

# MacArthur Foundation Will Award \$100 Million for Solution to a Global Problem

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By CHRISTINE HAUSER JUNE 2, 2016

The MacArthur Foundation, known for bestowing “genius” grants on artists, actors and other creative people, introduced a new competition on Thursday that would award \$100 million to an organization with the best proposal to solve a global problem.

The competition, called 100&Change, is open to organizations in any field, anywhere in the world, as long as the proposal identifies a problem affecting people, a place, or the entire planet and comes up with a way to fix it.

The foundation said in a statement it was “placing a few big bets” that significant progress could be made on social challenges like incarceration, climate change and nuclear risk. It did not place limits on what kind of problems should be addressed to be eligible for the award, which will be given every three years.

“Solving society’s most pressing problems isn’t easy, but we believe it can be done,” said Julia Stasch, the president of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. “Potential solutions may go unnoticed or under-resourced and are waiting to be brought to scale.”

The application process, the foundation said, is designed to provide feedback and visibility, so the proposals that do not win the MacArthur award might still attract backing or other forms of support.

It is open to nonprofit and for-profit organizations, but not to individuals or government entities. Registration must be completed online by Sept. 2, and applications detailing the problem, its solution and its budget, along with a video pitch, will be accepted through Oct. 3, it said.

Semifinalists will be announced in December, and finalists, who will be chosen in the summer of 2017, will present their solutions during a live event in the fall of 2017. Then the board will decide which organization will receive the \$100 million grant.

Each proposal will be reviewed by a panel of judges from a variety of fields, and their evaluation process for the proposals will be shared publicly on the competition’s website. Participants will receive feedback from the judges.

The foundation is widely known for its so-called genius fellowship: a \$625,000 stipend over five years, no strings attached, that has gone to artists, actors, photographers and others over the years.

The 24 people selected last year as fellows of the MacArthur Foundation fellowships included the writer Ta-Nehisi Coates; Lin-Manuel Miranda, the writer and star of the hit Broadway musical “Hamilton”; and the artist Nicole Eisenman.