

Case study: Grand Challenges (Gates Foundation)

Model: Use challenges to focus attention, effort on specific problems. Traced back to mathematician David Hilbert who 100+ years ago defined unsolved problems to spark progress in mathematics

Purpose: In 2003, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation launched Grand Challenges in Global Health, including multiple funding partners. Focused on 14 scientific challenges that, if solved, could lead to key advances in preventing, treating, and curing diseases of the developing world.

Concept: Seek to engage the world's most creative minds. In initial year awarded 44 grants for research projects involving scientists in 33 countries

Quick wins: In 2007, Gates Foundation launched Grand Challenges Explorations to engage more of world's innovators more quickly. Twice each year, invited high-risk, high-reward proposals

Methodology: 2 page applications submitted online – open to anyone from any discipline, from student to professor, and from any organization, inc. universities, government labs and for-profits

Funding: Initial grants of \$100K awarded and successful projects have opp. to receive up to \$1m

Goals/ successes: Improved vaccines, create new vaccines; control insect vectors; improve nutrition; limited drug resistance; cure infection; measure health status; global development

