

## USAID offering \$4m for solar startups in Africa

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) has announced a US\$4 million funding initiative aimed at supporting innovative solar companies across sub-Saharan Africa.

By [Gabriella Mulligan](#) 27 Feb 2017



Image by 123RF

[Disrupt Africa reported](#) in November USAID made eight investments – as part of the “Scaling Off-Grid Energy Grand Challenge for Development” programme – into companies disrupting household solar power worldwide, with two recipients based in Africa.

A further funding opportunity has now been announced, with US\$4 million to be made available to startups developing innovative technology solutions and business models across the household solar value chain in sub-Saharan Africa.

However, USAID will only be making investments based on a fund-matching model. Funding will go to early growth stage companies which can show a 2:1 private investor match; meaning that startups must be able to show a private investor is willing to commit twice the amount – on either an equity or debt basis – being requested from USAID.

The organisation said it expects funding granted to range between US\$500,000 and US\$1.5 million per company.

To be considered, applicants must be early growth stage companies active in one or more African markets and should be developing and scaling innovative solutions that will have broad reach across the sub-Saharan household solar market with the potential for high market impact.

Concept papers will be accepted on a rolling basis until April 30. Those interested are encouraged to contact the Scaling Off-Grid Energy team describing their solution and listing interested investors, prior to submitting a concept paper.

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