

AQUACULTURE & FISHERIES COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH SUPPORT PROGRAM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: GLOBAL RESEARCH, CAPACITY BUILDING, AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN AQUACULTURE AND AQUATIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT



IMPORTANT DATES Date of Release: 23 November 2006
Proposals are Due (10 weeks): 31 January 2007
Announcement of Selections: 31 March 2007

This Request for Proposals is issued by the Management Entity of the Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP, Snell Hall 418, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 97331 USA. Website: <http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/afcrsp> Email: acrsp@oregonstate.edu

The Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP (CRSP) Management Entity (ME) is inviting proposals for solving critical problems facing global aquaculture development and aquatic resources management in lower-income countries. The Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP is managed by Oregon State University under a five-year award from the US Agency for International Development (USAID). This RFP is designed to attract proposals that will develop linkages between the United States and selected Host Countries for Global Research, Capacity Building, and Institutional Development. Proposals must target regions and themes in furtherance of USAID's goals, as described in this RFP.

A single US institution will be the Lead Partner Institution for each proposal. Eligible lead institutions include US universities, colleges, and minority-serving institutions (see shaded box for details). Lead Partners are expected to assume strong administrative and technical leadership for projects, be involved in advisory groups serving the overall program, and form collaborative partnerships through sub-awards to developing country institutions, NGOs, IARCs, private sector firms, and other US universities or colleges.

The total award period under this RFP will be 2.5 years, from April 1, 2007 to September 30, 2009. Proposals will ideally include the participation of other US institutions to be funded by the Lead Partner Institution by means of secondary subcontracts. Host Country (HC) institution involvement is mandatory and will be funded via the Lead Partner Institution's award.

The average funding level available for 30-month multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary proposals is \$400,000. The program's flexibility in the number of proposals that will be funded depends on the overall funding received from USAID. Under current funding projections, up to eight Lead Partner awards are anticipated to be made to eight different institutions. Funding is typically allocated on an annual basis. All allocations are contingent on the annual funding level obtained from USAID and on performance under subcontract provisions.

A successful proposal will focus on one theme (p. 2) in one or more geographic regions (p. 5). Each proposal will likely include multiple investigations that each target one of the identified research topics (p. 3 to 4). Investigations are discussed in this RFP in more detail under Technical Considerations (p. 6). Proposals must address how they will align with overall Program goals.

The goal of the new Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP as stated by USAID is to "develop more comprehensive, sustainable, ecological and socially compatible, and economically viable aquaculture systems and innovative fisheries management systems in developing countries that contribute to poverty alleviation and food security." (USAID, May 2006)

Eligibility for Lead Partner Institution

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."

Eligibility for Additional Partners under the Lead: 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.

This Request for Proposals is issued by the Management Entity of the Aquaculture & Fisheries Collaborative Research Support Program, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, USA, under Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement No. EPP-A-00-06-00012-00. The ME will notify Lead Principal Investigators (PIs) of rankings on or around 31 March 2007. Lead PIs will be notified if the selection decision will be delayed. The ME reserves the right to modify this schedule as necessary to ensure that standards of fairness and accuracy are met. Actual awards are contingent on funding received by the ME. Assuming timely funding by USAID, projects are anticipated to begin 1 April 2007. As this RFP solicits 30-month projects, all investigations should be completed and all final reports submitted by 30 September 2009. All eligible institutions are encouraged to apply. Proponents with a demonstrable commitment to promoting and enhancing diversity are encouraged to apply.

Disclaimer: Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Oregon State University, nor does it commit the University to pay for costs incurred in the preparation or submission of an application. In addition, final award of any resultant sub-awards cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal OSU procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. Should circumstances prevent award of a project, all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

GLOBAL THEMES

The four global themes of the CRSP are cross-cutting and address several specific USAID policy documents and guidelines, including the *Policy Framework for Bilateral Foreign Aid*, *Agriculture Strategy*, EGAT Offices of Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Strategic Objectives, and IEHA (Initiative to End Hunger in Africa). To see how these themes relate to USAID's focal areas and for additional information on these USAID documents, please refer to the CRSP RFP website: *USAID Goals and Guidelines*. The overall research context for this RFP is poverty alleviation and food security improvement through sustainable aquaculture development and aquatic resources management. **Proponents will identify one primary theme (goal) for their overall proposal.** Proposals must address all four themes in an integrated systems approach, but will primarily focus on one theme as it relates to producing positive development outcomes:

Global Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP Themes (Goals)

- A. Improved Health and Nutrition, Food Quality, and Food Safety
- B. Income Generation for Small-Scale Fish Farmers
- C. Environmental Management for Sustainable Aquatic Resources Use
- D. Enhanced Trade Opportunities for Global Fishery Markets

The CRSP will be managed in a manner that achieves maximum program impacts, particularly for small-scale farmers and fishers, in Host Countries and more broadly. CRSP overall program objectives address the need for world-class research, capacity building, and information dissemination. Specifically, the Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP will strive to:

- Develop sustainable end-user level aquaculture and fisheries systems to increase productivity, enhance international trade opportunities, and contribute to responsible aquatic resource management;
- Enhance local capacity in aquaculture and aquatic resource management to ensure long-term program impacts at the community and national level;
- Foster wide dissemination of research results and technologies to local stakeholders at all levels, including end users, researchers, and government officials; and
- Increase Host Country capacity and productivity to contribute to national food security, income generation, and market access.

AQUACULTURE & FISHERIES CRSP TOPIC AREAS FOR RESEARCH, OUTREACH AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Thematic proposals will contain implementation plans (investigations) organized around a number of specific areas of inquiry (called Topic Areas). **Proponents will identify one topic area for each investigation in the proposal.** Proposals may contain between one and ten investigations (see p. 9). Thus, proposals may focus on more than one topic area in describing aquaculture research that will improve diets, generate income for small-holders, manage environments for future generations, and enhance trade opportunities. Proposals should be formed around *core program components*, as identified by USAID:

- a systems approach
- social, economic, and environmental sustainability
- capacity building and institution strengthening
- outreach, dissemination, and adoption;
- gender integration

A systems approach requires that each CRSP project integrate topic areas from both *Integrated Production Systems*, and *People, Livelihoods and Ecosystem Interrelationships* (see below).* USAID also encourages the CRSP portfolio (the sum of all funded projects) to address biodiversity conservation and non-GMO biotechnology solutions to critical issues in aquaculture. While not every investigation will individually address each element recommended by USAID, **overall the proposal must describe a comprehensive development approach to a problem.**

Topic Areas pertain to aquaculture AND the nexus between aquaculture and fisheries. Some of the following topic areas overlap and are interconnected. Select each topic area so that it best describes each individual investigation. Select a range of topic areas so that together they address the broader theme (goal). The text under each topic area is provided for illustrative purposes and is not prescriptive.

RESEARCH AND OUTREACH TOPIC AREAS: INTEGRATED PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

• Production System Design and Best Management Alternatives

Aquaculture is an agricultural activity with specific input demands. Systems should be designed to improve efficiency and/or integrate aquaculture inputs and outputs with other agricultural and non-agricultural production systems. Systems should be designed so as to limit negative environmental impacts. CRSP research should benefit small-holder or low- to semi-intensive producers, and focus on low-trophic species for aquaculture development. Research on soil-water dynamics and natural productivity to lessen feed needs were fundamental to the Aquaculture CRSP; critical new areas of research may be continued. Interventions for disease and predation prevention must adopt an integrated pest management (IPM) approach and be careful to consider consumer acceptance and environmental risk of selected treatments.

• Sustainable Feed Technology

Methods of increasing the range of available ingredients and improving the technology available to manufacture and deliver feeds is an important research theme. Better information about fish nutrition can lead to the development of less expensive and more efficient feeds. Investigations on successful adoption, extension, and best practices for efficient feed strategies that reduce the “ecological footprint” of a species under cultivation is encouraged. Feed research that lessens reliance on fish meals/proteins/oils and lowers feed conversion ratios is desired, as is research on feeds (ingredients, sources, regimes, formulations) that result in high quality and safe aquaculture products with healthy nutrition profiles.

• Indigenous Species Development

Domestication of indigenous species may contribute positively to the development of local communities as well as protect ecosystems. At the same time, the development of new native species for aquaculture must be approached in a responsible manner that diminishes the chance for negative environmental, technical, and social impacts. Research that investigates relevant policies and practices is encouraged while exotic species development and transfer of non-native fishes are not encouraged. A focus on biodiversity conservation, and biodiversity hotspots, as related to the development of new native species for aquaculture is of great interest. Aquaculture can be a means to enhance and restock small-scale capture and wild fisheries resources (Aquaculture-Fisheries Nexus Topic Area). Augmentation of bait fisheries through aquaculture to support capture fisheries is an area of interest, provided there are no net negative environmental effects.

• Quality Seedstock Development

Procuring reliable supplies of high quality seed for stocking local and remote sites is critical to continued development of the industry, and especially of small-holder private farms. A better understanding of the factors that contribute to stable seedstock quality, availability, and quantity for aquaculture enterprises is essential. Genetic improvement (e.g., selective breeding) that does not involve GMOs may be needed for certain species that are internationally traded. All genetic improvement strategies need to be cognizant of marketplace pressures and trends, including consumer acceptance and environmental impacts.

* USAID requires scientists to adopt a systems approach for understanding how their research relates to three elements: Livelihoods, Production Landscapes, and Market Forces. The correspondence of these three USAID elements to the Topic Areas above is: Livelihoods and Market Forces = *People, Livelihoods and Ecosystem Interrelationships*; Production Landscapes = *Integrated Production Systems*.

RESEARCH AND OUTREACH TOPIC AREAS: PEOPLE, LIVELIHOODS, AND ECOSYSTEM INTERRELATIONSHIPS

• Human Health Impacts of Aquaculture

Aquaculture can be a crucial source of proteins and micronutrients for improved human health, growth, and development. Research on the intrinsic food quality of various farmed fish for human consumption is needed – this might include science-based studies of positive and negative effects of consuming certain farmed fishes. Patterns of fish consumption are not well understood for many subpopulations. Human health can be negatively impacted by aquaculture if it serves as a direct or indirect vector for human diseases. There is interest in better understanding the interconnectedness of aquaculture production and water/vector-borne illnesses such as malaria, schistosomiasis, and Buruli ulcer and human health crises such as HIV/AIDS and avian flu.

• Food Safety and Value-Added Product Development (Aquaculture-Fisheries Nexus Topic Area)

Ensuring high quality, safe, and nutritious fish products for local consumers and the competitive international marketplace is a primary research goal. Efforts that focus on reducing microbial contamination, HACCP controls and hazards associated with seafood processing, value-added processing, post-processing, and byproduct/waste development are of interest. Consumers and producers alike will benefit from research that contributes to the development of standards and practices that protect fish products from spoilage, adulteration, mishandling, and off-flavors. Certification, traceability, product integrity and other efforts to improve fish products for consumer acceptance and international markets are desired. Gender integration is important to consider as women are strongly represented in the processing and marketing sectors.

• Technology Adoption and Policy Development

Developing appropriate technology and providing technology-related information to end-users is a high priority. The program encourages research that results in a better understanding of factors and practices that set the stage for near-term technology implementation and that contribute to the development of successful extension tools and methods. Areas of inquiry can include institutional efforts to improve extension related to aquaculture and aquatic resources management; science-based policy recommendations targeting poor subpopulations within a project area, or more broadly (for example, national aquaculture strategies); methods of improving access to fish of vulnerable populations including children (e.g., school-based aquaculture programs); science-based strategies for integrating aquaculture with other water uses to improve wellbeing, such as linkages with clean drinking water and improved sanitation. Policy initiatives that link aquaculture to various water uses to improve human health are needed. Additionally, social and cultural analyses regarding the impacts of fish farming may yield critical information for informing policy development.

• Marketing, Economic Risk Assessment, and Trade (Aquaculture-Fisheries Nexus Topic Area)

Aquaculture is a rapidly growing industry and its risks and impacts on livelihoods need to be assessed. Significant researchable issues in this arena include cost, price, and risk relationships; domestic market and distribution needs and trends; the relationships between aquaculture and women/underrepresented groups; the availability of financial resources for small farms; and the effects of subsidies, taxes, and other regulations. Understanding constraints across value chains in local, regional, and international markets is of interest, especially as constraints affect competitiveness, market demand, and how to link producers to specific markets.

• Watershed and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (Aquaculture-Fisheries Nexus Topic Area)

Aquaculture development that makes wise use of natural resources is at the core of the CRSP. Research that yields a better understanding of aquaculture as one competing part of an integrated water use system is of great interest. The range of research possibilities is broad—from investigations that quantify water availability and quality to those that look into the social context of water and aquaculture, including land and water rights, national and regional policies (or the lack thereof), traditional versus industrial uses, and the like. Water quality issues are of increasing concern as multiple resource use conflicts increase under trends toward scarcity or uneven supply and access, especially for freshwater. Ecoregional analysis is also of interest to explore spatial differences in the capacities and potentials of ecosystems in response to disturbances. Innovative research on maximizing water and soil quality and productivity of overall watersheds is of interest. Pollution is a huge concern, as over 50% of people in developing countries are exposed to polluted water sources. Additionally, aquatic organisms cannot adequately grow and reproduce in polluted waters, and aquaculture may not only be receiving polluted waters, but adding to the burden. Rapid urbanization has further harmed coastal ecosystems, and with small-scale fisheries and aquaculture operations in the nearshore, integrated management strategies for coastal areas are also important.

• Mitigating Negative Environmental Impacts (Aquaculture-Fisheries Nexus Topic Area)

With the rapid growth in aquaculture production, environmental externalities are of increasing concern. Determining the scope and mitigating or eliminating negative environmental impacts of aquaculture—such as poor management practices and the effects of industrial aquaculture—is a primary research goal of this program. A focus on biodiversity conservation, especially in biodiversity “hotspot” areas, as related to emerging or existing fish farms is of great interest. Therefore, research on the impacts of farmed fish on wild fish populations, and research on other potential negative impacts of farmed fish or aquaculture operations is needed, along with scenarios and options for mitigation.

Please note that specific fisheries issues will be addressed through subsequent Associate Awards involving USAID Missions, and not in the current RFP.

PROGRAM REGIONS

Proposals that focus on established Aquaculture CRSP Host Countries and overlap with emerging interest areas of the CRSP are encouraged. Strengthening existing countries' infrastructure builds on previous USAID investments. However, new host country linkages may be proposed (RFP website: *New HC Research Location Considerations*). Proposals will be evaluated based on the strength of linkages to host countries, among other criteria. **Your proposal must focus on one USAID-eligible country within a region, but activities are encouraged in nearby countries within the same region or across regions.** Please refer to the RFP website for current countries included in USAID's *Country-Level Foreign Assistance Framework* and USAID's *Policy Framework for Bilateral Foreign Aid*. USAID requires that one-quarter of the overall Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP portfolio focuses on countries included in the *Initiative to End Hunger in Africa* (RFP website: *USAID Links*). CRSP will focus primarily, although not exclusively, on Rebuilding Countries, Developing Countries, and Transforming Countries in the following regions:

- Central America
- South America
- Caribbean
- Africa
- South and East Asia
- Eastern Europe
- Central Asia



Current IEHA countries: Mali, Ghana, Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda, Kenya.
 Additional IEHA countries under consideration: Malawi, Nigeria, and Tanzania.

Continuing relationships may be built on foundation work laid by the Aquaculture CRSP in the following countries. For established institutional partners under the Aquaculture CRSP, please see weblink: <http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/>

AMERICAS

- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Peru
- Dominican Republic

AFRICA

- Egypt
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Rwanda
- Tanzania
- South Africa

ASIA

- Bangladesh
- Cambodia
- China
- Indonesia
- Laos
- Nepal
- Philippines
- Thailand
- Vietnam

OTHER SITE CONSIDERATIONS

USAID-Eligible Countries: Several countries listed above are not identified in the USAID Country-Level Foreign Assistance Framework currently under development. It is unknown whether these unidentified countries are ineligible. If you are interested in a country not mentioned in the Framework, please contact the CRSP ME for additional information. Cautionary note: Proposed activities will require USAID country-level concurrence prior to award. Non-concurrence can mean that a project or investigation is not approved for funding. For a list of USAID-presence countries, please go to the USAID links from the RFP website.

Memoranda of Understanding: Upon award selection, the Lead Partner Institution will be required to enter into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with institutions at Host Country sites. Subcontracting US institutions may also enter into MOUs with HC partners to strengthen institutional relationships and streamline administrative processes. MOUs between Host Country institutions are not discouraged but will not take the place of MOUs between US and Host Country institutions. MOUs must provide the opportunity for other CRSP projects to function under the authority of the agreement and must provide for joint authorship of reports and site visits at the discretion of the CRSP Management Entity. Draft MOUs must be submitted to the ME for review prior to execution (RFP website: *MOUs*).

New Host Country Collaborating Institutions: Proposals that add a new Host Country research location must include a response to the New Host Country Research Location Considerations (RFP website: *New HC Research Location Considerations*). Successful proponents may be required to prepare and submit full characterizations of new Host Country research locations during project negotiation. Descriptions of previous and current ACRSP research sites are available: http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/pubs/featured_titles/

Fostering Respectful Partnerships: Proposals that foster linkages with organizations including US minority-serving institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national agricultural research institutions, other CRSPs, international centers, private businesses, and others are desired. Proposals that link Host Country researchers from one CRSP site to another CRSP site are encouraged. US and Host Country PIs will share in budgetary decisions and overall priority setting for the project, as well as in other collaborative activities related to the CRSP. Proposals, work plans, and project budgets must be developed collaboratively between HC and US researchers.

US PIs must actively establish an effective working relationship with the ME and other CRSP US and Host Country PIs and program participants.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR AWARD OF A CRSP PROJECT

Research that generates new information should form the core of proposals. Proposals must also include institutional strengthening, outreach, and capacity building activities such as training, formal education, workshops, extension, and conference organizing to support the scientific research being proposed.

1. Proposals must be innovative, feasible, and demonstrate technical merit as assessed via peer review.
2. Investigations that generate new information should form the core of proposals. Each investigation must be clearly identified as an experiment, study, or activity, based on the following definitions:

Experiment A scientifically sound investigation that addresses a testable hypothesis. An experiment implies collection of new data by controlled manipulation and observation.

Study A study may or may not be less technical or rigorous than an experiment and may state a hypothesis if appropriate. Studies include surveys, focus groups, database examinations, most modeling work, and collection of technical data that do not involve controlled manipulation (e.g., collection and analysis of soil samples from sites without having experiments of hypothesized effect before collection).

Activity An activity requires staff time and possibly materials but does not generate new information like an experiment or a study. Conference organization, training sessions, workshops, outreach, and transformation and dissemination of information are examples of activities.

Investigations provide a transparent means for evaluating different types of work under the CRSP, be it quantitative, empirical, biologically-based, qualitative, policy-based, or informal.
3. Proposals must include at least one *experiment* or *study*. Proposals must also include outreach *activities* such as training, formal education, extension, and conference organizing to supplement the scientific research being proposed.
4. Proposals must identify intended beneficiaries, stakeholders, and end-users. To this end, each investigation must include a section on the *quantifiable benefits* that are anticipated (RFP website: *Quantifiable Benefits, and Outreach and Dissemination Plan*).
5. Proposals must provide a gender inclusivity strategy (RFP website: *Gender Inclusivity Strategy*).
6. Proposals that add a new Host Country research location to one of the CRSP regions must include a response to *New Host Country Research Location Considerations* and a plan for characterizing the new location (RFP website: *New HC Research Location Considerations*). Proponents may be required to prepare and submit full characterizations (*Site Descriptions*) of new Host Country research locations.
7. PI(s) will be responsible for fulfilling all ME and USAID reporting requirements (RFP website: *Reporting Requirements*).
8. Proposals must contain a plan for outreach and dissemination (RFP website: *Outreach and Dissemination Plan*). The CRSP seeks to build capacity of HC researchers, farmers, and other stakeholders through improved understanding of aquacultural technologies, including soft technologies such as best practices and knowledge-based systems, as well as hard technologies. Proposals must also briefly describe future plans for additional work in critical need areas, whether funded by CRSP or a different agency.
9. Successful proposals will address the following general *research priorities*:

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.

Target Groups
Aquaculture farms (small- to medium-scale, subsistence and commercial) and aquaculture intermediaries, policy makers, and others in host countries.

Key Partners
University, government, non-government, and private sector.
10. 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.

11. Successful proponents will be responsible for interactions with CRSP internal technical advisory groups. Each project will be assigned to one *Regional Center of Excellence* and one *Development Theme Advisory Panel*. These advisory groups will perform critical analysis and synthesis work for meeting USAID's goals, and producing lessons learned materials.
12. Overall program goals will address USAID needs for meeting biodiversity conservation and biotechnology earmarks. Not every project will need to address these earmarks, but overall CRSP portfolio selection will be based on meeting USAID needs, as well as the needs of host countries and others.
13. Projects will be expected to participate in a global pre-synthesis workshop early in the project start-up phase – most likely in Spring 2007. During this workshop, indicators, benchmarks and targets will be developed for synthesizing information across the broad global portfolio.
14. Applicants must provide a statement of project vision. (RFP website: *Project Vision*)

PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR AWARD OF A CRSP PROJECT

1. Proposals will ideally present a multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional approach to aquaculture research, development, and outreach in eligible Host Countries. Lead Partner Institutions and Lead PIs may submit more than one proposal, but award selection is likely to be limited to one proposal per Lead Partner Institution.
2. At least 50% of funds must be expended in or on behalf of the Host Country or region. (RFP website: *Budget Information*)
3. Proposals must be consistent with USAID's strategic objectives, goals, and requirements. (RFP website: *USAID Goals and Guidelines*)
4. Applicants are asked to select a USAID-eligible country for their base operations and are encouraged to involve satellite countries to broaden the potential impact of their results. Information regarding USAID-eligible countries can be accessed via the RFP website under USAID links.
5. At least 25% of the overall program portfolio will be devoted to proposals targeting IEHA countries. Current IEHA countries are: Mali, Ghana, Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda, and Kenya. (RFP website: *USAID links*). It is anticipated that funds awarded under this RFP will be allocated as follows: 32% to Africa; 32% to Asia; 32% to Latin America and the Caribbean; and 4% to other regions.
6. Each applying US institution must provide US non-federal cost sharing as required by USAID. Proponents should target a 50% matching contribution for this project, with at least 35% of the match provided as non-federal cost share from the participating US entities (RFP website: *Budget Information*).
7. A key consideration for award of CRSP funding is that each applying US institution provide strong institutional support through cost-sharing PI effort. Salary support for US PIs will be limited (RFP website: *Budget Information*). US PIs charging any portion of salary to the CRSP award must also be serving in the capacity of major advisor to a graduate student working under an approved CRSP investigation.
8. Collaborative efforts that involve undergraduate students, graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows are encouraged. CRSP funds will not be used to support US expatriate personnel or consultants, as the CRSP model is intended to build institutional networks and capacities.
9. Proposals that leverage support from other sources in furthering the broad goals of the CRSP are desired. Leveraged support is support in addition to US non-federal cost sharing funds required for award of a CRSP project and in addition to the HC institutional match.
10. Familiarity with institutions in the proposed HC and region as indicated by past relationships is desirable, as is a successful institutional track record of work in the proposed country. A short statement describing institutional capacity and track record in the proposed host country or countries is required.
11. Proponents from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply. US minority-serving institutions are encouraged to apply.
12. Proposals must demonstrate return benefits to the US in furtherance of the program's responsibility to provide mutual benefits and discoveries that can apply to the HC region and US and that will support future development of sustainable aquaculture.
13. Funding is typically allocated on an annual basis. All allocations are contingent on the annual funding level obtained from USAID and on performance under subcontract provisions.
14. USAID concurrence for projects in host countries will be required prior to award. The ME will obtain concurrence on behalf of highly ranked applicants via USAID/Washington. Applicants may include letters of support from USAID Missions in their proposals, but these will not take the place of USAID concurrence to the ME.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROPOSAL REVIEW

Prior to undergoing review, proposals will be checked for eligibility, completeness, and receipt date. Eligible proposals will undergo external technical peer review, which will be followed by programmatic review. Technical review will focus on scientific and intellectual merit, collaboration, and broader impact. Programmatic review will focus on overall portfolio balance among regions and themes; adherence to the RFP including the programmatic and budget sections; and adherence to the goals of USAID and needs of the host countries. (RFP website: *Proposal Review Criteria*)

EVALUATION GUIDELINES (excerpted). Please refer to the RFP Website for the complete review criteria.

INITIAL SCREENING

- Eligibility (institutional; RFP theme and topic area; country)
- Completeness
- Submission deadline

Eligible proposals will proceed to the review phase. Ineligible or late proposals will not qualify for review and/or funding consideration.

I. TECHNICAL PEER-REVIEW

INTELLECTUAL MERIT (50%)

1. Soundness
2. Innovation
3. Qualification of Researchers
4. Application of Research

COLLABORATION, CAPACITY BUILDING, AND BROADER IMPACTS (50%)

1. Education and Training
2. Inclusiveness
3. Human Health and Welfare
4. Networking and Institutional Development

II. PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

Part 1. RFP Adherence

- Adherence to all Programmatic Criteria listed in the RFP
- Adherence to Budget Criteria
- Adherence to Requested information for compliance and institutional support

Part 2. Portfolio Balance

- Regional Balance Assessment
- Thematic Balance Assessment
- Area of Inquiry (Topic Area) Representation
- Technical Ranking within Region and Theme

Part 3. USAID Compliance

USAID Eligibility

- Does the proposal have Mission concurrence?
- Is work proposed for a USAID-eligible country?
- Does the proposal address key USAID goals and interests as defined in the RFP materials?

Initial Environmental Examination Screening (problems may delay projects, or decline projects)

- Assessment of whether there are any obvious environmental issues not raised by the technical review
- Screening process and findings
- Examination and review as necessary

PROPOSAL ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT

- Format:**
- Paper Size: Standard (8.5" x 11")
 - Line Spacing: Single space
 - Minimum Page Margin: 1 inch on all sides
 - Minimum Font Size: 10 point (9 point for header or footer)
- Each page of the proposal subsequent to the cover page must identify the Lead PI and proposal title (abbreviated if necessary) and the page number.

CHECKLIST FOR PROPOSALS

A checklist is provided for assembling the proposal packet (RFP website: *Checklist for Proposals*). The research proposal narrative, item 3 below, **must not exceed 30 pages**.

Proposals must contain the following elements:

- 1. Cover Sheet Form with Institutional signature
- 2. Summary Page Form
- 3. Research Proposal Narrative (30 pages maximum)
 - a. Executive Summary; Introduction and Vision Statement (2-page limit)
 - b. Investigations (5-pg limit for each investigation; up to 10 investigations total; 26 pp total)
 - c. Outreach and Dissemination Plan (1-page limit)
 - d. Gender Inclusivity Strategy (1-page limit)
- 4. New HC Research Location Considerations (2-page limit)
- 5. Budget (with Institutional signature)
 - (3) single-year budgets for Lead. Include budgets for subcontractors and HC institutions (up to 9 single-year budgets)
 - (1) combined-year budget for Lead. Include the combined-year budget for subcontractors and HC institutions (up to 3 combined-year budgets)
- 6. Budget Justification for Lead, Subcontractors, and HC for each year (up to 9 forms)
- 7. Pending Funds Form
- 8. Conflict-of-Interest Form for each (Lead, US, and HC) PI
- 9. List of names of 5 reviewers (names, address and email, areas of expertise)
- 10. Letters of Commitment from HC PIs and from US and HC partners
- 11. Statement of institutional track record and experience in the proposed HC (2-page limit)
- 12. Lead Institution supporting information:
 - Animal Use Approval (or written waivers)
 - Human Subjects Approval (or written waivers)
 - NICRA for Lead Institution (Negotiated indirect cost rate agreement)
 - Institutional & Agency Certifications and Assurances (5 forms)
- 13. CVs of Lead PI and all US and HC Co-PIs (2-page limit per CV)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE DESCRIPTIONS OF INVESTIGATIONS ~ see Checklist: 3b ~

1. Individual investigation descriptions must not exceed five pages. All investigation descriptions within one proposal must not exceed 26 pages. Proposals may contain up to 10 investigations.
2. Each investigation must be described separately and include the following elements:
 - a. Title: below the title include the topic area (p. 3-4) to which the proposed investigation applies and specify whether the investigation is an experiment, study or activity (p. 6, item 2).
 - b. Lead PI and institutional affiliation; subcontracting co-PIs and institutional affiliations; HC PIs and institutional affiliation
 - c. Objective(s) [and null hypotheses for experiments]
 - d. Significance: Provide justification for conducting the proposed work, review similar and related work reported in the literature (include citations below under h.), and describe how the work relates to the priorities described in this RFP.
 - e. Quantified Anticipated Benefits: Identify target groups and direct and indirect benefits accruing from the research and outreach work. Benefits must be quantifiable (RFP website: *Quantifiable Benefits*).
 - f. Research Design or Activity Plan
 - (1) Location of work
 - (2) Methods
 - g. Schedule, indicating the start date (not earlier than 1 April 2007) and completion date (not later than 30 September 2009) of the proposed work.
 - h. Literature Cited

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

1. Submit your full proposal via email to acrsp@oregonstate.edu by 5pm Pacific Time on Wednesday, January 31, 2007. Also ten (10) printed copies and one (1) electronic copy on CD of each proposal must be received by Friday, February 2, 2007. The ME will acknowledge timely receipt of proposals via email to the Lead PI.
2. Do not exceed the proposal narrative 30-page limit. Proposals exceeding the proposal narrative page limit will not be considered.
3. Proposal packets must have the formal signed approval of the Lead Partner Institution.
4. Individual proposal parts (investigations) that will be carried out under subcontract from the Lead Partner Institution to another US institution must be affirmed by the formal signed approval of the subcontracting US institution. (*Attach a separate letter*)
5. Mail paper and CD submissions to:
Dr. Hillary S. Eгна
CRSP Director
Oregon State University
Snell Hall 418
Corvallis, OR 97331-1643 USA

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND FUTURE WORK

The goal of the Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP is to conduct research that contributes significantly to the removal of major constraints to sustainable aquaculture development and responsible small-scale fisheries management, thereby promoting economic growth, enhancing food security, and conserving natural resources in developing countries. CRSPs are funded by USAID under authority of the International Development and Food Assistance Act of 1975 (PL 94-161), and by participating institutions.

The Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP is a new CRSP under USAID/EGAT's Office of Natural Resources Management. Oregon State University was awarded the Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement (No. EPP-A-00-06-00012-00) for the Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP, which will run until 2011. In 2010, the program will be evaluated for a possible 5-year extension. Two major work plans (each with defined annual implementation plans) will describe the specific research to be carried out under the CRSP's framework of general research priorities. This RFP is a call for the First Work Plan. A second directed RFP is planned for late Spring 2007, about 4 months prior to the end of work commissioned by this first RFP. The second RFP will focus on gaps and emergent areas of research. It will run for two years, from October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2011. For the second directed RFP, CRSP researchers with incomplete First Work Plan investigations will not be eligible to receive funding until all previous obligations are satisfactorily met.

Additional information may be obtained from the Aquaculture & Fisheries CRSP 5-year plan and the Aquaculture CRSP Annual Administrative and Technical Reports, which are available on the CRSP RFP website. <http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/afcrsp/rfp>

~ AQUACULTURE & FISHERIES CRSP RFP ~

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

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CRSP RFP ?

Consult the CRSP RFP website pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/afcrsp/rfp for answers to **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**, a feature that will be added to over time.
Send an email to acrsp@oregonstate.edu or call ~ 541.737.6426