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Program Improvement Award RFA Questions and Answers

IDEAL was pleased to release our first [Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) for the IDEAL Program Improvement Awards (PIA) on September 23, 2019. The question period for the Program Improvement Award RFA ended on October 8th, and this document outlines questions and answers received during that period.

1. Can one organization apply for both Micro Grant and PIA? Will it hamper the competitiveness if you apply for both?
 - a. Yes, one organizations can apply for both a Micro Grant and PIA, but the project goals and objectives proposed should be different between these applications. At this time, we do not believe this will hamper competitiveness, but we will continue to evaluate this through the first two RFAs released under the Small Grants Program.
2. Can an organization submit multiple concept notes in response to this RFA?
 - a. Yes, one organization can submit multiple concept notes for different projects in the same country or different projects across multiple countries.
3. How many PIAs can any single organization receive in response to this RFA?
 - a. While there are no limits on the number of concept notes and applications submitted by one organization, under this PIA RFA no more than two awards will be made to the same organization or federation (e.g. Save the Children Federation).
4. Is there a difference in geographic reach in either Micro Grant or PIA? Is the PIA meant to be more focused on a specific program?
 - a. There is no difference in geographic reach for the Micro Grant or PIA and both should be focused on activities that will contribute to improved design and implementation of food and nutrition security programs. The PIA is meant to be more focused on projects that answer questions related to the [USAID's Office of Food for Peace \(FFP\) Learning Agenda](#) and [FFP strategy](#). The PIA should also focus on disseminating information to FFP and OFDA implementing organizations. Please see our [webinar recording](#) for more details on the PIA focus.
5. Does the applicant need to have an existing FFP or USAID award? Does it add value to the proposal?
 - a. No, applicants do not need to have an existing FFP or USAID award. It will not add value to your proposal per say, but current or recent work with FFP and USAID does demonstrate capacity and may help in the scoring of the Applicant Background (Section F1.1).
6. What is the difference between PIAs and Micro Grants?

- a. This topic is covered during the first half of our webinar: Understanding IDEAL's Program Improvement Award. You can watch the webinar video recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UD-KepxdDV4>
7. Could you confirm that this does not have to be attached to an existing FFP project or conducted in country that has an active FFP presence?
 - a. This award does not have to be attached to an existing FFP project or conducted in a country that has an active FFP presence.
8. Can the same proposal with different scale be submitted to both Micro Grants and PIA?
 - a. We would request you do not submit the same project proposal through both mechanisms. If a project idea was rejected for one mechanism, then it would likely be rejected for the other mechanism as well since scale is rarely the defining issue. Please make the decision before applying if your project is better suited for one award mechanism or the other.
9. Are there geographic restrictions on this work? Will you fund work in the LAC (Latin America & Caribbean) region?
 - a. There are no geographic restrictions on this work as long as the learnings are application to FFP-target populations. Yes, we will fund work in LAC region.
10. What is the Micro Grant timeline for the first deadline?
 - a. All Micro Grants submitted during the first deadline have gone through their first review and qualifying applications are now being scored by a panel of technical reviewers. Emails are currently being sent to applicants whose applications were not suitable for IDEAL Micro Grants, and we hope to update all applicants by October 21st with next steps on their applications.
11. How many rounds of Micro Grant RFA or PIA RFA are anticipated and when?
 - a. We do not expect later rounds to be proposed inside the current Micro Grant RFA or PIA RFA. We do however expect to release more Micro Grant and PIA RFAs in 2020 and 2021 with other funding opportunities. Those RFAs will use the same award mechanism but may have a more targeted focus depending on the needs of the food and nutrition security community in the future.
12. Can a proposal submitted for a PIA complement a project submitted for a Micro Grant (if funded)?
 - a. A proposal should not seek to compliment another small grant that is still in the 12-month implementation phase. We believe it is best to have each award managed as a distinct project and do not recommend combing these. However, if a small grant has been successfully completed with all requirements achieved, then applicants are welcome to propose another project that compliments or builds upon the learnings from the first. This does not however guarantee that the second application will be awarded, as scoring criteria and areas of interest will vary between RFAs during the life of the IDEAL Activity.
13. We are a multi-country international development and disaster relief organization who would like to apply for a PIA. Is there any restriction to multi-country proposals and, if yes, what might they be?
 - a. There are no restrictions on multi-country applications assuming they can still be completed in the 12-month implementation time period, for less than \$100,000.

14. Is there a preference given to researchers from the global south or the project being located in the global south?
 - a. There is no preference for researchers or projects located in the global south at this time. All project learnings must be applicable to FFP-target populations and this includes communities in the global south. We will consider preferences for researchers located in the global south in future RFAs, but it is not a criteria in the current PIA RFA.

15. I would like to request that you send out a link for the Ubuntu font because it would make it much easier for us to write our concept notes and proposals ahead of time.
 - a. By typing directly into the concept note template, your text will be in the Ubuntu font. Additionally, if you paste text into the template, you can use the format painter button to apply the Ubuntu font. If you prefer to download the Ubuntu font, this can be done using the following link: <https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Ubuntu>

16. If a program receives a Micro Grant or PIA during this year (or next year), would this disqualify them from receiving other IDEAL grants (Program Improvement Award or Research Award) during the same year?
 - a. No, receiving a Micro Grant during this year will not disqualify an organization from receiving other IDEAL grants during the same year.

17. Could you please elaborate on the following statement from the RFA: "This RFA is not intended to solicit applications for research work done by Development Food Security Activities (DFSAs) during the Refine and Implement (R&I) period."
 - a. Since FY 2016, the Office of Food for Peace (FFP) has awarded development food security activities (DFSAs) under a collaborative model known as Refine and Implement (R&I). The model is designed to allow implementing partners the opportunity to improve activity design after receiving the award and in partnership with FFP. The R&I period usually occurs during the first sixteen months of a DFSA, but exact dates may vary depending on the activity. If your organization is not currently involved with a new DFSA funded by FFP, then this restriction does not apply to you.

18. For the purposes of this RFA, do you consider international agricultural research organizations, which are also recognized as Public International Organizations by USAID to be "multilateral organizations"?
 - a. Yes, for the purpose of this PIA RFA, International Agricultural Research Organizations (such as those under [CGIAR](#)) are considered multilateral organizations and are not eligible to apply for PIA funding.

DISCLAIMER:

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