

# Welcome to Youth Excel!

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022



# Overview

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- Introduction to Youth Excel
- Theme Overview
- What is Research-to-Change?
- What might Research-to-Change look like for your team?
- Grant Competition Process
- Key Dates
- Q & A Session



# Youth Excel Goals and Outcomes

## Goals

**Local youth-led and youth-serving organizations** will improve and sustain positive outcomes for youth

**Local youth-led and youth-serving organizations** will advance local, national, and global development agendas

**Outcome 1:**  
Implementation  
research for stronger  
PYD programs.

**Outcome 2:**  
Intergenerational  
dialogue,  
collaboration and  
engagement.

**Outcome 3:**  
Knowledge products,  
knowledge synthesis,  
and youth-led  
advocacy.



# Youth Excel offers....

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Positive Youth Development  
(PYD)-focused  
**Implementation  
Research**

Thematic and  
Regional **Grant  
Opportunities**

Locally-led, youth-  
led, problem-solving  
**Collaborative  
Networks**

**Youth Digital  
Leadership**  
opportunities

**And so much  
more!**

**Data Summits**  
with youth and  
development leaders



# Regional Grant Competition

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- ***Some key components/approaches of the grant competition***
  - **Positive Youth Development:** to contribute to healthy, productive, and engaged youth, positive youth development programs must focus on available assets, youth agency, youth contribution, and the surrounding enabling environment
  - **GESI:** an approach that help us to understand the importance of equal rights and opportunities for all individuals regardless of their social identity. This concept addresses unequal power relations between different social groups that cause exclusion.



# Regional Grant Competition

- ***Some key components/approaches of the grant competition***
  - **Protection:** understand and prepare for protection concerns related to Youth Excel, which can be digital, physical and psychosocial so as to take local protection measures to prevent, mitigate and respond to risks and threats that Youth Excel can unintentionally exacerbate risks associated with programs, operations, and people).
  - Youth Excel aims to understand the specific risks, but also the protection capacities, the available resources and the right to protection of participants.
  - **Knowledge Mobilization:** strategic dissemination of knowledge products with a focus in driving change through the dissemination of information and data that are the result of different research and learning activities and are made openly available to the public for further use, re-use or re-distribution



# Regional Grant Competition

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- ***Some key components/approaches of the grant competition***
  - **Implementation Research/Research-to-change:** Information is a powerful resource that can be used to help organizations grow and make their programs work better. “Research-to-Change” (implementation research) is a tool that allows for organizations to gather data, take what they learn, and turn it into what they do in real-time
  - Your application will need to show how you plan to use Research-to-Change to strengthen one of your existing activities.
  - Must be for an existing project.



# Theme Overview

## ***"Using 'Research-to-Change' (Implementation Research) to Strengthen Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management for Girl's Education"***

Aim: use Research-to-change (Implementation research) to improve menstrual health and hygiene management activities while advancing girl's education

| What qualifies  | What doesn't qualify  |
|---|---|
| Adding implementation research to existing activities so that implementation can be strengthened. | Using implementation research to inform the start-up of new activities. |
| Working within schools that have existing WASH infrastructure.                                    | Investments in WASH infrastructure.                                     |



# **What is Research-to-Change?**



# What is Research-to-Change?

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- ☐ It champions the leadership of implementers in research processes.
- ☐ It explores how and why programs work under **real world conditions**
- ☐ It is participatory, iterative, and inclusive
- ☐ It helps organizations gather data, take what they learn, and turn it into what they do, **in real-time**



# What might Research-to-Change look like for your team?

- ✓ Establish a team within your organization dedicated to Research-to-Change.
- ✓ Discuss implementation priorities and establish learning goals.
- ✓ Develop and implement data collection strategy to achieve learning goals.
- ✓ Share key findings and hear feedback from others.
- ✓ Use what you learn to strengthen your implementation and establish new learning goals.

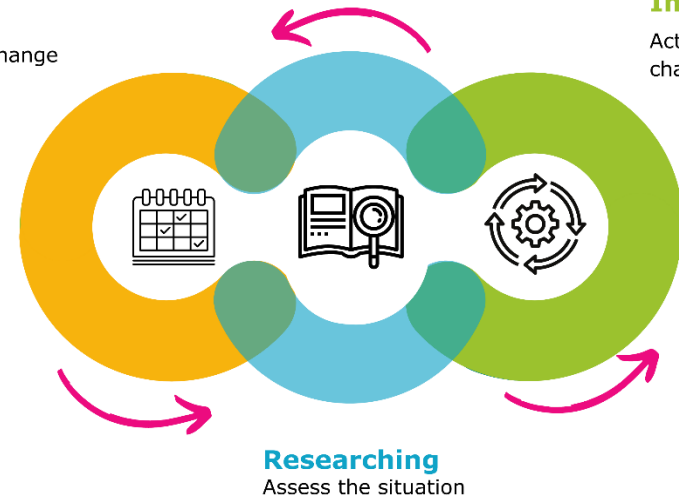
## Continued Learning

### Planning

Imagine the change

### Implementing

Act to make the change





# Practical examples: R2C in practice

## *Kenya ICON participants' learning goals*

**THEME:** Enhancing youth work readiness with youth, HEIs, and the private sector in Kisumu, Kenya

**We need to know** the market skills gap **so that** we can design a more relevant digital skills program for the youth from the slums. - *Nylanda Bread Power, YLO*

**We need to know** if our project beneficiaries are practicing the skills **so that** we can adapt our training strategies. - *Arise and Shine, YLO*

**We want to know** the barriers to growth for Youth-Led sustainable enterprises **so that** we can come up with strategies tailored to addressing the barriers appropriately. - *Wise Kenya, YLO*

**We need to know** if social entrepreneurship programs are a priority for youth with disability **so that** we determine if this is a suitable program to start. - *Disabled Self-Help Group, CSO*



# Practical examples: R2C in practice

*Using data to make decisions*

| Learning Goal  | Key Findings   | Learning and Program Adaptations   |
|--|--|--|
| We need to know whether school administrators and students see this comic book strategy as relevant for education around menstrual health and hygiene so that we can modify our strategy to better meet their needs. | <p>During key informant interviews, several school administrators had recommended that the comic books would be more effective if paired with peer-to-peer learning.</p> <p>Through surveys, we found that 62% of students read comic books. We also found that 80% of students felt that comic books would be a relevant method for communicating educational material.</p> | <p>The majority of students and school administrators see comic books as a relevant strategy for delivering educational content. Since the percentage of current comic book readers is not very high, we may want to explore other methods, such as peer-to-peer talks, to complement the comic books.</p> <p>Using these findings, we have decided to use a school champion approach where we will train students on how to deliver the comic book contents to their peers.</p> |



# Research-to-Change in practice!

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Examples shared are just some of the ways that R2C can be used. There are many ways that R2C can be used to strengthen implementation.

Research-to-Change emphasizes that organizations are the experts and should guide their own learning journey.





# Conclusion

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## Research-to-Change will...

- ☐ Give you the information you need for decision making
- ☐ Help you build on implementation successes and address challenges to maximize program impact
- ☐ Give you tools to inspire continuous learning and growth within your programs





# Application Tips

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- Clear vision for what change can be realized through use of data.
- Clear linkages to the program outcomes and research vision.
- Realistic, measurable, and timely use of data.
- Research is embedded within implementation, not separate.
- Research is not the end product, it is a part of the implementation process.
- Clear vision for team engagement around research for program strengthening.



# Discussion Question

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- Learning Priorities: What are you passionate about learning from your program through the addition of implementation research? Select one primary learning priority and explain why it is important to your current activity and organization. How will your implementation research contribute to the regional knowledge base?\*

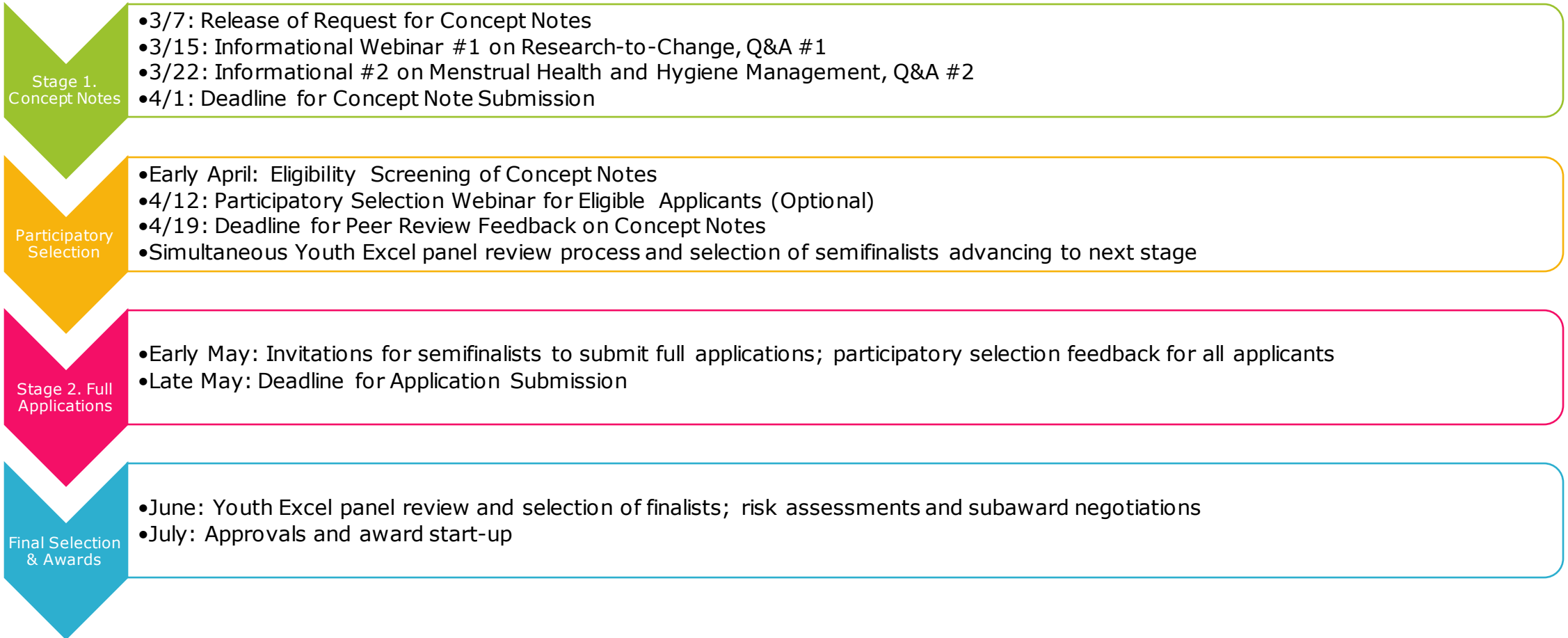


# **Grant Competition Process**

Request for Concept Notes: <https://www.irex.org/program/seeking-concept-notes-strengthen-menstrual-health-and-hygiene-management-girls-education>



# Timeline





# What kind of grants are available?

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- **Purpose:** using “research-to-change” (implementation research) to strengthen menstrual health hygiene and management for girl’s education in East and Southern Africa
- **Locations:** Malawi and Zambia.
- **Number:** 4-5.
- **Type:** Fixed amount subaward.
- **Amount:** USD \$40,000 - \$50,000. Cost share is not required.
- **Start:** July 2022.
- **Length:** 8 months.



# Who can apply?

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Local youth-led and youth-serving organizations serving youth aged 10-24 who meet the following minimum criteria and share Youth Excel objectives are eligible to apply.

Organizations led by or serving marginalized groups, which may include age, gender, disability, ethnicity, and other identities, are encouraged to apply.

The grant competition is not restricted to certain technical sectors or to research organizations.



# Eligibility Criteria

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- ✓ Registered Organization
- ✓ Local\* - locally registered & based, local majority ownership & governing body in Malawi or Zambia
- ✓ Non-governmental - NGOs, CBO, PVOs, other types of civil society eligible - or private companies
- ✓ Youth-led and/or youth-serving\*
- ✓ DUNS number, certifications\*
- Individual or Group, Not Registered
- International
- Government Institutions or Political Parties
- Appears on certain watchlists or exclusions from receiving USG funding
- Has received Youth Excel funding or has conflict of interest



# How can eligible organizations apply?

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Complete responses in English to the questions in Annex I. Concept Note Template. Submit concept notes online by April 1st, 2022 at 11:59 pm Central Africa Time.

At: [https://irexorg.formstack.com/forms/fy22\\_youth\\_excel\\_grant\\_competition\\_02](https://irexorg.formstack.com/forms/fy22_youth_excel_grant_competition_02)



# How will applicants be selected?

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- Eligibility screening for basic parameters, minimum eligibility criteria, completeness and timeliness of submission
- Participatory selection: optional peer review feedback
  - "Strongly recommended" or "recommended" concept notes will receive additional consideration by Youth Excel review panel
  - No impact on "not recommended" concepts or applicants who choose not to participate
- Youth Excel shortlisting and review panel



# Technical Question Rubric

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- Does applicant clearly identify and demonstrate understanding of the problem that the concept will address? [Question 4]
- To what extent does the proposed solution address the problem in a realistic, meaningful, and innovative way? [Question 5]
- Does applicant articulate its motivation and priority for the concept? [Question 6]
- Does applicant demonstrate clear understanding of the context, informed by preliminary gender equality and social inclusion analysis? Does applicant describe how it will adapt the concept to be effective in the context? Will the applicant leverage any ongoing investments in girls' education in the context? [Question 7]
- Is the concept inclusive of youth and marginalized group(s)? Is the concept and approach responsive to youth priorities? Does applicant display understanding of risks and demonstrate safeguarding measures to ensure the concept does no more harm? [Question 8]
- Are applicants aware of potential risks for participants and are they considering of mitigation strategies? [Question 9]



# Selection Criteria

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- **Responsiveness:** concept's approach and value for youth priorities related to the grant competition theme and region. [Part B, Questions 1-9; informed by participatory selection review]
- **Feasibility:** applicant's understanding of requirements and proven capacity to successfully implement the concept. [Part B, Question 10 and Part C]
- **Impact:** concept's potential to advance positive youth development outcomes and learning. [Overall]
- **Protection:** applicant's awareness of potential risks for participating youth and consideration of mitigation strategies [Question 9]
- **Inclusion:** applicant's commitment to diversity and inclusion (especially regarding work with and/or support to vulnerable or marginalized groups such as girls and women, youth with disabilities, youth from ethnic or religious minorities, and other identities)[Overall]



# **Q & A Session**





# Next steps

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- First webinar materials and first set of Q&A will be shared out on email and posted online by **March 18th**
- Second webinar on strengthening menstrual health and hygiene management for girls' education will be held on **March 22nd at 2:30 – 4 pm CAT**
- Continue to submit your questions anytime to [excelyouth@irex.org](mailto:excelyouth@irex.org) by **March 23rd**
- Second webinar materials and second set of Q&A will be shared out on email and posted online by **March 25th**
- Complete and submit your concept note online by **April 1st at 11:59 pm CAT**



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