Response to Questions

RFA FY16-RFA02-6017: USAID Systems for Health: Innovation Grants

Question and Answer period 11 April – 3 May 2016

Reminders and Notices

- Proposals are due 30 May, 2016 no later than 5pm GMT. Follow submission guidelines outlined in the RFA.
- We kindly suggest not using a yahoo email address to submit applications, if possible, as these often get caught in spam filters. Electronic applications are not considered received until they have been acknowledged by a response from Systems for Health. If you do not receive a response to your electronic submission within one business day, please contact us.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Question 1: Under Application Instructions Section 4.2; Annexes to proposal; we cannot find the attached template to be used for past performance references. Please we need your guidance to get it.


Question 2: I would be very grateful if you could assist me with information on how or where to access the USAID past performance reference template


Question 3: Please will URC supply us with application form or we will use the outline presented to write the proposal? What about the budget template.

Response 3: Please use the outline and criteria presented in the section 4.2 and 4.4 of the RFA to write your application. Please use the instructions in section 4.3 and Annex B to prepare your budget proposal.

Question 4: Can a single institution apply with separate proposals for all four of the innovation grants priority areas? Cost sharing would be specific to each sub-proposal and would not overlap across sub-proposals.

Response 4: Yes, an institution may submit a proposal for more than one technical area. If programs are integrated across technical areas, they should be applied for under one proposal. If an institution will implement discrete programs in different technical areas, then they should submit separate application packages (technical proposals, attachments and budgets) for each program and each proposal will be evaluated separately.
QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF GRANT FUNDS

Question 5: What does the statement “purchase of major commodities for program support or distribution” mean? For example, we intend to acquire “2 to 4 Motorkings to improve the referral system, Delivery Kits for TBAs for safe deliveries, Branded T-Shirts for TBAs as motivation/recognition as well as to create visibility for them in the communities and provision of minimal monthly financial incentive (e.g., 20 Ghana Cedis) for the TBAs. Does the above statement affect these essential items for the implementation of our operations research idea?

Response 5: Funds from this grant cannot be used to purchase equipment valued over $5,000 US (defined as “non-expendable equipment”). Funds may also not be used to purchase ineligible and restricted commodities and services. Motor vehicles are included in the list of restricted commodities and therefore cannot be purchased with funds from this grant. Applicants can familiarize themselves with the list of ineligible and restricted commodities and services by viewing the following regulations:

Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations:

Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations:

Any purchase of ineligible or restricted commodities or services must be paid for with private funds as part of the grant cost-sharing requirement.

Question 6: Could you further clarify the statement “discrete, stand-alone workshops, unless the applicant can demonstrate the unique value of the workshop for achieving the project goals”? For example, as part of our developing ideas, we intend to organize training sessions at the intervention district for the TBAs, Men to improve their involvement in maternal, newborn and child health issues from the household level to community level and to health facility level and few community durbars with expected high impact to create awareness on the idea for community ownership and sustainability. Does the above statement also affect our intended project design? Could you kindly provide further clarification on this?

Response 6: No, the above statement does not affect your project design. Workshops or trainings are allowable as part of a package of activities.

Question 7: Another concern is “interventions that propose funding that will primarily cover labor cost”. The applicants would be happy to receive additional clarification on this aspect. For instance, what is the maximum or range in terms of percentage of the total project cost that could be used for labor cost?

Response 7: Systems for Health expects that any labor expenses included in the budget will be appropriately allocated and reasonable in proportion to the proposed activities. Funding will not be allocated to staff time not specifically related to activities in the proposal.

Question 8: we request you to clarify this statement in more details: Each partner is required to match funding on a 1:1 basis, with a strong preference for applicants who can match 1:2 (for example $50,000 from USAID Systems for Health and $100,000 sourced from the partner).
Response 8: Applicants are expected to familiarize themselves with cost share definition and regulations. Per ADS 303.3.10, “Cost share refers to the resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement...The cost share must be verifiable from the recipient’s records; for U.S. organizations it is subject to the requirements of 2 CFR 200.306, and for non-U.S. organizations it is subject to the Standard Provision, ‘Cost Share.’”

More information regarding cost sharing is provided in the U.S. Government regulations detailed below.

- USAID Automated Directives System: ADS 303.3.10

  http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=c16296aefcefe71d582e0634cf6658cf1&node=2:1.1.2.2.1.4.29.7&rgn=div8

- USAID Standard Provisions:
  - For Non-US Nongovernmental Organizations (RAA 14)
  - For US Nongovernmental Organizations (RAA 9)

QUESTIONS REGARDING TECHNICAL WORK

Question 9: Under Geographic Scope in Section 2.3.1, does Northern Regions mean the three Northern Regions (Upper East, Upper West and Northern) Regions inclusive?

Response 9: The geographic scope is limited to the following 5 regions: Greater Accra, Central, Western, Northern and Volta. Applications for activities outside of these 5 regions will not be considered.

Question 10: The applicants intend to use the “operations research approach”, as part of our work design, can we conduct baseline survey in both the intervention and control districts to determine the current situation before the implementation and then an end-line survey after the implementation? If this is possible, should these two studies be incorporated in the overall design of the application?

Response 10: Yes, this is acceptable. If data collection is necessary to the design and implementation of your program then it should be included in the application.

Question 11: Considering that the Systems for Health Innovations Grant is only for one year with the possibility for one year extension, we would be happy to receive your advice or comments regarding our intended plan to integrate “postnatal care visits for newborn, skilled attendance at birth and referral systems. Should the applicants rather choose one priority area?

Response 11: Either option is acceptable. Integrated approaches are preferred where feasible (see section 2.3.1 on page 5 of the RFA). Applicants are expected to use their best judgement.
Question 12: are the districts in which the proposed project will be implemented already selected by your outfit or the applicant will have to decide and select districts for implementation?

Response 12: Applicants may choose the districts for implementation as long as they fall within the 5 project regions (Greater Accra, Central, Western, Northern, and Volta).

Date issued: 6 May, 2016
Justice Ado
Senior Grants Manager, USAID Systems for Health