

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP Request for Proposals

This site will be updated periodically throughout the proposal application period. If you have a question, please write to [acrsp@oregonstate.edu](mailto:acrsp@oregonstate.edu). Thank you.

## Questions and Answers

Return to RFP website <http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/afcrsp/rfp/>

### List of Questions

Scroll down for answers to these questions.

1. To whom should I address RFP questions?
2. Am I eligible to apply as Lead PI on a proposal in response to this RFP?
3. Are eligibility criteria different for subcontractors and other collaborators, who will not be applying as Lead institution?
4. Can I submit a proposal for my idea that would involve primarily offshore marine fisheries, and only secondarily aquaculture?
5. Which countries can I include in my proposal?
6. I want to get involved but am not eligible to serve as Lead PI. Can you connect me with others?
7. How much matching contribution must I commit in my proposal?
8. How much PI salary support can I include in my proposal? Can I use project funds to "buy-out" my time teaching or from other responsibilities at my university?
9. Can proposals be "global" and theme-based rather than focused on one geographic region?

10. Would a proposal that focuses on octopus nutrition research in Peru (or insert any specific project here) get funded?
11. Does the RFP focus only on fish? Can I propose to work on aquatic plants or shellfish?
12. I would like to work on genetic improvement of tilapia, and also will need to transport fish to different countries in my region for field-testing purposes.
13. Does my institution qualify for proposal funding?
14. I have begun writing a proposal and have a signed MOU and a draft budget to collaborate with an institution in a USAID-eligible country. Under this RFP, it appears I have to submit it as part of a larger whole. Is this true?
15. I would like to submit a proposal with many different topics (cage culture research, pond waste usage, and aquaculture/wetland interaction) involving numerous PIs. In addition, the research would take place in various regions of the world. How can I do that?
16. I am going to propose an investigation in Vietnam. What is the budget ceiling for an investigation?
17. Making large awards to a few institutions only to have them issue secondary subcontracts to other institutions is wasteful because indirect costs are computed twice and less money is left for research. Wouldn't it be more cost-conscious for the ME to issue subcontracts directly to each of the participating institutions?
18. Will my track record on the old PD/A CRSP or Aquaculture CRSP be taken into account during the proposal review?
19. Can the same investigation appear in more than one proposal?
20. What happens if I submit my proposal late?
21. What happens if I submit an incomplete proposal?
22. What happens if I submit a proposal that does not follow the RFP?

## 1. To whom should I address RFP questions?

One contact person will answer all questions so that the Management Entity of the CRSP can ensure equal treatment of all interested proponents. Dr. Hillary Egna, CRSP Director,

will be answering inquiries in consultation with others in the Management Entity. Inquiries that are likely to be on the minds of others may be posted on this website. Questions can be sent to [acrsp@oregonstate.edu](mailto:acrsp@oregonstate.edu)

## 2. Am I eligible to apply as Lead PI on a proposal in response to this RFP?

If you are affiliated with a Title XII institution in the USA, you are most likely eligible. You would, of course, need the support of your institution in order to submit an application. Based on Section 269(d) of Title XII of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, an eligible university or college is defined as: “... those colleges or universities in each State, territory, or possession of the United States, or the District of Columbia, now receiving, or which may hereafter receive, benefits under the Act of July 2, 1862 (known as the First Morrill Act) or the Act of August 30, 1890 (known as the Second Morrill Act), which are commonly known as ‘land-grant’ universities; institutions now designated or which may hereafter be designated as sea-grant colleges under the Act of October 5, 1966 (known as the National Sea Grant College and Program Act), which are commonly known as sea-grant colleges; Native American land-grant colleges as authorized under the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note); and other United States colleges and universities which – (1) have demonstrable capacity in teaching, research, and extension (including outreach) activities in the agricultural sciences; and (2) can contribute effectively to the attainment of the objectives of this title.”

The role of Lead PI comes with added administrative and reporting responsibilities for all collaborating partners. The workload for a lead PI is estimated to be two to four times that of a collaborating PI or co-PI. Lead PIs need strong support from their institutions, not only for cost-share, but for access to information and staff required for coordinating multiple overseas projects and subprojects.

If you are not eligible based on the above definition, you may still be eligible to apply as a partner under a Lead proposal. The eligibility requirements for partners are broad.

### **3. Are eligibility criteria different for subcontractors and other collaborators, who will not be applying as Lead institution?**

Yes. Eligibility criteria for additional partners under the Lead institution are different. Non-Lead collaborators include Title XII institutions (described above) as well as many others.

Public and private entities such as other universities, colleges, minority-serving institutions, companies, international non-government organizations (NGOs), and others with resources and relevant experience for conducting research, training and outreach activities, and implementing research projects, are eligible to apply. For-profit firms may participate as sub-awardees but, pursuant to 22 CFR 226.81, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as cooperative agreements. All reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (22 CFR 226, OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organization, OMB Circular A-21 for universities, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be paid under the CRSP. US Minority-Serving Institutions include those mandated as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Tribal Colleges and Universities, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Serving Institutions, and Hispanic Serving Institutions.

### **4. Can I submit a proposal for my idea that would involve primarily offshore marine fisheries, and only secondarily aquaculture?**

You can submit such a proposal but chances of it receiving funding are slim. The

program is moderately funded and has been directed by the primary donor (USAID) to focus on aquaculture. Aquaculture and fisheries nexus topic areas can be proposed (see the RFP). Aquaculture can be viewed through an ecosystem perspective, however, so there may be many ideas that overlap with fisheries (hence, the nexus topic areas). Also, please know that the CRSP will engage actively in seeking additional funding through USAID to support fisheries research over the next few years. Those funds will be Leader with Associates Awards (LWA). Currently this CRSP has no LWAs. Go to RFP website:

USAID links for more information. If you have a lead on funding from the USAID Missions, Regional Offices, or Bureaus and you want to explore how to buy-into the CRSP through an LWA, please contact the Management Entity at Oregon State University: [acrsp@oregonstate.edu](mailto:acrsp@oregonstate.edu).

## 5. Which countries can I include in my proposal?

Unfortunately, a single list of countries is not available from USAID at this time. USAID suggests that applicants familiarize themselves with USAID documents that include references to specific countries. The CRSP RFP website lists these documents. If you are interested in a country not mentioned in the directed website links to USAID, please contact the CRSP ME for additional information.

Cautionary note: Proposed activities will require USAID country-level concurrence prior to award. Concurrence for highly ranked project activities will be obtained through the CRSP ME and its USAID partner, as a final step in award selection. Non-concurrence can mean that a project or investigation is not approved for funding. Non-concurrence can happen even if the country you propose is a USAID-presence or USAID-eligible country.

For a list of USAID-presence countries, please go to the USAID links from the RFP website.

RFP Website <http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/afcrsp/rfp>

## 6. I want to get involved but am not eligible to serve as Lead PI. Can you connect me with others?

The Management Entity is providing a passive matchmaking service. If you would like to be listed in the matchmaking service, please send an informational email to [acrsp@oregonstate.edu](mailto:acrsp@oregonstate.edu) with the subject line: "RFP matchmaking." Your email will be uploaded as written to the matchmaking service. Attachments will *not* be uploaded, neither will CVs. Messages must be shorter than 300 words. If you wish to be dropped from this service, please send an email to the above address. Changes to the service will be posted fortnightly.

At present no Lead Universities have asked to be listed in the service. Lead US Universities looking for partners are encouraged to use this service.

Individuals and institutions are listed in the matchmaking service by broad geographic region and not by area of interest or expertise. If you are interested in contacting someone, please do so independently of the CRSP Management Office at Oregon State University.

Disclaimer: This service is provided for your convenience. By being mentioned in the service, this does not guarantee any commitment on the part of OSU or USAID to match you with a Lead PI, Lead institution, or other collaborators.

## 7. How much matching contribution must I commit in my proposal?

The required match is at least 50%, of which at least 35% must come from non-federal cost share sources from US institutions. For example, a \$400,000 proposal must show

minimum matching contributions of \$200,000. Of the \$200,000 at least \$140,000 must be committed as non-federal US cost-share.

For the US government definition of non-federal cost share, please refer to information contained within the Budget Information forms on the RFP website (also see the USG document 22CFR226).

Non-federal cost-share can be in-kind or cash. Host country and other forms of match can also be in-kind or cash contributions but do not need to adhere to regulations governing what can count as cost-share.

## **8. How much PI salary support can I include in my proposal? Can I use project funds to “buy-out” my time teaching or from other responsibilities at my university?**

From the RFP website, Budget Information: “Salary support for US principal investigators is not encouraged and, if funded, will not exceed 0.16 FTE (@ 2 months) total for all US PIs from a single institutional project. US PIs charging any portion of salary to the award must also be serving in the capacity of major advisor to a graduate student working under an approved CRSP work plan.”

The CRSP model discourages US PI or US co-PI salary to be paid with project funds, and it discourages paying for US consultants to carry out regular project activities. It is worth noting that a provision for US PI salary has been made, given the realities of the modern US university environment. US PIs can charge up to two months salary on their project, if and only if they serve as major advisor to a CRSP graduate student on a CRSP-funded investigation. In other words, this must be a graduate student who is working on an investigation that was approved as part of your CRSP proposal. The CRSP graduate student can be matriculated at the US or HC universities referenced in your project, and can be a US citizen or not. This exception does not extend to your being advisor to

undergraduate students or post-docs – it is only for Graduate students. “Buy-out” of US PI time (for teaching classes, etc.) follows the same rules as salary. Only up to approximately 2 months is allowed (0.16 FTE).

No more than 0.16 FTE can be charged for PI or co-PI salary from a single US institution. If the Lead is involving subcontracting US institutions, each additional institution can charge up to the 0.16 FTE limit for PI (and co-PI) salary. In all cases, salary will be closely reviewed and must be clearly linked to graduate student supervision and CRSP research. US PIs and co-PIs are expected to have their university’s support in providing them with buy-out, time (FTE), or other resources to participate in the project. Such university support, if it is in-kind or cash, should be detailed in the budget justification, and may count towards the non-federal cost-share requirement. (The cost-share source must be consistent with the federal guidelines – see 22CFR226. Usually, State funds for buying out salary can count towards the non-federal cost-share requirement.)

For other US research staff that are not PIs or co-PIs – for example research associates (post-docs without the co-PI title), faculty research assistants and laboratory technicians – any amount of FTE may be charged. They are not held to the 0.16 FTE limit.

**IMPORTANT:** Salary for US clerical, secretarial, bookkeeping, or related office staff may NOT be charged to the project.

Host Country PIs and co-PIs may charge any amount of FTE – they do not have to adhere to the 0.16 FTE limit. This decision is left to individual projects.

## **9. Can proposals be "global" and theme-based rather than focused on one geographic region?**

A successful proposal will include several investigations that likely focus on one geographic region and one or more of the 10 research topic areas. It might be entitled "Environmental Management for Sustainable Aquatic Resources Use in Ghana, Kenya,

and South Africa"; it might include six investigations encompassing these three research *topic areas*: Indigenous Species Development; Human Health Impacts of Aquaculture; and Technology Adoption and Policy Development. It would have to be multidisciplinary. While a global proposal could still be successful—as long as it was multidisciplinary and involved more than one US institution and, ideally, more than one HC institution—the risk is that, with so wide a scope, it might be seen as overly broad by reviewers. Remember that each proposal must identify only one *Global Theme*; for example: Theme C: Environmental Management for Sustainable Aquatic Resources Use (as reflected in the proposal title in the example above).

## **10. Would a proposal that focuses on octopus nutrition research in Peru (or insert any specific project here) get funded?**

That proposal alone will not be funded. If it is one investigation that is part of a larger proposal that incorporates several different investigations, the likelihood for funding increases. Keep in mind that proposals that have potential to increase food security most directly will likely be more successful than those that address specialty or ornamental fish production. Ornamental or non-food fish research can however be proposed as part of a broader concept tying various topics together in one theme.

## **11. Does the RFP focus only on fish? Can I propose to work on aquatic plants or shellfish?**

The RFP includes all aquaculture species and species of fish commonly fished in freshwater and near shore marine environments. There are a number of environmental considerations for determining which aquatic plants and animals you might focus on. From the RFP:

### *Priority Ecosystems*

*Freshwater and brackishwater ecosystems for aquaculture and aquaculture-fishery nexus topic areas; marine ecosystems are also included for the aquaculture-fishery nexus topic areas.*

### *Priority Species*

*Low-trophic level fishes; domesticated freshwater fishes; non-finfishes (e.g., bivalves, seaweeds); aquatic organisms used in polycultures and integrated systems; native species. Food fishes are a priority but species used for non-food purposes (e.g., ornamental, pharmaceutical) may also be included as a priority if they are a vital part of an integrated approach towards food security and poverty alleviation.*

Successful proposals will consider the following USAID *environmental restrictions*:

- Biotechnical investigations will be conducted primarily on research stations in Host Countries;
- Research protocols, policies and practices will be established prior to implementation to ensure that potential environmental impacts are strictly controlled;
- All training programs and outreach materials intended to promote the adoption of CRSP-generated research findings will incorporate the appropriate environmental recommendations;
- All sub-awards must comply with environmental standards;
- CRSP Projects will not procure, use or recommend the use pesticides of any kind. This includes but is not limited to algicides, herbicides, fungicides, piscicides, parasiticides, and protozoacides.
- CRSP Projects will not use or procure genetically modified organisms (GMO); and
- CRSP Projects will not use or recommend for use any species that are non-endemic to a country or not already well established in its local waters, or that are non-endemic and well established but are the subject of an invasive species control effort.

**12. I would like to work on genetic improvement of tilapia, and also will need to transport fish to different countries in my region for field-testing purposes.**

USAID policy states that CRSP Projects “will not use or recommend for use any species that are non-endemic to a country or not already well established in its local waters, or that are non-endemic and well established but are the subject of an invasive species control effort.” Transfer or transportation of fish can be proposed for research purposes but will likely introduce long delays in project start-up as myriad permits and approvals will be required from the US Government. There is no guarantee that these approvals will be granted, moreover. According to USAID, CRSP projects “will not use or procure genetically modified organisms (GMO)”, so if your research topic focuses on GMOs, it will not be funded. Genetic improvement through selective breeding or non-GMO methods is not restricted, but is subject to scrutiny by technical reviewers and USAID.

### **13. Does my institution qualify for proposal funding?**

The current RFP is open to all US universities and research institutions, as defined above in this FAQ and in the RFP itself.

Host Country (HC) research must be conducted in USAID-eligible countries; therefore, HC institutions qualify if they are based in USAID-eligible countries (RFP website: [USAID links](#)). Proposals must be submitted by a US institution via a US Lead PI, as this is the basis of the CRSP model. International NGOs can serve as HC institutions, but HC institutions with access to students and a variety of resources for carrying out research may serve your project best.

### **14. I have begun writing a proposal and have a signed MOU and a draft budget to collaborate with an institution in a USAID-eligible country. Under this RFP, it appears I have to submit this proposal as part of a larger whole. Is this true?**

Proposals must be multidisciplinary and multi-institutional, involving multiple US institutions plus at least one HC institution. You may want to find another individual who is putting a proposal together in this region (see Bulletin Board) and ask to have your investigation incorporated in his or her proposal (that person would be Lead PI).

Alternately, you could invite other researchers to add investigations to your proposal (you would be Lead PI). Since you have mentioned MOUs, note that executed MOUs are not required to be in place at the time a proposal is submitted. In any case, keep in mind that "CRSP" MOUs require certain elements: they must provide the opportunity for other CRSP projects to function under the authority of the agreement, and they must provide for joint authorship of reports and site visits at the discretion of the CRSP ME.

### **15. I would like to submit a proposal with many different topics (cage culture research, pond waste usage, and aquaculture/wetland interaction) involving numerous PIs. In addition, the research would take place in various regions of the world. How can I do that?**

The approach you describe would likely result in a proposal that is too broad, both in its thematic and geographic scopes, and would not likely be successful. An alternate plan might be for you and the other researchers to organize your investigations into several regional proposals. For example, you could be the Lead PI for a proposal in South America; your lead proposal would include other PIs' investigations and, if the proposal is funded, your institution (Institution A) would issue subcontracts to your co-PIs. A second person, at US Institution B, could be the Lead PI for a proposal in Africa; your investigation would be part of that portfolio, and your institution would be a subcontractor to Institution B. A third individual could be Lead PI at US Institution C for a Southeast Asia proposal; again, your investigation would be part of the Southeast Asia portfolio and your institution would be a subcontractor to Institution C. Please keep in mind that more than one Lead proposal from the same PI and Lead Institution will not be

funded. However, several funded proposals may include the same individual acting as a co-PI.

## **16. I am going to propose an investigation in Vietnam. What is the budget ceiling for an investigation?**

A proposal that is composed of only one investigation will not be funded. Individual investigations must be submitted as part of a larger proposal. The recommended funding level for a 30-month proposal is \$400,000. There is no ceiling for what percentage an individual investigation receives within a proposal.

## **17. Making large awards to a few institutions only to have them issue secondary subcontracts to other institutions is wasteful because indirect costs are computed twice and less money is left for research. Wouldn't it be more cost-conscious for the ME to issue subcontracts directly to each of the participating institutions?**

Secondary subcontracting does not increase the amount of funds charged as indirect costs; it has no effect on the amount available for research. The basic premise to keep in mind is that indirect costs cannot be attached twice to federal funds. The following two scenarios illustrate that, regardless of the management structure, the total amount of direct funds available for research remains identical.

Scenario 1: The Management Entity (ME) has \$1,000,000 to allocate to research, and the goal is to have 10 institutions involved, with each receiving the same amount in research funds. ME Institution issues 10 subcontracts. ME Institution administration takes 26% of the first \$25,000 (or \$6,500) on every subcontract written (\$6,500 times ten subcontracts equals \$65,000). The MEs pot of \$1,000,000 is reduced by \$65,000, leaving \$935,000 to

be allocated among the ten subcontracts. Since this amount is to be distributed evenly among the ten, each gets \$93,500.

Scenario 2: ME has \$1,000,000 to allocate to research, and the goal is to have 10 institutions involved, with each of the 10 receiving the same amount in research funds. Only five institutions will be ME subcontractors; the other five will be secondary subcontractors. ME Institution administration takes 26% of the first \$25,000 (or \$6,500) on every ME subcontract written (\$6,500 times five subcontracts = \$32,500). The MEs pot of \$1,000,000 is reduced by \$32,500, leaving \$967,500. Each of these five will now write one secondary subcontract, and each administration will take 26% of the first \$25,000 (\$6,500). There goes another \$32,500 from the total; \$967,500 minus \$32,500 equals \$935,000. Since this amount is to be distributed evenly among the ten, each gets \$93,500. Each of the MEs five subcontractors is going to get a total of \$193,500; \$6,500 will be taken off the top by the subcontracting institution, leaving \$187,000—or \$93,500 for the subcontractor and \$93,500 for the secondary subcontractor.

Scenarios 1 and 2: To finish off both scenarios above, regular institutional indirect still needs to be factored in. Let's assume that the 10 institutions have the same official indirect rate—40%—for on-campus research and that the on-campus rate is appropriate in all ten cases. Once the 40% indirect rate is calculated, the total amount left in direct funds at each institution—whether in Scenario 1 or 2—is \$66,786, which is the balance from \$935,000 after each institution has charged for indirect costs (\$26,714 is 40% of \$66,786; \$26,714 plus \$66,786 equals \$93,500). You can see here that the amount available for research is unaffected by the structure of the subcontracting. The only difference between these two examples is that in Scenario 1, the ME is collecting the entire \$65,000 in subcontract indirect. In Scenario 2, the ME collects only \$32,500 in subcontract indirect, and administrations of each of the five principal subcontractors collect an equal share of the balance; that is, each takes \$6,500. The amount available for research (\$66,786) does not change.

## **18. Will my track record on the old PD/A CRSP or Aquaculture CRSP be taken into account during the proposal review?**

In order to level the playing field, those new to CRSP and those who have had CRSP projects under another CRSP are treated equally in the technical review. Your track record in a previous CRSP project is not a criterion for the technical review. However, each lead institution's track record is reviewed in order to ascertain whether it has competency and a high likelihood for success.

## **19. Can the same investigation appear in more than one proposal?**

The same investigation can appear in more than one proposal. If more than one of these proposals are funded, funding for that investigation will only be provided through one of the proposals.

## **20. What happens if I submit my proposal late?**

It will be considered ineligible for review and funding, and will be rejected outright.

Your emailed proposal will be considered the official "date sensitive" submission. Remember to submit your proposal to [acrsp@oregonstate.edu](mailto:acrsp@oregonstate.edu), as this address gets distributed to two inboxes and can prevent email overloads that may, but hopefully will not, arise with large files being submitted on the closing date. Consider sending compressed, zipped, or smaller sized pdfs. The paper copies you submit will serve as the official review copies.

The closing date is 31 January 2007 (by midnight US Pacific time). If your email submission bounces, please immediately send a short SOS email to [egnah@onid.orst.edu](mailto:egnah@onid.orst.edu),

AND call 1.541.737.6426 and leave a clear message indicating your name and institution, title of your proposal, total number of pages in your proposal, and the circumstances of your problem.

Paper copies MUST contain the exact same information that was submitted via email. Electronic media must contain the exact same information that was submitted via hard copy or email.

## 21. What happens if I submit an incomplete proposal?

It depends. If you are missing institutional signatures, your proposal will be considered ineligible for review and funding, and will be rejected outright. If you do not have a budget, budget justification, proposal narrative, letter of support, CV, and other information (or waivers) requested on the proposal checklist, your proposal will be considered ineligible for review and funding, and will be rejected outright. If you submit documentation that is incorrect, but mostly complete, OSU will work with the highest ranked projects following the technical review process to ensure that all documentation is fully complete.

## 22. What happens if I submit a proposal that does not follow the RFP?

It depends. If the lead US institution is ineligible, your proposal will be considered ineligible for review and funding, and will be rejected outright. If your proposal narrative exceeds the 30-page limit, all pages in excess of the limit will be deleted from your proposal before it gets sent to reviewers.

Keep in mind that reviewers and USAID will use the RFP as a guide to proposal evaluation. Proposals that adhere closely to the RFP will obtain higher ratings than those that do not.

**Return to RFP website** <http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/afcrsp/rfp/>