

## ADDENDUM 3

**Date:** 7 November 2017

**Subject:** Addendum to the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research

**Pages:** Five

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### PEER REVIEW GUIDELINES

DFAT Stronger Systems for Health Security Scheme-specific Peer Review Guidelines are now available for applicants in the same location as this Addendum.

### DRAFT GRANT AGREEMENT

The Grant Guidelines document refers, on p.15, to the Draft Grant Agreement at Annex 3 to the Grant Guidelines. DFAT is not releasing an amended draft at this time, however, an updated version may be re-released by the closing date for applications of 6 December 2017.

### CONFIRMATION OF FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must not include in any part of their application:

- links to external websites, apart from references to journal articles, guidelines, government reports, datasets and other outputs that are only available online. Where links are included, provide the URL in full (e.g. the NHMRC website <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au>).
- publication metrics such as Journal Impact Factors, and the previous Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) Ranked Journal List, consistent with the recommendations from the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment.

Applications must comply with all content and formatting requirements. Incomplete or non-compliant applications may be excluded from consideration.

Further information and supporting documentation for this call, *NHMRC Advice and Instructions 2017*, *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*, and *Guide to Peer Review 2017* are available on [NHMRC's website](#).

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Applicants are advised of the following Questions and Answers about the Stronger Systems for Health Security competitive call for research.

**Q1.** I am writing to ask you a question regarding the nature of the research supported within the scheme. I read on page 4 of the guidelines that the scheme will not support clinical or biomedical research, including randomised control trials or cohort studies for clinical or biomedical research.

Delivery or treatments to consumers and field work directly aimed at informing in the implementation of new health policies somehow requires cohort studies. Will that work be funded under the scheme?

**A1.** As you have noted, the Grant Guidelines explain the Stronger Systems for Health Security research program will not support clinical or biomedical research, including randomised control trials or cohort studies for clinical or biomedical research.

DFAT expects the following outcomes from the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research (refer p. 4 of the Grant Guidelines):

**KEY OUTCOME:** New evidence regarding health policy and systems is used to improve regional health security and to stimulate future research.

**INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME:** High quality research outputs produced and disseminated that contribute to the evidence base on strengthening health systems and / or policy to improve regional health security.

Cohort studies which are not for clinical or biomedical research would not necessarily be excluded from consideration.

**Q2.** The following question and answer have been paraphrased to protect the identity of the enquirer and associated organisation. Question as follows: I have been asked to collaborate in prospective applications for the DFAT funded grants (<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants-funding/apply-funding/grants-funded-department-foreign-affairs-and-trade>). My position is funded by DFAT through an NGO-led project. I am writing to ensure that I am still eligible to participate in these grants. Kindly let me know if the DFAT funding of the project through the NGO makes me ineligible to participate.

**A2.** From your email I understand your current position is funded by DFAT through an NGO, through an existing DFAT funding mechanism. You have also been invited to participate as an investigator in two grant proposals to be submitted under the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research.

As explained in the Grant Guidelines on p. 7, DFAT may reject any proposal which does not disclose the fact that a proposed team member has an existing and continuing commitment to another project or activity. Additionally, individuals with conflicting commitments must not be included in the proposal or as individuals who may be engaged by the applicant if selected through the assessment process described in the Grant Guidelines.

In your email, you did not identify a specific conflict between your existing and proposed commitment however it stands to reason that you would need to consider competing demands on your time and availability. You would be required to ensure your existing and continuing commitment to another DFAT-funded project is declared in the proposals themselves. You would also be wise to ensure that the NGO supports your participation in the Stronger Systems for Health Security research project/s. The Indo-Pacific Centre for Health Security may request confirmation of the NGO's support for your involvement in the research projects in the event that DFAT wishes to enter into an agreement for the research you're involved in. If you or the NGO anticipate that your professional judgement or actions may be conflicted by your participation in multiple DFAT-funded activities then you would be required to draw this to DFAT's attention as soon as you become aware. Further, DFAT would not agree to fund your salary through DFAT-funded research grants if your salary is already being funded by DFAT through another mechanism.

**Q3.** Could you please let me know where to find details of the public consultation associated with this call for research?

**A3.** I assume you are referring to public briefings in relation to this call for research following its release in early October 2017. Please be advised DFAT is not providing applicant briefings for the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research.

**Q4.** Could you please let me know if there is a suggested word limit for the Minimum Data Synopsis to be submitted on 8 November?

**A4.** The information collected at minimum data is used to identify appropriate expertise for assessors and review panels. While there is no specific upper word limit, a synopsis that clearly indicates the focus on the proposed research will assist high quality peer review. Please note that using placeholder text such as “text”, “synopsis” or “xx” etc. are not acceptable as minimum data (refer to section 2 of the DFAT Stronger Systems for Health Security scheme-specific Advice and Instructions to Applicants).

**Q5.** Would DFAT, under this scheme, consider a proposal in relation to [specific focus removed for confidentiality] infectious diseases treatment in PNG?

**A5.** At this time within the application process it is difficult to give a definitive answer on whether your intended proposal would be excluded through the process of the conformance check. We must wait for completion of the conformance check—after the closing date for applications of 6 December has passed. In response to your follow up question, our best advice is to ensure your proposal addresses the objectives of the call for research, and is competitive against the assessment criteria.

**Q6.** Can we modify the proposal synopsis after 8 November?

**A6.** Applicants may amend the synopsis after minimum data, however please note that information collected at minimum data is used to identify review panels and assessors. Applicants are advised that any change made to the fields listed for minimum data after 8 November 2017 may impact the review of the application. Please refer to section 2 of the DFAT Stronger Systems for Health Security scheme-specific Advice and Instructions to Applicants.

**Q7.** What about oncosts, are they eligible for IRISS?

**A7.** IRISS is only available to NHMRC funded applications. Applications received under this call are not eligible for IRISS.

**Q8.** What about oncosts, can we include in the grant budget?

**A8.** The budget should not include administrative costs that would be provided by an institution in the normal course of undertaking and supporting health and medical research.

DFAT funding provided for research projects under the Stronger Systems for Health Security research program may include researcher and associated staff salaries. Funds can be used for annual leave and long service leave entitlements that accrue in respect of research personnel during their employment on the research activity under this DFAT funded research program. However, severance and termination payments and extended leave payments (leave entitlements accrued on activities other than the Stronger Systems for Health Security research program) must not be paid for with DFAT funding. Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) is specifically excluded and DFAT funds are not to be used to pay for this expense.

**Q9.** Does any specified percentage of the grant have to be spent overseas?

**A9.** DFAT does not require a specified percentage of budgets for individual proposals to be spent overseas.

The Grant Guidelines explain that the funding available for research under this call is Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding. Proposed research under this call must therefore meet requirements for being considered ODA i.e. the proposed projects must be directly and primarily relevant to the problems of low- and / or middle-income countries. Further information

about ODA eligibility is available in a factsheet prepared by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), at <https://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/3408695.pdf>.

The Grant Guidelines also specify, under this Stronger Systems for Health Security competitive call for research, the countries eligible to be beneficiaries and subjects of the research are DFAT's priority ODA eligible countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. A list of these countries can be found in Annex 1 of the Grant Guidelines document (updated 12 October 2017), on the Business Notifications page of DFAT's website.

**Q10.** What is the difference between a and b on the cover sheet requirement? – see below

**A. Cover Page – 1 page**

The cover page should include:

- a) List of countries which are focus countries of the research and capacity building activities in the proposal
- b) List of countries where the activities outlined in the proposal will be delivered

**A10.** The difference is as follows:

Part a) asks for a list of countries which are focus countries of the research and capacity building activities in the proposal. It is possible that research and capacity building activities may not be 'delivered' in the focus countries; whereas

Part b) asks for a list of countries where the activities outlined in the proposal will be 'delivered'. It is possible that the research and capacity building activities may be 'delivered' in countries other than the 'focus countries'.

**Q11.** Do you consider strengthening health systems in [specific focus removed for confidentiality] in several countries as a suitable topic?

**A11.** Our best advice to you at this point would be to ensure your proposal addresses the objectives for the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research, and is competitive against the assessment criteria.

**Q12.** I've just had a look at the grant guidelines, and noticed that the list of eligible Low- and Middle- income countries only covers lower-middle and not upper-middle income countries, although this does not seem to be a specification of the language used in the guidelines.

Can you please confirm whether this is the intent and that Tonga, Samoa, Nauru, Fiji etc are intended to be excluded as target countries?

**A12.** The correct list of DFAT's priority ODA eligible countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific is included in Annex 1 to the Grant Guidelines--the most recent version is dated 3 November 2017 and is available on the Business Notifications page of DFAT's website. Unfortunately a number of countries were omitted from the list in Annex 1 when the Grant Guidelines were first published on 8 October 2017. The corrected list was made available on 12 October 2017.

Tonga, Samoa, Nauru and Fiji are included as countries eligible to be beneficiaries and subjects of the research.

**Q13.** [A potential applicant] has asked me to contact you to try to arrange a telephone call either tomorrow with a number of potential applicants. The [organisation name removed for confidentiality] is considering a submission for the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research. Could you let me know if you would be available for a call?

**A13.** Thanks for your interest in the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research.

If you have any further questions it would be best if you could, for probity reasons, follow the established process for potential applicants to raise questions through [chs@dfat.gov.au](mailto:chs@dfat.gov.au). We will then be able to provide an answer in writing, and follow up by publishing questions and answers on DFAT's Business Notifications page for access by all potential applicants.

**Q14.** Is a person eligible to be Chief Investigator B-J if the person is neither an Australian Citizen nor an Australian Permanent Resident?

**A14.** Yes. But Chief Investigator A must be either an Australian Citizen or an Australian Permanent Resident.

### **Attachments to this Addendum**

#### **1. DFAT Stronger Systems for Health Security Scheme-specific Peer Review Guidelines**

All other information and documentation in relation to the Stronger Systems for Health Security call for research remains unchanged.