RFP – Request for Proposal
Youth Innovation Lab Trinidad & Tobago

Program: DIA – Democratizing Innovation in the Americas
Scope: Innovation, Youth & Technology

ISSUE: December 2020

THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS

The Trust for the Americas is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization affiliated with the Organization of American States (OAS). Established in 1997 to promote public and private partnerships, The Trust has implemented projects in 24 countries, and worked with over 500 organizations in the region. Our initiatives seek to improve access to human rights, economic opportunities, citizen security, and good governance. We have legal presence in the United States, Colombia and Canada.

Mission: To promote partnerships for social and economic inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Organizations intending to submit a proposal must send a Letter of Intent by **February 15, 2021.** These organizations will receive an invitation to:
1. Participate in an informative Q/A Conference Call to know more about the program, which will take place the last week of **February 2021**
2. Schedule virtual interviews and/or site visits on **March, 2021**.

Parties interested in submitting a proposal must send an electronic version of the document (PDF) by **11:59 PM** (EST) on **February 15, 2021**.

Please include the words **"RFP: Intent to Respond – Innovation Lab T&T"** in the subject line of all email exchanges with The Trust for the Americas. Questions and Letters of Intent should be sent to:

Rodrigo Iriani.
RIriani@oas.org
Senior Program Manager DIA

Timeline - Deadlines	
Letter of Intent Due	2/15/2021
Specific Questions and Interviews to Candidate Organizations	2/28/2021
Interviews and Site Visits	3/15/2021
Proposal Submission	3/20/2021
Local Partner of Choice Selected	3/31/2021

General Conditions
- *Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment by The Trust for the Americas*
- *The Trust for the Americas is not responsible for costs incurred by any organization or their partners in the RFP response preparation or presentation.*
- *Information submitted in response to this RFP will become property of The Trust for the Americas.*
- *All responses will be considered proprietary and confidential with respect to other proposing organizations.*
- *The Trust for the Americas reserves the right to modify this RFP at any time and reserves the right to reject any and all responses to this RFP, in whole or in part, at any time.*

In 2015, The Trust for the Americas launched DIA-Democratizing Innovation in the Americas, a regional initiative to empower at-risk youth through access to state-of-the-art technology training, collaboration spaces, specialized curricula, mentorship, and financial resources for social and economic ventures. Active in Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, Jamaica and Mexico, DIA-Democratizing Innovation in the Americas seeks to inspire young innovators and entrepreneurs to develop solutions that generate livelihood opportunities and economic development. DIA brings together academia, civil society, government officials, private sector entities, entrepreneurs, and young innovators.

PROJECT: Youth Leadership, Digital Training, and Innovation

OBJECTIVE: The Innovation Lab will provide young people with state-of-the-art innovation and technology training, as well as access to collaboration spaces, specialized curricula, mentorship and financial resources, to promote STEM education and entrepreneurship.

IMPACT: Young innovators and disruptive entrepreneurs will in turn create low-cost, high-impact, high-quality innovation solutions that generate affordable access and livelihood opportunities for their communities on a long term, sustainable basis.

To achieve this, in partnership with the Trust for the Americas, a local partner will be selected to launch an innovation center in Trinidad & Tobago. The center will follow the Democratizing Innovation in the Americas philosophy to foster inclusive innovation, and work collaboratively with the rest of the Labs in the DIA network. It will provide young innovators and entrepreneurs with a customized innovation-centered curriculum, access to state-of-the-art technologies such as 3D printers and microprocessors, guidance from job intermediators and mentorship opportunities from business individuals, a collaborative atmosphere, and access to seed-funds for the most promising and innovative, youth-led projects.

RESULTS: By the end of the grant period, **100** young innovators/entrepreneurs will have strengthened their innovation skill sets and gain skills to make their ideas real and commercialize them **(DIA Methodology)**, **US$15,000.00** will be awarded as seed funding to empower young innovators/entrepreneurs to launch promising ventures. Additionally, **200** other young people will have expanded their basic technology skills by accessing resources and services during extracurricular hours at the center.

DURATION: From March 2021 to January 2022 *****TIMELINE TO BE ADJUSTED**

TOTAL GRANT: US$50,000.00 USD – US$65,000.00 for activities, implementation costs, seed funding and technology for the Lab + Software, Course Materials and Technical Assistance
We expect the local partner to contribute in-kind resources, space for the Lab, contents, personnel and

other related costs. No funds will be available for construction.

Target Population: Young men and women aged 16 to 30 years of age, particularly those living in and working within vulnerable communities dealing with, *inter alia*, at-risk scenarios such as complex social environments, poverty, youth crime, poor academic performance.

<div align="center">*DETAILS*</div>

Specific Objective 1: Launch a space designed to foster innovation, digital skills and disruptive entrepreneurship.
- *Output 1:* establishment of one (1) Innovation Lab with state of the art technology and available coaching to energize new ideas, solutions for local challenges, and to create economic ventures

Specific Objective 2: To provide training to at-risk youth and empower community members through access to state-of-the-art-technology, collaborative spaces, innovation methodologies and seed funding opportunities. Training will be on two tracks:

Track: 1	Track 2
• Digital Literacy	• Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training
• Computer Science	• Canvas Business Model
• Data Science	• Financial Literacy
• New Technologies	• Life Skills

<div align="center">**Some methodologies will be provided as well as training for trainers*</div>

- *Output 1:* Train and provide coaching to at least **100** youth (40 hours per participant).
- *Output 2:* Provide access to the center to at least **200** members of the community at large via short workshops, demonstration of projects and use of technology during off hours.
- *Output 3:* Follow Trust for the Americas' Monitoring and Evaluation standards.

Specific Objective 3: Launch youth-led innovation projects through access to cutting edge technologies and seed funding.
- *Output 1:* Organize Two Ideathon Challenges to create solutions to everyday challenges on the topics of: Future of Work, Gender Equality, Sustainable Innovation and Youth Empowerment.
- *Output 2:* Organize one Pitch Tank Competition- innovators and disruptive entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to compete for funding, present projects and receive feedback from businesspersons, entrepreneurs, investors and government officials.
- *Output 3:* Provide US$15,000.00 in seed funding to finance the most promising and innovative youth-led projects selected during the pitch competition. Projects must be disruptive and respond both to social and economic challenges. Project should use technology and be based on principles of coding, hacking and robotics to develop apps and hardware that responds to local solutions.

Specific Objective 4: Connect innovators and disruptive entrepreneurships through access to guidance and mentorship opportunities, peer-to-peer collaboration, sharing of best-practices and lessons learned:
- *Output 1:* Organize a series of Networking Sessions where members from other Centers can interact and showcase ideas with project participants (virtual and in person), as well as organizing sessions with private sector leaders and mentors.

Specific Objective 5. Produce communications material and raise awareness on innovation and solutions.
- _Output 1_: Register all success stories from high-impact innovators and disruptive entrepreneurs
- _Output 2:_ At least 3 awareness activities high level events with government, businesses and other partners to showcase the program and recognize the donor's contribution.

KEY OBJECTIVES

DEVELOPING
the talent of youth, who will generate opportunities for inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship to be realized.

LINKING
the capabilities that youth possess with the requirements in the labor market, using technology to boost these competencies and skills.

FOCUSING
attention on youth between the ages of 16 and 35, particularly those at-risk.

ENSURING
that a focus on empowering women is a fundamental part of the Lab's mission.

CREATING
a network of ideas by bringing the Lab into contact with other like-minded projects in the area.

VERIFYING
that the courses and training programs conducted at the Lab are informative enough for participants to progress in their innovative work.

RECORDING
information on the implementation and development of the Lab, in order to provide best practices.

CREATING
a model for the Lab that allows it to become self-sufficient within a reasonable time period.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The pedagogical focus of a DIA Innovation Lab should be the driving force behind all courses and activities offered at the Lab. This process follows an established pattern of innovation outlined in 5 Steps:

DREAM: This initial stage is where young innovators discover their ideas through experience or knowledge gained in their lives. With the help of facilitators at the Lab, they filter and select the best creations that match the focus of the Lab. These can include peace, urban challenges, accessibility, open government, etc. In this stage, the facilitators play an important role, supporting participants and giving them feedback. It is important that they contribute their knowledge, but also that they remain neutral of the decisions made by the innovation team.

SHAPE: This second stage is where young innovators begin working on their projects through ideation and brainstorming. As ideas come together and details begin to emerge, participants should document all the process. It is important that facilitators assist participants in the process of identifying what are the needs of the project, who would be involved, what is the expected timeline, etc. This is also the stage where creativity accelerators come into play – what if game, assumptions, combining objects, etc.

MAKE: Now that the skills have been acquired, the goal is to make the dream a reality with a viable

prototype. The participant will use the equipment and tools available in the Lab, as well as making use collaboration spaces to work. Tests are also carried out until a viable product is obtained and the action plan is achieved. The participants should also carry out one or more presentations on their prototype.

LINK: Now that the prototype is complete, participants have the opportunity to share the idea with their community, as well as investors interested in establishing collaborative partnerships to grow and develop the idea. This last stage is also the time where the Lab should seek to advise participants to sell their idea to create more opportunities for success. Young people with the best innovations also have the possibility to participate in a Pitch Tank, a competition in which projects are presented in less than 5 minutes before a jury of experts to obtain specific feedback and compete for funding.

VENTURE: Technological, financial, and mentoring resources are available for projects with the potential to transform their communities. Participants can take advantage of the vast network of program partners through mentors, including development agencies, business incubators, capital, public bodies, and sponsors, which can help nascent ventures access financing for their projects.

SUMMARY OF MAIN ACTIVITIES

1) The DIA Innovation Fund will provide US$15,000 in total as seed funds to the most promising and innovative projects. Participants with the best ideas will have the chance to pitch them to a panel. The panel will be composed of local government authorities, businesspeople and community leaders. To be eligible to compete, ideas must be entrepreneurial as well as financially and socially viable. That means youth will have to produce disruptive solutions that not only solve local problems but have the potential to be marketable and produce an income for them.

2) Ideathons – this activity will be a one-day workshop where youth/groups will find solutions to specific topics and brainstorm ideas. This will serve as a platform for youth to start their long-term projects.

SUMMARY OF EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

- 1 DIA Lab established
- At least 100 young innovators/entrepreneurs trained in Innovation and Digital Skills
- 200 additional young people benefited through access to the Lab Services
- 1 Pitchtank Competition to select the best ideas to receive funding
- 2 Ideathons for youth to come up with disruptive ideas to solve urban challenges
- 3 high level events to highlight results and impact of the project.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Since 2012, The Trust uses an online, real-time data collection platform, TIS-Trust Information System. Here, local partners are able to register each participant, creating a profile that gathers demographical and

personal information. The TIS also register statistical information, success stories, mid-performance reports, and supporting documents.

In this regard, the DIA Labs register each project participant who receives training or access. This is crucial to monitor progress, quantify results and indicate the most pressing needs of the project, such as improving local partners' capacity to build strategic relations with government officials, private sector entities and academic organizations. The Trust's Project Manager and Project Officer will hold weekly conversations with our local partner, also conduct site visits, interviews and surveys with participants to assess the change produced by the program, analyze lessons learned, and best practices.
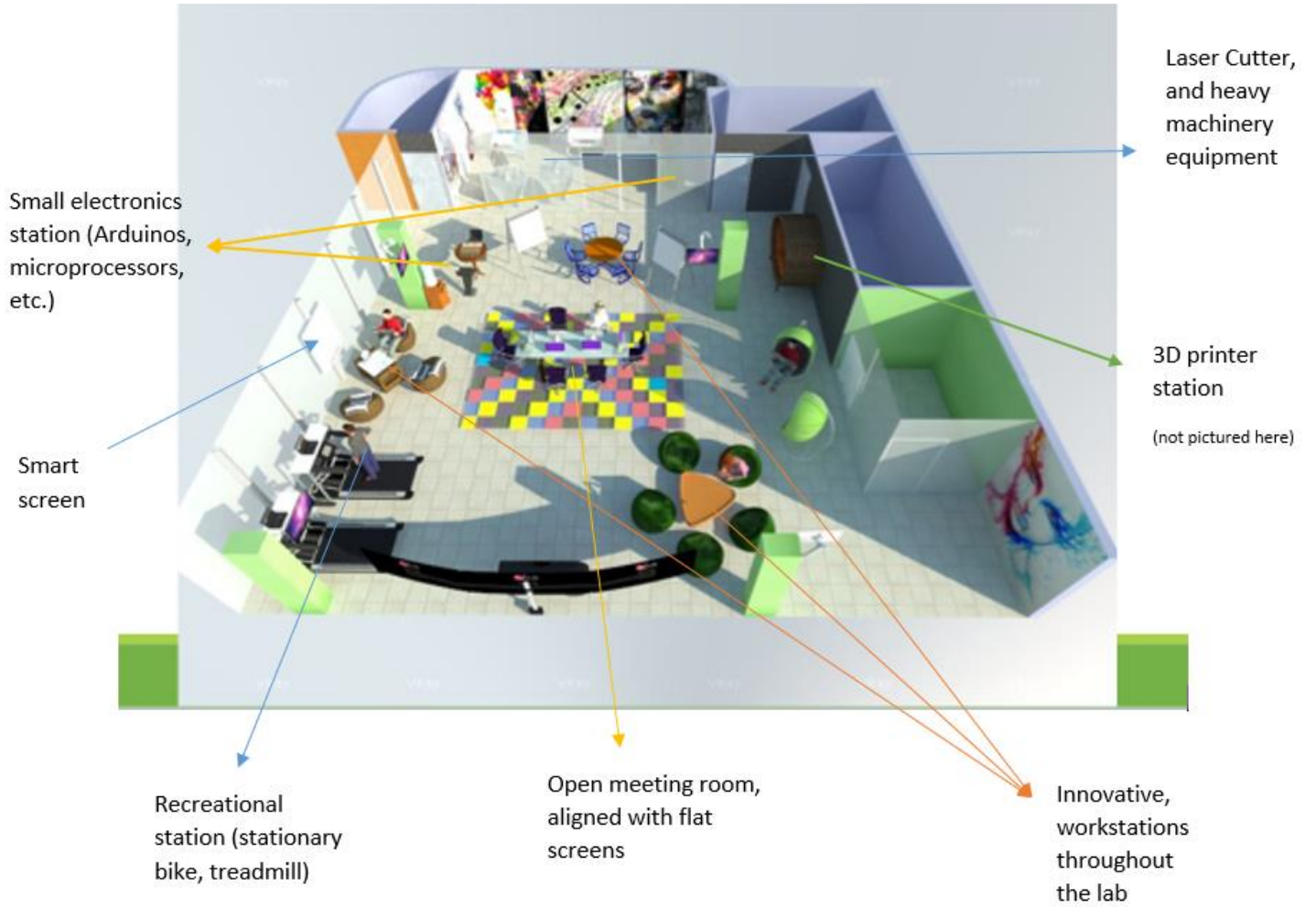
Specifics of our Methodology:

Monitoring:

1. Continuous review of project activities and progress towards outputs.

2. The data will be analyzed on a monthly basis. The Trust will feed the results to project implementers to modify activities, as needed, based on the quarterly results

3. The Trust Information System (TIS) will be the tool used for data collection and analysis. This online tool developed by the Trust allows users to document, store, analyze each participant's demographic information (age, gender, region, education, sector, etc.), as well as track indicators, produce reports, document lessons learned, and best practices. TIS facilitates the analysis of metrics, providing real-time, quarterly and yearly statistical reports. The TIS allows the Trust to monitor individual local partner progress as well as on-demand, project-wide monitoring.

4. Throughout the life of the project, our local partners will be required to register success stories using the TIS tool. Success story videos will be produced to highlight the effects of the project.

Evaluation:

- Base-line analysis: this step will help The Trust identify participants and target groups' knowledge on the topics that will be covered through the training activities. Surveys and focus groups will be the tools used to develop the baseline analysis.

- Mid-term progress: with surveys and data analysis from the TIS, The Trust will be able to identify challenges and best practices of the project and make the necessary adjustments to ensure the outputs of the project's activities will lead to the proposed outcomes.

- Final evaluation: With the data collected through the life of the project and the information analyzed, and the success stories produced, The Trust will highlight the main results (outcomes and outputs), lessons learned and significant practices to share in the final report.

DESIGN MODEL

Small electronics station (Arduinos, microprocessors, etc.)

Smart screen

Recreational station (stationary bike, treadmill)

Open meeting room, aligned with flat screens

Laser Cutter, and heavy machinery equipment

3D printer station

(not pictured here)

Innovative, workstations throughout the lab

--- END OF INFORMATION SECTION ---

APPLICATION

INFORMATION, PROFILE, AND EXPERIENCE

Name of the Organization	Click here to enter text.
Address (Headquarters)	Click here to enter text.
Country	Click here to enter text.
Main Telephone Number	Click here to enter text.
Website	Click here to enter text.
Date of Establishment	Click here to enter text.

Contact Information

Name	Click here to enter text.
Title	Click here to enter text.
Address	Click here to enter text.
Telephone Number	Click here to enter text.
Email Address	Click here to enter text.

Institutional Profile

Type of Organization *(University, Non-profit, Government Agency, Private Sector, etc.)*	Click here to enter text.
Mission and Objectives	Click here to enter text.
Specify if the Organization has a Board of Directors – BOD. If BOD, please provide names.	Click here to enter text.
Names of Senior Staff in the Organization and also those who support the proposal (name, positon, contact information)	Click here to enter text.

Experience

Details of project implementation working with youth, innovation, etc. (Provide name of the projects that have been implemented, links, details, mission, impact, expected outcomes, results, budget, and donor – it can be bullet points)	Click here to enter text.

Partnerships with other Institutions	Click here to enter text.
Recent Donors	Click here to enter text.
Please, specify work and types of active and past collaborations with private, pubic and academic sectors	Click here to enter text.

Infrastructure *(250 words maximum for long answers)*

Does your organization count with a space to set up the Innnovation Lab? Please specify space dimensions in meters, available furniture, electricity, water, bathrooms, etc. *Please attach pictures of the space*.	Click here to enter text.
Does your organization have any technological equipment? Please specify: computers, printers, keyboards, screens, TV, DVD, 3D Printers, Laser-cutters, internet access, projectors, etc.	Click here to enter text.
Where is this space located? Is it accessible? Please specify.	

Bidder Qualifications *(250 words maximum for long answers)*

Describe experience working with youth and populations in situations of vulnerability.	Click here to enter text.
If experience working with at-risk youth, please describe best practices to successfully implement a project.	Click here to enter text.
How do you call participants to projects? What would be your strategy to attract youth to the Lab to reach metric goals?	
Experience implementing projects with technology and innovation components and courses/materials that you organization offers	Click here to enter text.
How would your organization develop, design and organize a	Click here to enter text.

Hackathon and a Pitch Tank Competition?	
Please indicate how you intend to raise awareness of this program among key stakeholders. Your response should include communication strategies and visibility.	Click here to enter text.
Please indicate any opportunities to replicate or scale up this program upon completion	Click here to enter text.
What is the value that your organization adds to the project?	Click here to enter text.
Why would you like to partner and work with The Trust for the Americas/OAS?	Click here to enter text.
Does your organization count with partnerships that would add value to this project? Please describe public and private sector entities, as well as academia and civil society. Provide names and contact information.	Click here to enter text.
Who will be the personnel in charge of the Lab? Please provide names and short biographies (Experience, studies, qualifications, skills, etc.)	

Sustainability *(250 words maximum for long answers)*

How does your organization envision sustaining the Innovation Lab? (utilities, materials, fundraising, personnel, etc.)	Click here to enter text.
What would be the impact of the Innovation Lab 5 years from now?	Click here to enter text.

Budget

Will your organization be able to contribute resources, in kind or in cash, to the project?	Click here to enter text.
If yes, please indicate how / in kind contributions, amount, etc.	Click here to enter text.

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