

**Invitation for Proposals:
Research and Development of Mobile Digital Technology for Progressive Social Change**

Background

Mobile internet/app usage is already substantial, and, with the improvement in broadband wireless service, can be expected both to expand and to evolve in character. Despite apparent similarity to computer and tablet internet usage, the ubiquity and portability of smartphones – as well as small screen size – mean that people use smartphones differently from computers.

As a consequence of this series of changes, many internet-connected services – including those of online organizers – that historically functioned as disruptors are finding themselves to be the recipients of disruption.

The historical tendency has been for established organizations to look backwards as they respond to technological shifts (e.g. that people would consume journalism on screens just as they did in print). Similarly, today's efforts to create "mobile friendly" website formatting, while necessary, do not at all seize the potential of an internet that can originate from anyone, anywhere, at any time, to be consumed in an equally ubiquitous and continuous manner.

The mobile internet is its own medium. If it is not yet, it will become as different from a computer's internet as the internet is from print or from television.

Every major technological dialectic has reordered empires. Graduate students founded Google and an undergraduate student started Facebook, while such giants as CBS and News Corp. looked elsewhere or fumbled. Genuine foresight is rare, and even innovators often cannot perceive the future accurately.

Will progressive online efforts be bypassed by mobile technology, and will their fate thus be the same as that of other media incumbents who failed to surf the next wave? Or can we benefit from the top-to-bottom reordering to come?

In light of this opportunity, and to accelerate the development of progressive uses of mobile technology, Voqal is announcing a \$50,000 R&D program.

We are inviting proposals to the R&D program on an open basis so that we can consider your best ideas without establishing filters in advance. However, illustrative possible uses of R&D funding include developing technology to:

- Assist progressive organizers
- Enhance street demonstrations
- Gather data to improve the performance of existing methods, etc.

Voqal Mobile R&D Program

Funds will be provided by Voqal via one or more research and development contracts.

Eligible applicants: Organizations based in the United States that propose projects to be carried out principally within the United States. Both for-profit and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Individuals who wish to apply will need to form a corporation to serve as the applicant. Multiple organizations may submit a single application for joint funding; in such a case, one organization should be listed as the applicant and name its co-applicant(s) in the narrative.

Eligible projects: Research and/or development of mobile technology to promote progressive social change. Such projects may involve the development and/or adaptation of technology, or simply the diffusion of existing effective technology.

Definition of mobile digital technology: Technology involving digital applications and/or information created or adapted for use on mobile devices, especially cellphones.

Intellectual property: The contractor is responsible for licensing any necessary third-party intellectual property (IP), such as patents. The contractor will own IP developed from the project. However, a cost-free license must be provided to Voqal, which, in turn, must be authorized to sublicense IP developed under the project to nonprofit organizations that Voqal determines, in its sole discretion, to be working for progressive social change. The contractor will make all other decisions concerning the licensing of IP developed from the project.

Selection criteria: The extent of expected benefit for progressive social change within the United States; the prospects for unusually rapid and widespread adoption; the capabilities and commitment of the applicant organization or group; cost effectiveness.

Amount per research and development contract: Up to \$50,000.

Deadline for submitting proposals: May 31, 2017

To submit a proposal: Log on to www.grantinterface.com/ebs/Common/LogOn.aspx
Follow the instructions for logging in as a new user or an existing user. Once logged in, click on "Apply" at the top of the page. Enter the access code – California. Click on the blue "Apply" button to start your Voqal Mobile R&D proposal.