

## Request for Pre-Proposals

### ***Improving the Nutrition of the Poor, Especially Young Children and Women, through Grain Legume Consumption***

#### **Frequently Asked Questions (Revised September 25, 2013):**

- 1) Why the new documents posted on the website on September 11, 2013?

The original pre-proposal posting contained an incorrect deadline date for the “Full Proposals Requested.” The correct date, as now listed above, is October 22, 2013. Also, the original RFP document indicated a period of 55 months in various parts of the Call for Pre-Proposal. This is incorrect. The period is January 1, 2104 – September 29, 2017, thus 45 months.

- 2) Can non-governmental organizations be partners/subcontractees?

Subcontracting an NGO as part of a consortium of local institutional partners is acceptable. Please be reminded, however, of USAID’s expectation that Legume Innovation Lab research projects contribute to enhancing human and institutional capacity (point “e” on the Evaluation Criteria of Pre-Proposals). This objective is achieved through degree and short term training that directly benefits national public and private institutions rather than NGOs.

- 3) Why is legume productivity not addressed here?

Legume productivity is addressed on other Legume Innovation Lab projects.

- 4) Does the Legume Innovation Lab also consider soy research?

No, soy beans are not currently included under Legume Innovation Lab research.

- 5) Are food processing technologies included for consideration?

The research objectives must be aligned with the Technical Focal Area described in the Call for Pre-Proposals.

- 6) Can the funds be used to support graduate students?

Funds can be used to support post-doc fellowships and graduate research assistantships. Principal Investigators should be reminded that involvement of graduate students from collaborating host country institutions in research contributes to achievement of institutional capacity building objectives indicated in the Call for Pre-Proposals.

- 7) Is there any particular country (eg. Ghana or Guatemala) that is more important to include?

We do not have any particular country of focus for a nutrition project. It will be important to justify the selection of the country in terms of the incidence of malnutrition especially among children and its priority as a Feed the Future country. The factors that will likely be of equal and perhaps greater importance in the selection of pre-proposals will be the science (the merits of the hypothesis and research objectives proposed) and the strength of the partners to carry out the project. For nutrition research, it is imperative that quality nutritional scientists and institutions of repute with capacity to carry out clinical studies (if that is what is proposed) be recruited and proposed for the project. Unfortunately the ability to constitute the needed teams of scientists and collaborating institutions can be a challenge in some FTF countries.

- 8) The Request for Pre-proposal requires the signature of an “authorized university representative” on both the Cover Page and the Summary Budget. What is the purpose of this signature and who is considered to be an authorized representative of the university submitting the pre-proposal?

Signatures are requested as evidence that the candidate lead university is aware of and supports a faculty member pursuing an international multi-institutional collaborative research and institutional capacity building project opportunity through the USAID-financed Legume Innovation Lab. Since a full proposal (Technical and Cost Application) would be requested before any award is made, the requested signatures on the pre-proposal do NOT indicate that the university stands behind the proposed technical approach for the research and the budgeting of activities among participant institutions. Appropriate institutional representatives to sign pre-proposal documents include the department chair, research center/program director, or dean (or assistant dean) for research of the university unit in which the faculty member is appointed.

- 9) The RFA states “The Legume Innovation Lab requires that each project provides a minimum of 15% cost share, cash or in-kind contributions, on total costs budgeted by the U.S. university(s). Costs for training of host country scientists at a U.S. university are considered as a “U.S. for Host Country expense” and thus exempt from the cost-share requirement.”

Do we have to provide cost share on the amount of funding that we are giving our host country partner as a sub-award? Or, do we only calculate the 15% based on the funding that is coming directly to MSU? Are sub-awards to Host Country institutions also exempt from the cost-share requirement?

To clarify this point, here is the text from our operations manual (<http://legumelab.msu.edu/uploads/files/Operations%20Policy%20Manual%20revised%202012.pdf>) modified to reflect current RFA 15% rather than earlier 25% found in the manual (page 23).

## A. COST SHARE

The Legume Innovation Lab requires that each research project provide cash or in-kind contributions (cost share) on funds received according to the following guidelines:

Lead U.S. universities must provide U.S. non-federal cost share as defined by the USAID reference document for cost share -- 22CFR 226.23.

The cost share requirement for each project is at minimum 15% of the total U.S. costs. U.S. costs include total costs (direct + indirect) budgeted for personnel (staff salaries and fringes, labor cost, consultants), supplies, equipment, travel and non-participant training in the U.S. or at a non-HC institution outside the U.S. (e.g., IARCs).

Host Country institutions are encouraged to also cost share on Legume Innovation Lab project expenses as evidence of institutional commitment and support for the program, however this is not auditable. Please be reminded that Host Country cost share does NOT contribute to meeting the 15% U.S. institutional cost share requirement.