Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF)

December 23, 2024

WiDEF India Round FAQs

This document outlines responses to questions on WiDEF's India Round which is open until January 13, 2025. The following questions were raised during the webinar or were sent as inquiries to us over email. We have compiled all the questions and responded to them below. Some questions have been edited or modified to provide additional clarity. All questions were submitted by December 15, 2024.

For more information, please refer to the following:

- Read the full Request for Applications (RFA) before applying.
- View our informational webinar to understand our offering and the eligibility for this round.
- On page 7 of this document, you will find a step-by-step Fluxx user guide on navigating the application portal.
- Register for our Drop-in Session on 7th Jan 2025 at 3pm IST
- For any further questions, please write to us at **contact@widef.global**

#	Question	Answer
1	Could you expand on what makes a solution "proven"?	A proven solution is where there is evidence that the solution can increase women's adoption or increased usage of the internet and internet-enabled products and services and help close the gender digital divide. Evidence can include, for instance, results from a pilot or evaluation showing traction of a product or service by women customers in your market or other markets. Current evidence on some of the effective practices for addressing the gender digital divide is outlined in this WiDEF report on effective practices.
2	Is an organization registered in India with a US-based parent company (501(c)(3)) eligible?	Yes, the organization is eligible if it meets all the following criteria as a local entity: (a) legally organized in India, (b) principal place of business or operations in India, (c) majority-owned by Indian citizens or lawful permanent residents, and (d) managed by a governing body where the majority are Indian citizens or lawful permanent residents.
3	Can a for-profit organization with a non-profit counterpart in India but no FCRA registration apply?	Yes, for-profit entity is eligible to apply independently if it meets all the other eligibility criteria outlined in the RFA. Not-for-profits without a valid FCRA license at the time of contracting is ineligible. To note, clear operational separation must exist between the two entities.

4	Can a for-profit organization with a non-profit counterpart in India and valid FCRA registration apply?	Yes, both entities are eligible, but the organization must apply under one legal status, ensuring a clear operational distinction between them.
5	Can two organizations jointly apply, with one leading program implementation?	No, joint applications are not allowed. The applying organization must independently meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the RFA.
6	Can non-profits with valid FCRA registration and more than 250 employees apply?	Yes, they are eligible.
7	Can an organization with FCRA registration but without a UEI apply?	Yes, but the organization must be in the process of obtaining a UEI at the time of application.
8	Can joint ventures (JVs) between non-profits and for-profits apply?	JVs can apply as a single entity if they meet eligibility criteria independently and take sole responsibility for project delivery.
9	Can a joint venture (JV) proposal between a non-profit and for-profit entity be eligible?	A JV may apply as a standalone entity only if it (a) meets eligibility criteria as either a non-profit or for-profit organization, and (b) independently manages project delivery without involvement or resource sharing from the other entities.
10	Can innovative solutions addressing disability issues be accommodated?	Yes, WiDEF encourages solutions that improve the digital inclusion of women and marginalized communities, including those with disabilities.
11	Can digital devices and mobile phones be distributed to empower visually impaired higher education students?	No, WiDEF will not fund the purchase, distribution, or subsidization of mobile phones, tablets, or other communication devices for target populations or end-users. Refer to the "Types of Solutions/Projects" section of the **Request for Application**.
12	Would a fashion-tech AI tool for empowering regional artisans qualify for funding?	Eligibility considerations are being evaluated based on the requirements outlined in the **Request for Application** (see section Organizational Requirements for details). WiDEF encourages applications from entities that that scale a solution that can have a substantial impact on the digital inclusion of women, improving their livelihoods, economic security, and resilience. The proposed projects will be assessed based on the evaluation criteria outlined in the RFA.
13	Can an early-stage WhatsApp chatbot for agriculture and business incubation qualify?	Eligibility considerations are being evaluated based on the requirements outlined in the **Request for Application** (see section Organizational Requirements for details). WiDEF encourages applications from entities that that scale a solution that can have a substantial impact on the digital inclusion of women, improving

		their livelihoods, economic security, and resilience. The proposed projects will be assessed based on the evaluation criteria outlined in the RFA.
14	Can a for-profit consulting organization working with government agencies apply?	Yes, consulting organizations are eligible if they are the implementing organization of the proposed project.
15	Are consortium applications allowed?	No, consortium applications are not allowed as they involve sub-granting, which is prohibited.
16	Are digital ecosystem solutions for marginalized communities eligible?	Yes, WiDEF encourages solutions that empower women and marginalized communities such as scheduled castes, tribes, youth, disabled, LGBTQI+, and rural women.
17	Are for-profit organizations with women-focused livelihood project experience eligible?	Yes, for-profit organizations with such experience are eligible.
18	Is the fund sector-agnostic, for example, digital access to AgriServices or renewable energy?	Yes, WiDEF India Round is sector agnostic, seeking solutions across various sectors that enhance digital inclusion for women.
19	Is it possible to accommodate innovative solutions for disability issues?	Yes, WiDEF is open to innovative disability-focused solutions that contribute to the digital inclusion of marginalized groups.
20	Can an organization distribute digital devices for use in specific educational programs?	WiDEF does not fund the distribution, purchase, or subsidization of digital devices such as mobile phones or tablets. The focus is on scalable, proven solutions that drive digital inclusion of the underserved.
21	Are infrastructure costs like training center rent and trainer expenses for women/girls' digital use case programs eligible?	Yes, these costs can be included if they align with WiDEF's project and budget guidelines. These guidelines will be provided to shortlisted applicants as they progress into Proposal Stage. However, WiDEF will not fund projects solely focused on setting up ICT centers. Refer to the "Types of Solutions/Projects" section of the Request for Application.
22	Is SAM registration equivalent to a UEI for NGOs?	If the applicant is registered on SAM.gov, its UEI is already available there.
23	Can you share more details on the scoring/evaluation criteria? Will a project that seeks to address barriers of literacy and digital skills or safety and security be evaluated similarly to a project that seeks to address availability and affordability?	Details are provided in the "How To Apply" section of the Request for Application. Projects addressing different barriers will be evaluated uniformly.. Eligible applications need to articulate the most prominent barriers facing the communities they aim to support and how they will address at least two of the four core WiDEF priority areas.

24	Must projects create new tools, or can they enhance existing ones for better accessibility for women?	WiDEF does not suggest any specific initiative for the applicants. Applicants may propose solutions that improve women's adoption and usage of the internet or internet-enabled services. WiDEF seeks proven or evidence-based solutions and does not fund projects in the prototype or pilot stage. Refer to the "Types of Solutions/Projects" section of the **Request for Application**.
25	If an accelerator supports social enterprises, can it apply to implement solutions developed by its startups?	No, accelerators are ineligible to receive funding.
26	Is there a minimum operational period for an organization to qualify?	There is no minimum operational period, but applicants must provide audited financial statements, which may exclude those with minimal to no financial activity, in case of shortlisting.
27	Is there a minimum or target number of women beneficiaries for projects?	No, there is no target number of women beneficiaries/users per project.
28	Can consulting organizations provide consulting for government agencies on digital inclusion?	Yes, consulting organizations are eligible if they are the primary implementing organization.
29	Can I submit more than one pitch at the same time?	The application portal will only allow one submission per registered entity. Multiple submissions for the same project are not permitted. In cases where this occurs, the first submission will be reviewed if it is eligible, and all duplicate submissions will be deemed ineligible and not reviewed. If during scoring, it is discovered a single company has submitted multiple applications for different projects (such as entities delivering projects in multiple states or areas of work), no more than one application per entity will be advanced beyond the pitch stage.
30	Is a UEI mandatory for applying?	Yes, applicants must have, or be in the process of obtaining, a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) as outlined in t the ''Éligibility'section of the **Request for Application**.
31	Is there a minimum operational period for an organization to qualify?	There is no minimum operational period, but applicants must provide audited financial statements, which may exclude those with minimal to no financial activity, in case of shortlisting.

32	What percentage of funding can cover organizational expenses?	Indirect costs or overheads should not exceed 10% of the funds requested. Project budgets must not include a profit component.
33	Will scaling a proven solution using technology to empower women to be considered innovative?	Yes, WiDEF encourages projects that scale proven solutions to improve digital inclusion and address barriers preventing women from accessing or using mobile internet. For details, refer to the "Proven Solutions" section of the **Request for Application**.
34	Can a 3-year program apply if only part of it is completed within 15 months?	WiDEF funding is available for 15–18 months. However, the proposed project can be part of a long-term business strategy or project.
35	Is there a specific employee count for eligibility?	The fund is open to small and medium enterprises, defined as for-profit entities with fewer than 250 employees. There is no specific employee count for not-for-profit entities with a valid FCRA license.
36	How many grant proposals will be selected?	The number of selected proposals will depend on the volume of submissions that align with WiDEF's core priority areas. Funding decisions are made by an independent Fund Panel.
37	Are organizations with gender equality in leadership eligible?	Yes, organizations promoting gender equality in their leadership structure are eligible and encouraged. Mention this in the pitch form under **Question 2.5.**
38	Is the grant disbursed as a deliverable-based or reimbursement-based model?	The funding is milestone-based, with some payments potentially made as reimbursements, especially the final milestone at project closure.
39	Can you elaborate on ownership requirements for eligibility?	The majority (more than 50%) ownership must be held by Indian citizens or lawful permanent residents.
40	Is there a cost-share or match-funding requirement?	No, there is no cost-share or match-funding requirement for this round.
41	Can funding be used for upgrading digital devices?	WiDEF does not support funding for purchasing or subsidizing digital devices. The focus is on scaling proven solutions for digital inclusion.
42	How can an NGO obtain a UEI number?	NGOs can obtain a UEI by visiting SAM.gov. See this **video** for assistance.
43	Are sub-grants allowed?	No, sub-granting is prohibited. Awardees must directly implement and manage all project activities.
44	Is there a target segment for beneficiaries, and is it limited to users with high-end devices?	WiDEF aims at driving digital inclusion of the underserved and does not restrict solutions to specific device types. It aims to shift digital ecosystems for women and marginalized

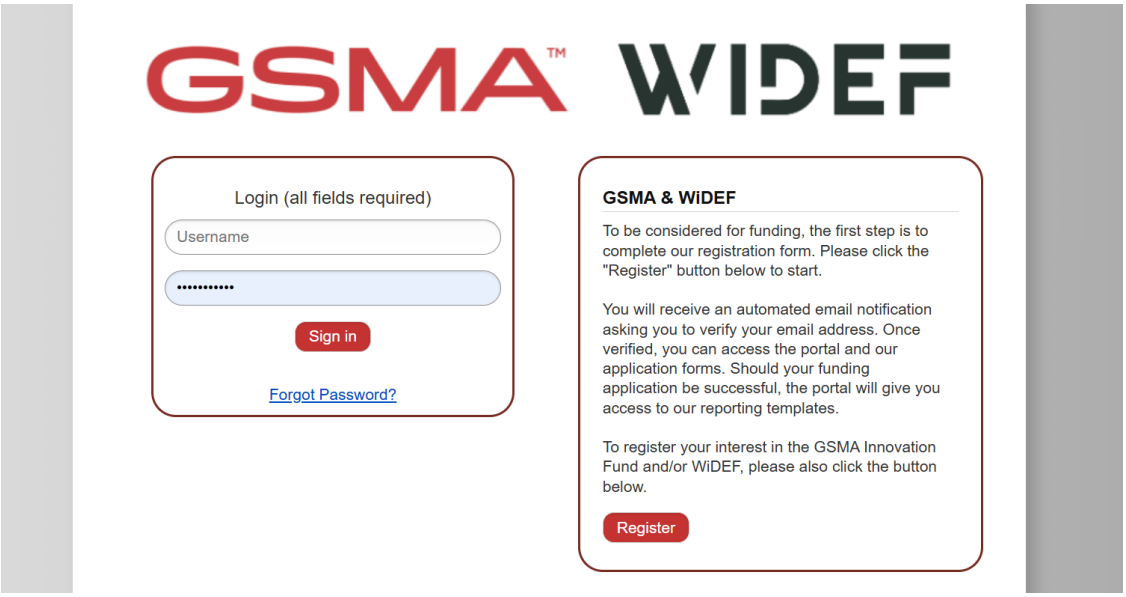
		populations, including scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, youth, disabled, LGBTQI+, and rural women in India.
45	Is an organization previously selected in the Women Connect Challenge (USAID and Reliance Foundation), Grand Challenges (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), or Innovation Fund Challenge (GSMA Foundation) eligible to apply for the WiDEF India Round??	Yes, organizations previously funded by any donors under prior programs or rounds are eligible. Applicants must mention this under **Question 2.3** in the pitch form.
46	Can an organization based in India apply through its India-based for-profit sister organization?	Yes, provided the sister organization meets the following criteria: (a) legally organized in India, (b) principal place of business in India, (c) majority-owned by Indian citizens or lawful permanent residents, and (d) managed by a governing body primarily composed of Indian citizens or lawful permanent residents.
47	We registered with GSMA but have not received the automated confirmation email	Follow these steps: (a) Check spam/junk folders, (b) Attempt to register again, (c) Try a different email address. If the issue persists, contact the Fluxx team at widefquestions@gsma.com for assistance.
48	What is the scoring or evaluation criteria?	Details on the scoring and evaluation criteria are provided in the "How To Apply" section of the Request for Application.
49	Can you clarify the acceptable nature of partnerships and how the grant will be disbursed in partnerships?	Partnerships may involve knowledge sharing, vendor engagements, platform integration, or agreements (e.g., MoUs) with government or private sector entities. Only one entity must apply for funding, and this entity must be responsible for implementation of the WiDEF-funded project. Disbursements will be made only to this primary implementing entity.
50	How long does it take for feedback or review of the eligibility form?	Feedback and review of the eligibility form typically take two days or less from the date of submission.
51	Is there a defined age group for program participants under WiDEF?	No, the WiDEF India Round does not specify an age group for program participants/ users/ beneficiaries.
52	What are the minimum data disaggregation requirements? Our initiative primarily works with women and men are not direct participants	Awardees that receive WiDEF-funding will be required to report against WiDEF key performance indicators (KPIs) that must be gender-disaggregated. include reporting gender-disaggregated KPIs. More details to be provided to shortlisted applicants at Proposal Stage.
53	What metrics or indicators does WiDEF use to evaluate potential for scale?	Potential for scale will be evaluated on case-to-case basis depending on how the project will achieve sustainability or be replicable beyond the WiDEF project timeline.

54	What are WiDEF's expectations for demonstrating economic impact within the 15–18-month grant period?	Applicants should demonstrate if and how digital inclusion of women will improve their livelihood, economic security and resilience through their proposed project.

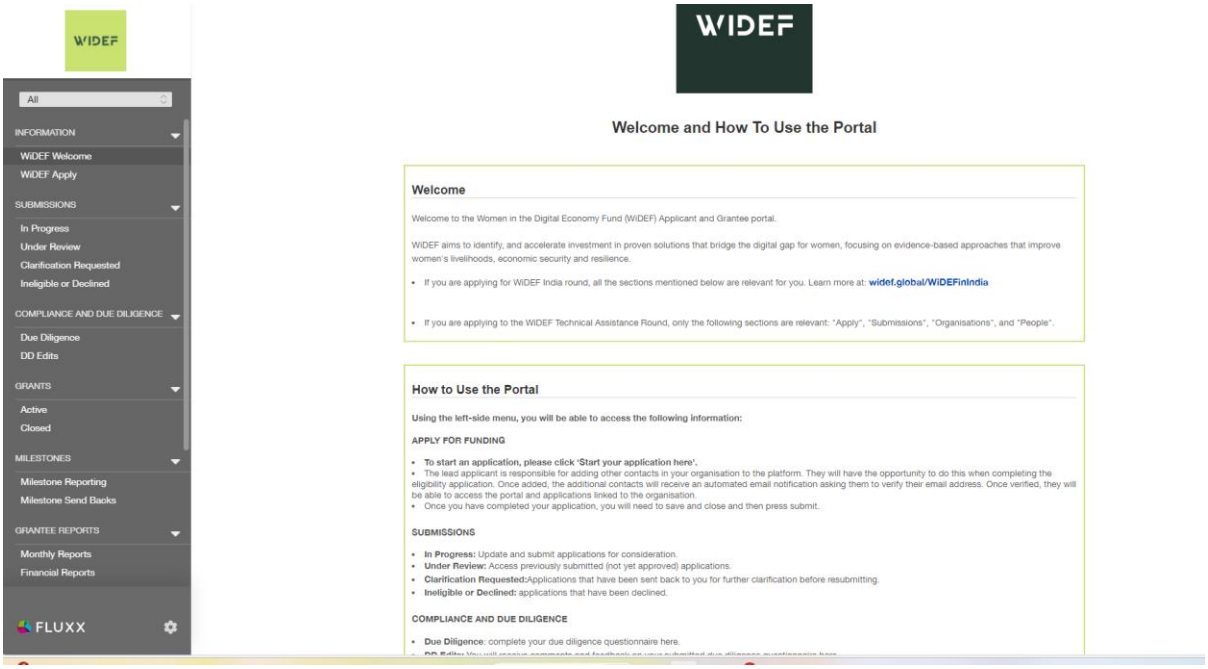
Please note: The above table answers all questions received by the WiDEF team until 15th December 2024. If you have further questions regarding the application process please attend the drop-in session on 7th January,2025 using this link.

Fluxx User Guide

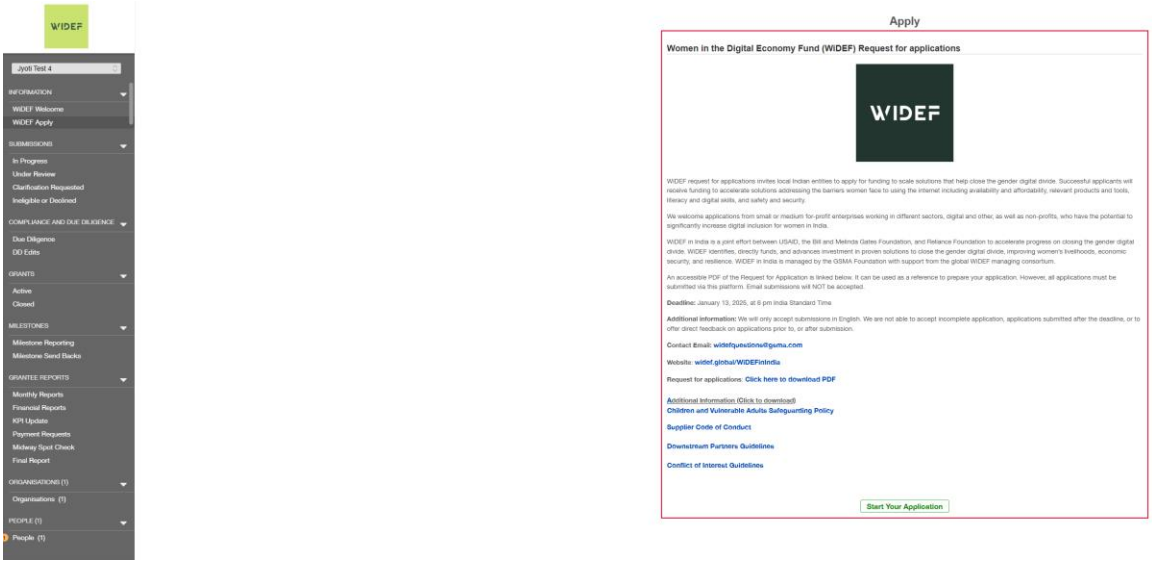
Step 1: Access the application form from the GSMA WiDEF Fluxx system. You will need to create an account by clicking the register button. Once you complete the process, you will receive an email from GSMA WiDEF to confirm your email address.



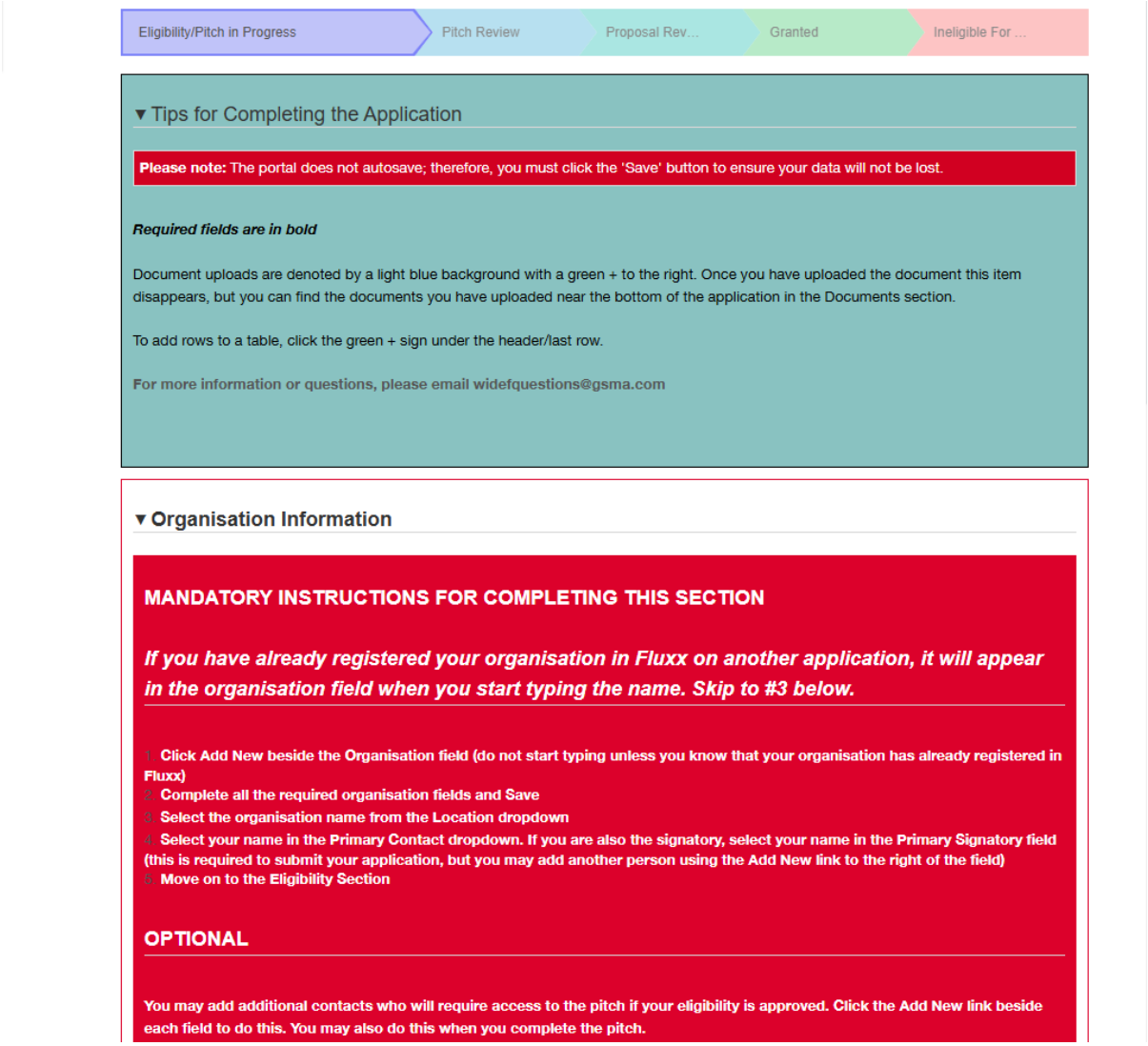
Step 2: Once you have confirmed your email, log in again. You will be directed to the landing portal shown below. On the left side, you will see the **APPLY**. Click this button to be redirected to the application page.



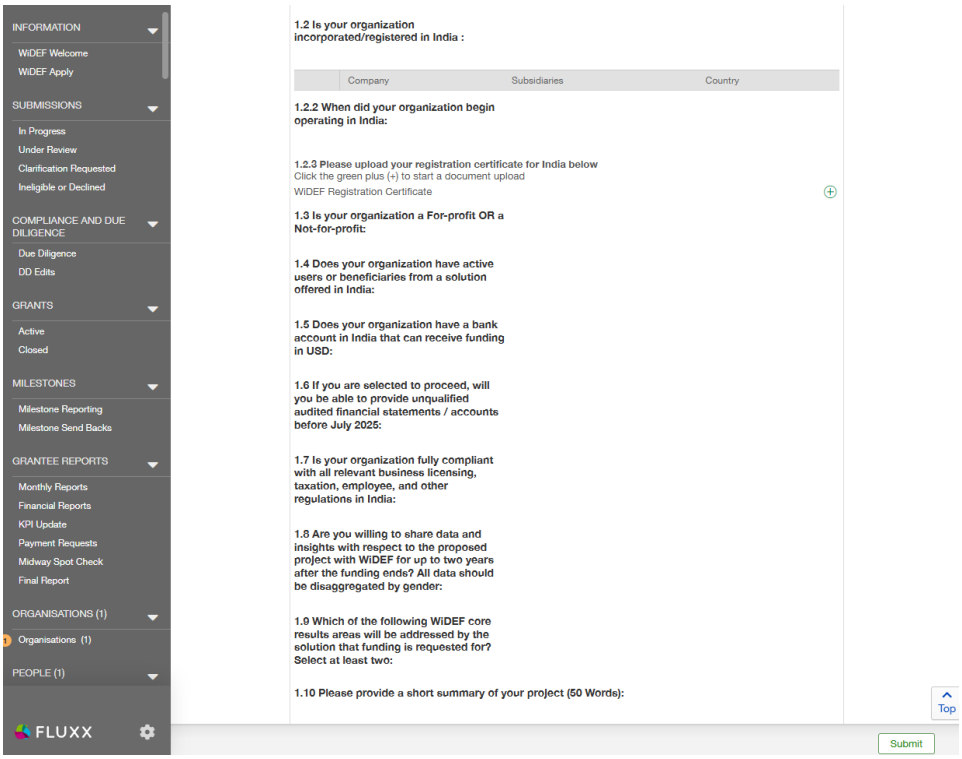
Step 3: On this page, you can begin your application by clicking begin the application.



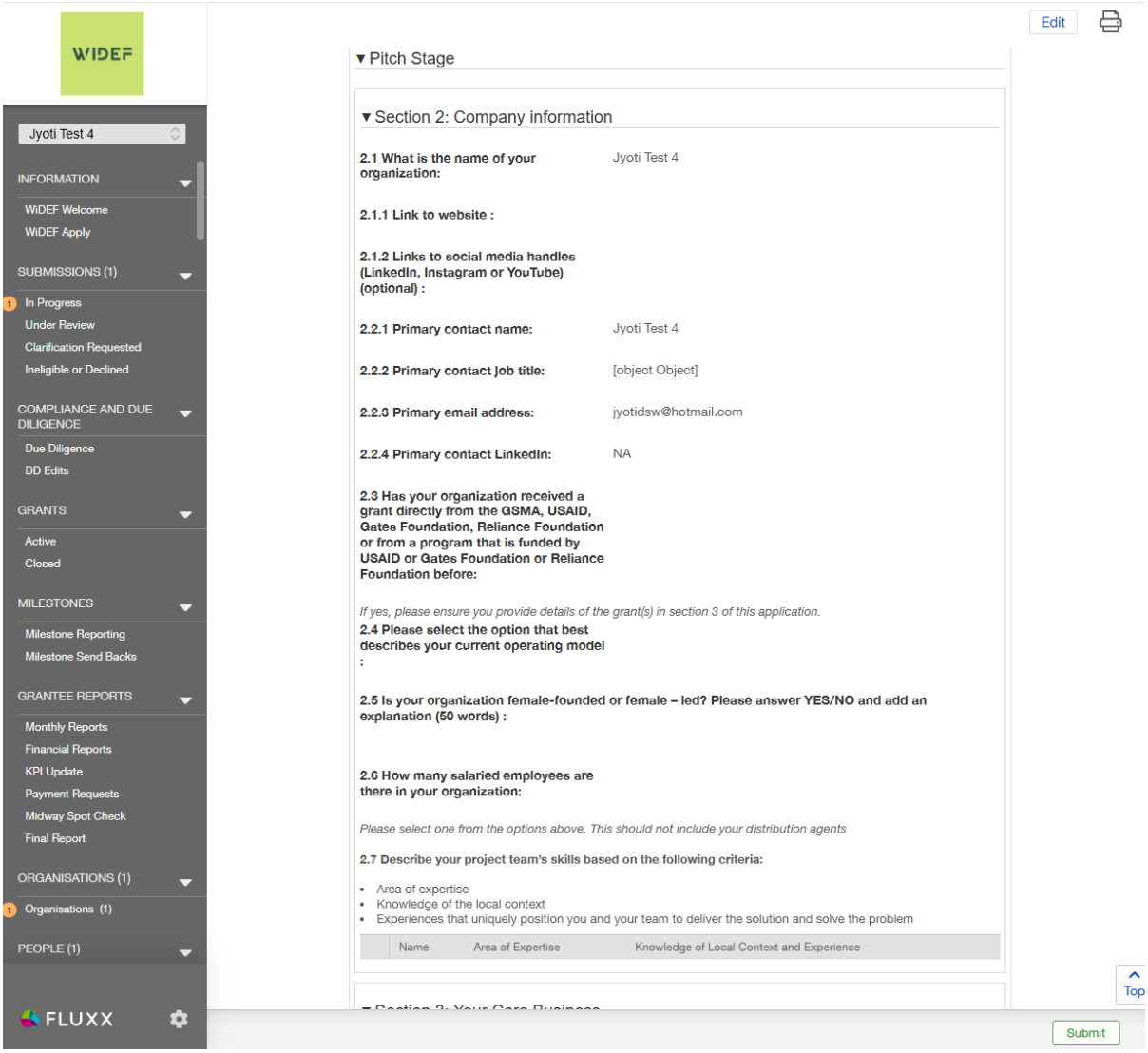
Step 4: Next, begin populating your application form by first completing the basic company information in one go. Then, submit it for the eligibility check. Please note that this section cannot be changed later.

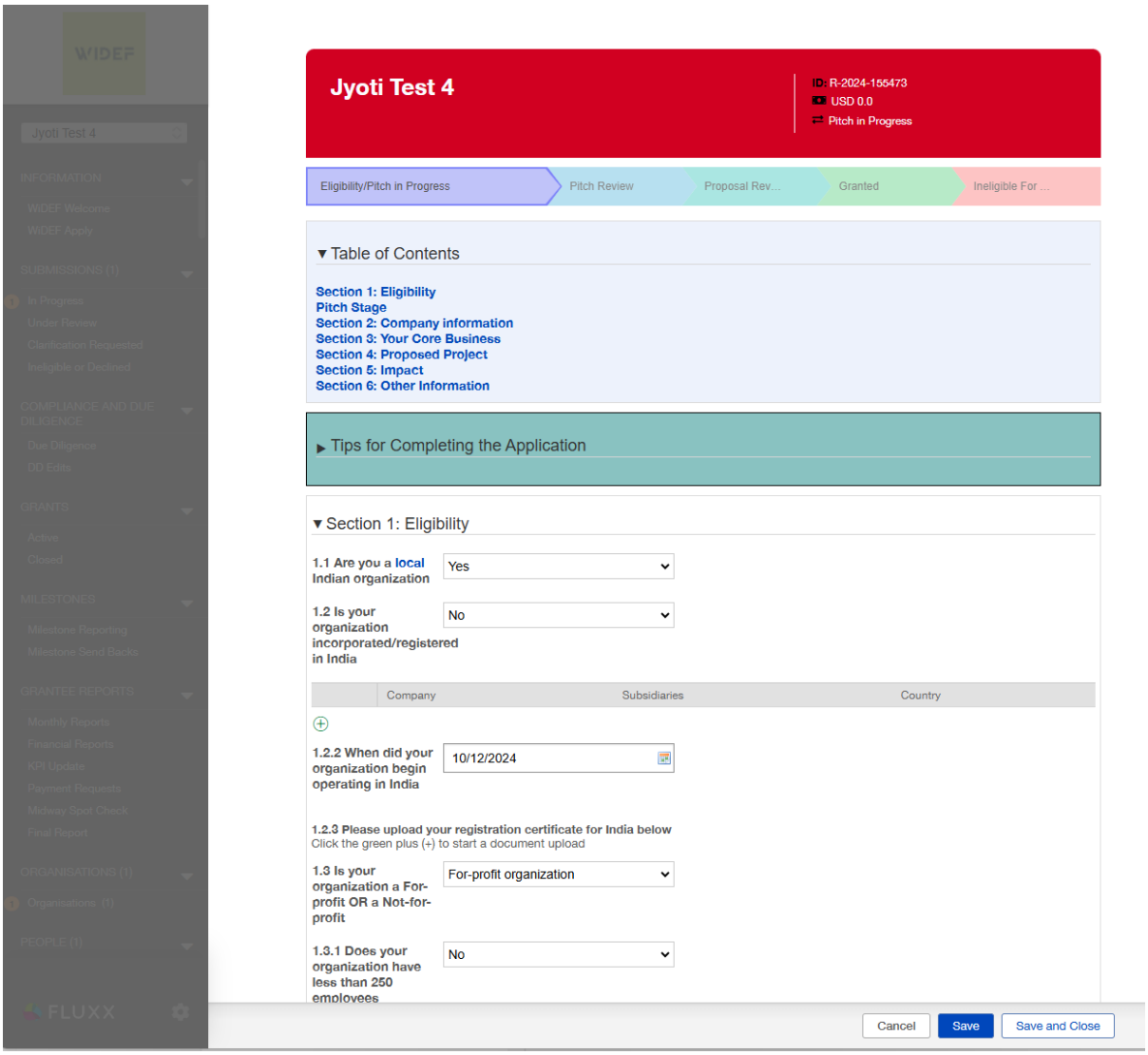


Step 5: When completing the eligibility information, fill out all the required fields and submit everything at once, as you won't be able to go back and make changes. You can only continue your application if you meet the eligibility criteria. Please note that this initial "submit" button is only for the eligibility check, not for your actual application.



Step 6: If your organization's eligibility is approved, the Project section will open for your application. First, read the Request for Application to prepare your answers with a rough word count. When you are ready, click the EDIT button. This will open the text boxes in the second screenshot, where you can type your responses. Remember to save your progress as you go along. You can save, close, and finalize the application later.


WIDEF
Jyoti Test 4
INFORMATION
WiDEF Welcome
WiDEF Apply
SUBMISSIONS (1)
In Progress
Under Review
Clarification Requested
Ineligible or Declined
COMPLIANCE AND DUE DILIGENCE
Due Diligence
DD Edits
GRANTS
Active
Closed
MILESTONES
Milestone Reporting
Milestone Send Backs
GRANTEE REPORTS
Monthly Reports
Financial Reports
KPI Update
Payment Requests
Midway Spot Check
Final Report
ORGANISATIONS (1)
Organisations (1)
PEOPLE (1)
FLUXX
Edit
▾ Pitch Stage
▾ Section 2: Company information
2.1 What is the name of your organization:
Jyoti Test 4
2.1.1 Link to website :
2.1.2 Links to social media handles (LinkedIn, Instagram or YouTube) (optional) :
2.2.1 Primary contact name:
Jyoti Test 4
2.2.2 Primary contact job title:
[object Object]
2.2.3 Primary email address:
jyotidsw@hotmail.com
2.2.4 Primary contact LinkedIn:
NA
2.3 Has your organization received a grant directly from the GSMA, USAID, Gates Foundation, Reliance Foundation or from a program that is funded by USAID or Gates Foundation or Reliance Foundation before:
If yes, please ensure you provide details of the grant(s) in section 3 of this application.
2.4 Please select the option that best describes your current operating model :
2.5 Is your organization female-founded or female – led? Please answer YES/NO and add an explanation (50 words) :
2.6 How many salaried employees are there in your organization:
Please select one from the options above. This should not include your distribution agents
2.7 Describe your project team's skills based on the following criteria:
Area of expertise
Knowledge of the local context
Experiences that uniquely position you and your team to deliver the solution and solve the problem
Name
Area of Expertise
Knowledge of Local Context and Experience
Top
Submit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ID: R-2024-155473
USD 0.0
Pitch in Progress
Eligibility/Pitch in Progress
Pitch Review
Proposal Rev...
Granted
Ineligible For ...
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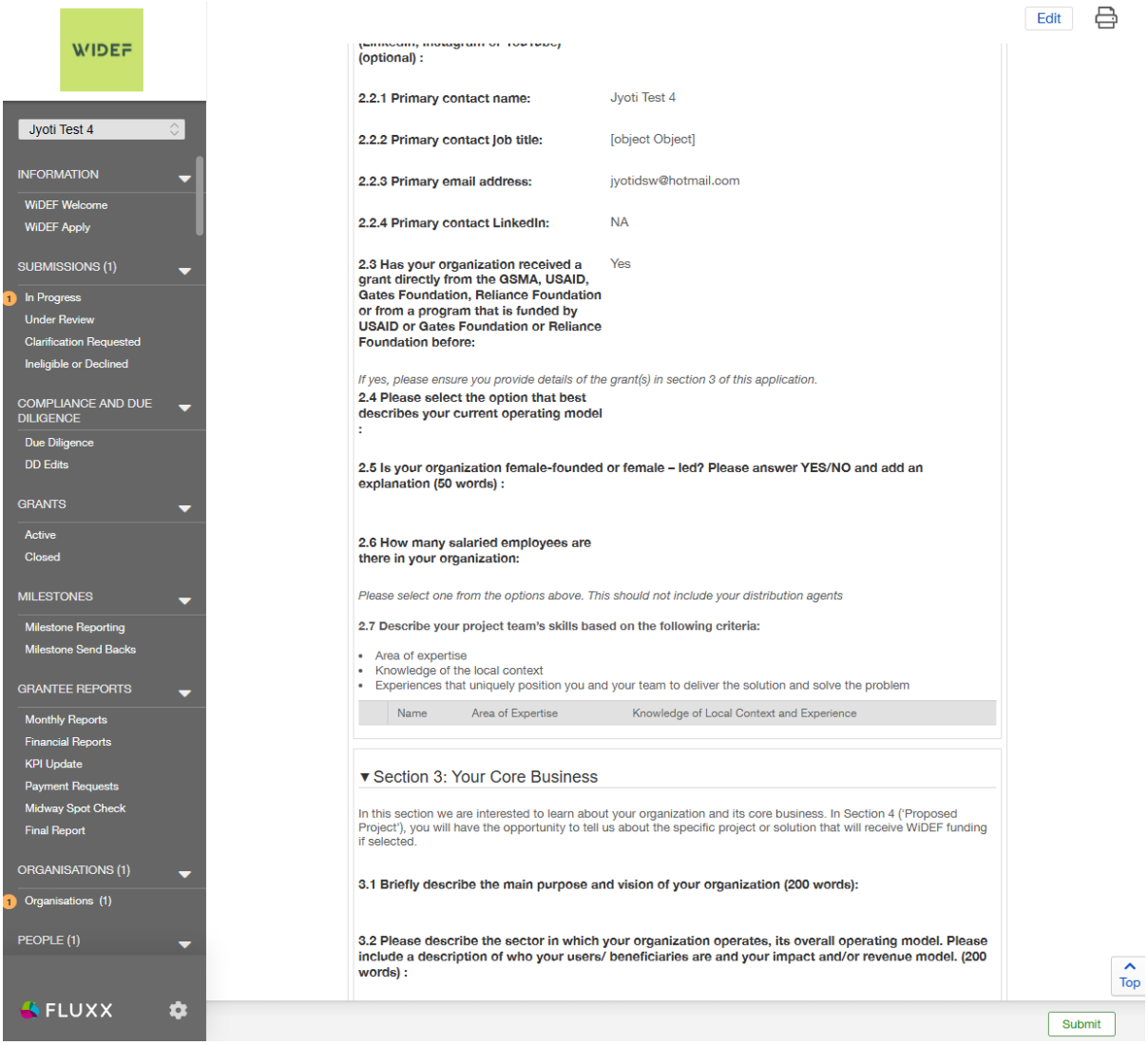
Section 1: Eligibility
Pitch Stage
Section 2: Company information
Section 3: Your Core Business
Section 4: Proposed Project
Section 5: Impact
Section 6: Other Information
Tips for Completing the Application
Section 1: Eligibility
1.1 Are you a local Indian organization
Yes
1.2 Is your organization incorporated/registered in India
No
Company
Subsidiaries
Country
1.2.2 When did your organization begin operating in India
10/12/2024
1.2.3 Please upload your registration certificate for India below
Click the green plus (+) to start a document upload
1.3 Is your organization a For-profit OR a Not-for-profit
For-profit organization
1.3.1 Does your organization have less than 250 employees
No
Cancel
Save
Save and Close

Step 7: When your application is completed and checked you can proceed to submit.