

Announcement of GIST Technology Idea (GISTech-I) Competition

Where Innovative Minds and Entrepreneurial Spirit Merge

I. Background: CRDF Global & GIST Initiative

CRDF Global, an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to international science cooperation and technology commercialization, has launched a new initiative to advance scientific and technological collaboration between the United States and nations in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region and South and Central Asia. The Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) initiative is funded by the U.S. Department of State. The GIST initiative builds upon CRDF Global's extensive experience engaging scientists, innovators and entrepreneurs in countries around the globe and in leading the way to science and technology-based development and commercialization. GIST is one of the primary initiatives to be implemented following the proposals announced by U.S. President Barack Obama in Cairo in June 2009. For more information about the GIST initiative, please visit www.gistinitiative.org.

II. Competition Overview

CRDF Global invites all interested innovators, scientists and entrepreneurs from eligible countries ([see Appendix 1](#)) to participate in this first-ever multinational technology idea competition. The GIST Technology Idea Competition, hereafter "GISTech-I," was announced at the GIST Economic Development through Science and Technology Innovation Conference in Rabat, Morocco, June 16-17, 2011.

GISTech-I is open to individual applicants or teams of individuals who have innovative ideas that have potential to become technology solutions to critical problems in sectors such as information and communication technologies (ICTs), energy, health, agriculture or other related areas. The competition will be conducted in two phases (application details in competition guidelines section below):

Phase I. July 1 to October 31, 2011: Eligible applicants submit their technology idea in an approved video format, with a maximum running time of two minutes and a maximum file size of 150MB to www.gistinitiative.org. The video can be submitted either in English or in another language with English subtitles.

From the initial applicants, a total of 25 semi-finalists, representing all three regions (approximately 8 top rated entries per region) will be selected based on online peer voting by the end of November, 2011.

Phase II. By December 1, 2011 a total of 25 semi-finalists will be notified and asked to submit a written executive summary of their technology idea within two weeks. They will then be invited to participate in a two-day GIST entrepreneurship workshop/business pitch competition/award ceremony event on December 19-20, 2011 in Amman, Jordan, where they will receive one-on-one mentorship from innovation experts on the first day. On day two, they will present their ideas in greater detail in an oral presentation before a panel of three judges. Competition award winners will be selected among the 25 semi-finalists, based on the best combined scores from their oral presentation and previously submitted executive summary. Special consideration will be given to female individuals or female-led teams.

To be eligible for any of the awards, semi-finalists must participate in the workshop and award ceremony in person. Teams will be represented by a designated team leader and optionally one other person from the team. All awards will be granted to the designated team leader only.

The GISTech-I competition winners will receive awards as follows:

1. GIST First Place: a \$20,000 grant will be awarded to the top applicant.
2. GIST 1st Runner-up: a \$10,000 grant will be awarded to the top runner-up.
3. GIST 2nd Runner-ups: four \$5,000 grants will be awarded to the next four runner-ups.
4. GIST Honorable Mentions: five \$2,000 grants will be awarded to the next tier of runner-ups.

All competition winners will receive their awards in the form of CRDF Global grants and be subject to CRDF Global's award and grant reporting requirements. Competition semi-finalists will receive personalized coaching, training on business and marketing skills, and positive public exposure through available social media networks. In addition, they can use the GIST Network (www.gistinitiative.org) to form partnerships – within or outside their country – to further advance their technology ideas toward commercial possibilities. All competition applicants will be encouraged to remain active GIST Network members and

take advantage of the resources the network offers to peers, promising technologies, innovative business tools, training and mentorship resources, and other funding opportunities available across the regions.

Competition Goals

The GISTech-I Competition has three goals:

1. Encourage and enhance interest in technology entrepreneurship across the regions;
2. Identify entrepreneurial talents and promising technology-based ideas that have potential to address economic development challenges in ICT, health, energy, agriculture or other related areas relevant to a potential or actual market;
3. Provide practical entrepreneurship skills to budding entrepreneurs, especially core business skills such as:
 - Company formation
 - Technology validation
 - Market assessment
 - Building a winning team
 - Developing a viable business model/plan
 - Fundraising and exit strategies

III. Competition Guidelines

A. General Information

The video format is designed to enable participation by the maximum number of potentially interested innovators, scientists and entrepreneurs who are residing throughout the eligible countries. A wide range of people will have an opportunity to vote for the best ideas through simple online voting via YouTube and play an active part in the selection of the 25 semi-finalists representing all regions eligible for the competition.

B. Submission Process

In order to participate in the competition, an eligible applicant must register as a GIST network member and then upload a video presentation (also referred as the “elevator pitch”) of up to two minutes to the competition website at www.gistinitiative.org. There are four required elements of all submitted videos: 1) Description of the technology based

product/service; 2) Indication of the relevant market problem the technology based product/service solves; and 3) the unique value of the technology based product/service; 4) a running time of two minutes or less and a maximum file size of 150MB.

Guidance on how to make a video can be found here,
<http://planetforward.org/about/learn-how-to-make-a-video/>

Helpful tips on creating a concise “elevator pitch” can be found here,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tq0tan49rmc&feature=related>

Approved video formats can be found here,
<http://www.google.com/support/youtube/bin/answer.py?answer=55744>

During the submission process, applicants will be asked to provide a brief (not to exceed 150 words) general description of their idea. The deadline for all video submissions is 12:00 Midnight EDT (GMT-5), October 31, 2011. Applicants are advised to allow ample time before the deadline to submit their videos. This will ensure timely assistance by GIST program staff if there are technical issues with the submission.

Important note: competition applicants must create a profile through the GIST Network web site (www.gistinitiative.org) and agree to the conditions of use prior to submitting their videos to this competition.

Upon initial screening by CRDF Global for eligibility and content appropriateness (at CRDF Global’s sole discretion), the applicants will be notified by email whether their submission has been officially entered into the competition. On November 3rd, 2011 all official video submissions will be made available for public viewing and voting on YouTube. The 25 GIST semi-finalists will be notified by December 1, 2011, while award winners will be announced at the GIST entrepreneurship workshop/ business pitch competition/award ceremony on December 19-20, 2011 in Amman Jordan.

C. Selection Process and Criteria

As mentioned earlier, the selection process involves two phases:

In Phase I, 25 semi-finalists representing all three regions (approximately 8 top rated entries per region) will be selected by November 1, 2011, based on the results from online voting on YouTube

Voters will be asked to judge video presentations based on quality and originality of presentation, novelty of technology idea, its commercialization potential and market relevance. Semi-finalists will be asked to submit an executive summary within two weeks of notification. The executive summaries will be evaluated by a carefully-selected impartial panel of international judges recruited through CRDF Global's extensive network, including successful entrepreneurs, practicing angel and venture capital (VC) investors, and seasoned technology commercialization professionals.

In Phase II of the competition, the 25 semi-finalists will be invited – with expenses covered by GIST travel grants – to participate in a two-day GIST entrepreneurship workshop/award ceremony event in Amman Jordan, on December 19-20, 2011. On the first day, participants will receive personalized coaching and mentorship from GIST innovation and entrepreneurship experts. On the second day, participants will be asked to present their business “pitch,” i.e., a 10-minute oral presentation, to a panel of three judges. Award winners will be decided based on the highest combined score. The 10-minute business presentations will be evaluated based on originality and relevance of the technology, sustainability and effectiveness of the business model, entrepreneurial spirit of the inventor (or a team), presentation and questions & answer skills.

The GISTech-I competition winners will receive awards as follows:

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4. GIST Honorable Mentions: five \$2,000 grants will be awarded to the next tier of runner-ups.

D. Competition Timeline

A summary of the important dates for the competition are as follows:

- Online video submission start date – July 1, 2011
- Online video submission deadline – 12:00 am EDT (GMT-5), October 31, 2011
- Public (YouTube) voting– November 3 – 24, 2011
- Semi-finalists selection announcement –December 1, 2011 (email and online)

- GIST Entrepreneurship Workshop/Business Pitch Competition/Award Ceremony event by on December 19-20, 2011 in Amman, Jordan

E. Eligibility Criteria

GIST Idea Competition applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible to participate:

1. All applicants, including all members of a Team must be legal residents of one of the GIST eligible countries ([see Appendix 1](#)).
2. Applicants can be individuals or teams, but a team must designate a team leader, who will be the sole point-of-contact for the competition and be awarded any and all grant monies. Each team or applicant can only enter the competition once, with one video submission.
3. All applicants in a team must register as members of the GIST network.
4. Applicants or teams cannot be incorporated as an existing business.
5. All submitted ideas must have potential to become actual technology solutions.
6. Applicants must demonstrate plans to advance their technology idea toward a commercial application.
7. U.S. citizens, regardless in what country they reside, are not eligible to apply to this competition.
8. Any persons employed by CRDF Global or any of its affiliates, or are employed by the United States Department of State in any capacity are not eligible to apply to this competition.

E. Export Control

CRDF Global complies with all U.S. laws and regulations and applicable international law pertaining to export controls and to the participation of foreign nationals or institutions in its activities. It is CRDF Global's policy not to conduct any transactions with U.S. restricted entities without appropriate authorization from the U.S. government, including licenses and other permits and restrictions. CRDF Global reserves the right to restrict the participation of any individual or institution in its programs.

F. Protection of Confidential Information

Applicants are responsible for identifying any written business confidential information contained in their application materials. CRDF Global assumes that no business confidential information will be disclosed by an applicant either in the initial video presentation, which will be made available to the general public on the World Wide Web. If there is a valid need to provide any business confidential information after selection as a semi-finalist, such

written information shall be clearly marked so that CRDF Global can, to the degree reasonably possible, protect it by restricting its exposure to authorized staff of CRDF Global, its funding and oversight agencies, and external U.S. and international business reviewers and judges retained by CRDF Global. Independent U.S. and international business reviewers and judges retained by CRDF Global, as well as all personnel of CRDF Global and its partner organizations, are required to adhere to strict standards of confidentiality in the handling of all business confidential information contained in any written materials.

Any written materials containing business confidential materials should be clearly labeled “Business Confidential.” Reviewers and judges will be required to sign a standard and legally-binding non-disclosure agreement prior to receipt of any business confidential materials from an applicant or team. A copy of the template for this agreement is available on request by corresponding to gist@crdf.org. Applicants may request that particular organizations or individuals, whose access to their proposals would compromise business confidential information, not be selected as reviewers. Such information must be disclosed to CRDF Global at the time any Business Confidential information is disclosed to CRDF Global during the competition.

G. Definitive Version of this Announcement

For explanatory purposes or for clarification, this GIST Idea Competition or GISTech-I announcement and associated documents may be translated into Arabic or other languages. In the event of the existence of such a translation, the English language version shall serve as the definitive version determining the interpretation of any provision contained herein. In the case the CRDF Global has to amend or make corrections and clarifications to this announcement, applicants will be notified as soon as possible.

IV. CONTACT INFORMATION

Any and all questions and correspondence regarding this competition Announcement should be directed to GIST representative at gist@crdf.org. Applicants are requested to identify themselves or their team leader in all correspondence and put the phrase “GISTech-I competition” in the email subject line. CRDF Global at its sole discretion may choose not to disclose certain information in a response to any question or query, if in our view such details would affect the fairness or transparency of the competition or convey an undue advantage to an applicant. CRDF Global also reserves the right to disclose to all other applicants an answer or clarification to a question from an applicant in the interest of fairness, objectivity, and transparency of this competition.