

**Online Q&A about Horticulture Innovation Lab RFPs on postharvest, nutrition and gender  
Sept. 2, 2014**

**Introduction:** Your hosts today are:

- Beth Mitcham (answering questions about the postharvest RFP and Horticulture Innovation Lab policies)
- Michael Reid (answering questions about technologies, postharvest, and the Horticulture Innovation Lab)
- Amanda Crump (answering questions about the gender/social equity RFP, monitoring and evaluation, and the Horticulture Innovation Lab)
- Britta Hansen (answering questions about the nutrition RFP and the Regional Centers)
- Heather Kawakami (answering budget and contracting questions)

We will answer your questions as quickly as we can. At the end of the session, all questions and answers will be posted at: <http://horticulture.ucdavis.edu/main/funding.htm>

Participants divided their questions between several chat boxes, highlighted in the headers below: general questions, budget and contracts, postharvest RFP, nutrition RFP, and gender/social equity RFP.

Thanks! We hope this helps you as you prepare your proposal.

**General questions:**

Amanda Crump: Welcome to our chat! This section is for any question that you want to ask.

Q: Could you provide contact information for the Regional Center in Kenya?

A: Britta Hansen: I will be coordinating communication with each Center, I don't want them to get really bogged down with lots of proposal writers. [bhansen@ucdavis.edu](mailto:bhansen@ucdavis.edu)

Q: Can an institution currently contracted with USAID-Feed the Future still apply for any of these opportunities?

A: Beth Mitcham: yes

Q: Is there going to be only one award per the 3 areas?

A: Beth Mitcham: yes

Q: @Britta. So, contact you to make some introductions for us for letters of support from the centers?

A: Britta Hansen: Yes you will only need a LOS if you plan on subbing funds to a Center, I can put you in touch with the right people.

**Budget and Contract**

Heather Kawakami: Hello and welcome!

Q: Will there be more than one award made for a given RFP? E.g., Could there be two awards made under the Nutrition RFP?

A: Heather Kawakami: Just one per area.

Q: Will a printed version of all 5 Q&A chats be available after the online session?

A: Heather Kawakami: Yes, it will be posted online within a few days.

Q: Do we have to include budget (i.e., sub-award) for engaging the Regional Centers in the proposal?

A: Heather Kawakami: It depends if you would be subbing out to the Center for a specific scope of work. It would depend on if your institution would be paying for the activities out of the U.S. budget, or if you would be sending the funding to the Center directly for the activities.

If funding will stay at your institution, then the Center activity could be as simple as a line item in your budget.

Q: Can cost share come from office /lab space in FTF countries?

A: Heather Kawakami: If the FTF countries are claiming the 10% indirect costs that they are allowed, then no, but if they opt to waive the 10% allowed, then they can detail out space based on usage rates. They would need to have a pretty good determination on how they came up with the costs.

Q: When does FY 1 end? What about FY 2, 3, 4, and 5?

A: Heather Kawakami: FY1 = start - 09/30/2015, FY2 = 10/01/2015 - 09/30/2016, FY3 = 10/01/2016 - 09/30/2017, FY4 = 10/01/2017 - 09/30/2018, FY5 = 10/01/2018 - 08/31/2019

Heather Kawakami: FY1 = 01/01/2015 - 09/30/2015

Q: Thanks-- FY 1 starts in January 2015, correct? Also, what with Horticulture Innovation Lab pay for and expect during Nov and Dec of 2014?

A: Heather Kawakami: Year 1 has 9 months, and year five will have 11 months. The rest are twelve months each.

This is based on our prime funding cycle, thus the weirdness.

A: Beth Mitcham: We are hoping to visit the Mission with the selected projects in November or December 2014. If we do, the Horticulture Innovation Lab will pay for costs for travel. We are awaiting approval for this from USAID.

We also hope that PIs will work to set up their sub-awards in November and December so that funds can flow in January.

#### **Postharvest RFP:**

Beth Mitcham: Hello, this is Beth. Write your questions about the postharvest RFP here

Q: Guidance of the specific type of deliverable expected for the database described in Part III would be appreciated. For example, is UC Davis looking for an MS Access database system or an Excel spreadsheet? Does UC Davis have another software program in mind? Or would a report document be sufficient?

A: Beth Mitcham: An excel spreadsheet would be sufficient. We plan to work with another group to build the model with the data collected. We would like the project team to be willing to coordinate their data collection with this group. Probably only a few conversations needed.

Q: Assuming a proposal covers three countries, which would be more favorably considered: the programmatic advantages of a geographic cross sample (i.e. coverage of countries from different regions) or the logistical benefits arising from covering countries that are adjacent or near to each other?

A: Michael Reid: We feel that the cross-geographic approach would be more informative in looking at issues in different climatic and socio-economic/cultural environments

Q: cross geographic approach within or across centers?

Across centers could get almost too broad to be managed or understood well, it seems to me, at least on first reflection.

Is that up to the PIs to decide at this point, maybe.

A: Michael Reid: It would depend on the countries targeted. Our centers are in Kenya, Honduras, and Thailand and each has regional responsibility. It does seem that a project across the centers could be very broad

A: Beth Mitcham: It is definitely up to the PI to decide. The Centers should be a help, not a burden to the project. They may be able to assist with access to appropriate technology, training facilities, and recommendations of good partners.

### **Nutrition RFP:**

Britta Hansen: Hi This is Britta, please enter questions related to the Nutrition RFP here! Thanks!

Q: sound?

A: Britta Hansen: This is just an online Q and A there is no talking :)

Q: Are studies that include nutritional profile in plasma appropriate as part of a proposal?

A: Britta Hansen: To measure levels of different micronutrients? If you have the proper IRB approvals and can show that is the best way to assess change in a specific status, then yes.

Q: Thanks--are IRBs required if sampling only in dev country anonymously? Also--I take IRBs are needed only after approval of grant

A: Heather Kawakami: IRB at UC Davis would be required before you could access any of the funding. "Pending" for proposal status at UC Davis.

Q: I notice in the "Gender/Social Equity" Q&A they noted that there is no advantage for proposing multi-country v. single country proposals. Is that the same for the Nutrition RFP?

A: Britta Hansen: Yes it is the same, no advantage or disadvantage. It's not a part of the evaluation criteria.

Q: Do you mean that approval by our lead institution's IRB would not be sufficient, but that the IRB application would also need separate, additional approval from UC Davis?

Heather Kawakami: Sorry, no, just your institution. I was addressing a person here at UC Davis. :)

Q: Is that ok to include graduate students in the projects especially PhD

A: Amanda Crump: Yes. Graduate students should be included as appropriate as part of capacity building. They can be at your school or at a school in the focus country or elsewhere.

A: Heather Kawakami: Please note the difference between a grad student employed on your project and one that would be coming in as an exchange visitor on a J-1 Visa. The J-1 student would need to come in under Participant Training.

Q: RFP-Page 8-I am working with Rwanda which is not italicized-is that going to be a problem

A: Amanda Crump: Rwanda is fine. The reason it isn't italicized is because the USAID Mission hasn't chosen a horticultural crop to focus on. The Mission will be consulted after we decide who to award the project to. I don't envision a problem with Rwanda.

A: Amanda Crump: If you know someone at the Mission there, you should float your idea by them. As long as it meshes with their work, it should be fine.

Q: I expect that the Regional Centers would be able to provide support and proposals could focus on capacity building of those centers if the proposal is focused on the home country of the center. Do you have thoughts on how much support might be expected from the Regional Centers if the proposal were to take place in a FtF country within the region, but not in the home country of the Center?

A: Britta Hansen: The Centers are connected regionally, so if the project was looking for logistical help in a non-center FTF country they could do some of that. We mostly expect that the project will use the Centers as a place to train people from the region (including Center staff) or to test new technologies.

Q: We developed a food lab in kigali and planning to initiate home garden project-I am hoping legumes and vegetables are both come under horticultural crops

A: Britta Hansen: Dry legumes are not included but fresh are.  
Depends on how the product is consumed.

Q: Malawi is not italicized either. Is it the same reason as Rwanda, ie. the hort crop focus has not been determined yet?

A: Amanda Crump: Yes. Exact same reason. Malawi didn't select horticulture as an emphasis so it isn't as easy to work there as in another country where the Mission really invests in horticulture. Just like Rwanda.

Q: Are you planning to fund new projects this year or continue funding last year projects?

A: Amanda Crump: These three projects in the RFP are new. We will probably continue a few more of our old projects but that is not included in this RFP.

A: Beth Mitcham: We will be funding new projects beginning this fall. Our current PIs will also have an opportunity to apply for funds to continue some of their current work, in a slightly different way.

Q: I do have a very strong university partners in Kigali but do not know anyone in FTF mission in Rwanda

A: Amanda Crump: No problem. We will be taking each team that we award these proposals to the Mission for a meet and greet at the beginning of the project. So you will know them eventually.

Q: To what extent do you encourage applicants to engage Missions at the proposal development stage ?

A: Amanda Crump: We hope that you can engage now. If you can even engage and get a letter of support from the Mission, that would be great. That's included as an option in the Additional Letters of Support on page 18. That way, you know that they will be supportive of your work in the country.

Q: I am a new faculty member at ----, how do I get matching funds-can I match part of my salary

A: Heather Kawakami: You can match your salary at the equivalent of your effort on this project. You can also match your fringe that goes with your salary as well as the indirect costs on your salary and fringe.

Q: The RFP also mentions "unrecovered indirect costs" as a means of cost-sharing. Does that refer to the percentage of IDC that falls below the PI's institution's required IDC?

A: Heather Kawakami: Yes, if your institution opts to claim a lesser amount than the federally-negotiated rate, then you can claim the difference.

Q: For the smaller proposals (e.g. scaling), if one's Feed the Future country is not one of the horticultural identified countries (e.g. italicized), will this be a problem? e.g. if one is writing a proposal to scale out from previous project in a non-italicized country

A: Amanda Crump: All proposals being solicited are the same - we are interested in FTF countries and the FTF zones and people who are working in FTF countries who support horticulture just have an easier time working there, in our experience.

### **Gender/Social equity RFP:**

Amanda Crump: Hi. Please enter any questions you have here.

Q: Is Burma a potential partner/country of interest

A: Amanda Crump: No. I'm sorry. Burma isn't part of this RFP. We do hope to do something there someday.

Q: Is there a general advantage for proposing multi-country/regional approach that will include one or FTF countries?

A: Amanda Crump: There isn't an advantage either way. We are looking for good projects and a sound project could either focus on one country or on multiple countries.

Q: Will it strengthen a proposal to have more than one country included?

A: Amanda Crump: See above. We just want a strong proposal that works in the FTF zone of FTF countries. Can be one or can be several countries.

Q: To what extent do you expect prospective proposals to build upon the existing HortCRSP programs?

A: Amanda Crump: If it is appropriate, we have some cool technologies and strategies that can be incorporated into these new RFPs. For example, we have some technologies in food processing that someone could use and we have some technologies in novel training that could be used. So any are open for building upon.

Q: Re: existing technologies and strategies--are these readily available on the Hort CRSP website?

A: Amanda Crump: Look here: <http://horticulture.ucdavis.edu/main/projects.htm> and <http://horticulture.ucdavis.edu/main/media.html#technology>

Q: With regard to cost share--can contributions from potential in-country institutions count towards the stipulated 25% requirement for the lead implementer?

A: Heather Kawakami: Yes, host country contributions can add towards your overall cost-share.

Q: The first page of the RFP lists a series of research questions but the criteria for evaluation repeatedly mention a project as if it were a development project. Is the activity more research or development?

A: Amanda Crump: We are looking for more research - that is appropriate for development and helps development practitioners. So, not super basic research but research that can be applied in the field.

Q: On page 2, there is a list of questions that must be considered. Would you expect equal focus on each of these question in the proposal?

A: Amanda Crump: No, that is my long list of questions that, someday, I hope we can answer. You wouldn't need to answer all of these and if you have your own better questions, you can ignore these all together. This is just a list of things that I know that the gender research community doesn't really know, especially in horticulture.

Q: Does it strengthen a proposal to get a letter of support from the mission?

A: Amanda Crump: It definitely lets us know that the proposal fits with the Missions goals in the country. That strengthens the part of the proposal evaluation about fitting with Mission priorities.

Q: Thanks. We have been in touch with the Mission, and will ask for a letter of support.

A: Amanda Crump: awesome!

Q: Please clarify about the FTF zones in FTF countries? It is essential that any project also is happening in the FTF zones? Also is there a link where the FTF zones are clearly defined for each FTF country?

A: Amanda Crump: Each country has different zones (some countries indicate that the entire country is the zone). They can be found here: <http://feedthefuture.gov/countries>. Then select the country, view their profile, and then read through those pages. Some countries (like Ethiopia) are really clear, others are less clear. Let me know if you can't find a specific thing.

Q: Thanks. And what about first question? All proposals should include activity in at least one FTF zones for any targeted country?

A: Amanda Crump: You can only work in FTF zones of influence in any FTF country. This is something that we restricting more than in the past projects.



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This is a transcript of an online Q & A session, held Sept. 2, 2014 about three Requests for Proposals issued by the Horticulture Innovation Lab on the topics of nutrition, gender and postharvest. More information about these RFPs are at <http://horticulture.ucdavis.edu/main/funding.htm>.

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