

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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14.2 This query seeks clarification on a prior query for which some information was provided but I am still not clear. The original query was whether the solution providers need to partner with a local or regional tech company if they are not Caribbean based. In response I was provided a list of problem owners and solution providers. I understand that the solution providers must work with a regional problem owner but what I need to understand is whether additionally, the solution provider is required to partner with a regional tech/IT/blockchain company or if the requirement for required partnership solely concerns the pairing of a solution provider with a regional problem owner. 6

1. Why blockchain technology? Why the Caribbean?

The interest in blockchain from the Caribbean public, private and academic sectors comes from the opportunity it provides given the fragmented nature of the markets. Over the past few years, large investments were made to explore the possibilities of this technology. For example, a few large blockchain platforms like Polymath and Aion have established operations in Barbados, while other fintech companies such as bitt.com are investing millions of dollars into solving the lack of financial inclusion in the region¹. The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank and the Bahamas are also exploring the use of this technology to issue their currency digitally ([click here for lunch discussion on the progress made](#)). The University of West Indies (UWI) joined forces by collaborating with global employers to offer blockchain workshops, bootcamps as well as courses for its students. In Barbados, the government established a regulatory sandbox last year to test the feasibility of technological innovation in a real-world but controlled environment.

2. What are the objectives of the Blockchain Innovation Initiative (BII)?

- i. Facilitate the use and relevance of blockchain technology by connecting solution providers to Caribbean businesses and government agencies that can most benefit from it.
- ii. Create a pipeline of pilot projects eligible for funding by CCPF by facilitating potential partnerships and collaboration among public and private stakeholders as needed.
- iii. Raise international awareness about the blockchain innovation hub in the Caribbean to attract socially responsible investors, business leaders, employers, innovators interested in inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economic growth
- iv. Identify the real value-added that blockchain technology offers to solve Caribbean problems and opportunities relevant to the private sector.
- v. Raise interest among students, professors and other stakeholders to explore blockchain solutions in addressing the lack of inclusive economic growth in the Caribbean.

¹ <https://bitcoinmagazine.com/articles/overstock-ups-investment-bitt-furthering-digital-currency-issuance-central-banks>

3. Who can participate?

The pitch event bringing together the entities with problems that can be solved using blockchain technology and the solution providers is open to the public. All pitches are available here: Entities legally registered in one of Compete Caribbean’s 13 beneficiary countries: Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

International Firms (Firms incorporated / domiciled outside of the beneficiary countries) will be asked to partner with Firms incorporated in one or more of the aforementioned countries to be deemed eligible. The Lead Firm responsible for executing the project must be registered in a IDB member country (www.iadb.org) or OECS member states. See guidelines – Call for proposals on Compete Caribbean’s website for more details on eligibility criteria.

4. Can my firm submit a proposal to more than one challenge?

Yes, the proposal submitted can address more than one challenge as long as a Letter of commitment is provided by each entity involved.

5. Where can I find information about the challenges already submitted by the Caribbean entities?

The challenges submitted are summarized into seven one-pagers – see the seven categories of problems identified:

<https://www.competecaribbean.org/block-chain-innovation-initiative-virtual-pitching-event>

7 challenges, 12 entities selected as problem owners	
Categories of Caribbean problems to be addressed	Problem owners, ie. the entities interested in exploring the possibility of piloting a project in their country
1. Digital transactions and money <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobile wallet• Online payment especially in the context of community-based tourism in the Caribbean	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO)• Dominica Cooperative Societies League
2. Post-disaster insurance claim processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD) in Dominica
3. Traceability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fine Cocoa Company• Cocoa Research Center (CRC) at UWI• Brasso Seco Morne la Croix Farmers Association (honey)
4. Digital identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barbados Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MIST)
5. Monetisation of intellectual property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Association of Caribbean Copyright Society (ACCS)
6. Land/ Property/ vehicle registry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Information Technology in St. Kitts• Ministry of Science, Innovation and Technology in Barbados
7. Customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Trade and Industry in Trinidad & Tobago

6. Who is defined as the “Problem Owner”

The problem owner is the person or organization who ultimately owns the problem detailed in the (7) categories confirmed to participate in the Blockchain Innovation Initiative Pilot.

7. What are the criteria for selecting the proposals?

See guidelines – Call for proposals on Compete Caribbean’s website but in summary: Scalability of the solution proposed; Social and environmental impact; Economic impact on Caribbean firms and individuals; Execution capacity of the entities involved.

8. What is the total value of the Technical Assistance Grant?

The value of the technical assistance grant may range from USD\$50,000 to \$180,000 depending on the scope of the project and the capacity of the entities involved

9. What is the counterpart contribution required?

Grant funding requested (\$50k to \$180k) cannot represent more than 50% of the total project budget. The counterpart contribution required is therefore at least 50% of the project's budget but half of which can be in-kind. See guidelines – Call for proposals on Compete Caribbean's website

10. Can other organizations support my counterpart financing requirements?

Yes since alliances are encouraged. For all queries: **Please email: blockchaininnovationinitiative@gmail.com** before the final submission deadline. Please include in the subject line: **BII Query**

11. When will I know the outcome of my application?

Milestones	Dates
Call for proposals' launch	April 9, 2020
Submission of proposals	June 15, 2020
Feedback round provided to short-listed applicants	June 30, 2020
Final submission deadline	July 20, 2020
Announcement of finalists	August 10, 2020
Investment Panel with Q&A in private	August 2020 (date to be confirmed)

12. What activities cannot be financed through the Program:

- Payment of companies' debts and taxes
- Operating expenses of companies
- Working capital for the operation of the companies
- Activities that the applicant regularly implements with its providers
- See other requirements of IDB in the guidelines – Call for proposals on Compete Caribbean's website
- Purchase of goods and equipment

13. Commitment and agreement with Problem Owner

13.1. It was clarified during the Q&A session that the Proposal needs to be submitted by the Solution Provider and not the Problem Owner. In this scenario what are the documents/ agreement/commitment which are needed from the Problem Owner.

The Signed Letter of Commitment from the Problem Owner is a required guarantee of engagement and participation. The template of this document is available online in Word Format for your ease of edit.

13.2. Is it limited to the Commitment Letter format which provides information about the Counterpart Funding from Problem Owner?

Yes – the letter must specify the expectations and commitment from the problem owner in particular, including how the time will be spend (ie. in-kind contribution) and how the funds will be spent (ie. Cash contribution)

13.3 Would other commitments from the Problem Owner to continue supporting the project post pilot, etc. add additional value to the proposal?

It would certainly add value as it would increase the potential impact in the medium and long term. See Call for Blockchain proposals guidelines for details.

13.4 Please confirm that if the Solution Provider is working on two or more separate categories (Traceability, Customs, etc.) for two or more separate Problem Owners, the Solution Provider can submit two or more separate proposals?

You must submit (1) proposal for each Problem Area you have a Solution for.

Each Proposal submitted is considered for a single project on its own merit for evaluation. Therefore, one Proposal cannot be submitted for (2) problems.

13.5 Will one Solution Provider be allowed to submit a single proposal for two or more Problem Owners (under same category)? Is there any other (apart from those specified presently by CC) specific document, (Problem Owner Acceptance or others) required from the Problem Owners or Solution Provider in such a case?

You are allowed to submit one proposal for one problem area that includes multiple problem owners – at least one letter of commitment from one of the problem owners should be included in the proposal.

Should you have (2) or more solutions for one Problem Area - this will also require 2 or more Proposals - to fit your proposed Solutions with each problem individually.

It would be advised to treat each project as a single submission, and therefore obtain all documents for each submission individually.

13.6 Please indicate the payment model. Will Compete Caribbean (CC) make payment directly to the Solution Provider or disburse funds to the Problem Owner who in turn will pay the Solution Provider? or others) required from the Problem Owners or Solution Provider in such a case?

The execution arrangements will vary from case to case – depending in large measure on the execution capabilities of the counterpart, the procurement procedures that apply to them (i.e. public/private) and other considerations. Depending on the case, and at its sole discretion, Compete Caribbean/IADB may retain the role of execution agency (thereby making all procurements and payments), or may delegate this role.

13.7 What will be the modality of payment in case multiple problem owners come together to submit a single proposal along with one solution provider?

The typical disbursement method for technical assistance grants involves the procurement of consultancies – individual consultants or consulting firms that provide the expertise to address gaps and achieve the objectives in the proposal. The answer to question 13.6 is applicable here.

13.8 Please indicate the role of Compete Caribbean, IDB, Problem Owner etc. in the approval of milestones and payments to Solution Provider

Once the projects are approved, the approval of deliverables from the consultants/consulting firms and/or milestones/payments will be done by Compete Caribbean/IDB, against Terms of Reference used for contracting and/or evidence of attaining previously agreed upon milestones as specified in the project document, and following the rules of the IDB.

13.9 Is there a time-frame, maximum time limit, etc., that Compete Caribbean wants to prescribe/mandate for the completion of the PoCs?

Yes the expectation duration of projects is less than 24 months.

14.0 The LoC format states that the CEO/President needs to sign it. Will the firm/organisation's Authorised Signatory's signature, along with the submission of a copy of the Power of Attorney for authorisation, be acceptable to Compete Caribbean?

Yes.

14.1 The proposal needs to include a Terms of Reference – for consulting firms/consultants to be contracted under the project.

1) Please indicate if this ToR refers to scope split/agreement between Solution Provider and Problem Owner or between Solution Provider and any Third Party Consultant?

2) Is there a specific format for the ToR?

3) Is the submission of this ToR mandatory? Please clarify if its not required in cases where there are no separate consultant or partner firm being hired by the Solution Provider?

The Terms of Reference are not required with the proposals.

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To be eligible, the Problem Owner needs to be located in one of the 13 beneficiary countries of Compete Caribbean

In terms of the Solution Provider, the proposal submitted shall include substantial involvement from a Caribbean firm AND the project team shall include Caribbean professionals from any of the 13 beneficiary countries

Therefore, the answer is yes – international firms shall partner with Caribbean firms to submit a proposal.