Request for Proposals: Review of Research Program and Platform Modalities

What we are seeking:

CGIAR seeks a consultant (individual or team) who will undertake a light-touch review of the modalities of the CGIAR matrix research programs and platforms in the context of equivalent programmatic design in other large-scale research-for-development programs globally, to propose a set of evidence-based options going forward.

Background:

CGIAR is a global research partnership dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystem services. Its research is carried out by 15 CGIAR Centers in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector. The CGIAR Centers deliver shared system-level outputs, outcomes and impact by collaborating in 12 CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs) and 3 Platforms.

To ensure that it is fit for purpose, CGIAR is implementing, from January 2019, an inaugural three-year business plan as a pragmatic short- and medium-term response to major strategic issues facing the organization. As one of its 2019-2021 business cycle actions, CGIAR will develop a "2030 Plan" that will include a new 2022-2030 program of agricultural research and innovation framed in terms of CGIAR's planned contribution to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To support CGIAR's development of the 2030 Plan, parallel and closely connected workstreams are planned on (a) research objectives and focus, (b) research delivery modalities, and (c) institutional arrangements, all thee involving wide-ranging consultation coupled with specific review elements. For the research delivery modalities workstream, a key element is a review of the modalities of the existing system-wide 12 CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs) and 3 CGIAR Platforms.

Deliverable:

A concise, light-touch review that provides: (a) an evidence-based analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the CRP and Platform modalities 2011-2019, (b) a comparison against modalities used in comparable non-CGIAR research programs, and (c) a set of options for

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modalities for CGIAR research delivery mechanisms (programs, platforms and/or other formats) during the 2022-2030 period.

Modalities to be considered include: design process, priority-setting, resource allocation, management arrangements, governance, incentives for pooled fund-raising, partnership arrangements, monitoring and reporting, and services (legal, finance, information technology, human resources). The review will assess the extent to which these modalities have delivered an effective, efficient and coherent body of research for development, relative to other options for organizing an R4D system.

The review will address the overall set of modalities that are common across the system, or to multiple CRPs and Platforms. It will not undertake individual reviews of individual CRPs or Platforms.

Activities:

1. Read, analyze and extract key relevant findings from existing reviews and evaluations, particularly the 2016 synthesis of lessons from CRP evaluations (http://iea.cgiar.org/evaluating/synthesis-and-lessons-learned-from-crp-evaluations/) and the responses by relevant governing bodies;
2. Building on a preliminary design submitted in the bid, work closely with the CGIAR System Management Office to design a review format and analytical structure, and a process for interviews, workshops and analysis that enables interaction with the Science Leaders and other key stakeholder groups at key moments in the 2030 Plan process during 2019, but does not over-burden any of these groups;
3. Undertake interviews, focus groups or short dedicated workshop sessions with the following key stakeholder groups: (a) Science Leaders (i.e. Leaders of CRPs and Platforms, as well as Deputy Director Generals (Research) at the CGIAR Centers) (at the Science Leaders meeting in Montpellier on 3-6 June 2019); (b) other key participants in the CRPs and Platforms, such as managers of finance or services in Lead Centers and Participating Centers (most likely by semi-structured interviews over remote calls); (c) members of SIMEC, the Standing Committee on Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation of the CGIAR System Council (most likely by semi-structured interviews over remote calls); (d) members of CGIAR's Independent Science and Development Council (ISDC) (preferably at one of their scheduled meetings) and former members of CGIAR's Independent Science and Partnership Council (most likely by virtual calls); and (e) leaders from external organizations that have implemented matrix research-for-development delivery comparable to CGIAR (preferably at a dedicated 1 day workshop session facilitated by the consultant);
4. Draft a concise review according to the deliverable specification, format and analytical structure agreed above (deadline 1 July 2019);
5. Present this review to a retreat of CGIAR's System Reference Group (in Montpellier 16-18 July 2019) and share more widely with key stakeholder groups for comments; and

6. Finalize the review in response to comments by CGIAR staff members and external reviewers, for formal submission to the System Management Board (deadline 1 September 2019)

This role will be under the responsibility of the Programs Unit and more specifically under the lead of Director of Programs, Sonja Vermeulen.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of 10 years of experience in strategic planning, organizational structures and change management;
- Track record of providing strategic and technical support in large and complex organizations with diverse stakeholders;
- Good knowledge of research for development, preferably in the context of agriculture and food security, though other sectors also highly relevant;
- Familiarity with a wide range of research-for-development organizations and modalities; and
- Proven excellent written and oral communication skills in English, including in multi-cultural settings.

Proposal evaluation criteria:

All proposals will be evaluated on a value-for-money, 2-step basis with the technical proposals and the financial proposals each being evaluated separately in the first round and then combined to determine best value for price. Bidders whose proposals have been short-listed may be contacted with questions for clarification.

Who we are:

CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future. CGIAR science is dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystem services. Its research is carried out by 15 CGIAR Centers in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations, and the private sector. These 15 Centers have close to 10,000 staff based in over 50 countries.

The CGIAR System Organization, which is an international organization headquartered in Montpellier, France, provides governance to the CGIAR System in collaboration with the System Council, and has about 40 staff. The Organization is committed to cultivating a work environment that reflects teamwork, gender equality, and respect for diversity. We endeavor to foster a multi-cultural environment that is free of any form of harassment and discrimination; and that embraces and values individuals regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender, national or social origin, marital status or any other form of personal identity.

Please find more information about CGIAR at www.cgiar.org

How to submit a proposal:

Please submit a narrative proposal and a budget proposal as two separate documents to smo-procurement@cgiar.org. Both documents can be attached to the same email.

The narrative proposal will consist of no more than four pages using Microsoft Word or similar format, font size 11pt., margins no smaller than one-inch.

The budget proposal will be presented using Microsoft Excel or similar format and consist of, at a minimum, the following line items: consultant time (with separate line items according to seniority), resources, travel. The budget will be presented in US dollars.

All proposals must be received no later than 17:00 Paris time on 3 April 2019. Only electronically submitted proposals will be considered. Late proposals will not be considered. Shortlisted bidders will be contacted no later than 8 April 2019.