

Youth Excel: Our Knowledge, Leading Change Program Malawi Youth Landscape and Learning Platform Activity

Research Organization for Malawi Youth Landscape Analysis Phase II Request for Applications (RFA) No. FY25-Youth Excel-Malawi-01

Deadline: December 16, 2024, by midnight CAT

Application Information	
Request for Applications (RFA) Number	FY25-Youth Excel-Malawi-01 Issued under USAID Youth Excel Cooperative Agreement Number 7200AA20CA00024
Website	Access all RFA information online at: https://www.irex.org/program/request-applications-rfa-research-organization-malawi-youth-landscape-analysis-phase-ii
Social Media	Follow RFA updates on social media at: Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/youthexcelprogram Twitter: https://twitter.com/excelyouth
Questions	Email questions by December 6, 2024 , to: excelyouth@irex.org Using subject line: "FY25-Youth Excel-Malawi-01 Questions"
Information Session	Attend optional online RFA information session on December 6, 2024, from 2:30-4:00 CAT by registering at: https://irexorg.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAscequrTsjEtQImSEJZn86xIzEQzHLxdof Youth Excel will respond to all questions received by email and at the information session and post the responses and recording online by December 9, 2024 .
Application Submission	Submit applications by December 16, 2024 , via email to: excelyouth@irex.org Using subject line: "FY25-Youth Excel-Malawi-01 Application"
Application Timeframe	
Issue Date	November 19, 2024
Questions Due	December 6, 2024



Information Session	December 6, 2024, from 2:30 – 4:00 CAT
Answers Posted	December 9, 2024
Deadline	December 16, 2024, by midnight CAT
Grant Start Date	February 1, 2025



Overview

About the Program: The [USAID-funded Youth Excel: Our Knowledge Leading Change program](#) implemented by IREX and its consortium supports young leaders and youth-led and youth-serving organizations around the globe to conduct quality “research-to-change” (implementation research); use data and learnings to improve their own cross-sectoral, positive youth development programs; synthesize data and learning; and engage in intergenerational dialogue with adult decision-makers so that together youth and adults can shape and advance data-informed development policies, agendas, and programs.

Under this award, IREX implements the Malawi Youth Landscape and Learning Platform (YLLP) Activity from 2021-2025. The activity supports the USAID/Malawi mission’s implementation of Development Objective 2 of their Country Development Cooperation Strategy: Youth lead healthy, informed, and productive lives and the ability to collaborate, learn, and adapt across USAID’s Program Cycle. YLLP comprises of these three tasks: Task 1) Youth Landscape Analyses (two over the life of the activity), providing key information on youth context in Malawi; Task 2) Facilitating a Learning Agenda and Feedback Loops; and Task 3) Data Collection and Reporting.

About the Youth Landscape Analysis Phase II: In delivering the YLLP, IREX committed to undertake at least two Youth Landscape Analyses (YLAs) aimed at establishing a deep understanding of the current youth context in Malawi. The YLA will provide formative information for USAID’s cross-sectoral youth focused activities in the country. The assessment will draw from USAID’s Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework, the Mission’s Project Design Document’s (PDD) learning questions, and the PAD’s prioritized indicators. The YLA will adopt a multi-pronged approach that will include a desk review of existing literature and secondary data on youth in Malawi and include primary data collection through interviews with young people and key stakeholders on USAID/Malawi’s youth-related interventions. The YLA will utilize principles of participatory methods, and the research will engage youth and youth researchers at every step. The YLA team will collaborate with USAID, the Ministry of Youth & Sport’s Joint Technical Committee on Youth Empowerment (JTC), the National Youth Council of Malawi (NYCOM) and other national and local level youth stakeholders.

In 2021/2022, the USAID Mission in Malawi through YLLP conducted the first Youth Landscape Analysis (YLA 1) - a nationally representative mixed-methods study - to inform the design and implementation of the Mission’s cross-sectoral youth-focused activities in Malawi. Drawing from USAID’s [Positive Youth Development \(PYD\) framework](#) to gather valuable quantitative and qualitative information from youth aged between 10 and 35 years, and other key information.



The YLA explored four thematic areas aligned with USAID/Malawi's areas of focus namely: education, economic activities, health, and civic participation. It also covered the subtopics of gender equality, social inclusion, COVID-19, mental health, and climate change. (Please refer to [YLA I Summary Slides](#))

Based on the YLLP overall workplan, it is anticipated that the YLLP will survey Malawian youth a total of two times over the life of the CDCS (2020-2026) to understand the context, program effectiveness, and youth engagement from the perspective of Malawi's youth. This second iteration of the YLA is therefore expected to provide updated information on the changes in the status of young people in Malawi at this point in time to inform D02 youth cross sectoral activities implementation and alignment to the PYD framework.

However, with YLA I results being disseminated widely in 2024 we anticipate that the scope of the YLA 2 study to have a narrower focus to let us dive deeper in the issues emerging from YLA I, given the temporal proximity of the studies.

This YLA 2 will therefore take place from February to August 2025, as follows:

- Finalize research methodology, select, and train enumerators, and prepare instruments. *(February and March)*
- Data collection *(April to June)*
- Data analysis and preparation of report *(July and August)*

About the Request for Applications (RFA): IREX therefore seeks to identify a local research organization to lead the qualitative and quantitative research elements of the YLA II as proposed above. In close collaboration with the USAID/Malawi Mission, the successful research organization will work under the supervision of the YLLP Team Lead and will co-design and implement qualitative and quantitative data gathering and analysis. The research organization will ensure that youth are central to designing, implementing, and analyzing the research.

One award is available for up to USD \$200,000 for 6 months from February 2025 to August 2025. This opportunity is open to local and locally established organizations based in countries receiving USAID assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa that have capacity and experience in qualitative and quantitative research, including youth-led participatory approaches, in Malawi. Please see full information in the following Request for Applications.

Issuance of this request for applications does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Youth Excel, nor does it commit Youth Excel, IREX, or USAID to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and

submission of an application. The application is submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.



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I. What type of award is available?

- **Purpose:** conduct a youth landscape analysis to inform cross-sectoral youth programming in Malawi.
- **Location:** Applicants must be a local or locally established organization based in a country receiving USAID assistance in Africa (see details in Section 3).
- **Number:** I. Subject to the availability of funds, Youth Excel reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.
- **Type:** Fixed amount subaward. Payments set based on the negotiated budget will be made upon successful completion of project milestones. [ADS Reference 303mat](#) *Mandatory Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards to Non-Governmental Organizations* apply.
- **Amount:** Up to USD \$200,000 is available. Applicants can propose the amount required within this range and will be selected using best value principles. Cost share is not required. Cost restrictions include:
 - Ineligible commodities per [ADS 312](#), including military equipment, surveillance equipment, commodities, or equipment for the support of police or other law enforcement activities, abortion equipment and services, luxury goods, gambling equipment, weather modification equipment.
 - Restricted commodities per [ADS 312](#), including: agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, contraceptives and condoms, pesticides, used equipment, and fertilizer.
 - Unallowable costs per [2 CFR 200 Subpart E](#), including alcoholic beverages, bad debts, contributions and donations, fines and penalties, fundraising, lobbying, and other costs that are not allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the project.
- **Duration:** February 2024 to August 2024.
- **Length:** 6 months.



2. What is the scope?

YLA 2 Methodology Considerations

Although USAID defines youth as those aged 10-29 years, the Government of Malawi's definition encompasses anyone aged between 0 and 35 years. **The Youth Landscape Analysis 2** will thus be focused on all age groups, while remaining aware of the fact that techniques for interviewing children under the age of 18 are complex and require specific IRB approval. The selected evaluator will have to demonstrate experience conducting interviews with children - where necessary - given the sensitivities surrounding the demographic.

The proposed study will employ research methodologies with sufficient rigor to generate actionable answers to the research questions within the resources and time available for this effort. A research design based on rigorous methodologies that balance the needs of the analysis and available resources should be proposed. Principles of participatory methods will be utilized in the research process. Key components of the research methodology will include:

Literature Review and Secondary Data analysis. The evaluator will complete a desk review of existing reports on youth data in Malawi from 2018 to date including the raw data, analytical outputs, and final report from YLA I, key thematic, cross sectoral youth focused studies in Malawi and national datasets such as: the 2018 Population and Housing Census including the thematic report on Youth, Malawi Demographic and Health Survey, Malawi Integrated Household Survey and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, peer reviewed articles, and other literature, as appropriate, related to youth in Malawi. USAID/Malawi and YLLP will assist in compiling known materials from its activities, but the evaluator should look beyond what is provided. The successful research team is expected to have conducted an initial review of literature prior to the deployment in the field.

Geographic Sampling: USAID/Malawi works across the country, with a particular focus on 14 districts namely: Chitipa, Karonga, Lilongwe, Kasungu, Nkhosvota, Salima, Nsanje, Chikwawa, Balaka, Machinga, Mangochi, Mulanje, Phalombe, and Zomba. We encourage prospective bidders to engage with the Mission's implementing partners to help identify youth to participate in the study. A diverse sample will be drawn from at least seven of the fourteen focus districts selected across the three regions of the country for geographic diversity. For each district, the sample is expected to be representative of all youths aged between 10-35 at that level. Sampling for the quantitative survey will account for age groups of respondents split into 5-9, 10-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, and 35 years. To obtain district-level representative data, a multi-stage sampling method will ideally be used to select Enumeration Areas (EAs) in the district, households in the EA, and one eligible participant in the household.

Sampling frame: Malawi is divided into 28 districts, each of which is divided into Traditional Authorities (TAs). In turn, each TA is subdivided into smaller census units called EAs, which are

classified as urban or rural. In the proposed seven selected USAID districts, YLA 2 will use the list of all EAs from the 2018 Population and Housing Census conducted by the NSO as a sampling frame for random selection of EAs for the survey. District selection may consider demographic and socioeconomic data from available sources including poverty level (poverty headcount ratio), inequality (Gini coefficient), fertility rates, contraceptive prevalence rates, and literacy levels. Other factors to be considered include prevailing kinship systems (patrilineal or matrilineal), urban/rural location, ethnicity, economic activity, and percentage of youth. The final list of districts will be agreed in consultation with the USAID Mission and YLLP.

Youth-Centered & Participatory Methodologies: The assessment will seek to actively engage youth as protagonists throughout the research design, data-gathering, and analysis. Engagement of youth is a key objective of the assessment, and the focus should ideally be on a mixed methods approach, at the primary data collection level (*This is also open to discussion at the negotiation and design phases of the study*). Participatory methodologies will aim to include diverse participant samples to create a nuanced picture of youth development from multiple perspectives. Some examples of these methodologies include, but are by no means limited to, the following:

- **Scoping workshops:** The research partner, in collaboration with the Mission, and IREX/ YLLP POCs and Activity Managers will initiate a series of in-person consultative meetings and workshops with USAID/Mission program office, sector teams, select IPs, youth, Government agencies and Key actors that will inform final methodology and research questions.
- **Engagement of Stakeholders.** To ensure input from key stakeholders is considered throughout the process, YLLP will convene a group of national stakeholders and experts. This Core Consultative Group (CCG) will consist of representatives from USAID, funders, GOM, NGOs, civil society, academia, as well as adolescents and youth. The CCG shall meet periodically throughout the research period to provide input on the scope of the research and the design for each stage of the research; to review and provide feedback on preliminary findings; and to provide advice to improve the relevance of the research activities, findings, and recommendations. The CCG will either be convened separately or as part of an existing national TWG.
- **Survey data collection:** Quantitative data will be collected using structured survey questionnaires to determine the level of indicators among young people in the district. The prevalence of district level phenomena will be useful in comparing district-level variations and similarities - including any deviations with the national values obtained in YLA I.

- **Peer Group Discussions:** Systematic discussions with youth groups will be the core approach for primary data collection and participatory assessment. It is important that these youth be groups of peers, or those of the same socio-economic class, age, gender, and ethnicity who are comfortable speaking and interacting with one another and in a language that they are comfortable speaking. Enough time must be allotted for each session to give youth the space to “open up” and speak honestly in front of the facilitator. Some questions may need to be asked privately because of their sensitivity. Ideally the research will employ creative approaches that use youth to help facilitate these sessions and support the analysis. This will build capacity among the youth researchers and deepen the analysis and assessment. If necessary, follow-up sessions with the same peer groups can be scheduled if the first meeting does not allow enough time for open dialogue with the target peer group.
- **Key Informant Interviews:** Primary data collection through group discussions should be complemented and expanded using semi-structured interviews with key informants; primarily youth. These interviews could be carried out with youth who are beneficiaries of past USAID activities. For interviews with youth, it is recommended that females are interviewed by female interviewers and males by male interviewers. Other interviewees should include implementing partner staff, youth-focused organizations and associations, service providers, educational and training institution officials, private sector stakeholders, government officials, and donors.
- **Case studies** may be used to get a deeper understanding of the sub-groups of young people based on the level of indicators reported in YLA I (see section above on rationale for methods). These categories of youths may be guided by various learning questions including: (i) understanding why 80% of youths perceive education as having no benefits; (ii) why tertiary level youths have low intentions and use of contraception; (iii) what makes rural youths perceive education as economically beneficial compared to urban youths; etc.
- **Mapping** of high impact or promising practices. This will involve identification of practices and documenting them as case studies to capture what is working and promising practices for positive youth development in Malawi among specific youth sub-population and stages. High Impact Practices (HIPs) are a set of evidence-based practices and documented in an easy-to-use format. HIPs are identified based on demonstrated impact and potential application in a wide range of settings. Evidence of replicability, scalability, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness are also considered.
- **Solutions Workshops:** will be used to further explore and understand what is working, how and when within a particular location and youth subpopulation. These will engage a diverse set of national stakeholders and grassroots actors as applicable with

findings from these research activities and co-create recommendation and high impact practices where possible and suggest improvements to structures and capacities. The workshop's design will incorporate human-centered design (HCD) approaches to focus participants on actionable and specific solutions. Following a presentation of research findings, workshop participants will work in facilitated groups using HCD-inspired techniques to frame problems or challenges in a way that encourages creative, solutions-oriented thinking and systematic problem solving. Followed by plenary discussion and a facilitated prioritization exercise to identify recommendations that participants feel are most likely to lead to impact.

Partner Role

The partner will conduct data collection and analysis for the Youth Landscape Analysis aimed at providing a better understanding of the youth context in Malawi. The analysis will provide robust insights into how young Malawians live the challenges they face, their aspirations, and their recommendations for action to enable them to lead healthy, informed, and productive lives.

The selected research organization will co-design the research methodology, conduct research activities using tools co developed with the IREX research team, guided by USAID Project PAD learning questions and the PAD's prioritized indicators. They will then co-produce a high-quality research report summarizing the key findings and presenting recommendations for contextually appropriate cross-sectoral interventions to improve policies and approaches to the empowerment of young people. They will also be responsible for developing learning products and knowledge sharing materials tailored to different audiences and stakeholders, where necessary.

The applications submitted in response to this call should, at a minimum, recommend a scientifically robust mixed-methods approach, including qualitative and quantitative methods, with a stronger focus on qualitative methods, including key informant interviews and peer group discussions.

The proposed approach and methodology should also clearly highlight a systematic sampling method, including details on how the data would be cleaned and analyzed. The proposed sampling framework and approach should particularly ensure a representative sample of youth from at least seven of the fourteen focus districts selected across the three regions of the country for geographic diversity, and show how we will deliberately engage the marginalized and vulnerable, youth with disabilities, students, rural, poor and ultra-poor, and also consider urban/peri-urban/rural youth. The proposed methodology and approach should also incorporate specific provisions to capture insights regarding the current status of youth



engagement across the key sectors of interest, i.e., Health, Education, Livelihoods, Agriculture, Workforce development, Civic Engagement, and Gender.

The successful research organization will work with the IREX/YLLP team and the USAID mission to develop and refine the research methodology and tools which will be subjected to stakeholder consultations and a final approval by USAID. The research organization will also facilitate the necessary Malawian IRB approvals as would be required. (IREX will facilitate U.S.-based IRB approvals, if required.)

The final research report should clearly outline the study method used, how the sample was defined, and how the data was collected and analyzed. The research organization will provide information to the participants about the research and clarify each participant's expected role before data collection begins. The successful proposal should outline ethical considerations to be taken during research, particularly where young or vulnerable individuals are engaged, or how parents, guardians, or caretakers' consent will be sought for research participants who are under 18 years. Any interviews and focus groups conducted during the research should be recorded, transcribed, and translated into English.

Reporting

The final YLA 2 report should contain the following sections at a minimum and include user-friendly data presentations, visualizations, and summaries.

- Introduction and context, outlining the rationale for the study and its objectives.
- Methodology, including how the research was conducted and the data analyzed and reported on, and the strengths and limitations of the methods used.
- Results – the key findings from the survey and presentation of findings
- Analysis of findings and key themes.

The research partner will be under day-to-day technical supervision of the IREX/YLLP MEL Advisor, with YLLP lead and research consultants providing technical oversight. The research partner will be named and co-branded in YLA public products.

Key Deliverables

Implementation stage

- i. Finalized YLA 2 assessment methodology (*drawing from draft methodology and created in collaboration with the YLLP/USAID teams*)
- ii. IRB approvals by relevant authorities
- iii. Field data collection and management protocols (*if not included in the methodology*)
- iv. Enumerator recruitment and training plan



- v. All raw and cleaned datasets

Reporting stage

- i. Progress reports
 - Fortnightly updates of progress throughout the research period. Should include progress of primary research, enumerator training and management, community engagement, challenges and lessons learned, and dissemination plan (to be undertaken jointly with IREX/YLLP).
- ii. Initial findings brief
 - First draft in MS Word
 - Final draft in MS Word and PowerPoint
- iii. YLA 2 report
 - First draft in MS Word
 - Second draft in MS Word
 - Final draft in MS Word, PDF, and PowerPoint



3. Who can apply?

The request for applications is open to local or locally established organizations based in a country receiving USAID assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa that meet the following minimum criteria and share Youth Excel objectives. Organizations led by and serving youth, including those from marginalized groups which may include age, gender, disability, ethnicity, and other identities, are encouraged to apply. The award will be made to a single recipient organization.

“Local entity” (as defined in [ADS 303.6](#)) is an organization that:

- Is legally organized under the laws of a country that is receiving assistance from USAID;
- Has its principal place of business or operations in a country receiving assistance from USAID;
- Is majority-owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of a country receiving assistance from USAID; and
- Is managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the country receiving assistance from USAID.

“Locally Established Partner (LEP)” (as defined in [ADS 303.6](#)) is a U.S. or international organization that works through locally led operations and programming models. LEPs:

- Have maintained continuous operations in-country for at least five years and materially demonstrate a long-term presence in a country through adherence or alignment to the following:
 - Local staff comprises at least 50% of office personnel;
 - Maintenance of a dedicated local office;
 - Registration with the appropriate local authorities,
 - A local bank account; and
 - A portfolio of locally implemented programs.
- Have demonstrated links to the local community, including:
 - If the organization has a governing body or board of directors, then it must include a majority of local citizens;
 - A letter of support from a local organization to attest to its work; and
 - Other criteria that an organization proposes to demonstrate its local roots.



Eligible	Not Eligible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally registered, local, or locally established organization in an eligible country. • Eligible countries: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, eSwatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, The Gambia, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. • Non-governmental or private organization • Eligible to receive USAID funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to obtain Unique Entity Identifier • Able to sign ADS 303 mav Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unregistered organization, group, or individual • International organizations not based in an eligible country • Consortium of multiple organizations • Government institutions • Not eligible to receive USAID funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears on Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control list • Appears on United Nations Security Designation list • Has active exclusions, debarment, suspension, or ineligibility in the System for Award Management

4. How can you apply?

Provide responses in English to the application questions, technical proposal and annexes, and required attachments listed in Annex I. Submit applications by **December 16, 2024, by midnight CAT** via email to excelyouth@irex.org using subject line: “FY25-Youth Excel-Malawi-01 Application”.

IREX reserves the right to accept late and incomplete applications when it is in the best interest of Youth Excel objectives; otherwise, late, and incomplete applications will be automatically disqualified.

5. How will the partner be selected?

- 1) Eligibility screening: An IREX grants team will conduct an initial review of the applications, based on the following eligibility requirements, and disqualify applications that are not eligible for consideration.
 - Does application satisfy the basic parameters of the RFA?
 - Does the application fulfill the eligibility criteria?
 - Is the application complete and submitted on time?
- 2) Shortlisting: An IREX technical team will conduct a merit review of all eligible applications, based on the following selection criteria.
- 3) Finalist Selection: The Youth Excel review panel, comprised of IREX, partner, youth, and USAID representatives, will use the selection criteria to select finalist(s) based on the following selection criteria.

Criteria	Description	Weighting
Institutional Capacity and Past Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bidder has requisite depth of experience managing projects of similar scope, magnitude, and complexity. • Bidder has experience of delivering similar work in Malawi or other developing contexts/countries. 	25
Technical approach / Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the methodology is responsive to the desired outcomes • Approach involves young people at every stage of the process with special considerations made to the engagement of marginalized categories of young people. • Understanding of the prioritization and sequencing of activities and tasks, feasibility of proposed timelines. 	30
Quality of key personnel for the assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key personnel demonstrate the requisite expertise, experience, language skills, other capabilities, and gender balance necessary to support the proposed technical approach, while remaining cost-effective. • Key personnel are representative of Malawian diversity. 	20



Kenya
Red Cross



Cost/Price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall costs proposed are realistic for the work to be performed. • Costs reflect the applicant's understanding of the requirements and are consistent with the technical application. • Costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable. 	25
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Notifications to all applicants will be made to the point of contact who submitted the application. The selection of an application in accordance with these established criteria and processes does not guarantee an award. Awards are contingent on successful workplan-budget negotiations, risk assessment, and IREX and USAID approval. [OBJ]

Annex I. Application Requirements

A complete application includes responses in English to the following questions about your organization (Section A), technical proposal (Section B), and attachments (Section C).

A. About your organization:

Please provide the following information about your organization. An asterisk (*) indicates that a response is mandatory; others are optional.

1. What is your organization's name? *
2. Required: is your organization a local or locally established organization in an eligible country? *
 - Yes: Please specify type:
 - Local
 - Locally established
 - Please specify country:
 - No
3. Required: is your organization legally registered in your country? * This will be verified with the registration certificate in Attachment 7.
 - Yes
 - No
4. Required: is your organization a non-governmental or private organization? *
 - Yes: Please specify.
 - Non-governmental
 - Private
 - No
5. Not required: is your organization led by youth under 35? *
 - Yes
 - No
6. Please provide your organization's UEI (Unique Entity Identification) number if available.



7. Please provide links to your organization’s website and social media pages if available.
8. Please provide a brief description of your organization. * (500 characters)
9. What is/are the main youth demographic(s) that your organization focuses on? * Please choose all that apply.
 - Young Women
 - Young Men
 - Adolescent Girls
 - Adolescent Boys
 - Youth with Disabilities
 - Youth from Indigenous Populations
 - Youth from Marginalized Ethnic Group
 - Youth from Marginalized Religious Group
 - Youth Identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex (LGBTQI+)
 - Youth Affected by Crisis or Conflict
 - Youth Living with HIV/AIDS
 - Other: Please specify.
10. What is the approximate total number of youth participants that your organization has supported in the past year, across all your work? * (Number)

Please provide breakdown by gender identity if available.

- Female: (number)
- Male: (number)
- Non-binary: (number)
- Choose not to disclose: (number)

11. What are the primary sectors your organization focuses on? * Please choose all that apply.

- Youth economic opportunity/youth livelihoods/employment
- Gender, inclusion, equity & girls/women's equality
- Youth mental health & psychosocial support
- Youth digital leadership, technology & innovation
- Youth civic or political engagement & advocacy
- Youth peacebuilding



- Education
- Reproductive Health
- Agriculture
- Environment and Climate Change
- Other: Please specify.

B. Technical Proposal

Please submit a narrative and workplan (maximum 10 pages, not including cover page and annexes) in Word or PDF that outlines the following. Any submissions above the page requirements will not be reviewed. Shorter submissions are welcome if key requirements are addressed.

1. Cover page, including a) your organization's legal name and address and b) your authorized signatory's name, title, phone, email, and signature. (Not included in the page limit.) Include the following certification:
 "As an authorized signatory of the applicant organization, I certify that the information provided is complete and accurate, to the best of my knowledge. By signing this application, I authorize IREX to verify information. Any willful false statements in this application will be grounds for disqualification of application or termination of grant if issued."
2. Technical proposal (maximum 10 pages), including:
 - a) Your institutional capacity and past performance, describing at least three (3) relevant projects. (1-2 pages). Note that past performance information for these projects must also be provided in Section C of the due diligence questionnaire.
 - b) A description of the cross-sectoral youth landscape in Malawi, demonstrating your understanding of demographics, gender and inclusion dimensions, and key stakeholders at the community and national levels. (1 page)
 - c) Explanation of how youth will be engaged throughout the activity and how you will leverage the positive youth development framework. (1/2 – 1 page)
 - d) Illustrative qualitative research methodology to reach diverse youth demographics (including parents of children under age 18) across Malawi. (1 page)
 - e) Illustrative quantitative research methodology to reach a representative sample of youth groups, to include all relevant socio-economic classes, age, gender, and ethnicities across Malawi. (1 page maximum)
 - a. Specify all data collection, analysis and management systems that will be used (1 page maximum)
 - b. Workplan. Use a Gantt chart and provide a narrative description.
 - c. Timeline for full activity.



- f) Methodology, tools, and enumerator recruitment and training should take place in February 2025, with data collection beginning in April 2025 and lasting 6-8 weeks. (1 page)
 - g) Detailed explanation of how each data collection approach will be implemented, to reduce errors, guarantee data quality and integrity, and to protect all data (1 page maximum)
 - h) Additional information on data collection (1 page):
 - a. Specify how data collection teams will be identified, recruited, trained, and supervised
 - b. Brief descriptions of any challenges anticipated and propose suitable mitigation measures
3. Annexes (not counted in page limit):
- a) Research Dissemination Plan. (1/2 – 1 page) describing how the report may be disseminated in Malawi and the region. *Dissemination to be undertaken in collaboration with IREX.*
 - b) Samples of similar work if available.
 - c) Organogram of proposed research team.
 - d) CVs for Team Lead (required) and other team members (optional).

Key Personnel Requirements:

- I. Post graduate degree in relevant fields such as research methods, statistics, development studies, social studies, or community development.
- II. A minimum of 7 years undertaking similar research studies and/or evaluations
- III. Demonstrate excellent oral and written English.
- IV. Excellent analytical skills and report writing skills.
- V. Demonstrate experience in undertaking landscape assessments or related studies in Malawi or similar countries.
- VI. Ability to develop formulae for assessing the level of achievement of indicators overtime
- VII. Proficiency in statistical analysis packages like SPSS, Stata
- VIII. Proven experience in conducting participatory qualitative and quantitative research with superior analytical skills
- IX. Knowledgeable in the Malawi youth development sector and other relevant sectors.
- X. Evidence of theoretical knowledge and practical application of cross-cutting issues in youth development such as education, gender, innovation.

Essential



- I. Demonstrated experience working with youth and youth-serving organizations, and a variety of public/private sector stakeholders to develop and implement research activities.
- II. Significant expertise in Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning.
- III. Ability to communicate accessible findings and recommendations to a variety of audiences and stakeholders.
- IV. Experience in facilitating learning and participatory processes to validate and integrate research findings into learning.
- V. Experience working across Malawi.

Desirable

- I. Experience conducting evaluation activities remotely.
- II. Experience in facilitating workshops and other learning activities online.
- III. Experience in a range of participatory evaluation techniques
- IV. Experience working on USAID related research activities and evaluations.

C. Attachments

Please include the following attachments:

1. Budget using Excel template provided.
2. Budget narrative using Word template provided.
3. Due diligence questionnaire using Word template provided and submitted as a signed PDF.
4. Registration certificate.

Annex 2. Key Terms

- **Capacity development:** an approach for youth-led and youth-serving organizations to strengthen skills and leverage opportunities in different areas.
- **Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI):** an approach that helps us to understand the importance of equal rights and opportunities for all individuals regardless of their social identity.
- **Issue-Based Collaborative Networks (ICONS):** ICONs are a place-based, whole-system-in-the-room collaboratives, convened to collaboratively tackle a shared problem and goal and leveraging members' work and assets. Each ICONs work iteratively to address a shared cross-sectoral issue.
- **International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX):** IREX is a global development and education organization. We strive for a more just, prosperous, and inclusive world—where individuals reach their full potential, governments serve their people, and communities thrive. IREX and its Our Knowledge, Leading Change consortium lead the Youth Excel program.
- **Intersectionality:** Interaction of an individual's identities (race, gender, disability status, age, and other aspects) in ways that can intensify the inclusion or exclusion they experience. Intersectionality is the understanding that a person may enjoy advantages, or suffer disadvantages, based on multiple identities rather than just one.
- **Intersectional Rapid Gender and Protection Analysis (IRGPA)**
- **Knowledge Mobilization:** an approach to creating and disseminating knowledge from your research-to-change process.
- **Knowledge Product:** a product for sharing learning and enabling the audience to act based on that learning from the research-to-change process.
- **Learning Goal: a goal for information you need to decide soon.** Learning goals help your team to identify learning needs that will guide your research-to-change plan.
- **Local Organization:** an organization that is legally organized under the laws of a country that is receiving assistance from USAID; has its principal place of business or operations in that country; is majority-owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of that country; and is managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents of that country. This definition comes from [USAID's New Partnership Initiative](#) and [ADS 303.6](#).



- **Locally Established Organization:** A U.S. or international organization that works through locally led operations and programming models. LEPs: Have maintained continuous operations in-country for at least five years and materially demonstrate a long-term presence in a country through adherence or alignment to the following:
 - Local staff comprises at least 50% of office personnel;
 - Maintenance of a dedicated local office;
 - Registration with the appropriate local authorities,
 - A local bank account; and
 - A portfolio of locally implemented programs.

Have demonstrated links to the local community, including:

- If the organization has a governing body or board of directors, then it must include a majority of local citizens (in the host country, this is not required);
- A letter of support from a local organization to attest to its work; and
- Other criteria that an organization proposes to demonstrate its local roots.

This definition comes from [USAID's New Partnership Initiative](#) and [ADS 303.6](#).

- **Marginalized groups:** Those who have traditionally been excluded from power and access to resources, and may include indigenous peoples, ethnicities, religious groups, LGBTQI+ populations, women and girls, youth, individuals with disabilities, or other groups.
- **Protection:** an approach that helps us understand and prepare for protection concerns for youth, which can be digital, physical, and psychosocial.
- **Research-to-Change (Implementation Research):** an approach that allows organizations to gather data, take what they learn, and turn it into what they do in real-time.
- **United States Agency for International Development (USAID):** USAID leads international development and humanitarian efforts to save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people progress beyond assistance. USAID funds the Youth Excel program.
- **Youth:** Youth Excel defines youth as people between the ages of 10 and 35. USAID defines youth as people between the ages of 10-29. Youth Excel has expanded this definition to include youth leaders in countries where the definition of youth extends beyond age 29.

- **Youth Excel:** Youth Excel is a global program funded by USAID and implemented by IREX and its Our Knowledge, Leading Change consortium. Youth Excel empowers young people and youth organizations to use implementation research to strengthen local, national, and global development solutions.
- **Youth-Led Organization:** Youth Excel defines youth-led organizations as those whose Chief Executive Officer or other leaders are under 35 and whose Board of Directors are predominantly under 35.
- **Youth-Serving Organization:** Youth Excel defines youth-serving organizations as those who have a mission, mandate, or programs with an expressed priority of serving or supporting youth under age 35.

