AusAID selection criteria for research proposals

Table 1: Standard selection criteria

Key area	Selection criteria	Details
Significance relevance Suggested weighting **20 – 30%**	Proposal makes a significant contribution to development knowledge	Does the proposal include a clear understanding of the state of existing research and knowledge in this area? The research addresses a significant development question or challenge and fills a gap in current evidence? The proposal does not duplicate research already being funded by AusAID.
	Alignment with current or emerging priorities and objective/s of the Australian aid program and / or partner country	There is a clear link to an identified or likely future priority within the AusAID strategic framework. There is clear alignment with relevant funding area priorities outlined in strategy documents. There is evidence of demand from developing country stakeholders and / or the development community for the type of evidence this research will provide? The countries of focus are priority areas for AusAID.
	The research has the potential to produce clear lessons for development policy / programming	Proposal clearly describes how outcomes of the research can be used and by who to improve development policy / programming. Are there opportunities to collaborate with other donors on the research funding?

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Methods & approach Suggested weighting **20 – 30%**	Research aim and objectives are clear	Overall ultimate development aim of the research is clear and related to a development challenge in the country / countries covered by the research.
	The methodology is clear and is appropriate to the research question	Methodology proposed will result in meaningful findings and information required to address the listed objectives of the research in the given time frame.
	The design combines robust qualitative and / or quantitative methods with innovative thinking	Established techniques are used to address new questions and / or new techniques are being applied to existing or new questions.
	The research approaches are culturally relevant and appropriate and participatory methods are included where relevant.	
	Gender	The importance of gender is addressed and disaggregation of data and analysis by gender is included where appropriate.
Research team Suggested weighting **15 – 25%**	Researchers have demonstrated capacity to deliver the proposed work	Track records of senior research team members in completing research in related areas. Previous experience in developing countries is shown.
	Proportion of time committed by the senior investigators is sufficient to ensure quality	Proposal should include full time equivalent days, weeks or months to be committed by each team member and their relevant level or position.
	Team includes expertise across disciplines relevant for addressing the research questions posed.	Evidence of added value of social research disciplines, statistically based disciplines, relevant quantitative and qualitative skills and cross cutting expertise on issues such as gender .
	Representation from developing county groups and users of the research	Participation in the research team of key users of the research and developing country researchers and users has evidently been considered and where appropriate addressed.
	Gender	Gender balance on the team has been referred to and addressed.

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Research process & impact Suggested weighting **20-30%**	Capacity building – Potential for the building of sustained individual and institutional research capacity	To what extent is capacity building integrated into the whole proposal? Are there key groups in country that should be considered for collaboration that have not been included? Are the capacity development initiatives suggested appropriate in the context and how sustainable will they be?
	There is a clear communication and engagement strategy to promote the research uptake and use in policy or practice	Useful content of a communication strategy includes: - a maximum of three specific, relevant and accessible target audiences - the attitudes, practices or policy changes of each target audience that the research will seek to influence and how it is hoped the research will be used to achieve this - the communications channels and mechanisms through which target audiences will be engaged over the research from planning stages to communication of results. Are the strategies included in the above appropriate and likely to be effective?
	The project will foster appropriate linkages between research groups	Have relevant in country researchers and / or stakeholders been included as part of the research team? Are beneficial Australian and / or international collaborations between institutions represented? Are the relative roles and responsibilities of research partners clearly articulated? Do the partnerships proposed appear to be based on ethical principles and equity?

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Value for money Suggested weighting **10 – 20%**	Is the level of support requested appropriate for the research program / project activities described?	Budget should include the following components and details - STAFF: - including each position being funded the grade or level of that position, the number of full time equivalent months / weeks and the unit cost (per month / week) - EQUIPMENT & SOFTWARE - TRAVEL / FIELDWORK COSTS - RESEARCH COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES (should be budgeted separately) - MONITORING AND EVALUATION (should be budgeted separately) - OVERHEADS: As a % of budget or salaries (includes administrative time and inputs such as telephone fax, stationery etc).
Research Ethics **(must be addressed)**	Does the project have ethics clearance already? Is there a clear process for ethics review and approval if not?	At a minimum all research funded by AusAID must conform to the ethical standards and processes outlined in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)
	Sensitivity to and respect for communities and individuals involved in the research is clearly considered.	The research approaches are culturally relevant and appropriate. Ways in which communication from and with the research subject communities and individuals will be promoted are outlined. Evidence exists of planned feedback to researched groups and communities of the research results in culturally appropriate ways.
	Any ethical concerns are anticipated and addressed in the proposal.	Risks that may arise through the conduct or release of the research are clearly identified in the proposal and ways that they will be addressed outlined.

NB – Total weightings used must add to 100%