



CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

Strengthening Impact Assessment in the CGIAR: New partnerships for building impact assessment capacity

Email concept notes to: Tim Kelley timothy.kelley@fao.org no later than 15 October 2013

Background

The CGIAR Independent Science and Partnership Council's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA) is soliciting brief concept notes from any organization or individual interested in undertaking an activity or a set of activities aimed at building capacity within the CGIAR for conducting *ex-post* impact assessment of agricultural research. This call falls under Objective 4 of a new program on "Strengthening Impact Assessment in the CGIAR" (SIAC) which seeks to enhance the capacity within the CGIAR, at both Center and CRP levels, to conduct highly credible *ex post* impact assessments across a range of research areas. Interested parties should review the attached link which describes the major objectives of the 3-year [SIAC program of work](#).

Dates, modalities and restrictions

Concept notes should be submitted to Tim Kelley, SPIA secretary (timothy.kelley@fao.org). Please put "SIAC Objective 4 concept note" as the subject of your email. There is no standard format, but the concept notes should briefly (3 page maximum) describe the specific activities, with estimated budgets, that will address one or more of the current *ex post* impact assessment challenges in the CGIAR Centers and Research Programs.

Proponents from within the CGIAR are not eligible to apply directly – this is intended to be a mechanism for funding outside parties to work in partnership with CGIAR Centers and CGIAR Research Programs. The concept notes should therefore come from individuals / institutions outside the CGIAR. However, a statement of intent to form a capacity-building partnership that demonstrates that there has been dialogue between the proponent and the relevant CGIAR counterparts would strengthen the concept note.

Challenges that are to be addressed in the concept notes might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- developing a strategic approach to *ex post* impact assessment that results in prioritizing studies (and allocating resources accordingly) based on a clear understanding of the demand for and use of *ex post* impact assessment related information by donors and other key stakeholders
- pursuing various strategies for building stronger linkages with academic institutions and the broader impact and evaluation community of practice through specific programs such as pre-doc or post-doc positions or sabbaticals posted at the CGIAR Centers (co-financed), as well as other activities that generally promote more interaction and collaboration with advanced research institutes that involve top-quality young researchers – with special consideration to proposals involving female researchers
- ensuring that high-quality data and methods (best practice) are used in conducting impact assessments so that the impacts are estimated as rigorously as possible, e.g., addressing selection bias and poor empirical identification of technology impacts
- developing practical approaches and incentive structures for institutionalizing the systematic collection and maintenance of datasets relevant for impact analysis, such as:

- a. experimental data and on-farm trial data (for varietal testing for example) as a basis for estimating treatment effects in the absence of data from farm-level randomized trials *ex post*
 - b. collection and use of regionally or nationally representative panel data
- organizing short training courses or CGIAR-wide workshops on specific topics, e.g., impact pathway analysis, partial and general equilibrium models to capture economy-wide impacts of adoption of research derived agricultural technologies and policies, randomized control trials for short-term small scale impact evaluation
 - building a shared understanding between Center administration, impact assessment specialists and biological scientists about the potential use and value of *ex post* impact assessments, to encourage ownership and overcome institutional barriers to enhanced and continuous impact assessment

Timeframe for proposed activities

Any time period between December 2013 – December 2015.

Funding available

This will depend on the scope of work and perceived value, but it is anticipated that one or two grants will be awarded in the range of \$200,000 to \$300,000 each.

Criteria for selecting concept notes

- Addresses one or more of the major challenges for strengthening IA in the CGIAR
- Rationale and compelling argument for specific activities around IA
- Technical strength and experience of proponents / collaborators from non-CGIAR institution
- Value for money

Proponents should plan to create and maintain a detailed website (not just a webpage on the Center's website) for the partnership with all the planned activities, blogs from participants in the training, tools and slides used in presentations etc, to allow other Centers to learn from the experience.

Timeline for submission

Proponents have until 15 October 2013 to submit concept notes to SPIA at timothy.kelley@fao.org. Please put "SIAC Objective 4 concept note" as the subject of your email. Successful submissions will be notified by 30 October and invited to submit full proposals by 21 November. Notification of the successful full proposal(s) will be made before 10 December 2013.