

Request for Proposals

Project Name:	New programs feasibility study - traditional financial service providers
Project Objective:	To gather insights on the strategic issues and identify capacity building needs of traditional finance service providers, to inform the content of our new programs.
Timeframe:	The project is expected to start in July 2016 and finalize at the end of March 2017
Budget:	Proposals up to USD \$60,000 will be considered
Proposal Deadline:	May 24, 2016

About the Boulder Institute of Microfinance

As the paramount training institution for inclusive financial services for over two decades, Boulder Institute has trained over 5,000 professionals from microfinance institutions, support organizations and government agencies. Boulder Institute is known for helping finance professionals understand the changes needed to effectively serve lower-income markets in a way that no other institution has been able to develop.

Boulder Institute's programs have a unique mix of elements:

- **Global perspective:** Boulder's faculty have a global view, which combined with the diversity of participants attending our programs enhances the exchange of experiences between countries and continents.
- **Technical approach:** Boulder's courses convey evidence-based models and approaches that critically analyze what does and does not work in financial microfinance.
- **Strategic in nature:** Boulder's programs are designed not only to build participants' capacity, but to challenge them to understand different perspectives, providing a diverse menu of strategies, tools and references for solving complex problems.

Boulder is currently embarking in the development of new programs that respond to the emerging issues in the field of financial inclusion, for which we are gathering insights on capacity building needs for distinct market segments, in order to identify the content that should be included in our new programs.

About Boulder Institute Programs

Participants of Boulder Institute's flagship microfinance training program (MFT) have continued to describe their experiences as **transformational**. For over 21 years, Boulder MFTs have provided a pre-eminent global platform to advance the cause of sustainable microfinance through **peer-learning and networks**¹ guided by many of the world's most recognized innovators and early adopters. Boulder Institute's model for the dissemination of innovation holds that conversations within networks - not impersonal news segments or articles - spread adoption.

At its inception, Boulder helped to pioneer the emerging issue of sustainable microfinance. Although each of our programs' courses shared an overarching theme of sustainability, each served as a subcomponent of a diverse menu of options where tools and experiences were shared. Twenty years

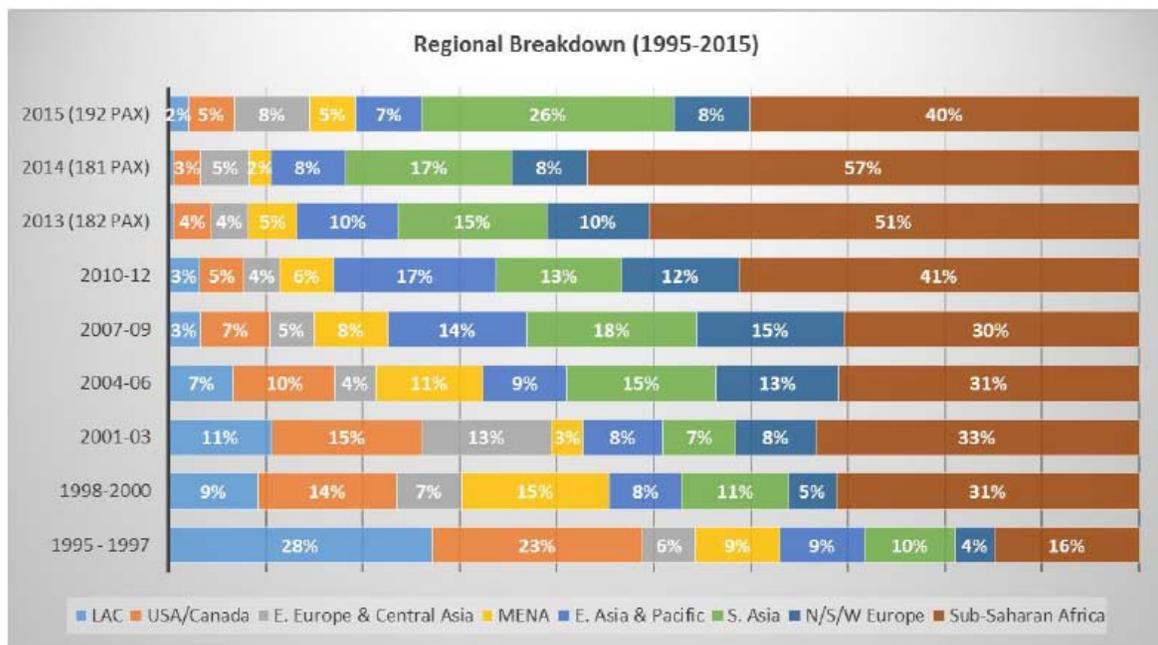
¹ For more information on how peer learning and networks diffuse innovation, please visit: Everett M. Rogers, Diffusion of Innovations, Fifth Edition 2003, Free Press, New York

later, sustainable microfinance is mainstream and many of our alumni are currently leading the largest microfinance institutions in the world.

Boulder has a strong global brand that is tied to its MFT Programs. Boulder MFT's are unique in offering participants the option to select among 12 - 40 courses depending on the program, allowing them to tailor their experience to their individual needs and interests. Boulder MFT's are one of the only spaces where microfinance institutions, support organizations and government agencies convene to talk about the issues that matter most in financial inclusion.

The loyalty of our alumni has been an important factor in Boulder Institute's sustainability. Most of our participants come to Boulder because someone they know recommended the program. The regional composition of our participants has varied by year and seems to mirror the state of development of microfinance. This can be seen in the graph below showing the regional breakdown of our longest standing program, the English MFT.

Graph 1 - English MFT



We are approaching a new era in financial inclusion, where new players and technologies are expanding the possibilities of financial inclusion. At the same time, microfinance's success in reaching clients in new markets has increased competition, with markets showing signs of maturity. Boulder Institute believes that traditional players (NBFIs, commercial banks, and cooperatives) continue to have an important role for the future of financial inclusion.

About the study

To ensure Boulder's ability to offer programs that focus on the emerging issues and that have a sustained ability to remain current and relevant, we are seeking a consultant to conduct a market demand study in order to better understand current and upcoming capacity building needs of those

who provide financial services to the unbanked. The consultant will conduct a market study of a sample of leading traditional microfinance players to assess demand for training programs.

Our expectation is that the study will:

- Assess those challenges that members of the microfinance community are experiencing that are susceptible to being address by capacity building;
- Map how their capacity building needs are currently being met and identify gaps;
- Assess the demand for training programs and content segmented by region/countries, experience, level within an institution and type of institution.
- Contrast the vision provided by industry leaders with insights on content/topics that are demanded by traditional financial service providers to inform Boulder Institute’s future programming.
- Test approximate price points and formats

Scope of work, deliverables and timeline

The consultant will:

Identify the major issues that financial inclusion industry leaders consider will be pertinent to the survival and success of traditional microfinance players in the next decade.

The proposals to be submitted are expected to outline a proposed approach, but it is anticipated that they may include outputs below:

- Assess the opportunities and challenges traditional financial service providers perceive, and the main issues they consider will be pertinent in the following decade
- Identify the current capacity building offering for traditional players including what is offered by Boulder Institute
- Analyze how these capacity building offerings are responding to the needs of traditional players, identify needs that are not being met in capacity building, and what they consider is missing
- Based on the above analysis, prepare a report. The report is to include:
 - o Overview of the capacity building market for traditional players
 - o Estimate of demand size and content for specific client segments within traditional players such as: level within the organization, type of organization, region
 - o Recommendations for future programming that can be developed by Boulder Institute, including topics, pricing, formats and potential faculty that could deliver the training
 - o Best messaging, contacts and channels for marketing the new programs, and
 - o Other sections as deemed necessary by the consultant – to be agreed upon during consultations upon proposal submittal.

The work is expected to take up to **45** working days, starting on or around July 1st, 2016. The consultant is expected to propose a schedule for the most appropriate way to accomplish the above goals, along with the schedule of deliverables adjusted as necessary, within the proposal to be submitted to Boulder Institute.