

Imagine a South Africa where every father is positively involved as a caregiver, from the earliest years of his child's life.

A call for innovative solutions that will result in quality father-child relationships with a focus on the early years (0 to 6.)

Selected applicants will be supported to pitch their solutions to the Innovation Edge Investment Committee at a Zoom meeting in November 2021. Successful ventures will each receive up to R1.3 million in grant funding, strategic coaching, customised venture building support and connections to social capital.

Submissions deadline: 30 September 2021

Click here for the APPLICATION FORM

CONSIDERATION CRITERIA

We welcome applications from individual innovators, registered non-profit and for profit social enterprises in South Africa.

The following criteria must be met to be eligible for consideration:-

- Ventures must be at the stage of feasibility testing; or prototyping and market testing; or transitioning to scale. We do not accept ventures in the ideation phase.
- Ventures must be innovative in that they find an entirely new way of doing things or repurpose an existing solution in order to solve an evidence-based problem.
- The venture needs to have a capable and committed lead person, who is able to benefit from coaching.
- The venture must, directly or indirectly, benefit children aged 0-6 years (this includes the period of development during pregnancy) in South Africa.
- It must not exclude children in low-income families.
- Ventures must be focused on enabling quality father-child relationships.

PROMPTS TO CONSIDER

Research[1] shows that when a child has an active and positive father or father figure in their lives, they benefit in numerous ways. Better performance at school, the likelihood of stable employment and better mental health are all outcomes that are influenced by a child's sense of closeness to a father or father figure. This is true irrespective of whether the father lives in the house with the child. This is because it is the involvement, not the co-habitation that plays a vital role in the child's wellbeing.

Sadly, many young children in South Africa grow up without the benefit of a dependable, consistent and motivated male caregiver. Reasons for the absence of proactive fathering are numerous and complex. Barriers include social and cultural norms, unemployment and the inability to provide financially, prohibitive parental leave policies, and unwelcoming health sector institutions - particularly in the critical first 1000 days of life period. In addition, many fathers have themselves not received adequate care and support from their fathers during childhood.

How might your solution...

- Transform health sector institutions to promote fathers' involvement from the prenatal period through birth and childhood and men's involvement as caregivers. Read more in the 2021 State of the World Father's Report.
- Adopt a gender-synchronised approach to promoting and enabling caregiving.
- Drive narratives and consistent messaging that defines ways in which fathers can practice engagement and care.
- Consider that many fathers have themselves suffered from lack of engagement with their own fathers.
- Create (physical and/or virtual) spaces where people across gender and cultural groups can be engaged in active listening as a means of building trust.
- Consider that structural nudges are powerful and needed in encouraging care. These include paid parental leave.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ITEM	LINKS
MenCare in Africa Media Kit	https://genderjustice.org.za/publication/mencare-in-africa-media-kit/
State of the World Father's Report 2021	http://stateoftheworldsfathers.org/
State of South Africa's Fathers report 2021	https://genderjustice.org.za/publication/state-of-south-africas-fathers-2021/
MenCare Global Website	www.men-care.org

[1] https://www.heartlines.org.za/fathers-matter/the-report

Overview of fatherhood programmes SA	https://genderjustice.org.za/publication/engaging-south-african-fathers/
MenCare+ programme description	https://genderjustice.org.za/project/regional-programmes-networks/mencare-plus/
Stories of change from 2015 MenCare+ participants (MenCare+ was implemented in partnership with WC DoH at ante-natal health facilities and surrounding communities)	https://genderjustice.org.za/project/regional-programmes-networks/mencare-plus/stories-of-change/
Heartlines Fathers Matter campaign	https://www.heartlines.org.za/fathers-matter/home https://www.heartlines.org.za/fathers-matter/the-report