



# Welcome to Winnovators 2026



**Winnovators**

Developing skills, ideas, futures

# Agenda

- 1** Welcome & introduction
- 2** Presentation of the two Solve challenges
- 3** Fundraising guidance and advice
- 4** Learning and development
- 5** Key dates



# Winnovators 2026 Teams



# The Solve Challenge



**Country of focus:**  
**Nepal**

**1**

**Solve Challenge:**  
**Strengthening Healthcare**  
**Waste Management**



# The Challenge

**Design innovative solutions for strengthening healthcare waste management in Nepal for safer health facilities and healthier communities to reduce infection risk, environmental contamination and occupational hazards.**

Despite the availability of National Health Care Waste Management (HCWM) standards and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), implementation is weak or limited in most Healthcare Facilities (HCFs) including birth centres. Nepal is facing significant gaps in HCWM especially at primary healthcare facilities.



# Summary

In most HCFs, awareness of the national HCWM standards and SOPs is limited, especially regarding healthcare waste segregation. Unsafe practices remain in common, including open burning, mishandling of sharps, poor waste segregation, poor infrastructure and limited waste treatment capacity and inadequate storage. These practices continue to expose health workers, waste handlers, patients and communities to infection risks and environmental contamination.

Evidence shows a high needle-stick injury prevalence (21.3%) among clinical staff. Strengthening HCWM systems is critical to improve infection prevention and control, occupational safety, environmental health, and climate resilience in Nepal.



# Summary Cont'

Despite national standards and growing government commitment, implementation remains inconsistent. There are significant gaps between the national HCWM standards and actual practice at HCF level.

This challenge seeks *innovative and practical solutions across the full HCWM pathway, starting from waste segregation at source, safe handling and storage, waste treatment to final healthcare waste disposal leveraging technology, behaviour change and system strengthening to protect health workers, patients, communities and the environment.*

**Further details and additional relevant materials are available in the Briefing Deck.**



**Country of focus:**  
**Nepal**

**2**

**Solve Challenge:**  
**Addressing Chemical Water Quality  
Challenges in Groundwater in  
Nepal**



# The Challenge

**Design practical and scalable solutions to improve manganese removal from groundwater for peri-urban water utilities in Nepal's Terai region, with a focus on NWSC Lahan, to protect health and meet national drinking water standards.**

Persistent manganese contamination is posing growing public health risks, particularly for infants and children, and existing treatment approaches are not sufficient in low-resource settings, such as the WaterAid-supported water utility in Lahan.

Iron is also a major challenge for the Lahan utility.

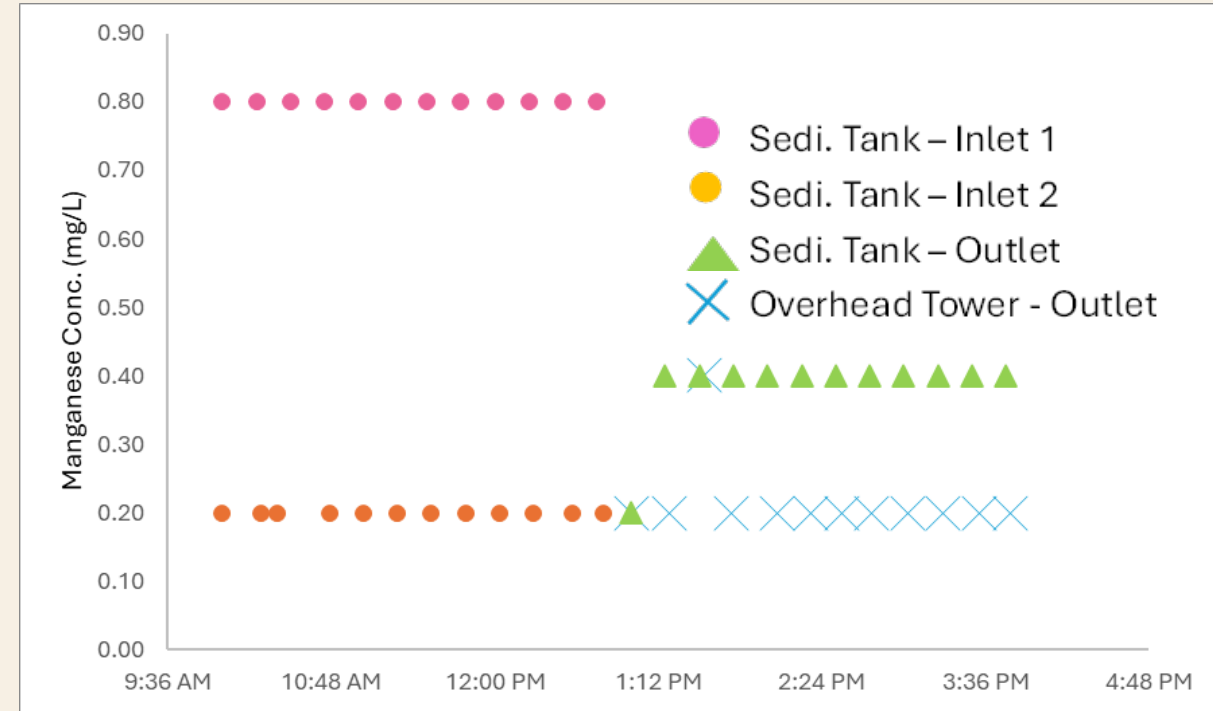


# Summary

In Nepal's Terai region, groundwater is the primary source of drinking water but is affected by naturally occurring (geogenic) contaminants, including arsenic, iron, nitrate and manganese. While low-cost solutions for iron removal are already available and arsenic-affected boreholes are capped, manganese remains a critical and growing challenge, particularly in low-resource settings.

At NWSC Lahan, monitoring has shown persistent and system-wide manganese contamination, with levels frequently exceeding both Nepal's National Drinking Water Quality Standards (NDWQS 2079) of 0.2mg/L and WHO provisional standard of 0.08mg/L. Existing treatment and operational measures are insufficient to consistently reduce manganese to safe levels.

Recent research indicates that prolonged exposure to elevated manganese may pose serious health risks, especially neurological impacts in infants and children.



*Note: pH ranges between 7.2 to 8.3*

# Summary Cont'

Manganese poses a complex challenge - although treatment methods for manganese removal exist in academic research and in utilities in high-income countries, *there is limited evidence on how to scale up and implement these in utilities in a low-income setting.*

This challenge invites teams to explore innovative, practical and locally appropriate approaches – including adapting existing research or technologies – that could be piloted, scaled, and shared with national stakeholders to strengthen water safety in Nepal.

Iron is also a major challenge, so participants are encouraged to develop treatment solutions which address both issues if possible.



**Further details and additional relevant materials are available in the Briefing Deck.**



# The key challenges include:

## 1. Chemical parameter water quality issues

- Manganese and Iron
- Quality and local availability of chemicals for treatment processes
- Consistency in chlorine concentration

## 2. Resources and WQ treatments

- Government policy and consistency of following of standard on WQ
- Lack of strong surveillance unit and implementation of Water Safety planning
- Lack of best choices of technical option for WQ treatment

## 3. Management, Capacity, resources

- Insufficient staff
- Limited utility budgets
- Sustainability of WQ testing mechanism for different management model of Water service providers



# How WaterAid supports you

- ◆ Each team will receive a starter pack that includes the details for the Solve challenges, program timelines and judging criteria.
- ◆ A Resource Library hosting case studies, background documentation and submission of winning teams of previous years will be available at the Innovators website.
- ◆ Webinars at the launch and mid-way through the program will be organised for an opportunity to meet with representatives from the Nepal team and our Program team and talk through the Solve challenges.
- ◆ Each team's work will be assessed by an expert panel. Various awards are up for grabs as teams compete with each other.



# What will you submit

A solution in the form of **one or more** of the following:

- 💧 1,000-word report (excluding appendices, which should not exceed five pages)
- 💧 A3 poster/board
- 💧 5-minute video
- 💧 10-slide PowerPoint

Final submissions are due by Wednesday 30 September 2026.



# Award Categories



**Best Solve – Strengthening healthcare waste management in Nepal**



**Best Solve – Addressing chemical water quality challenges in groundwater in Nepal**

For the judging rubric, refer to the 'Final submission instructions and information'

If your team excels in the Solve and Fund Challenges, you will win the title of:

**Winnovators Overall Champion**



WaterAid/ Oliver Dixon

# The Fund Challenge



# Fund Challenge

We all need clean water. It is the foundation for good health and a life full of opportunity. Along with decent toilets and good hygiene, clean water means people can break free from poverty and build the lives they want, with dignity.

The funds raised by the Winnovators teams will support WaterAid's mission to bring clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to communities who need it most.

Your team can develop and deliver exciting, big ticket fundraising campaigns that will help make this a reality.



# What is involved?

- Set your team fundraising goal.
- Prepare, present and execute your creative and profitable fundraising campaign.
- Your team will receive **\$750 AUD** seed funding after a successful pitch in May to help deliver your ideas.
- Manage your campaign through your own dedicated fundraising page provided by WaterAid. If your company uses other fundraising platforms or dollar-matching systems, please inform WaterAid in advance.
- Deliver your campaign and share your fundraising journey and achievements along the way.
- Engage with colleagues, business partners, friends, and the wider community to ensure events are a success.



2024 Sydney Water WinnoVators Team



2025 Greater Western Water Team



# How WaterAid supports you

- 💧 Each team will receive a starter pack that includes details for the Fund challenge and a fundraising pitch guide.
- 💧 A Resource Library hosting fundraising advice, marketing and communication assets, fundraising doc templates and examples submitted by previous teams will be available at the Winnovators website.
- 💧 WaterAid will provide feedback and suggestions on each team's fundraising pitch. Teams will receive \$750 in seed funding after a successful pitch.
- 💧 Optional one-one-one fundraising support sessions is available for each team, scheduled at a time that works best for you.
- 💧 In-person support and presentations for teams' fundraising events and campaign development is available throughout the program.



# What is required

## Fundraising Pitch

- 2-minute max video presentation of fundraising plans
- Complete your preliminary income and expenditure sheet
- Completed seed funding form

## Final submission

- Show how the seed fund was turned into success in **one or more** of the following:
  - A3 Poster/Board
  - 5-minute max video
  - 10-slide max PowerPoint
- Final income and expenditure sheet

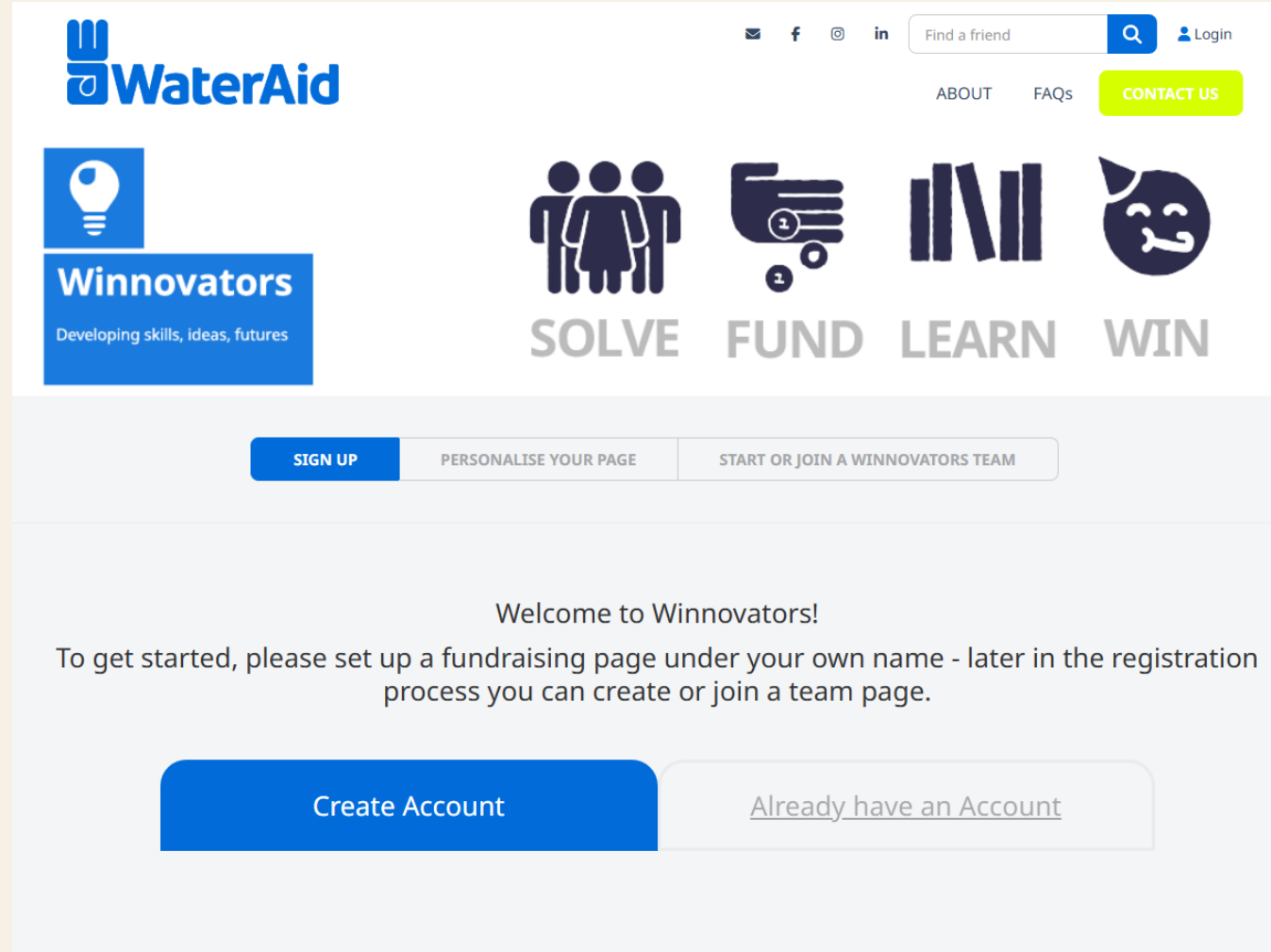
**Deadline: 22 May 2026**

**Deadline: 30 September 2026**



# Your dedicated fundraising page

- All teams can track and submit their fundraising online via their dedicated page provided by WaterAid [here](#).
- With your Winnovators registration, each team member has already created their own account and profile. Please use your account to join your team's fundraising page.
- If you have any questions or issues with your fundraising page, please contact WaterAid Winnovators Project Team via [auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au](mailto:auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au).



The screenshot displays the WaterAid Winnovators website interface. At the top left is the WaterAid logo, and to its right is a search bar with the text "Find a friend" and a magnifying glass icon, followed by a "Login" button. Below the search bar are links for "ABOUT", "FAQs", and a prominent yellow "CONTACT US" button. A central navigation bar features four icons with corresponding text: "SOLVE" (lightbulb icon), "FUND" (hand holding coins icon), "LEARN" (book icon), and "WIN" (smiley face icon). Below this is a secondary navigation bar with three buttons: "SIGN UP" (highlighted in blue), "PERSONALISE YOUR PAGE", and "START OR JOIN A WINNOVATORS TEAM". The main content area contains a welcome message: "Welcome to Winnovators! To get started, please set up a fundraising page under your own name - later in the registration process you can create or join a team page." At the bottom of this section are two buttons: "Create Account" (highlighted in blue) and "Already have an Account" (with a link underline).



# Award Categories



## The Best Fundraising Campaign Award

- It recognises the team that delivers the most compelling, engaging and innovative fundraising campaign. It's not just about the total amount raised – it's about the strategy, creativity, and impact behind the campaign. For the judging rubric, refer to the 'Final submission instructions and information'.



## Most Funds Raised Award

- It recognises the team who raises the highest total amount, regardless of expenses.



WaterAid/ Oliver Dixon

# What did the 2025 winners do?

## Best Fundraising Campaign: Watercare

The team used a layered fundraising strategy combining engaging, accessible events with a major finale to spark interest and participation. The campaign culminated in a community fun run with strong participation and matched corporate donations, generating majority of funds raised.



## Most Funds Raised: Sequana

The team used a creative, community-driven strategy to deliver six engaging fundraising initiatives. From morning teas and colourful canvases to sizzling sausages, and even icy plunges, each moment highlighted the power of community. With strong participation and storytelling, the campaign more than doubled its original target.



# What are next steps

- Submit your fundraising pitch – successful pitches will receive \$750 AUD in seed funding to support the delivery of their ideas.
- Check with your company to see if there are any restrictions on types of fundraising they can support, and you can plan.
- Check out the other resources provided on the Winnovators website:
  - Letter templates and Winnovators fundraising brand assets
  - Advice for planning and budgeting
  - Information about WaterAid’s liability insurance for teams in Australia
  - Examples of previous winning Fund Challenges
- Contact us at [auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au](mailto:auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au) if you have questions.



# Learn Overview



# Learn

Winnovators provides the opportunity for our highly valued members to engage with and help further the work of WaterAid.

Winnovators provides a unique chance for cross-organisational teams within your business to collaborate and work together to develop solutions for challenges faced in the communities we work in.

The Learn component of the program provides the framework for you and your teammates to set out and achieve your own development goals.



# What is involved

## Each Team

Set collective team goals and track your progress through the pre- and post-program surveys.

## Each Individual

Set your own personal goals and track your individual progress through the pre- and post-program surveys.

See the next page for the Innovators Learning and Development Framework to support this.



# Learning and development

	Project management Team work	Leadership	Communication	Influencing	Stakeholder awareness	Financial management Networking	Personal development planning		
Team set up and planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Business pitch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Delivering the programme	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Demonstrating learning	✓			✓	✓				✓
Check in with WaterAid and your company				✓	✓	✓	✓		



# Key Learn Milestones & Requirements

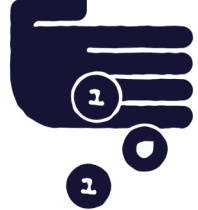



- ◆ Each team member must fill out the **pre-program survey by 22 May** and set your three personal development goals.
- ◆ Stay tuned for our updates and reminders on the key area of focus for Learn in each month.
- ◆ Complete the post-program survey at the end of the program and reflect personally on your leaning and development.
- ◆ Please consult Winnvoators Learning and Development Plan in the Resource Library on the Winnovators website and contact us at [auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au](mailto:auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au) with any questions.



# Timeline and deliverables

Throughout your team's Winnovators journey there will be key milestones to reach for Solve, Fund and Learn.

We will hold check in webinars to help support you and your amazing ideas.

	April	May	June	July & August	September	October
 	<p>Welcome to Winnovators! Get started by having your first team meeting and learning more about your teammates</p> <p><b>27 April</b></p> <p><b>Virtual Launch Event</b> where you will be briefed on the program</p>	<p><b>22 May</b></p> <p>All teams submit their <b>Fundraising Pitch</b></p>	<p><b>1 June</b></p> <p>WaterAid send feedback and seed funding based on each team's Fundraising Pitch</p> <p><b>1 June</b></p> <p>All teams submit their <b>Solve Challenge Outline</b></p> <p><b>22 June</b></p> <p>WaterAid provide feedback</p>	<p><b>Late July</b></p> <p><b>Solve Webinar</b></p>	<p><b>30 September</b></p> <p>Time's up! Make sure all your <b>final submissions</b> have been turned in for judging</p>	<p><b>Virtual Awards Event</b></p> <p><b>Date TBC</b></p>
						 
<p>Teams deliver on their plans and activities</p>						





# Thank you for being part of Winnovators 2026!

The Winnovators team will support you every step of the way. Contact us on [auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au](mailto:auswinnovators@wateraid.org.au) if you have any questions we can answer for you.

