



## Call for Expressions of Interest

### *Africa-based Digital Health Entrepreneurs to Expand Tools for Community Health*

#### Background

Currently, at least half of the people in the world do not receive the health services they need.<sup>1</sup>

Health systems, as they currently exist, exclude people from care. For half of the world's population, the nearest doctor or nurse can be hours, or even days away, and the health facilities that are reachable are unaffordable, understaffed, and under-resourced. System strengthening and system reform are needed at scale to ensure people can access the care they need, and communities are more prepared to respond to future pandemics and other health crises.

Despite the rapid development of technology and communication infrastructure in these same parts of the world, technology is underutilized or ineffectively applied to support healthcare where it is most needed. However, when digital tools are supported by informed and empowered leadership, the implementation of global standards, and a focus on interoperability, they have great potential to address health inequity. Traditional models of donor support have incentivized innovation in digital health but have not made the same investments in the scale and sustainability of promising technologies. Further, many investment decisions have favored organizations registered in middle- and upper-income countries and neglected the development of local entrepreneurs in low- and low/middle income countries.

#### Identifying Development Teams through an Expression of Interest

With initial funding from the Bayer Foundation and USAID, the Digital Health Ecosystem Project (DHE) will support the sustainability and expansion of digital tools for health by helping entrepreneurs more easily access financing, technical resources, and opportunities for scale. We will foster a global network of innovators building businesses on common open-source platforms, enabling innovators to focus on unmet needs while leveraging existing code. By doing so, innovators will face fewer barriers in scaling businesses that support health care workers and communities with tools to improve the quality, speed, and access of equitable care.

In support of the DHE's efforts, Digital Square invites African businesses, organizations, and social entrepreneurs with software, content, and/or services to respond to this expression of interest (EOI). Applicants should have an interest in applying and expanding their software, content, and /or services to the health sector.

#### Benefits to applying

Through this EOI, qualifying respondents will become part of a continent-wide list that will be shared with donors, investors and implementing partners world-wide. Pending availability of resources, Digital Square will offer to qualifying respondents an organizational capacity self-assessment tool that supports organizations in becoming direct recipients of USAID funding, and be used to mobilize resources among a broader set of partners to support organizational capacity development and facilitate becoming direct recipients of international funding sources.

Additionally, a subset of respondents will be invited to participate in the first round of a DHE funded request for a grant application to:

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<sup>1</sup> WHO Universal Health Coverage Fact Sheet: [https://www.who.int/health-topics/universal-health-coverage#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/universal-health-coverage#tab=tab_1)





- Expand your current product offering by leveraging the [Community Health Toolkit](#) (CHT), specifically for entrepreneurs located and/or supporting work in Kenya, Mali, Niger and/or Uganda.
- Develop your organizational capacity according to your priorities, including initiatives that unlock new grant funding opportunities from bilateral, multilateral, and private philanthropic donors; and
- Gain exposure to local government buyers of digital tools, as well as other investors in the global health community.

Those not selected for the initial round of grants, will automatically be considered for future rounds (that may go beyond community health). In particular, the global health mechanisms Digital Square and CHISU may use this list to identify partners for country digital transformation work, and in parallel to making programmatic grants, will support entrepreneurs to become direct recipients of USAID and potentially other donor funds.

### Expected Outcomes

- A published list of promising digital health entrepreneurs in Africa, promoted widely across the global health and global development community and providing new networking and grant funding opportunities.
- A subset of respondents selected for funding per the three above-mentioned domains.
- A subset of respondents completing an organizational self-assessment and, where relevant, enacting steps towards becoming direct recipients of USAID (and potentially other donor) funding.

### Eligibility Criteria

We invite EOIs from African organizations, businesses, and entrepreneurs with the following profiles:

- Demonstrated ability to support the implementation of software tools and products.
- An interest in engaging in the digital health space of a country and willingness to work with local governments, private sector health providers and health insurance schemes.
- Willingness to engage populations at scale; including populations that cannot directly purchase from vendors, but may be government beneficiaries.
- Team includes members with software expertise.
- Registered as a formal organization or business in the WHO SSA Region, with sufficient accounting mechanisms to track revenue and expenditures.

### How to Submit an Expression of Interest

Applicants should fill out [this form here](#) that includes the following. Should you have any issues accessing the portal, please contact Maria Soc ([msoc@path.org](mailto:msoc@path.org)).

- Business name
- Date of inception
- Country of registration
- Location of work/description of any other country/regional presence outside of where registered
- Organization size, # of staff (0-10, 10-20, 20-50, 50-100, 100+)
- What products and services you currently offer, including, but not limited to:
  - Commercial Software
  - Open source Software
  - Software as a Service (SaaS) products/systems/tools
  - Standards used in current software, if any (e.g., FHIR)





- List and short description of up to 5 projects, products, or services. Be sure to include work involving:
  - Open source software deployments
  - Scale of the deployments (number of facilities, regions, provinces, countries, etc.)
  - Deployments in the health sector
- Description of technical services, skills, and experience with:
  - Software Languages: check all that apply and include others as applicable.
    - Java
    - JavaScript
    - PHP
    - Python
    - C#
    - Nodejs
    - Other(s)\_\_\_\_\_
  - Databases: check all that apply and include others as applicable.
    - MySQL
    - Postgres
    - MongoDB
    - Other relational DB\_\_\_\_\_
    - Other document DB\_\_\_\_\_
    - Other(s)\_\_\_\_\_
  - DevOps: check all that apply and include others as applicable.
    - Docker
    - Kubernetes
    - Other(s)\_\_\_\_\_
  - Health Standards: check all that apply and include others as applicable.
    - HL7
    - HL7-FHIR
    - IHE profiles
    - ICD9/10/11
    - SNOMED
    - LOINC
    - CDA
    - Other(s)\_\_\_\_\_
  - Health Architecture: check all that apply and include others as applicable.
    - OpenHIE
    - SMART on FHIR
    - OpenEHR
    - Other(s)\_\_\_\_\_
- Annual revenue up to the 3 years; or projected revenue for current year
- List of partners you commonly work with including other NGOs, faith-based organizations, governments, donors, commercial entities.
- Are you interested in exploring government-as-customer opportunities?
  - No experience
  - Some experience
  - Much experience
  - No interest





- Some interest
- Much interest
- Do you have experience working with:
  - Local government
    - No experience
    - Some experience
    - Much experience
  - Public sector
    - No experience
    - Some experience
    - Much experience
  - Diverse populations that may be unable to pay directly for your product/services.
    - No experience
    - Some experience
    - Much experience
  - Open source communities.
    - No experience
    - Some experience
    - Much experience
- If you do not have any experience with the above four groups, are you willing to engage with them if given the necessary introductions or connections?
  - No
  - Maybe
  - Yes
- Please provide a link to your website or more detail descriptions (if applicable).
- Check here if you have experience with or interest in working with the Community Health Toolkit (CHT).
  - Experience
  - Interest
- If you collect individual-level data, who owns that data? Check all that apply:
  - My organization
  - The government
  - The individual
  - The contracting party for my product or services
  - Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- Please provide up to five LinkedIn profiles of your organization's key staff (optional).

### Review Process

The Local Entrepreneur Steering Committee made up of a diverse set of the foremost leaders and thinkers in digital health technology including country governments, donor organizations, implementing organizations, technology vendors, and other constituencies. The Committee will review all EOIs against the following criteria:

- How long the org or product has been in existence (<2 years, 3-5, >5)
- Geographic scope
- Potential for scale
- Type of product or service and the demand for it in Africa
- Demonstrated, sufficient technical services skills/capabilities (software stacks, languages, etc.)





- Compliance or willingness to comply with health standards
- Health Architecture experience with or willingness to engage with OpenHIE, SMART on FHIR, OpenEHR
- Experience with or willingness to engage with opensource communities
- Experience or willingness to engage with governments, public health, and diverse populations

#### Disclaimer

By submitting an application, you agree to having a summary of your organization, your years of experience and your contact details published on a list of promising digital health entrepreneurs in Africa. This list will be promoted widely across the global health and global development community to foster networking and grant funding opportunities.

- I agree
- I do not agree

Please submit an EOI [using the form here](#) by **August 12, 2022 at 11:59pm PDT**. Should you have any issues accessing [the portal](#), please contact Maria Soc ([msoc@path.org](mailto:msoc@path.org)) ahead of the submission date. Applicants will receive a response by **September 30, 2022**.

