitted to the program.
6. **Thereafter, throughout the course of the program:**
 - a. Admitted companies work with an Alliance relationship manager to co-create concept notes for projects that fill critical gaps which reflect company priorities.
 - b. Concept notes are evaluated by a committee consisting of Alliance management and external investment experts; modifications may be requested as appropriate.
 - c. Approved concept notes are developed into full, costed proposals which are reviewed and approved by the committee.
 - d. Approved projects are undertaken in collaboration with the company, Alliance, and expert advisors; project management responsibility is held by the Alliance relationship manager and the company's designated project manager.
 - e. Upon conclusion of the project, a case study or other promotional package may be developed to ensure visibility for the progress achieved by the company, and to ensure publicly relevant lessons learned are shared with sector participants.

Future projects may be developed and approved depending on the success of the first project. Multiple consecutive projects are possible with each CIC-Venture portfolio company.

Portfolio companies can remain in the program without a specific end date, depending on the value perceived by the company and the Alliance's analysis of its further requirements. The company's participation will be reviewed by the Alliance and company on a semi-annual basis. The CIC-Venture selection process and this RFI will be repeated on a periodic basis to allow for new companies, including new market entrants and companies exhibiting demonstrable progress, to be considered or re-considered for admission.

RFI PROCESS

The RFI phase of the CIC-Venture selection process will be open from January 14, 2020 and **submissions are due by Friday, January 31, 2020 at 6:00pm EDT** to investment@cleancookingalliance.org. Applicants are asked to submit any relevant company informational materials already prepared, but specifically at least the following:

1. Company info: investor deck(s), management presentation(s), and business plan(s)
2. Financials: Past 3 years of historical financials (audited if available), projections/model

ABOUT THE CLEAN COOKING ALLIANCE

The Clean Cooking Alliance works with a global network of partners to build an inclusive industry that makes clean cooking accessible to the three billion people who live each day without it. Established in

2010, the Alliance is driving consumer demand, mobilizing investment to build a pipeline of scalable businesses, and fostering an enabling environment that allows the sector to thrive. Clean cooking transforms lives by improving health, protecting the climate and environment, empowering women, and helping consumers save time and money.

INTENT AND DISCLAIMER

Applicants agree that the Alliance may, in its sole discretion:

- Amend or cancel the RFI, in whole or in part, at any time
- Extend the deadline for submitting responses
- Determine whether a response does or does not substantially comply with the requirements of the RFI
- Waive any minor irregularity, informality or nonconformance with the provisions or procedures of the RFI
- Negotiate with all Consultants that UNF deems acceptable
- Issue multiple awards
- Photocopy the responses for evaluation/review

This RFI is not an offer to contract. Alliance assumes no responsibility for Applicant's cost to respond to this RFI. All responses become the property of the Alliance.

Applicants, by submitting a response to this RFI, waive all right to protest or seek any legal remedies whatsoever regarding any aspect of this RFI.

Applicants represent that they have responded to the RFI with complete honesty and accuracy. If facts provided in the Applicants' response change, the Applicants agree to supplement their responses in writing with any deletions, additions, or changes within ten (10) days of the changes. Applicants will do this, as necessary, throughout the selection process. Applicants understand that any material misrepresentation, including omissions, may disqualify it from consideration for selection.

Applicants understand they may receive proprietary and confidential information from the Alliance during the RFI process ("Confidential Information"). Applicants agree to not use Confidential Information for any purpose other than its participation in the RFI process and to not reveal Confidential Information directly or indirectly to any other person, entity, or organization without the prior written consent of the Alliance. Applicants further agree to exercise all reasonable precautions to maintain the proprietary and confidential nature of Confidential Information where it can best demonstrate its value and capacity to delivery ecosystem-wide, meaningful value.

This RFI is made with the intent to identify Applicants as described. The Alliance will rely on the applicant's representations to be truthful and as described.

If the Alliance amends the RFI, copies of any such amendments will be sent to all respondents to the proposal.