

Call for Proposals for a Gender Equality in Food Systems Research Platform

Purpose

This document sets out:

1. A summary of areas that have been strengthened in the call for proposals for a Gender Equality in Food System Research Platform, in response to requests and guidance from the System Council, System Management Board and Funders.
2. Outline of call for proposals
3. Criteria for assessment revised and put forward by the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC)
4. Schedule for call, proposal development, review and endorsement

Action requested

The System Management Board is requested to approve the call for proposals for a Gender Equality in Food Systems Research Platform to be issued immediately.

Distribution Notice:

This document may be distributed without limitation.

Part A: Highlights of efforts to strengthen the call for proposals

Background to strengthening the call for proposals

1. A request from the System Council at its 7th meeting that, in developing the call for proposals, the 2015 agreed criteria for assessment of a CGIAR Platform be revisited [SC/M7/AP1].
2. Guidance provided by the System Management Board at its 12th meeting on a number of areas including (i) encouragement of a collaborative and coordinated approach with planned partnerships from the outset of proposal development; (ii) the need to focus on embedding of culture change including potentially adding a proposal assessment criterion on this; and (iii) the suggestion made to add 'inclusion' to the nomenclature.
3. Three Funders- ACIAR, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and IDRC- provided funding in 2018 for a strengthening gender equality in CGIAR's research and workplaces workplan and actively participated in the Gender Equality Reference Group from which the concept for the elevated Platform emerged. These three Funders were consulted on what has been done to strengthen the call for proposals, with all three responding positively to the outline, assessment criteria and timing to take this important step forward.
4. While the Gender Reference Group was instrumental in providing valuable inputs in the process and concept for steps towards elevating the Gender Platform, it should be noted that this Group has not been engaged in development of the call for proposals. This was purposely done to mitigate potential conflict of interest given that most members are affiliated to CGIAR Centers who are the entities which can respond to the call. This also includes the two Gender Champions, who have not been involved in the development process outside of their role as members of the System Management Board, which has robust conflict of interest mechanisms in place.

Highlights of areas strengthened

5. The call for proposals for a Gender Equality in Food System Research Platform has been strengthened in the following three areas.
6. **Call for proposals outline:** Some additional items have been added to the outline to ensure that the proposals responding to the call:
 - a. Provide a rationale for a Gender Equality in Food Systems research Platform
 - b. Describe activities specific to the two objective streams for the Platform
 - c. Indicate how the Platform would contribute to an embedding of culture change
 - d. Suggestion of possible tools to include in plans for monitoring and reporting
7. **Assessment criteria:** The original criteria have been revisited and revised by the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) [and are found in section C below]; these build on the original criteria through additionally assessing:

- 7.1. Credibility of the proposed outputs
 - 7.2. Engagement with stakeholders is based on a principled and value-driven model that embraces true diversity as a key enabler of functional agri-food systems
 - 7.3. Rather than a general business case, looking at greater specificity on strengthening of CGIAR delivery on gender equality research and Global leadership with transformative impacts
8. **Issuing of call:** Subject to the endorsement of the call for proposals by the System Management Board the call will be made directly following the 2-4 April meeting. Stakeholders across the CGIAR System will be made aware of the 'SMB13 document on proposed call' through its availability on cgiar.org two weeks ahead of the SMB meeting. The System Management Office will also share the endorsed call with the 'Seeds of Change' Conference taking place in the first week of April in Australia to allow interested groups represented in that forum the opportunity for early conversations and planning.

Part B: Outline for call for proposals (March 2019)

Title of Platform. Gender Equality in Food Systems Research Platform

Rationale and scope. [Max. 4 pages text]

- The proposal should articulate the **strategy** for a Platform that addresses the vision, goal, **strategic and operational objectives and outcomes** outlined in the business case and including:
 - a. Proposed activities to elevate and strengthen gender integration within the research of CRPs, Centers and other CGIAR Platforms and embedding of culture change
 - b. Proposed strategic research to close global evidence gaps on women's empowerment in agriculture and to influence the broader ARD ecosystem
- Demonstrate CGIAR as a clear **steward of its gender research work** through this Platform.
- Identify **competitive/comparative advantage** of the CGIAR Center which as the Lead Center would carry overall fiduciary and programmatic responsibility for the Platform vis-à-vis the System Organization, as well as the other CGIAR Centers which would work as significant implementing partners.

Platform structure and arrangements. [Max. 2 pages text]

- **Describe arrangements for hosting of the Platform**, noting:
 - Requirement: The Platform shall be hosted by a CGIAR Center
 - Principle: Preference for hosting in a multi-Center location (not necessarily in Lead Center HQ)
- **Describe how the Platform will be structured and arrangements for its activities**, noting:
 - Principle: Arrangements for the Platform's activities may follow current CGIAR Platforms' use of a modular approach or adopt another approach that supports the strategic and operational objectives outlined. Intended arrangements should be clearly articulated in the proposal and should maximize involvement of other CGIAR entities.

Requirement: A clear plan to outline the transition of successful activities and processes of the current collaborative platform into arrangements of the proposed Platform.

- **Describe the interface of this platform with other CGIAR programs and platforms.**

Impact pathway and contribution to theory of change of CGIAR. [Max. 1 page text]

- **Describe how the Platform outputs will be provided to CGIAR and other users to contribute to overall CGIAR outcomes, and how those impacts will result.**

Capacity development. [Max. 1 page text; link to more detailed annex]

- **Provide a CapDev strategy as it applies to the Platform with proposed activities.**

Platform leadership, management and governance. [Max. 2 pages text]

- **Describe the scientific leadership, how the Platform will be managed and how to will be effectively linked to overall arrangements for governance in CGIAR, noting:**

Principle: The Platform will have an advisory body with a balance of perspectives from within CGIAR and from outside.

Requirement: The Platform Director shall be a senior-level position with substantial gender expertise.

Business case. [10 pages text]

The proposal should describe the capabilities of the Platform proposed, identifying a number of clear, measurable, high-level objectives which justify its establishment, and should include:

- A **rationale statement** for a Gender Equality in Food Systems Research Platform for CGIAR
- A statement of the **relevant expertise and track record of institutes** and key personnel who will be involved (linked to an Annex with CVs), and how this expertise will be maintained. [Max. 1 page text]
- A statement of how **access** to materials, site, services and networks will be carried out, supported and maintained. [Max. 1 page text]
- A description of the **interactions between the Platform with users**, beneficiaries and other key institutions and how these will be maintained. Outline specific mechanisms for engaging gender researchers. [Max. 1 page; cross CRP collaborations listed in an Annex]
- **Adherence to key CGIAR policies.** Explain adherence to CGIAR principles, guidelines including Intellectual asset management, Open access management [Max. 1 page; links to Annex with specific objectives for data and IP management]

- **Communication strategy.** Explain communication strategy for the Platform. (Max. 1 page; link to annex as needed)
- **Risk management.** Describe risks to platform function and sustainability and how these may be mitigated or addressed. [Max. 1 page text]
- **Monitoring and reporting.** Explain how the Platform will ensure robust mechanisms for monitoring and reporting at the System-level, including complying with reporting requirements for Platforms (e.g key metrics/indicators of success; measurement plan; learning agenda). [Max. 2 pages text]
- **Resource Mobilization strategy.** Outline additional fundraising to be undertaken by the Platform, plus possible mechanisms for using funding to support wider gender research across CGIAR. [Max. 2 pages text]

Budget narrative summary. [Max. 1 page text]

Provide the cost structure, expected sources of budgetary support for the Platform and necessary planning for its sustainability. Fill out the Platform budget template.

Part C: Criteria for assessing CGIAR Gender Equality in Food Systems Research Platform with the evidence required to assess each criterion in brackets (provided by ISDC, 2 March 2019)

9. The ISDC has proposed an update of the criteria to be used for this and future assessments to align with the Frame of Reference for assessing Quality of Research for Development (QR4D) which was developed during 2017 by the then ISPC, together with representatives from the other components of the CGIAR System Organisation.

1. Relevance

- 1.1 The extent to which the platform objectives are aligned with the agreed outcomes in the current CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs), and hence value will be added to the CRP portfolio and external users. *(In addition to listing the objectives, evidence should be provided of the specific demand from the CRPs and existing platforms as appropriate and the expected areas where value will be added)*
- 1.2 Comparative and competitive advantage of CGIAR and partners and ability to deliver on the core objectives of the platform. *(Evidence should include a summary of the state of the art in the area, referenced material on socially relevant research questions (with context) and any lessons learned from the research undertaken in the Policy, Institutions and Markets Flagship).*
- 1.3 Appropriate choice of partners. *(Evidence to include such elements as the underlying strategy and advantages of partner choices, recognition of particular strengths and weaknesses—and how these will be addressed as well as evidence of past, successful collaboration, if applicable.)*

2. Scientific Credibility

- 2.1 The credibility of the team. *(Evidence to include professional skills, relevant working experience, gender representativeness and capacity of the proposed lead and assigned researchers as well as partners and collaborators to deliver fully and in a timely manner on the proposed activities which should show key research publications, innovations and development outcomes related to gender equality and food systems research).*
- 2.2 Mechanisms for assuring the quality of data and of science, their storing and sharing. *(Evidence to include approaches to data collection with rationale for their selection, and for ensuring data curation and its utility for sharing; the adequacy of the plans for engagement with the research community; adequacy of linkages to other institutes and providers; the quality and efficiency of platform arrangements, outputs and services).*

2.3 Credibility of the proposed outputs. *(Evidence to include the types of analyses, including methodological approaches, which will be undertaken for dissemination to users, particularly within CGIAR).*

3. Legitimacy

3.1 Governance and management. *(Evidence that the leadership, management and governance arrangements appropriate to CGIAR responsibilities for ethical considerations, inclusivity, stewardship and international public good (IPG) use, including for partnership management and fair distribution of funds).*

3.2 Engagement with stakeholders is based on a principled and value-driving model that embraces true diversity as a key enabler of functional agri-food systems. *(Evidence from description of communication strategy to stakeholders including reference to expected degree of engagement with national partners)*

4. Effectiveness

4.1 Strengthening of CGIAR delivery on gender equality research. *(Evidence from the processes proposed to act as a convenor across the System on gender research and engaging with the different elements of the System and indicators that will be used to measure how gender thinking is being embedded in the work of other CRPs)*

4.2 Global leadership with transformative impacts. *(Evidence from activities proposed for interacting with the international community of gender researchers focusing primarily on agricultural research).*

5. Budgets

5.1 External reviewers will be asked to comment on whether the budgeted items are justified and reasonable. It is presumed that the format will be proscribed.

Part D: Schedule for call, proposal development, review and endorsement

10. The schedule agreed by the System Management Board meeting in its 12th meeting, would entail:
- a. SMB13 (2-4 April 2019) – Approve and issue call for proposals (12-week development timeframe)
 - b. 1 July 2019 – Proposal submission deadline
 - c. During July – Proposal assessment process
 - d. During August – Possible proposal re-submission period (if required)
 - e. SMB September 2019 – For endorsement of selection
 - f. SC9 November 2019 – Approval of proposal and funding for 2020-2021 period (within business plan period)
-