GUIDELINES

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GRANT

February 2024

GPE Transforming Education

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 3

Grant Details 3

- **Amount** 3
- **Activities** 4
- **Duration** 4
- **Roles and Responsibilities** 4

Requesting the Grant 6

Grant Administration and Monitoring 8

- **Revisions** 9
- **Risk Mitigation** 9
- **Completion** 10
- **Reporting** 10

QUICK START

What is this grant?

The **program development grant** covers a grant agent's costs associated with preparing and submitting a program for a partner country's **application** for a system transformation grant and/or GPE Multiplier grant.

Who is eligible?

Grant agents selected by partner countries in accordance with GPE **standards** to support governments with a system transformation grant or GPE Multiplier and that have or will immediately obtain a **financial procedures agreement** with the GPE Fund Trustee.

How much is available?

The program development grant offers up to **US$200,000** or as much as US$400,000 in certain exceptional cases.

How does a grant agent apply?

Within 4 weeks of selection, grant agents make a **request** through the GPE Secretariat and provide a government-approved **program development timeline** and a **budget**.

How long will it take?

Approval usually takes around **2 weeks** after receipt of request.

INTRODUCTION

The program development grant enables the grant agent, working under the leadership of the government, to cover expenses related to the preparation of the program and supporting documents for a country's application to GPE for a system transformation grant, Multiplier grant and/or GPE Girls' Education Accelerator.

The grant typically offers up to **US$200,000** or as much as $400,000 in exceptional cases. Upon approval, funds are transferred **directly to the grant agent** for work in accordance with its own internal administrative processes. The program developed with the grant is to support implementation of the **priority reform** that a country and its partners set out in the **partnership compact.**

GRANT DETAILS

Amount

The program development grant has a **standard allocation of $200,000**, with the grant amount determined by the costs of the proposed activities.

In some cases, grant agents can request up to $400,000 by demonstrating **why** the country requires such **exceptional effort and resources to develop the program**. These circumstances typically are limited to grant applications from large/federated countries or combined applications from island nations. Security costs might also justify a larger grant request.

In the case of a **jointly financed program**, program development costs should be distributed among **different funding sources**. As such, the requested amount typically will not reach the program development grant **ceiling**. Likewise, the requested amount will typically be lower than the ceiling if the grant will be used to develop an additional financing program for an **existing grant or pooled fund**.

In a given context, it may be appropriate to have more than one grant agent for the system transformation grant or a separate grant agent for the system transformation grant and the Multiplier grant. In such a case, the different grant agents can **each** access a program development grant. Also, in countries with federal systems where multiple states or regions (or other subnational entities) can access GPE grants, grant agents appointed at these levels may each apply for a program development grant. Where one grant agent is operating in several subnational regions, only **one** program development grant will be given, unless a strong justification is provided to the GPE Secretariat explaining the need for more than one grant.

Activities

The program development grant finances **activities, goods or services needed for the development of an education program** as well as other documentation needed as part of the **application for a system transformation grant and/or GPE Multiplier** grant. Sample activities include:

- Stakeholder consultations
- Fiduciary assessments or any technical appraisals illustrating implementation readiness and informing program
- Preliminary designs for infrastructure
- Creation of implementation manuals and preparation of procurement processes

Duration

Activities financed through the program development grant should be completed within **7 months**, although this may be extended to accommodate transition to implementation of the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier. This period encompasses preparation of the draft system transformation grant and/or Multiplier grant **program** and GPE's quality assurance review of the draft program documentation (the latter prior to the final readiness review). It may also include preparatory activities to ensure timely effectiveness and implementation of the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier grant.

The program development grant official start and end dates are specified in the Secretariat's **approval letter** sent to the grant agent upon the allocation decision. The **start date** is usually the **same date as the letter**, while the end date is determined based on the **application, approval and timeline** of the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier grant.

Roles and Responsibilities

GPE grants are transferred to designated **grant agents**, which are accountable for the use of these resources in line with the specific grant application and GPE's program development guidelines. The grant agent's **roles and responsibilities** and those of other key players in program development grant are summarized in **table 1.**

Grant agents must meet GPE's **minimum standards** and have a **financial procedures agreement** with the trustee of the GPE Fund, the World Bank. If this is not already in place, the grant agent should **immediately** seek an agreement to ensure rapid and smooth transfer of resources.

Gender Equality

The grant agent is responsible for ensuring that **gender equality** is mainstreamed in the program that it develops with the government.

Table 1. Roles and responsibilities in relation to the program development grant	
Partner country government	• Leads the development of the system transformation grant and/or GPE Multiplier program that is being prepared with GPE support. • Signs off on the program development timeline the grant agent submits to the Secretariat.
Grant agent	• Ensures that a financial procedures agreement is in place to channel the program development grant funds, once approved, and manages the funds, including any subcontracting. • Is responsible for ensuring that the gender equality perspective is taken into consideration when developing the program with the government and local education group. • Works with the coordinating agency to ensure that all local education group members are consulted on the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier grant application process, including on timelines and issues that may adversely affect implementation. • Prepares the system transformation grant, Multiplier grant and/or Girls' Education Accelerator program document under the leadership of the government. • Manages activities in line with its own internal processes and policies and GPE guidelines, requesting revisions, if necessary, in line with the program development grant guidelines. • Ensures the program development grant is used for the intended purpose and submits a financial report at the completion of the grant.
Coordinating agency	• Fosters open and inclusive communication within the local education group on the grant development process. • Ensures that members of the local education group have been consulted on the organization of the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier application process, including on agreed moments of consultation. • Communicates in writing to the Secretariat any concerns about the timing and/or the content of the proposal at the time of program development grant request. • Works with the grant agent to ensure that the local education group is updated regularly and has all the necessary information to contribute to the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier program development process.

Local education group	• Provides Input on the program development timeline, including on the proposed moments of consultation
Secretariat	• Quality assures the application and implementation, especially through (1) screening of the grant application and (2) general and technical guidance during the program development process. • Verifies that the request is complete, approves it and notifies the trustee of the GPE Fund so that funds can be transferred when requested by the grant agent. • Sends approval letter to the grant agent and a copy to the coordinating agency for distribution to the local education group.

REQUESTING THE GRANT

Step 1. Timeline and identification of activities

Grant agents are eligible to request a program development grant **immediately** after their selection.

In preparing the application package for the system transformation grant and/or GPE Multiplier grant, the grant agent establishes a **program development timeline within 4 weeks of its selection** and schedules an initial meeting with the Secretariat to streamline the GPE quality assurance reviews. At this meeting, the Secretariat sets out the quality standards it will apply in assessing the final grant application for the system transformation grant, Multiplier grant and/or Girls' Education Accelerator.

The grant agent shares the timeline with the local education group to ensure continued collaborative decision making and ensures that the timeline includes specific moments for ongoing consultation. Consultation is different from endorsement, as it is not limited to submitting a document to the local education group for its approval.

The grant agent develops a system transformation grant, Multiplier grant and/or Girls' Education Accelerator program in accordance with the **timeline** as set out and **agreed on with the government**. In consultation with the government, the grant agent next identifies the activities to be funded through the program development grant.

Step 2. Preparation of the program development grant request

The program development grant request to the Secretariat consists of 1) the agreed program development **timeline** for the system transformation grant, Multiplier grant and/or Girls' Education Accelerator and 2) a detailed **budget** of the program development activities.

If the grant agent wishes to share additional documents, it can attach them to the **request**. The grant agent submits to GPE a detailed budget with the following information:

- Names of the grant agent, coordinating agency, and partner ministry representative
- Short description of each activity
- Schedule for all activities
- Budget for the activities, with specificied expected unit costs
- If applicable, any specific circumstances that require more than $200,000

Step 3. Submission

A program development grant request with timeline and budget can be submitted anytime via gpe_grant_submission@globalpartnership.org, copying the GPE country team lead and the coordinating agency.

Step 4. Screening

The Secretariat will carry out an **initial assessment** on receiving the request for the program development grant. It will have **10 working days** to complete this initial screening and notify the grant agent, copying the coordinating agency, if needing clarification. This review determines whether the grant request meets the eligibility criteria, including:

- **Clear timeline on program development:** Are steps to develop the program, including the Secretariat quality assurance steps, clear and within 6 months after the grant agent selection?
- **Participation:** Are there indications that the consultation process indicated in the program development timeline provides sufficient opportunity for inclusive dialogue?
- **Budget:** Is the budget for completing the activities described reasonable? Are the indicated unit costs acceptable?
- **For an exceptional request:** Does the information to request more than $200,000 reflect the need linked to an exceptional circumstance, as mentioned in the guidelines?

If the Secretariat has serious questions or concerns related to the content of the request, it will send written comments to the grant agent, copying the coordinating agency. The grant agent, in consultation with the government and local education group, addresses the Secretariat's concerns, if necessary, before resubmitting the application.

Step 5. Approval

After the initial screening, the Secretariat's **grant application review committee**—composed of a team of technical, policy and financial experts—reviews the request, making sure that the proposed grant process and budget are in line with GPE guidelines. The review committee makes recommendations to the designated manager within the Secretariat for further allocation decision.

Where a request has failed to address concerns raised during the screening stage, or where the Secretariat's grant application review committee raises significant new concerns, the Secretariat may ask for additional clarifications.

If no clarifications are needed, the Secretariat will **process the request within 2 weeks of receipt** and communicate its decision to the grant agent, copying the coordinating agency. Upon approval, the Secretariat will request that the trustee transfer the grant funds to the grant agent.

Should the Secretariat decide against approval, it will provide written comments explaining its decision.

GRANT ADMINISTRATION AND MONITORING

The grant agent is responsible for the implementation of the program development grant, relying on its own financial management and monitoring systems to ensure that high-quality work is carried out on time and in accordance with the grant agent's own policies and processes.

The grant agent may **subcontract** program activities. The Secretariat encourages grant agents to source **domestic or regional expertise** as relevant and appropriate to foster local or regional capacity development. Contracting relationships will be the sole responsibility of the grant agent.

A basic principle of grant management is to **detect and resolve issues** that may arise during implementation **as early as possible**. If there are delays or issues that might adversely affect the quality and timing of the work, it is the responsibility of the grant agent to inform the Secretariat and the local education group. In doing so, the grant agent should also include an explanation of the action being taken to ensure that the grant will be completed on time or mitigate the impact of delays.

It is important that the grant agent works closely with the government to ensure **ownership** of the program financed by the implementation grants, and with the coordinating agency to ensure that the local education group is **consulted and regularly informed** on the status of activities, including any delays in the work plan.

Revisions

The grant agent may revise the grant activities, provided that the adjustments to the grant budget are in line with the objectives of the grant.

If the grant agent needs to extend activities beyond the time frame indicated in the original application, it should prepare a request in consultation with the local education group. The Secretariat will consider the request and either issue a no-objection to the proposed changes or will inform the grant agent if the changes are not acceptable. Should the Secretariat decide not to approve the request, it will provide written comments outlining its rationale.

The grant agent should submit any request for revisions to the Secretariat, copying the country team lead, through: gpe_grant_submission@globalpartnership.org

Risk Mitigation

Misuse of funds

GPE has a policy of zero tolerance on **misuse** of GPE Fund resources. In the event that misuse does occur, the grant agent applies its internal processes for dealing with such issues, including procedures to reclaim any misused funds, if applicable. The grant agent also immediately informs the Secretariat, in writing, of any concerns regarding misuse of funds, detailing its remedial actions to mitigate the impact on the program (in line with GPE's Policies and Communications Protocol on Misuse of GPE Trust Funds and the applicable provisions of the Financial Procedures Agreement).

Safeguards against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

In preparing grant programs, the grant agent should consider GPE's Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. The policy aims to ensure that there are adequate safeguards against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) and related misconducts in the implementation of programs funded by GPE.

Grant agents are expected to follow their own SEAH policies and procedures; however, the grant application will need to flag if any SEAH risks are identified, and then provide details of such risk and mitigation measures. If an SEAH incident occurs in the implementation of a GPE-funded program, the grant agent is required to notify the Secretariat immediately.

The notification should be sent to the country team lead, copying:
gpe_grant_submission@globalpartnership.org

Completion

The program development grant's main deliverable is the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier **grant application package**, and potentially some other initial grant program preparation activities.

If the system transformation grant and/or Multiplier application is rejected and must be resubmitted, the grant agent is entitled to request for additional program development grant resources. It is expected that much of the work would have been completed under the previous program development grant, and any additional request must fully explain how the new work under consideration would address the weaknesses identified in the previous application.

Reporting

The grant agent submits the grant's final financial statements to the GPE trustee as set out under the financial procedures agreement. Any unspent funds at the close of the grant should be reported to the Secretariat and to the GPE trustee by an authorized signatory using the relevant annex outlined in the financial procedures agreement. The Secretariat and the trustee for the GPE Fund will liaise with the grant agent for further details on how the unspent funds will be returned.

CONTACT

information@globalpartnership.org

OFFICES

Washington
701 18th St NW
2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20006
USA

Paris
66 Avenue d'léna
75116
Paris
France

Brussels
Avenue Marnix 17, 2nd
floor B-1000, Brussels
Belgium

Chennai
Global Infocity Park, Block
C 11th floor
40 MGR Salai, Perungudi
Chennai, Tamil Nadu
600096 India

GPE Transforming Education