



Request for Information
USAID/India CDRI-Higher Education Partnership Activity

Reference Number: **7200AA23RFI00002**

Release Date: **March 30, 2023**

Questions/inquiries Due Date and Time: **April 13, 2023, 23:59 hrs (India Local Time)**

RFI Response Due Date and Time: **April 27, 2023, 23.59 hrs (India Local Time)**

NAICS Code: 541990-All Other Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

The United States Agency for International Development's Mission to India (USAID/India) is in the process of gathering information to support an anticipated design for a new USAID/India CDRI (Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure) Higher Education Partnership, as described in Attachment 1. This new partnership would be designed in cooperation with CDRI under their Infrastructure Resilience Academic Exchange (IRAX).

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to solicit comments/suggestions in order to understand key challenges, gaps, and opportunities to build the capacities of working professionals, researchers, and policymakers to promote climate and disaster resilient infrastructure. By issuing this RFI, USAID/India aims to engage with the broad community of private sector actors, academia, training institutions, public institutions, development partners, non-governmental organizations, industry associations and think tanks involved with education, training and knowledge management related to disaster and climate resilience. Please see **Attachment 1** for more details.

This RFI neither constitutes a solicitation, Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), or a Request for Application (RFA), nor does it commit USAID to issue one or to make an award. Please note that responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to or preclude any organization or individual from any solicitation, NOFO, or RFA that may be subsequently issued. USAID will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI and information received will become the property of USAID and can be made public. Therefore, information that cannot be shared should not be submitted.

Any future solicitations or funding opportunities for the new CDRI-HEP Activity will be announced on the Federal Business Opportunities website at www.sam.gov or at www.grants.gov at a later date. USAID/India is not seeking technical or cost applications/proposals at this time.

Responses to this RFI must be submitted by email to desharma@usaid.gov; vvats@usaid.gov with a copy to indiarco@usaid.gov no later than the date and time shown above. Please include RFI number -----and (title of activity) “***CDRI-Higher Education Partnership Activity***” in the subject line and use the format provided in Attachment 1, Section II. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS.

Respondents will not receive individualized feedback. All inquiries concerning this RFI must be directed only to the email address identified above by the due date and time cited above. Hard copy submissions will not be accepted nor will phone inquiries be entertained. This Notice is available at www.sam.gov and www.grants.gov. We look forward to receiving your comments.

Best regards,

Cheryl Hodge-Snead

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Hodge-Snead
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Cheryl Hodge-Snead
Agreement/Contracting Officer, USAID/India

Attachment 1 - Background and Response Requirements

I. BACKGROUND

In recent years, the global community has been witnessing the increasing intensity and frequency of extreme weather-induced events, including heat waves, cold waves, storms and cyclones, and floods, which have led to devastating effects on lives and economies. A large proportion of direct damage from disasters – sometimes up to two-thirds of the total – are related to infrastructure. The [Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure \(CDRI\)](#) has estimated that approximately US \$3.7 trillion will be invested annually in global infrastructure in the next two decades. With over half of the infrastructure required by 2050 yet to be built, the world is presented with both a challenge and an opportunity - to build better infrastructure - for now and tomorrow.

Critical infrastructure systems such as power, transportation, and telecommunications networks, and hospitals are becoming increasingly more complex and interdependent. Further, there has been a significant increase in operational uncertainty of these systems due to disasters and climate change. Yet, a preliminary assessment by CDRI indicates that there are visible gaps in the capacities of researchers, private sector professionals, and policymakers related to the intersection of engineering, infrastructure, and climate and disaster resilience. Knowledge exists but is fragmented and heterogeneous across disciplines, and geographies. Further, there are limited courses, curriculum, research, and trained faculty focused specifically on climate and disaster resilient infrastructure.

USAID/India aspires to work together with CDRI and other key stakeholders in a transparent and accountable manner to further advance disaster and climate resilient infrastructure across the globe. USAID is keen to draw on the expertise and resources of the Government of India (GOI), the private sector, financial institutions, academia, civil society organizations, and like-minded partners.

II. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

Responses should include the following:

1. Cover page, not to exceed one (1) page, that includes:
 - a. Organization name and address
 - b. Point of contact name and contact information
 - c. Brief statement of interest and capability that indicates (i) the organization's level of interest in partnering with USAID on a potential CDRI-Higher Education Partnership activity and (ii) whether the organization has worked on higher education projects in the past. If so, what focal areas, and in what capacity?
2. Please share information on gaps in education, training, and knowledge management pertaining to resilience of infrastructure systems in the Indian, regional and global contexts.

In your responses to the questions below, please provide any relevant sources for the information, including peer-reviewed or grey literature, expert opinion, project evaluation reports, and other documents.

Respondents are free to answer any or all of the questions below [5 pages max. excluding the cover page].

- (1) What specific opportunities should USAID/India prioritize to bridge current gaps in education, training, and knowledge management for infrastructure resilience nationally, regionally and globally, and why? In your response, please consider the infrastructure development challenges in different parts of the world, legal, regulatory, and administrative requirements for modifications in curriculums of higher education institutions (HEIs) and how they may affect the feasibility of pursuing such opportunities.
- (2) What are the relevant areas/streams of undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses wherein it is imperative to integrate infrastructure resilience?
- (3) What issues and challenges do you anticipate in mainstreaming infrastructure resilience in higher education in the relevant undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses or curriculum programs?
- (4) What novel approaches will you recommend for the integration of infrastructure resilience in higher education in the relevant undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses or curriculum programs such as engineering, architecture, urban planning, others in India, regionally and globally?
- (5) Who are critical stakeholders you recommend that USAID engage with to better understand the challenges of integrating specific modules on infrastructure resilience in the curricula of relevant undergraduate and post-graduate programs and explore innovative solutions?
- (6) What is the possibility of designing a CDRI Higher Education Partnership with a contingency fund to accept funding from other sources outside of USAID with an eye to expand the number of participating universities within the United States and India as well as beyond the United States and India?

No other documents or information are requested at this time. USAID asks respondents to not send any additional information other than what is requested above and to kindly adhere to the page limits mentioned. Thank you in advance for your time and for your commitment to climate action.