Climate Resilient Cities in Latin America Research Call

Clarification Questions

3rd June 2016

In the interest of fairness and transparency, answers to questions regarding the Climate Resilient Cities research call are made available to all potential applicants. Answers are generalised; we cannot comment on individual project ideas or circumstances at this stage.

The window for questions on the Terms of Reference (TOR) was open until Friday 27th May. Interim responses to questions received up to Friday 20th May were circulated on Friday 27th May (included here). The answers to some of these queries are outlined in the TOR, so please do read that document carefully.

1. I have completed the form but haven't received the research call documents

You should have received an email containing a hyperlink to a page where the documents can be downloaded. The email can take up to an hour to come through. If you can't see this in your inbox, please check your spam folder. If you still don't have it, please email researchcall@cdkn.org and we can send you the files.

2. What is the deadline for submitting my EOI?

The deadline is Monday 13th June 2016, at 12:00 (midday) Ecuador time zone (ECT).

3. What is the maximum and minimum budget allowable? Is there an approximate size for each project?

The total budget for the call is up to US$ 1.5 million, which will be distributed among the projects we select to fund. The minimum budget per project is US$ 100,000, and the maximum budget is US$ 300,000. The budget requested should be appropriate for the scope of activities outlined in the proposal.

4. How many projects will you fund?

We expect to fund around 6 projects, but the number of projects we fund will depend on the budgets requested by the best reviewed proposals.

5. Is my organisation/ intended partner allowed to apply/ be part of my consortium? (UPDATED)

The organisation eligibility criteria are outlined in Section 6.2 of the TOR. With the exception of 'Demonstrable capacity in research', these criteria apply to the **lead** organisation on a project team. Organisations that do not meet these criteria may be named as a project partner (and receive funds through the lead organisation).

Therefore they can participate as one of the consortium institutions, but may not be the lead institution on an application.

For organisations applying as part of consortia, the organisation eligibility criterion relating to demonstrated capacity in research (which would normally involve employment of at least three permanent or long term staff, each of whom has 4-6 years postdoctoral research experience or comparable experience) may be met by the membership of a consortium as a whole, rather than single organisations within it.

Any organisation meeting these criteria may apply; this includes private companies, NGOs, universities, think tanks and research institutions. However please note that we are unable to contract UN organisations and national or subnational governments as the lead partner on a project, though such organisations **are** allowed to be project partners in the research consortium (subcontracted through the lead project partner).

In the event that we believe a shortlisted EOI is led by an organisation that does not meet the eligibility criteria/ that we cannot contract, the applicants will be notified of this when they are invited to submit full proposals; such EOIs will not be excluded at EOI stage on the basis of this criterion.

6. **Are individuals allowed to apply?**

Individuals cannot apply on their own as they would not meet the eligibility criteria. However, individuals may be named as a project partner (subcontracted through the lead partner).

7. **Does the project team need research experience? Does the research team's experience need to relate to the topic of the research proposed? Can early career researchers apply? (UPDATED)**

The research team must have appropriate research experience. Applications from early career researchers are eligible, but we remind applicants of the evaluation criteria outlined in TOR section 7.2.

8. **Is it necessary for the research staff to have *postdoctoral* research experience? (UPDATED)**

No. The information given under Section 6.2 Organisational Eligibility (Demonstrable capacity in research) is intended as guidance regarding the level of research capacity implied by 'demonstrable capacity in research'. Equivalent research experience, without a doctoral degree, is equally acceptable.

9. **Is it possible to include members of our Board of Directors, non-permanent staff or independent contractors who are not employed by our organisation, in the research team? (UPDATED)**

Yes, you should include anyone that will play an active role in the research, whether they are staff of/ affiliated with the lead organisation, or a subcontracted partner or independent contractor. The organisational eligibility criteria relate to the organisation, rather than named individuals.

10. **Should we have a Canadian or UK-based partner, given that this is a joint initiative with Canada and CDKN?**

No, no advantage or disadvantage will be given to projects with partners in Canada or the UK on the basis of their location.

11. **What costs are eligible?**

Staff costs, including overheads, and project expenses are eligible at 100% of economic costs. Contributions in the form of financial resources or in-kind contributions are encouraged, but not required. At this stage, applicants are only required to provide the total funding requested, rather than a detailed budget breakdown. At full proposal stage, applicants will be provided with our expenses policy, a budget template, and the information needed to complete this.

12. **I wish to submit an application for research focussed on a city with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants/ more than 500,000 inhabitants, is this eligible?**

While we acknowledge that there is no universally agreed definition of 'small or medium sized city', we gave minimum and maximum bands of 20,000 people and 500,000 people in the TOR for this research call. We will consider these to be **soft thresholds**; proposals focusing on cities which fall outside of these population sizes will not be deemed ineligible, and therefore will be reviewed as part of the EOI review process. Applicants should be reminded of the evaluation criteria for EOI Technical Question 1, which states *Are the research question(s), scope and methodology action-oriented, robust, innovative and **relevant to the TOR** and subtheme(s) that the project seeks to tackle?*; research focusing on cities which are significantly larger or smaller than the population bands given will be at a disadvantage in the review process.

13. **Please can you advise as to whether my research idea is a good fit for the Climate Resilient Cities in Latin America research call?**

We are unable to comment on individual project ideas at this stage. Please refer to the TOR, in particular Section 5.2, for guidance regarding the research themes and characteristics we are looking for.

14. **Will shortlisted applicants be permitted to make changes between EOI and full proposal stage, for example adding or substituting partners or revising budgets?**

Yes, provided that a strong rationale is given in the full proposal.

15. **Is this an isolated research call/ will you be launching other research calls at a later date?**

This is the only research call we will launch associated with this initiative. CDKN and IDRC may separately release other research calls in the future.

16. **We would like to involve a city government in our consortium. Does their participation need to be confirmed by the time of the EOI deadline?**

It would strengthen your proposal if their participation was already confirmed, but if this is not possible then an explanation of their expected role and their current engagement with the project in your response to the relevant technical question(s) would suffice. Shortlisted applicants will be permitted to add partners for their full proposals.

17. **Will CDKN connect the lead organisation to country/ city stakeholders? Will CDKN work with the lead organisation to deliver the research, for example to support data collection?**

Principally, applicants are responsible for identifying, connecting and engaging with the country/ city stakeholders relevant to their research. While FFLA/ CDKN *may* be in a position to provide additional connections where we have them, this does not mean that FFLA/ CDKN will act as a direct link, or be able to provide connections, but will provide guidance to funded projects. More information on the guidance we will provide will be given to shortlisted applicants at the full proposal stage. FFLA/ CDKN will not be involved in delivering the research itself; this is the sole responsibility of the project consortium.

18. **Is there a limit to the number of partner organisations included within a consortium?**

No, there is no maximum number of partner organisations.

19. **Do all researchers in the team need to be full time on the project?**

No. At full proposal stage, shortlisted applicants will be required to provide details of the project team with a breakdown of the number of days each member will be spending on the project, as deemed appropriate by the applicants. This is not required at EOI stage.

20. **What qualifies as 'junior staff'?**

Staff who are less experienced than the principal researchers.

21. Will you require documentation, in the form of written agreements, of the partnerships within a consortium?

No, we will not require such documentation at either EOI stage or full proposal stage.

22. Can my proposal focus not just on resilience but also climate change mitigation?

The primary focus of this research call is climate resilience. While proposals which seek to avoid higher carbon trajectories in their pursuit of climate resilient pathways are welcome, climate change mitigation is not the primary focus.

23. Can my proposal relate to a single subtheme?

Yes. Your proposal may either relate to a single subtheme, or multiple.

24. Must my proposal relate to a single city?

No, both single-city and multi-city proposals are eligible.

25. Can my proposal focus on a peri-urban district within a large city/ megacity?

If the district is jurisdictionally and administratively part of the large/ megacity, it is not eligible.

26. Do you have a specific definition of 'rapid growth'? Is there a minimum population growth rate?

We don't specify a minimum threshold for 'rapid growth', which can refer to increasing population, urban extent and/ or Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Rapid growth suggests that these cities are growing faster than other cities in their country or region. Applicants should include a description of the nature of growth of their focus city(s) in their response to Technical Question 1.

27. Can my proposal include research objectives which challenge assumptions made in the research call TOR?

Yes, our assumptions in the TOR may be challenged in your response, provided that the proposal still responds to the TOR. Applicants should be reminded of the evaluation criteria for EOI Technical Question 1, which states *Are the research question(s), scope and methodology action-oriented, robust, innovative and relevant to the TOR and subtheme(s) that the project seeks to tackle?*

28. Can my research proposal be part of an ongoing programme, project or process?

Yes, your proposal can build on/ be a new component of existing work. If this is the case, you must explain in your application how the new research builds on existing findings and momentum. It could be relevant to Technical Questions 1 and 2, for example.

29. Is replicability of research seen to be positive?

We are looking for proposals which aim for action, and enhanced policy, planning and practice, as a core outcome of research. Replicability could be one aspect of this.

30. Can my proposal focus on cities in countries other than the listed eligible countries?

Proposals focusing on cities in countries other than the listed focus countries are not eligible. Research must relate to one or more of the following countries in Latin America: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Uruguay.

31. Do the research partners need to be based in the eligible countries? Can I include partners from other countries in the research consortium?

Partners from any country may be included in the research consortium – the eligible countries relate to the focus of the research, rather than the location of research partners. South-South or South-North partnerships are highly desirable, as are collaborations that bring together different disciplines and involve practitioners and policy makers. Where proposals are submitted by a consortium/ partnership, at least one of the partners must be from a Latin American country, and we encourage southern-led proposals.

32. Should proposals be pure research, or should they also have a technical assistance component? Do you have a preferred balance of research and technical assistance components within each project?

We are looking for research proposals which explicitly set out to inform and potentially shape policy, planning and practice. Therefore, we don't see distinct 'research' and 'technical assistance' components, per se, but rather wish to see this aim reflected in the approach taken throughout the proposal – from the framing of research questions, and construction of the research partnership, through to the communication and research uptake strategy.

33. Does my proposal need to be for research? Would development of educational materials, for example, be eligible?

Your proposal must be a research proposal. Applications for projects which are not research projects will not be accepted.

34. Can I submit more than one application? Can an organisation or principal investigator be involved in more than one application?

Yes. The same person can act as principal Investigator in two different proposals. Organisations may submit more than one proposal either as the lead organization or in partnership with another organisation, provided these are substantively different e.g. they respond to different subthemes, or are entirely separate projects under the same area. Individual researchers may be named on more than one proposal.

35. Can I include more than three examples of previous experience in the EOI, in Section D: Demonstrated Experience?

No, each applicant must provide a maximum of three examples. We suggest that you prioritize the three examples that best demonstrate your consortium's relevant experience.

36. Should the Demonstrated Experience section give examples of our work as an existing consortium, or as separate organisations?

You should prioritise examples that best demonstrate your consortium's relevant experience. If you have prior experience as a consortium, then you can include such examples. If the partners have not worked together before, or if other examples from individual partners are more relevant, then you can give these. It is up to applicants to determine which examples best demonstrate your consortium's experience.

37. How can we demonstrate our experience in Section D of the EOI application?

Applicants should give examples of their past work which show reviewers that the project team has the relevant experience and capability to deliver the proposed project. It is up to applicants to determine what examples to include, and what information they give about each example, but this could include an explanation of the project, the partner's role in the project, and the outputs and outcomes of the project, for instance.

38. What are 'non-financial contributions'?

This includes any in-kind contributions of services, personnel and equipment, for example, that a partner organisation may give to the project at no cost to the project. Space will be provided in the full proposal application form to describe such contributions; they do not need to be costed. Contributions to the project in form of financial resources or in-kind contributions are encouraged, but are not a requirement.

39. What is the difference between the 'Total budget of the project' and 'Total funding required' fields in Section C of the application form?

'Total budget of the project' includes any co-funding you may have from other sources (this includes financial contributions only – in-kind contributions do not need to be costed). 'Total funding required' refers to the funding you are requesting from this research call. Contributions to the project in form of financial resources or in-kind contributions are encouraged, but are not a requirement, and as such these figures may not differ. If you have co-funding from another source, you should explain in your response to the relevant technical questions what aspects of the project relate to the funding requested from this research call and the co-funding.

40. Who will decide how the total budget is allocated across consortium partners?

We do not require a breakdown of the budget across consortium partners at EOI stage. It will be up to shortlisted applicants to determine the budget allocations across consortium partners when they submit full proposals.

41. Does there need to be a lead partner in the consortium? Can all the organisations in the consortium share lead responsibility?

There needs to be a lead partner which holds the contractual relationship with FFLA. The other partners will be subcontracted on the project through the lead partner. We will direct funds to the lead organisation, which will then be responsible for the distribution and management of funds to other organisations in the research consortium.

42. Can we make changes to the NDA (Non-Disclosure Agreement)?

No. Changes to the NDA are not permitted.

43. What are your policies regarding intellectual property and copyright?

This will be explained to shortlisted applicants at full proposal stage.

44. What documentation do you normally request regarding the institutional governance and accountability structure, and audit procedures?

This will be explained to shortlisted applicants at full proposal stage.

45. Can EOIs be submitted only in Spanish?

No. As we have an international panel of reviewers, an English language copy of the EOI must be submitted, using the English application template. This may be accompanied by a Spanish language version if applicants wish to do so. If the EOI is submitted in both languages, the applicant must indicate which application is their primary copy. If there is any confusion or lack of clarity due to language we will refer to the primary copy.