

RESEARCH PROGRAMME CONSORTIA

January 2010

Expressions of Interest for the following Themes:

**Tackling the neglected crisis of undernutrition;
Tackling the structural drivers of the HIV epidemic; and
Improving mental health services in low income countries**

Background Document

(Including Application Form)

Background

- 1.1 The purpose of DFID's Research is to make faster progress in fighting poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We do this in two ways. We help produce new knowledge and technologies to tackle the most important development challenges, and we help make sure that countries and the wider development community put the new knowledge and technologies into use.
- 1.2 DFID's Research Strategy 2008-13 sets out priorities for long-term research.¹ In health the priorities are to make health programmes more effective, research into health systems and developing new technologies for diseases of the poor. The Research Strategy also outlines DFID's commitment to capacity building for southern researchers and institutions and communications to improve the uptake of research findings and the integration of research and policy.
- 1.3 Research Programme Consortia (RPCs) represent one of the ways in which DFID funds research. Members of the consortia can work together, addressing key research questions, across a number of countries. This model of working facilitates capacity building between partners and exploration of results in a number of different settings. The aim is to generate new policy-relevant knowledge that will help developing countries,

¹ Research Strategy 2008-2013, DFID 2008

<http://www.research4development.info/FeatureResearchStrategy.asp>

the wider development community and DFID to eradicate world poverty and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and to help get that knowledge reflected in policy and practice.

1.4 The features of RPCs include the following:

- Headed by a single lead organisation which may be in a developed or developing country
- Comprise 4-6 institutional partners (inclusive of the lead organisation) of which at least three, and all may, be in developing countries
- May comprise of a variety of institutions: academic, civil society and/or commercial organisations

The full terms of reference for RPCs are outlined in the *Research Programme Consortia: Terms of Reference* which can be found out <http://www.research4development.info/dfidguidancenotes.asp>

2 Scope

2.1 The scope of this call is multi-disciplinary and broad with an emphasis on health services, operational and health systems research. DFID is looking for innovative, strategic research that will build upon the existing evidence base and provide new knowledge on how to shape effective service delivery and strengthen health systems in the future. It is important that all research demonstrates effective demand from, and practical relevance to decision makers in the field.

2.2 We anticipate that funding for each RPC will be up to £7.5 million over six years, including an inception phase of up to one year. There is possibility of extension for a further two years. Value for money will be one of the criteria used to judge potential bids. The actual amounts will depend on bids received. DFID reserves the right to decide how much to award each RPC a year and fund more than one RPC under a theme. The aim is to provide sufficient and flexible resources over a long enough period to enable genuine development and application of expertise and new thinking.

2.3 Each Consortium under this call will focus on one of three themes: These are:

- **Tackling the neglected crisis of undernutrition**
- **Tackling the structural drivers of the HIV epidemic**
- **Improving mental health services in low income countries**

Please see draft TORs available from <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Working-With-DFID/Procurement/Current-contract-opportunities1/> for more details on the research that could be undertaken under each theme.

2.4 The activities of the Consortium will be driven by a coherent research agenda. Activities which may be funded under an RPC contract include research (staff time and direct costs), developing training materials,

southern capacity development and dissemination, including workshops and conferences, publications, policy briefings etc. The RPCs are expected to contribute to the broad information base for decision making about policy in developing countries.

- 2.5 Although not part of the contract it is hoped that these Consortia will become important sources of specific, separately commissioned policy advice for DFID.
- 2.6 Only research that adds to the current literature will be funded. Bidders are expected to be able to demonstrate awareness of both previous and current international research in their areas of expertise. DFID reserves the right not to award a contract if the proposals for a particular theme do not meet the expected criteria.
- 2.7 All research studies are expected to include an integrated and continuous communications and dissemination strategy. It is expected that the RPC will link globally and at country level, to international and national organisations and institutions.

3 Bidding arrangements

3.1 Expressions of Interest (EOI) should be in the form of a capability statement using the template provided at Annex A. The EOI must be completed in conjunction with the guidance provided in this document. Applicants must adhere to the instructions in the Annex, paying particular attention to font size and page limits where identified. EOIs must:

- Propose examples of the research that may be undertaken within the DFID-specified topic area and explain why these types of research are important development issues; identifying demand for the research and how it builds on existing research.
- Indicate the likely organisations in the consortium, their experience, and a short CV of the Consortium Director and name of Chief Executive Officer if known.
- Outline possible elements of the research programme and how the consortium members will work together to deliver the required outputs and address capacity development of developing country research.
- Suggest the routes by which the proposed research outcomes are expected to be applied to contribute to poverty eradication.
- Contain abridged CVs (more than 2 A4 pages) for key team members

3.2 The principal selection criteria for EOIs will be:

- (i) Originality and relevance of the research programme and how it will deliver answers in the future
- (ii) How will research contribute to poverty eradication (including relevance to Millennium Development Goals and potential for policy impact)?
- (iii) Quality and composition of consortium's organisations, researchers, Director and Chief Executive (if known)
- (iv) How well it fits with DFID's research strategy (2008) and other relevant strategies²
- (v) How will the programme transfer knowledge and skills (communications, gender mainstreaming, collaborative arrangements and capacity development)?

3.3 DFID staff can **not** meet with RPC bidders to discuss their EOIs.

3.4 Successful applicants at the EOI stage will be asked to prepare a full proposal.

3.5 EOIs should be sent electronically only to DFID stating the particular Theme in which the Consortia is Expressing Interest. EOIs must be submitted electronically in English in formats compatible with the Microsoft Windows XP® operating system (*.doc, *.xls, *.ppt, *.pdf etc) marked for the attention of Andrena Craig, to developmentresearchprocurement@dfid.gov.uk by **23.59 23rd April 2010.**

Each Expression of Interest should be clearly labelled with the title of the RPC you wish to bid for (undernutrition, structural drivers, mental health) and the surname of the proposed Director.

An application form and EOI should be submitted for each RPC you wish to bid for

Start-up arrangements

Once a Consortium is selected, there will be an inception phase of up to one year, during which proposals and budgets for the full programme period (fully detailed for the first 2-3 years of research) will be submitted to DFID. We recognise that some consortia may want to start as soon as possible, whilst others may need to wait until key staff become free from other work. DFID would decline to proceed if the inception phase was not satisfactory. Progress will be monitored through regular reviews.

² Research Strategy 2008-2013, DFID 2008
<http://www.research4development.info/FeatureResearchStrategy.asp>

Annex A

DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DFID) DFID Research

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) Guidance Notes

Expressions of Interest should follow the format set out below. They must be no longer **than four sides of A4, excluding the basic summary sheet**. The font size must be no smaller than Arial 11.

Instructions for submissions of EOIs are given under Bidding Arrangements (Section 3) in this background document.

Any Expressions of Interest not conforming to the guidance given in this document will be rejected without appraisal.

The principal selection criteria for EOIs will be:

- (i) Originality and relevance of the research programme and how it will deliver answers in the future
- (ii) How will research contribute to poverty eradication (including relevance to Millennium Development Goals and potential for policy impact)?
- (iii) Quality and composition of consortium's organisations, researchers, Director and Chief Executive (if known)
- (iv) How well it fits with DFID's research strategy (2008)³ and other relevant strategies
- (v) How will the programme transfer knowledge and skills (communications, gender mainstreaming, collaborative arrangements and capacity development)?

The following conditions also apply:

- We cannot meet with organisations to discuss their EOIs.
- When EOIs are short-listed, the organisation submitting the full Bid must be the same as the organisation which submitted the EOI.
- Directors and organisations may apply for more than one RPC, but they must have the capacity to carry out all activities required if successful.

³ Research Strategy 2008-2013, DFID 2008
<http://www.research4development.info/FeatureResearchStrategy.asp>

Application Form to be Considered for:

RPC Title –

Please enter the information requested in the spaces provided. Application from separate legal entities of worldwide organisations or multi nationals are acceptable, provided the organisations are eligible to operate in competition with each other. Questions 1, 2, 3 & 4 must be with regards to the lead company only.

1: Your Details

Your Name (Lead organisation)

Parent Company (If Applicable)

Your Address

Contact Name

Contact Telephone Number

E-Mail Address

2. Information Required for Statistical Purposes Only

Country of Registration (Companies)

Nationality (Application from Individuals)

Number of Employees (as appropriate)

3. Lead organisation Years in Business

How many years have you been in business?

4. Lead Organisation Turnover

What was the lead organisation's total annual turnover in pounds sterling for the last three years?

One year ago?

Two years ago?

Three years ago?

What was your turnover in pounds sterling, for services similar to those required here, for the last three years?

One year ago?

Two years ago?

Three years ago?

Over the last three years what percentage of your turnover has been or is currently with DFID?

One year ago?

Two years ago?

Three years ago?

Conflict of Interest

You must disclose in your response, details of any known circumstances that will, or might give rise to a conflict of interest. Where a potential conflict is identified, you should state how you intend to avoid such conflict.

It is difficult to precisely define a "Conflict of Interest" and there are numerous situations in which it can arise between DFID, their employees, former employees and suppliers. The most common of which are:

- Suppliers and / their subcontractors not declaring their involvement in a project "design phase" when bidding separately for the "implementation" phase;
- Suppliers who are working with or whose personnel are working with DFID staff or partner governments or organisation;
- Suppliers who are filling or whose personnel are filling a post, which would more usually be filled by a DFID member of staff e.g. advisory role, team leader etc.;
- Suppliers who have friends or relatives working for DFID or partner governments or organisations;
- DFID staff on Special Leave or former DFID employees associating with suppliers bidding for DFID contracts in a country or region or sector where the employee has knowledge of the programme or project;

We understand suppliers may not know at this time whether "Conflict of Interest" is an issue that they need to address. Consequently it will be raised again when the Invitation to tender documents are sent out to those short-listed.

Section 1 –Summary Sheet

1.1 Research Theme:	
1.2 RPC Title:	
1.3 RPC Director: Present Position held: Institution: Address: Postcode: Tel: Email:	
1.4 Chief Executive Officer (if known) Present Position held Institution Address Post code Tel Email	
1.5 Details of contact person , (if not RPC Director above): Job Title: Institution: Address: Postcode: Tel: Email:	
1.6 Consortium Members: (Please list all members, both agreed and/or proposed)	
1.7 Countries and region(s) / district(s) in which the research will take place:	

(No more than four pages in total)

Section 2: The RPC Theme/s (maximum 1-2 pages)

- What is the overall purpose of the RPC?
- What problem/s are you seeking to address?
- What are the research themes/questions to be explored by the RPC?
- Why are they important development issues?
- What evidence exists of the demand for the research proposed?

Section 3: The RPC Partners (maximum 1 page)

- What experience and expertise do the partners have of working on the issues, and in the countries outlined in this application?
- Identify the Research Director.
- Identify Chief Executive Officer if known, if not explain how you will search for them.
- Please provide a statement of their capability or short CV of Research Director to include: current position, academic qualifications, research expertise/interests and research management experience.

Section 4: The Operation of the RPC (maximum 1 page)

- What will be the main activities and outputs of the RPC?
- What methodology will be used?
- What are the implementation and management arrangements to ensure that RPC partners achieve these?
- How will you identify and address the capacity strengthening needs of developing country research?

Section 5: The RPC Impact (maximum 1 page)

- How will the proposed research lead to a reduction in poverty?
- How will the work of the RPC contribute towards the Millennium Development Goals?
- Who are the target groups for the research findings from the RPC?
- How do you intend to influence these groups to ensure that the research is used?
- How will you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the RPC work on policy and practice?
- How you will develop a communications strategy?