

## Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) - Call for Proposals

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Updated 26 September 2024

#### Eligibility Criteria

- ***DFAT received several questions relating to specific organisations' eligibility or suitability for the MAP – Call for Proposals.***

*To ensure fairness and transparency, DFAT is unable to provide individual advice to organisations on their specific eligibility or suitability. Please refer to the MAP - Call for Proposals Guidance, Eligibility and Selection Criteria to self-assess against criteria.*

- ***Can a lead organisation who meets the eligibility criteria partner or form a consortium with a consultancy firm?***

*Consultancy firms are ineligible as specified implementing partners or as consortia members in proposals.*

- ***Can a lead organisation who meets the eligibility criteria sub-contract a consultancy firm?***

*Lead organisations may sub-contract consultancy firms (unspecified in proposals) during implementation if consistent with sample grant arrangements and organisational operating rules and procedures.*

- ***Please clarify if for-profit businesses are ineligible to submit a proposal, even as a sub-contractor or part of a consortium?***

*For profit, commercial, private companies, including managing contractors and consultancy firms are ineligible as specified implementing partners or consortia members in proposals.*

- ***Are privately owned companies eligible as implementing partners?***

*Privately owned companies are ineligible, unless operating as social enterprises as defined in FAQs.*

- ***Are Australian government owned companies eligible as implementing partners?***

*Australian government owned companies are ineligible.*

- ***Can proposals engage private sector through co-funding arrangements?***

*There are no restrictions on co-funding arrangements, please note that proposals must fully align with MAP eligibility and selection criteria and DFAT requirements.*

- ***For consortia approaches, does the delivery partner have to work in more than one country?***

*Proposals should be multi-country or subregional in nature and include two or more Mekong countries. For consortia arrangements, involving at least two partners, the breakdown of delivery partners' scope is determined by partner's ability to deliver. All consortium partners must operate in the Mekong subregion.*

- ***Can non-Australian local organizations in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam apply? Can local NGOs join consortiums?***

*Non-Australian local NGOs in all the countries of the Mekong can apply and also join consortia.*

- ***How should consortia approaches be presented in the proposal template?***

*Consortia should provide all relevant information for lead and implementing partners. Lead organisations should submit proposals and partners are encouraged to review the invitation to submit an activity proposal (including instructions to applicants) that detail how consortia*

information should be prepared, for example, copy and paste additional tables to detail partners and respond to necessary reference requirements.

- **Can consortia sub-contract and if yes, are there qualifications for the subcontractors and the maximum budget to be subcontracted?**

You can use subcontractors and we do not specify budget limits. That is for implementing organizations to detail in proposal budgets. Sub-contracting must comply with requirements detailed in sample grant arrangements.

- **Are countries outside of the Mekong Subregion eligible?**

Implementation in countries outside of the Mekong subregion would be ineligible for funding under the MAP - Call for Proposals.

- **Are INGOs headquartered outside of the Mekong subregion, but with an operating base in the subregion eligible?**

INGOs are eligible if they can demonstrate a base of operations (office/ business address) in the Mekong subregion that can be specified in the proposal, and an ability to operate in proposed countries of implementation.

- **Are international governmental and intergovernmental organisations, such as UN agencies eligible?**

International, regional and national governmental and intergovernmental organisations (including UN agencies) are ineligible as lead implementing partners or consortia members in proposals. International non-governmental organisations are eligible.

- **Can multilateral UN partners, development banks, intergovernmental organisations and other development partners engage as co-funders, but strictly not involved as implementers?**

There are no restrictions on co-funding arrangements, noting that proposals must fully align with the MAP eligibility and selection criteria and DFAT requirements.

- **Are government/ publicly funded or partially funded universities, research institutes or research organisations eligible to apply?**

Universities and research institutions (private and public) are eligible for the Call for Proposals. However, on a case-by-case basis DFAT may need to consult with our relevant Posts to consider any identified sensitivities involving the extent of government funded partners.

- **Are Australian government agencies eligible as implementing partners?**

Australian government agencies are ineligible.

- **Are you expecting Australian organisations to be part of each proposal?**

We are not expecting Australian organisations to be part of each proposal.

- **Can government organisation or agencies in the Mekong be an implementing partner, consortium partner or strictly beneficiaries?**

Government organisations or agencies in the Mekong cannot be implementing or consortium partners, but can be beneficiaries.

- **Can you please provide a definition of a social enterprise?**

Generally, an organisation that applies commercial strategies to achieve social objectives or values and reinvests profits towards its core social objectives or values.

- **Can one eligible institution submit two proposals as a lead organisation?**

There are no restrictions to the number of proposals an eligible lead organisation can submit. Each proposal will be reviewed on merit and the demonstrated ability to deliver.

- **Can an eligible organisation submit as a lead organisation in one proposal and participate as a subregional partner in another proposal?**

There are no restrictions to the number of proposals an eligible organisation can be involved. Proposals will be reviewed on merit and a demonstrated ability to deliver.

- **How are Non-Government Organisations (NGO) defined for the purposes of the call?**

NGOs are generally being defined as organisations formed independently from government and for a public or social interest. This includes international, regional or national non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations. Consortia of NGOs, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), along with universities, research institutions, foundations or social enterprises may be considered.

- **How are government aligned mass organisations defined for the purposes of the call?**

Generally, defined as organisations representing large-scale groups with substantial membership that collaborate to address social issues and are aligned with government.

- **Are there any special considerations to take into account for proposing activities in countries with sensitive operating environments or partners in the Mekong?**

Proposals involving countries with sensitive operating environments or partners will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and consulted with the relevant DFAT areas and/ or Posts.

- **Is it important for all delivery partners to provide some type of co-contribution and additional in-kind support? Can you explain the requirements of co-funding?**

We do not require co-funding arrangements, or in-kind contributions but provision is made in the templates if applicable. Proposals will be assessed on merit and against the selection criteria.

- **Is it a requirement to have worked previously with DFAT under MAP?**

It is not a requirement that you must have worked with DFAT under MAP to be eligible for this call for proposals. It is an open call, and all proposals will be assessed on their merits. Eligible partners are able to apply for new investment, not extensions to existing programs.

- **Is it mandatory for the lead organisation to be based in Australia, or can an institution from the Mekong subregion also take on this role?**

Organisations that can specify a base of operations (office/ business address) in either Australia or the Mekong subregional and meet all other eligibility criteria are eligible to be lead organisations.

- **How will you check the ability of submitted organizations to operate in proposed countries of implementation? Are there any documents requested for proving the eligibility of submitted organizations and/or its partners?**

The Guidelines, Eligibility and Selection criteria outline in Section 2.3 that if shortlisted, organisations are expected to meet [DFAT due diligence requirements](#). As required, further checks may also be undertaken through consultation with DFAT's Mekong Posts.

## Selection Criteria

- **What outcomes is DFAT expecting proposals to address through the MAP - Call for Proposals?**

*The Call for Proposals focuses on four of the five MAP End of Portfolio Outcomes (EOPOs):*

- *Mekong subregion partners reduce vulnerability to impacts of climate change;*
- *Mekong subregion partners manage water resources in a more coordinated and sustainable way;*
- *Mekong subregion partners increase leadership and economic opportunities for women, people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups; and*
- *Mekong subregion partners enable strengthened economic resilience and subregional integration.*

*Please refer to the [MAP Portfolio Design Framework](#) for further information on thematic priorities.*

- **Can proposals be structured to address multiple issues in multiple countries?**

*Proposals should be sub-regional or multicountry in nature, and may be structured to respond to one or more MAP end of program outcomes, in at least two or more Mekong countries. Proposals should also articulate how they effectively respond to specified transboundary development challenges.*

- **Does the proposal need to respond to all thematic intermediate outcomes under selected portfolio Outcome?**

*It is not a requirement to respond to all thematic intermediate outcomes under relevant End of Program Outcomes, but proposals are encouraged to demonstrate strong alignment with those considered key intermediate outcomes for respective proposals.*

- **Is it feasible to fund scholarships through the call?**

*MAP has separate processes to fund scholarships; these programs fall under our Leadership and Skills component which is outside the scope for this call.*

- **Can leadership and skills activities still be included in proposals if deemed cross cutting?**

*Leadership and skills activities may be included if cross cutting, but proposals should focus on prioritised thematic areas and EOPOs outlined for this call. See the [MAP Portfolio Design Framework](#) for further details on MAP thematic scope.*

- **Will proposals addressing more than one EOPO be assessed more highly?**

*Proposals may respond to one or more of the specified MAP EOPOs. Each proposal will be assessed based on merit against selection criteria, this includes an assessment of the organisation's ability to deliver the proposal.*

- **Will proposals targeting a higher number of countries be assessed more highly?**

*Each proposal will be assessed based on merit against selection criteria, this includes an assessment of the organisation's ability to deliver the proposal. Proposals may include two or more countries in the Mekong Subregion and should be subregional or multi-country in nature.*

- **What is the funding split for proposals between proposed thematic areas?**

*There is no set funding split between thematic areas. Proposals will be reviewed on merit to inform a balanced outcome.*

- **What is meant by reasonable accommodations?**

*Reasonable accommodation is the provision of support, modifications, and/or adjustments that meet the individual needs of people with disabilities to enable them to participate in, and benefit from Australia's development investments (targeted and mainstreamed).*

- **How many proposals will be awarded?**

*The total number of awards has not been set. It will depend on the volume and quality of the proposals we receive.*

- **What is the total funding available for the MAP - Call for Proposals?**

*The total amount of funding available has not been set. It will depend on the volume and quality of the proposals we receive.*

- **What is the ratio of grant and organisation contribution?**

*There is no specified ratio of grant to organisation contribution*

- **Are third party contributions compulsory?**

*Third party contributions are not compulsory.*

- **Are government agencies able to participate as third-party contributors?**

*Government agencies are ineligible as lead or implementing partners for grant funding under this call. The extent of government agency third-party involvement may be eligible, and can be outlined in proposals. Any sensitivities will be consulted with relevant DFAT areas and Posts. All proposals are expected to satisfy selection criteria and comply with DFAT's requirements.*

- **Do we need to obtain a written commitment of third party to their financial contribution when submitting the proposal?**

*Written commitments of third-party contributions are not required at this stage, but the extent of commitments may be indicated in the proposal for DFAT's follow-up in next steps if successful.*

- **Does DFAT have a preference on scaling existing relationships or projects vs. forming new ones?**

*MAP does not have a preference between scaling and establishing new projects. All proposals are expected to satisfy MAP selection criteria and be able to comply with DFAT's requirements.*

- **Can proposals work in partnership with other relevant initiatives in the region that are supported by other funders to achieve common goals and objectives?**

*Proposals may be complementary to existing initiatives to avoid duplication, but are expected to clearly satisfy MAP selection criteria and comply with DFAT's requirements.*

- **Are there guidelines on the different budget categories particularly for budget headings described as 'Overheads,' 'Administrative Support Costs' and 'Management Fees'?**

*Budget categories are included for indicative guidance. Overheads, administrative support and management costs generally refer to the operational aspects of programming. Other budget categories may be added or deleted as appropriate to ensure all relevant costs related to the proposal, including relevant activities and program requirements can be estimated for the duration, for example, costs may also be broken down annually and/ or contingency line incorporated. Budgets should be calculated in Australian dollars.*

- **Where can we find further information to complete budget tables?**

The invitation to submit an activity proposal (template) provides indicative tables to structure budget information. Budget table instructions should be followed as a general guide, excel tables may be used and imported into the word template to align with organisational budget templates.

- **What is the extent of detail required in budget tables?**

Proposed budget details should be as complete and accurate as possible for the Evaluation Committee to make an informed assessment. Any clarifying budget information/ explanation may be provided in relevant narrative sections.

- **What do Assets in Table 8 refer to?**

Assets refer to tangible items purchased under the grant arrangement that must be accounted for throughout the duration of the investment. The Assets table 8 is indicative and can be adjusted after entering into an agreement with DFAT. Assets must be administered in accordance with requirements detailed in sample grant arrangements.

- **Do you expect key staff to be named in the proposal?**

Proposals should outline all key human resource requirements and related costs including for all technical, program, operations and administrative staff necessary to efficiently and effectively deliver the proposal.

- **Is there a requirement that DFAT Aid Advisory Rates (ARF) be used to inform personnel budget lines?**

There is no requirement for proposals to use DFAT ARF for budget submissions, however, where advisor costs are included the ARF may be used as a general guide to support budget estimates.

- **Can the multiyear budget include small grants to support groups such as Indigenous women? Can the budget include establishment of pilot sites?**

Your proposal can include those things. Proposals will be assessed using the selection criteria, and we expect proposals to specify the range of activities to be funded.

- **Does project funding include travel costs for regional experts or Mekong participants to visit Australia, or are these costs covered by partners?**

All activity costs must be for Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligible activities only and included in proposals. ODA includes activities carried out with the economic development and welfare of developing countries as their main objective (further information is available in [FAQs on ODA – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#))

- **Does the budget cover salary? Can small equipment be purchased with this budget? Is there a maximum percentage of the total budget for the purchase of equipment?**

We encourage applicants to put as much detail in the budget table as possible, with explanatory notes of what you are putting there and why. We would expect proposals to outline known costs for what is required in order to implement the project only. Proposals will be assessed on the extent it represents value for money based on economy, efficiency, effectiveness and ethical use of funds.

- **Is any cost contribution from the implementing partner required? What percentage of organisation contribution of the total funding is expected?**

There is not a requirement for implementing partners to cost contribute, but please reflect it in the proposal if applicable.

- ***Is it necessary for the proposal to outline how partners will work together?***

*Proposals should clearly outline management, implementation and coordination arrangements in relevant sections of the proposal template.*

- ***Does MAP preference research or practice?***

*MAP does not have a specific preference, but proposals should demonstrate evidence-based approaches to contribute to MAP EOPOs.*

- ***Can referees be partners, funders, or beneficiaries of the projects that the organizations have implemented or participated?***

*Nominated referees may include these groups and support letters provided with submissions by 11 Oct. Support letters should align with referee criteria detailed on page 16 of the invitation to submit an activity proposal. There is no standard template other than outlined criteria.*

- ***Can one supporting letter for the entire consortium proposal be provided?***

*For consortia, two letters of support from referees must be provided for each consortium partner.*

- ***Where are DFAT's public affairs requirements located?***

*Relevant public affairs and publicity requirements are detailed in respective sample grant arrangements available on the DFAT business notification – MAP Call for Proposals.*

- ***What is the definition of transboundary in the Mekong subregion? Are you referring to geographical area or issues when we talk about transboundary in MAP?***

*We are referring to those issues that affect all the countries or a subset of countries. This includes issues like smoke haze, which does not respect the borders of countries, issues related to the Mekong River and water management, and issues relating to climate change that are transboundary in nature.*

- ***Are there any priority subregions within the Mekong for this funding round?***

*We have not specified priority subregions. The thematic areas of MAP give applicants the best indicator of areas that we are looking, including water security, climate resilience, GEDSI, economic resilience and sub-regional integration.*

- ***Do consortium members collectively have to demonstrate the ability to manage a total of at least two million, or each member have the capability of managing at least two million?***

*\$2 million refers to the minimum total proposal value. We do not require every consortium member to manage \$2 million. The consortium as a whole must be able to manage \$2 million, or the total amount budgeted in the proposal. The lead organization would be the organization that DFAT enters into an arrangement with and so that organization will be expected to provide the lead budget oversight of the consortium and any program requirements that apply.*

- ***How detailed should the MEL System, GEDSI Strategy, Communications and Publicity Plan be at this stage? Can they be changed later?***

*Requested annexes are indicative and intended to provide an outline of proposals approaches to MEL, GEDSI and communications. Annexes should strictly follow page or word limits indicated in the invitation to submit a proposal and follow suggested guidance notes. Successful proposals will be further refined through next design, feedback and quality assurance steps.*

- **Can we attach other supporting documents deemed relevant to the proposal and can prove our capacity, such as a list of previous similar projects?**

Additional supporting documentation to what is requested in the invitation to submit an activity proposal will not be considered. We request all relevant information be provided in sections of the template provided. For example, organisation capacity details can be concisely outlined in Annex 4, Table 5 (point 5) and through supporting letters. Individual CVs are not requested.

- **What evidence of prior or ongoing collaboration do you require for partnerships with regional stakeholders?**

Proposals should be able to outline the extent they have demonstrated impact in implementing similar investments in the Mekong subregion in Table 5.

- **How are each selection criteria weighted?**

Each selection criteria (Table 5, 1-6) are equally weighted.

- **How does DFAT evaluate proposals with significant differences in funding requests within the \$2 million to \$10 million range?**

Each proposal is assessed on its merits against eligibility and selection criteria.

- **Will Organisational Effectiveness be assessed solely on the lead organisations capacity, or will the capacity of all delivery partners in the consortia be assessed as a collective?**

Each proposal will be assessed on its ability to deliver intended objectives, including the capacity and capabilities of all specified delivery partners.

- **Would DFAT like proposals to focus on either the conceptual framework of the proposal and its intended outcomes or specific examples of proposed activities or issues to be assessed?**

Proposals should be structured consistently with the invitation to submit an activity proposal template and word counts or page limits strictly followed.

- **Would DFAT prefer evidence of past project success or innovative approaches for tackling new, transboundary challenges?**

Proposals should satisfy the selection criteria. In doing so, proposals will demonstrate how they intend to achieve objective(s) that respond to transboundary development challenges, as well as demonstrate impact in implementing similar investments in the Mekong subregion and also demonstrate value for money.

- **Will the capacity of sub-contractors be evaluated as part of the call or only lead and consortium members?**

Only specified lead and consortium partners will be evaluated. Sub-contractors are ineligible to be specified lead or consortia members in proposals. It is therefore not feasible to evaluate capacity of unspecified resources.

- **Are organisation certifications required for lead organisations and/ or implementing partners at the time of submission?**

All specified partners in proposals are required to submit organisation certifications at the time of proposal submission.



- **Must the proposed locations for project implementation be directly adjacent to the Mekong River, or can they be in any areas within the countries stated in the Mekong subregion?**

*Proposals can include any areas involving countries stated in the Mekong subregion under MAP. Any sensitive locations or operating environments may require further consultation with relevant DFAT areas and/ or Posts.*

- **Are we permitted to provide small cash grants to beneficiaries?**

*Small grants to beneficiaries may be considered under proposals, noting sufficient consideration should be provided to the ability of partners to manage risks associated with these activities, the extent this represents value for money, and contributes to specific MAP end of program outcomes. Provision of small grants would also need to comply with sample grant arrangement requirements.*

- **Are letters of support a requirement? Where can further information be found?**

*Applicants must submit letters of support from two referees. For consortia, two letters of support must be provided for each consortium partner. Further information is detailed on page 16 of the invitation to submit an activity proposal.*

- **What activity and operational costs are eligible under this funding?**

*The proposal template provides scope for prospective partners to outline all relevant program resources and budget costs associated with the implementation of activities, operations, necessary human resources required for the scope/ duration of the investment. All activities must be ODA eligible and contribute to the achievement of MAP EOPOs.*

## **Next Steps**

- **Will the information session be recorded and shared with those who cannot attend?**

*Consolidated summary questions and responses, including those from the information session will be published on DFAT Business Notification - MAP - Call for Proposals. DFAT aims to share a summary transcript of the information session with participants. The recording will not be shared.*

- **Could you also provide a record of questions and responses as indicated in the call for proposals invitation to submit document?**

*Consolidated questions and responses, including those from the information session will be published on DFAT Business Notification - MAP - Call for Proposals. DFAT will accept questions until 26 Sep 2024 and aims to post responses before 3 Oct 2024.*

- **What is the process for assessing and evaluating proposals under the MAP Call for Proposals?**

*The Mekong Hub will assess proposals' eligibility consistent with the Call for Proposals Guidance, eligibility and selection criteria. The Mekong Hub will facilitate expert technical assessment of each eligible proposal to inform the evaluation committee's assessment. This committee will comprise representatives from DFAT's Mekong Posts, Mekong Hub and Mekong Strategy Section. Evaluation Committee recommendations will be shared with the MAP Steering Committee for further endorsement.*

**When will applicants be notified of the evaluation outcomes?**

*DFAT aims to inform applicants of proposal outcomes by the end of the year (2024).*

- ***To what extent will DFAT inform applicants of the evaluation outcomes?***

*DFAT aims to inform applicants if proposals are successful or unsuccessful. However, feedback will only be provided (on request) for eligible proposals that are assessed by the Evaluation Committee.*

- ***Is there any other information related to the process 'further design, feedback, quality assurance'?***

*Depending on each successful proposal's scope and associated risk, further design steps or clarifications may be required and aligned to MAP's internal processes. Successful proposals will be expected to respond to Evaluation Committee and Steering Committee feedback to proceed and respond to relevant DFAT quality assurance assessments.*

- ***Will all partners identified in proposals be party to arrangements with DFAT?***

*Only a single lead organisation will be party to an arrangement with DFAT. Lead organisations that submit proposals will be responsible for all cascading requirements including overall administration of sub-grants to specified consortium members, and all program delivery arrangements and requirements detailed in proposals and arrangements.*

- ***Are co-led arrangements possible?***

*DFAT will only enter into arrangements with a single lead organisation. A single lead organisation should therefore be specified in proposals if partnering through a consortium.*

- ***How will tranche payments be structured?***

*After successful proposals proceed through next steps and to arrangement negotiations, appropriate tranche payment structures will be reviewed to ensure proposals have sufficient financial resources to deliver objectives efficiently and effectively. This may include tranche payments on arrangement signing and/or further tranche payments as required based on deliverables, milestones, disbursement rate or other indicative expenditure indicators over the duration of the investment.*

- ***If proposals have nominated a partner we think meets the criteria, but is deemed ineligible or unacceptable, will there be an opportunity for the lead organisation to seek replacement partners?***

*Only eligible proposals will proceed to the evaluation stage, and only successful proposals (following evaluation) will proceed to next steps, which provides opportunity for prospective partners to respond to DFAT feedback.*

## **MAP Portfolio**

- ***What is meant by supporting local architecture?***

*In the context of MAP, this refers to supporting and strengthening local partners and partnerships including government agencies, community organisations, think tanks, subregional bodies, networks and platforms. Please refer to section 5.5 of the MAP Portfolio Design Framework (locally led development and localisation) for further information.*

- ***What do "enabling" outputs mean?***

*Enabling outputs refer to internal MAP outputs designed to support the management and coordination of the MAP portfolio.*

- **What do intermediate thematic outcomes - external economic shocks and pressures mean?**

External economic shocks and pressures refer to events from outside of the Mekong subregion, or Mekong countries, that impact Mekong economic systems and/ or Mekong countries' economies.

- **Where can we find further information about MAP's initial phase and MAP lessons?**

Further information on MAP is available on [DFAT's Mekong Australia Partnership](#).

- **What is meant by 'Mekong sub-region partners...' in the context of MAP?**

MAP is committed to working with a broad range of Mekong sub-regional partners, this includes, but is not limited to sub-regional architecture, international, regional and national governmental and non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, universities, research institutes, foundations, private sector and other development partners.

## Other

- **Can you confirm that the Sample DFAT Complex Grant Agreement and the Sample DFAT Simple Grant Agreement are different and please update links?**

DFAT can confirm the sample Agreements are different and links have been updated accordingly.

- **Will DFAT grant all MAP funding through this call or there will be future calls, if so, is there a timeframe?**

MAP is using a range of funding modalities to program MAP investment, in addition to this call. MAP is not planning future calls, unless necessary.

- **What is the expected timeframe, including start date and eligible duration of proposals?**

Preference is for multi-year and longer-term proposals that cover the duration of MAP. Preference is also for proposals starting in DFAT's 24-25 financial year. However, we have not put any restrictions on later start dates, as some flexibility may be required. All proposals must conclude by the end of Jun 2029.

- **Will advisors or technical experts be provided by DFAT to guide applicants during the proposal development or implementation phases?**

MAP program staff will be available to assist successful proposals and partners through relevant next steps.

- **How is due diligence applied to consortium partners?**

DFAT has a category for cascading (downstream) due diligence checks applied through lead organisations when working with consortia and/ or downstream partners. Lead organization responsibilities may extend to downstream members and their capacities and capabilities used when in partnership. Further information is available in [DFAT's Due Diligence Framework](#).

- **What do we mean by lessons learned in the sector? Does this refer to past projects or in the region or sector?**

MAP takes a broad view of lessons learned. If the organization has been operating in a particular sector and can demonstrate how it has learned and responded to issues or challenges, then that is a good way of demonstrating lessons learnt. Equally, through projects and programming and ways of doing things in a different way, demonstrating from programming or operations where things that have worked (or not) and how organizations have strengthened responses.

- ***Is a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework expected to link with proposals for reporting and/ or if it is not specific to MAP, will we be expected to use DFAT indicators and/ or link in with reporting processes in any way?***

Proposals are expected to align with eligibility and selection criteria, which aligns with the MAP portfolio design framework and logic. Proposals will be expected to align with MAP's broader MEL framework for reporting, including alignment with relevant indicators. DFAT grant arrangements will further outline reporting requirements.

- ***Is information supplied kept confidential?***

As a competitive grant process DFAT is required to follow standard confidentiality and conflict of interest requirements. This extends to acknowledgement and declarations from all staff involved in the administration of the MAP – Call for Proposals, including members of eligibility, technical and evaluation committee assessments. All information supplied is stored on secured systems and information classified as 'official' or above and shared on a need-to-know basis only.

- ***Where can applicants find proposal and financial templates and guidelines for this call for proposals?***

All relevant proposal templates, guidance and background information, including eligibility and selection criteria, responses to frequently asked questions and information session transcript is available on [DFAT business notification – MAP Call for Proposals](#).

- ***If a successful lead partner already has a head agreement with DFAT can this be used to facilitate grant arrangements?***

DFAT's existing arrangements, such as head agreements and/ or due diligence assessments, of successful lead organisations can be leveraged to support grant arrangements where applicable.

- ***Is DFAT's South East Asia Development Partnership Plan (or Mekong equivalent) available yet?***

Our South East Asia Development Partnership Plan is expected to be available soon.

- ***Can you elaborate on what is meant by development Issues - in the application form?***

'Development issues' in Table 3 – Proposals Summary refers to a brief outline of the key development issues being addressed by the proposal and as further detailed in Table 4 – Point 3 – Major Development Objectives'. These should be aligned to MAP end of program outcomes.

- ***Is the proposal deadline extendable?***

The Call for Proposals submission deadline is fixed, and only complete proposals received by 5pm (AEST) on Friday, 11 October via the mailbox will be accepted. Please note submissions that are incomplete, do not meet eligibility and selection criteria or are received after the closing date will not be considered.

- ***Does GEDSI integration weigh differently across thematic areas such as economic resilience and sub regional integration and water security?***

All proposals will be assessed on the extent they respond to mainstreaming GEDSI priorities, including outcomes, approaches and reasonable accommodations. GEDSI focused proposals will be further assessed on the extent the proposal demonstrates specific, measurable and achievable pathways to achieving the relevant MAP end of program outcome on GEDSI.

- ***Is there any guidance on GEDSI and MEL, could you please direct us to the relevant webpages?***

Additional guidance on DFAT's approaches to [GEDSI Analysis](#) and DFAT's [Design and MEL Standards](#) are available online.