



August 6, 2009

Reference: Adapting Livestock Systems to Climate Change (ALSCC) Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP) RFA M-OAA-EGAT-AG-09-1155

Synopsis of Amendment 01

The purpose of Amendment 01 is to make the following changes:

- 1) Synthesize significant questions and answers submitted by email and at the Pre-Application Conference of June 30, 2009, incorporated into the RFA as Attachment # 1.
- 2) Other administrative changes: All changes have been incorporated into the RFA # M-OAA-EGAT-AG-09-1155 Amendment 1.
- 3) Extend the closing date for submission of applications **from August 11, 2009 to August 24, 2009.**

JUNE 30, 2009 PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Questions are marked with a “Q” and answers are marked with an “A”

Q1-Will written questions be answered in this forum, or separately as amendments to the RFA?

A1-Both. Questions will be answered today and issued as an RFA amendment.

Q2-Please clarify if sub-awardees must be US-based or can they be foreign universities and international NGO's?

A2-

Q3-Are all expected Associate awards to be included in this Leader with Associates (LWA)?

A3- No. Each Associate award will have its own Program Description. Applications may include activities that you may think could be awarded, but each Associate award will be issued separately. We cannot anticipate what Associate awards will be issued three years from now. Specifics of Associate awards are not known until Missions or the AID/W Bureau put the Associate award request together. No costs incurred prior to any award will be reimbursed.

Q4- When you say Leader, should you only mention organizations that are in the Leader award?

A4- Yes.

Q5-Do I understand that there is a difference between Associate awards and sub-awards?

A5-Yes.

For more guidance on **subawards** see **CFR 226.5**

For more guidance on **Associate Awards** see USAID's Automated Directives System **ADS 303.3.26**

Q6- Is there an incentive for the Leader awardee to establish a consortium in advance?

A6- No consortium is required. It is up to the applicant to read the technical evaluation criteria and prepare a competitive response, based on your own capabilities as you see fit to present them. Whoever gets the Leader award will get the Associate awards.

Q7- Compared with the Horticulture CRSP, the ALSCC CRSP cost is much less.

A7-Do not compare RFA's. Look at each RFA individually.

Q8-How did this CRSP come to be? A combination of climate and livestock?

A8- With the current global livestock CRSP award ending, USAID seeks a new award that reflects contemporary thinking and innovation. We are not repeating/converging/etc. We are more concerned with current and future developments in the livestock sector.

Q9-Please speak to review process (internal/academics).

A9-There may or may not be an outside expert. Each application will be read individually on its own merits, internally at USAID.

Q10- Will each application be read by the same people?

A10- Initially, each application will be read independently on a face value review. They will be read at the same time, from cover to cover, by several evaluators.

Q11-Are you still planning to award by the October deadline?

A11-We hope to award by the end of October.

Q12- In the application, should we submit a budget for the Leader award?

A12- Yes, the budget should be specific to the Leader award only.

Q13- Can cost-share be considered administration/buildings, etc.?

A13- Yes. Cost-share can be cash, in-kind, technical expertise or other value added service or resource.

Q14- At the very end, the RFA talks about activities related to pesticide activity, bureau environmental officer. What does the applicant need to know?

A14- Applicants cannot purchase, use or recommend for use any pesticide (that includes herbicides, pesticides, rodenticides, etc.) until an additional environmental review, technically an amendment to the existing ALSCC CRSP Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) is completed, following the Pesticide Procedures in 22 CFR 216.3(b). The details of the information required for this review are found at 22 CFR 216.3(b)(i). The document has to be approved by the USAID EGAT Bureau Environmental Officer. No funds can be used to procure pesticides and no pesticides can be used until the IEE is completed and signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer. Here's a link to 22 CFR 216:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/22cfr216.htm#216.3

Q15- The RFA states that activities will not procure, use or recommend pesticides, or introduce Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO). If the applicant puts this in the proposal, will it have to be approved?

A15- If the applicant proposes to create a GMO (such as a GM cow), its proposal will have to undergo a biosafety review before field trials or open release. If the applicant intends to do laboratory research to create the GMO, USAID will require adhering to the **National Institute of Health Guidelines on Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules**.

The IEE for the ALSCC CRSP only covers the Leader award and explicitly states that separate IEEs will be required for Associate awards. The IEE would have to be amended twice -- once to cover the research, requiring that the applicant follow NIH guidelines and have a full biosafety review before field trial or dissemination, and then a second time if the applicant develops a GM animal that it proposes to disseminate. Recent biosafety information is at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/index.html.

Q16- The applicant is requested to choose any six topics and later on choose any of six targeted results. Does that mean all Associate awards will have to conform to original LWA requirements?

A16- Yes. All Associate awards will have to be within the broad scope of the LWA Program Description. The applicant will choose the topics so that there is an integrated program that meets the development needs of a locality. Depending on the needs of a USAID bilateral or regional mission, other issues may become important in the future.

Q17- Is there a penalty for proposing more than six topics?

A17- Please read and understand the target areas of evaluation of applications, and adhere to the evaluation criteria.

Q18- Are there specific regions that are pre-defined or is the Leader to designate?

A18- There is no pre-designation.

Q19- The RFA gives lots of attention to the pastoral environment. Are all species given the same weight?

A19- Yes.

Q20- If we have a consortium where we have integral capabilities within our subcontractors, can we mention them in the Leader application?

A20- Yes.

Q21- Whether I propose this as part of the Lead group, or as a subcontract with another entity, if I propose to produce a cow that is resistant to something, would there be a response from USAID that the Agency has no interest?

A21- Yes. USAID would provide a response either by award or debriefing.

Q22- For the funding that is provided for Associate awards, am I correct in understanding that the Associate award will be processed by USAID/Washington or a Mission under the auspices of the Leader award?

A22- Yes. USAID/W or overseas Missions may fund the Associate award. (The awardee for the Associate award will be the same organization that has the Leader award.)

Q23- Is the spirit of Associate awards to provide ultimate flexibility to USAID for all program activities (not just the six)?

A23- Post-award, the Program Description for the Associate award must be within the Program Description of the LWA.

Q24- Would an Associate award be issued to expand upon the work of a previous Associate award?

A24- Possibly.

Q25- Is it correct that the AOTR would be the same for the LWA and Associate awards?

A25- The AOTR could be the same or it could be someone different (especially if issued by a Mission).

Q26- Can the Associate award bypass the Leader award altogether?

A26- No. It must fit within the Program Description of the LWA.

Q27- Will USAID consult with the Lead to ensure the sub-award or associate award is issued?

A27- Yes. The clearance process is noted in the RFA.

Q28- There is a stipulation that the CRSP Director should be a tenured professor. Some universities have professors who hold research appointments (for many years), but are not tenured. Can the applicant submit a Director who is not tenured?

A28- No.

Q29- Is it fair to assume that after this there will be no more answers to our questions?

A29- That is correct.

Questions emailed to USAID:

Q: Associate Awards (the non-competed components of the research portfolio). There are a series of issues that require clarification including:

A: Associate Awards are PRE-competed – not NON-competed – because they are part of the Leader Award (which is competed).

Q: While management of these Awards is under the ME (p. 22), how are these Awards to be negotiated and evaluated?

A: Negotiation is between Missions and the Leader/ME – they will be evaluated the same way the Missions evaluate any of their projects or activities

Q: How are these Awards to be implemented (e.g. by whom)?

A: By the institutions working under the Leader Award – the ME manages them

Q: What is the role of the ME in management and evaluation?

A: The ME has full responsibility to manage and evaluate the research of sub-awardee institutions.

Q: Is the ME permitted to solicit such Awards from Missions or USAID/Washington?

A: Yes, the ME is encouraged to do so and to notify and inform all Missions of its work.

Q: Can the ME use core CRSP funds for travel to missions to discuss and/or arrange Associate Awards?

A: Yes, within reason and with prudence.

Q: Development Outcomes:

Q: What precisely does the Agency expect in terms of “Development Outcomes?”

A: See RFA Goals and Objectives.

Q: Is the reference to outcomes meant to refer to targets that guide the intended impacts of the research portfolio? Or is the CRSP actually expected to set benchmarks and measurable outcomes and evaluate performance based on these outcomes?

A: Some of each -- within USAID targets the institutions propose what they will do.

Q: Is it reasonable to do the latter in light of the relatively short time frame of the CRSP?

A: Yes – a key element of the competition is what is being proposed within the timeframe and results that will be achieved.

Q: Are the sorts of illustrative results (pp. 24-27) examples of anticipated results or is it expected that the CRSP will be moving in the directions indicated? We note that the listed examples of results are not “research outcomes” but rather more typical of development outcomes. We would assert that a research program should be doing research for purposes of development not development per se.

A: Research has to include developing methodologies or technologies that will lead to development. It’s not just research with a future impact on development but research that directly leads to development.

Q: “Themes” and “Results” (pp. 9, 26-27) from which the ME is to select its preferences for forming the CRSP portfolio: Is the Agency’s expectation that the ME pick from all areas in each instance? Is it acceptable to be more narrowly focused in the selected portfolio of planned activities and/or results?

A: The RFA gives examples of the Agency’s specific areas of interest. The winning proposal will select and focus where the research will get the greatest return on investment.

Q: Extension: There is reference to an objective that the CRSP program is to “extend and apply” research findings as part of its effort (p. 15), although later on (p. 24) the reference is made simply to “strategies for ensuring that research be relevant to and used by...” presumed beneficiaries. Is the CRSP to do Extension or simply devise strategies to ensure that Extension of results is an output of the CRSP?

A: It’s not one or the other but both based in realistic actions. The RFA must show that there are direct relationships between research activities and development as well as demonstrate that the research results make a difference in people’s lives.

Q: Expectations for the “Research Portfolio”: The RFA states objectives relative to capacity development extend/apply research findings, and policy formation, yet nowhere is there reference specifically to research per se as an objective, nor to research-specific outputs (though research is implied in the listings of characteristics of CRSPs on pp. 1-2 of the RFA). Is the CRSP expected to generate “new research?”

A: Maybe or maybe not – the research could develop and apply already existing technologies and determine new ways to deliver impacts, or it could plow new ground.

Q: If so, how is new research to be measured and reported as an outcome? Could you please clarify the expected balance of new research, applied research, and/or extension?

A: This depends on the situation, the locality, and other parameters to be defined in the proposal.

Q: Policy: Is the CRSP to develop policy (p. 27) or develop policy options (p.14)?

A: It is more likely the CRSP would develop policy options and would be expected to work with national or local governments to put policies into action.

Q: Are the policy areas in which the new CRSP will work to be limited to the other areas of their research, or can there be independent research on additional policy areas?

A: The proposal needs to tell the Agency what makes a cohesive and manageable program.

Q: Gender: Although gender issues are raised as a significant area for attention, there are no points assigned to gender issues in the evaluation section of the RFA. Nor is gender explicitly mentioned as an area of investigation in Section IV, “Expected Results.” Although mentioned as being an element of the “Technical Approach” (page 35), how will the proposal be evaluated in terms of the quality of the gender expertise offered, and the degree to which gender issues are addressed in the proposals?

A: Proposal evaluations will be based on their potential development impacts and gender may be a specific area of research interest.

Q: Will there be a specific point value for attention to gender (page 47)?

A: This is unlikely.

Q: Agriculture Enabling Environment vs. Agriculture Sector Productivity: The research component of the CRSP in the RFA is expected address both of these component (pp. 15-16, 18-19, Annex 6) requiring a Lead institution with a very strong policy reform, legal research, and training capability, along with strong production and technology generating capabilities. Please clarify: Should the recipient of the Leader Award be competent in one or BOTH FAF components? This is very important, as it will be unfair to award the grant to a university/college that cannot manage both FAF components unless this is clearly spelled out.

A: Agreed – that’s why the Leader will be a Land Grant institution with a wide range of competencies.

CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

Colorado State University

Shana Gillette, PhD, Dept. of Clinical Sciences, Animal Population Health Institute, College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

Counterpart International

Sue Savage, Director of Operations

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Patrick Doyle, Technical Area Manager, Energy and Climate Change

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Corbin Lyday, PhD, Manager, Government Relations
Constance Neely, VP for Advocacy

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Viney P. Aneja, PhD, Professor, Air Quality & Environmental Technology, Dept. of Marine, Earth, and Atmospheric Sciences

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Joseph ("Joey") King, Chief of Staff, Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture
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Mark Westhusin, Professor, College of Vet Medicine - Physiology & Pharmacology

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Nasrat Wassimi, Adjunct Assistant Research Scientist, Arid Lands Studies

University of California, Davis

Ms. Chelo V. Abrenilla, Analyst - Supervisor, International Programs Office, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
(attending for Jim Hill, Associate Dean, International Programs Office, CA & ES)

SUBMITTED QUESTIONS BY EMAIL BUT DID NOT ATTEND:

Research Triangle Institute

Kimberly Sherrill, Contracts and Procurement

Virginia Tech

Michael K. Bertelsen, Associate Director, Office of International Research, Education, and Development (OIREED) and Associate Dean for International Agriculture, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS)

Administrative Changes:

1) Page 14, III,

Replace “Statement of Work” with “Program Description”

2) Page 22, b. ii., add the following to the beginning of the paragraph:

“The Leader awardee”

3) Page 22, b. iii., add the following to the beginning of the paragraph:

“The Leader awardee”

4) Page 22, b. iii., add the delete the following:

“received from USAID’s Missions and Washington Bureaus. Work under an Associate”

Add the following in it’s place:

“subsequent to execution of award by the Agreement Officer in a USAID Mission or AID/Washington”

5) b. iv., add the following to the beginning of the paragraph:

“The Leader awardee”

6) Page 23, C Implementation Plan, replace the second paragraph with the following paragraph:

“A Leader award shall be made to a single Title XII university to serve as the Management Entity (ME) or lead university, which post-award may submit a technical and cost/price application for one or more Associate awards, upon request of the Agreement Officer from a USAID Mission or AID/Washington. The ME, upon consultation and approval with the AOTR, may suggest an Associate award Program Description (PD), with the understanding that the government does not reimburse bid or application costs prior to any award. The Government’s RFA for an Associate Award may.”

Delete the following:

“issue its own RFA that makes Associate Awards that”

Add the following to the end of the third paragraph:

“Specific discussion should be included of the how the CRSP will encourage Mission engagement in CRSP activities via the Substantial Involvement provision, Section 2(3), and /or

at a minimum, will avoid such activities to which a Mission objects. The applicant's plan should include safeguards to avoid conflicts of interest in the solicitation, submission and evaluation of sub-awards."

Delete the following from the end of paragraph three:

"Associate awards."

7) Page 24, replace the beginning of the second paragraph on the page with the following:

"In unique, compelling or urgent circumstances, the Leader awardee/lead university may be able to justify to the satisfaction of the Agreement Officer (AO) a non-competitive subawardee."

IV. EXPECTED RESULTS, delete the following from the second sentence of the first paragraph:

"Statement of Work"