The Implementer-Led Design, Evidence, Analysis and Learning (IDEAL) Activity

Small Grants Program

Micro Grant Request for Applications

RFA: SC-IDEAL-MG-RFA-2019-01

Subject: Capacity strengthening and innovation to improve the design, implementation and effectiveness of emergency and development food and nutrition security activities

Date RFA Issued: **July 2, 2019**

End of Question Period: **5PM ET July 15, 2019**

Introductory Webinar: **July 23, 2019 at 9am ET**

Due Date for Applications: **Round 1- 5PM ET August 30, 2019**

                                  Round 2- 5PM ET November 1, 2019

Award Ceiling: **$50,000 per Micro Grant**

Issued by: Save the Children Federation, Inc. / IDEAL Award

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Acronyms

CoP	Community of Practice
DFSA	USAID/FFP Development Food Security Activity
EFSP	USAID/FFP Emergency Food Security Program
FFP	USAID Office of Food for Peace
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
IDEAL	Implementer-Led Design, Evaluation, Analysis and Learning activity
IP	USAID/FFP Implementing Partner
KM	Knowledge Management
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
P2P	Peer-to-Peer
R&I	Refine and Implement
RFA	Request for Applications
SBC	Social and Behavior Change
SC	Save the Children Federation, Inc.
SGP	IDEAL Small Grants Program
TOC	Theory of Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Introduction from the IDEAL Award Director

July 1, 2019

Dear prospective applicants,

I am pleased to announce the first in a series of calls for small grant applications to support applied research, test innovative approaches and strengthen strategic learning and adaptive management practices as part of the IDEAL Award. Funded by USAID's Office of Food for Peace (FFP), IDEAL aims to strengthen food and nutrition security among FFP-target populations through promotion of systems-level approaches to improve the design, implementation and overall effectiveness of emergency and development food security activities. This award will create linkages and strengthen mechanisms for capacity strengthening to aid implementing partners in delivering high quality, effective food and nutrition security programming.

IDEAL is a unique implementer-led project and my team is here to work with you (the implementers) to identify concepts and approaches with the greatest potential impact to reduce hunger. Our small grants program (SGP) aims to grow the evidence base around practices and systems for capacity strengthening and adaptive management leading to stronger food and nutrition security programming.

IDEAL Requests for Applications (RFAs) are designed to identify, fund, and grow innovative ideas from every corner of the globe to benefit the emergency and development food and nutrition security community. These RFAs will be broad and the subsequent awards will not require extensive reporting to allow implementers of all sizes to generate field-focused solutions that are relevant to their work. In the spirit of IDEAL, we encourage all applicants to fully utilize field staff and small local partners to identify the gaps on the ground, design applications and implement projects. Together, these IDEAL-funded activities and products – be it tools, trainings, research papers, and knowledge-sharing events– can address the most pressing challenges of the food and nutrition security sector today.

Sincerely,

Penny Anderson

Penny Anderson
IDEAL Activity Director

A. Authority and Introduction

The purpose of this request for applications (RFA) is to solicit applications that support the development of tools and topic-specific learning events to strengthen the capacity of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (FFP) grantees, and the broader food and nutrition security implementing partner community. The awards under this RFA consist of Micro Grants funded up to $50,000 US Dollars for up to 12 months of implementation, as necessary, for strengthening the design, implementation and effectiveness of food and nutrition security activities. IDEAL also intends to issue additional RFAs in 2019 under its SGP in higher funding ranges for other food and nutrition security related subjects.

The first round of applications will close on August 30, 2019 and awards are expected before December 31, 2019. All subsequent applications will be reviewed as part of the second round which closes on November 1, 2019. Questions for this RFA will be collected through July 15, 2019 and responses will be posted on the IDEAL Small Grants Program webpage on the FSN Network website by July 25, 2019.

The authority for these awards is found in the Food for Peace Act of 1954, as amended, and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. It is re-delegated to Save the Children Federation Inc. under its Cooperative Agreement No. 72DFFP19LA00001 with USAID.

B. Specific Programmatic Guidance

B1. Background

IDEAL is a five-year USAID FFP funded activity that aims to address knowledge and capacity gaps expressed by the food and nutrition security implementing community. The goal of IDEAL is to strengthen food and nutrition security among FFP-target populations through promotion of systems-level approaches to improve the design, implementation and overall effectiveness of emergency and development food and nutrition security activities. It seeks to achieve this through four pathways: (A) capacity strengthening; (B) peer-to-peer learning; (C) small grants program (SGP); and (D) stakeholder consultations.[1]

The crucial strategic objectives of IDEAL are for: (1) IPs/CoPs establish sustainable systems for strengthening their own capacity in essential elements of quality programming; (2) IPs/CoPs consistently develop, share and apply meaningful analysis for adaptive management of food and

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[1] https://www.fsnnetwork.org/announcing-ideal-activity

nutrition security programs; (3) IPs/CoPs foster sustainable linkages among key stakeholders to improve collaboration, coordination, and efficient action around common goals.

This Micro Grant RFA was crafted to identify and fund innovative approaches and practical solutions to close the knowledge and capacity gaps in priority focus areas. In alignment with IDEAL's mission, each grant will be awarded with the intent to facilitate strategic learning and adaptive management across various organizations.

B2. Objective

The objective of this RFA is:

To solicit applications from food and nutrition security practitioners to support the development of products and tools, conduct events, and implement practical activities to improve the quality of food and nutrition security programming among FFP-target populations. Successful Micro Grant applications will align with IDEAL's content focus areas, the FFP Learning Agenda and identified gaps and needs expressed by implementing partners.

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. **Additionally, award funding cannot be used for purchase of capital assets (land, buildings, equipment over the value of $5,000, and intellectual property except for computer software).**

B3. Focus and Subject Areas

Over the past decade, FFP made significant investments in strengthening implementer capacity in a number of key technical areas central to food and nutrition security (e.g. Agriculture, WASH, Commodity Management, Nutrition Technology). Under IDEAL, the emphasis will shift to underlying content focus areas that have received less attention in recent years but remain central to protecting and enhancing lives and livelihoods while transforming communities and institutions. These focus areas represents areas of current practice for implementing partners working in food and nutrition security and offer clear opportunities for capacity strengthening and enhanced sharing across partners on best and promising practices.

Content Focus Areas[2] for IDEAL:

1. **Strengthening the quality and impact of emergency programming**
2. **Data collection and analysis for improved program design and impact**
3. **Adaptive management and application of learning**
4. **Integrated activity design and implementation**
5. **Sustainability and planning for exit**

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[2] These content focus areas were articulated by USAID in the 2018 IDEAL RFA.

6. **Social and behavior change**
7. **Equity, empowerment, social cohesion and social accountability**

Previous food and nutrition security Micro Grants can be found on the Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Network Library website (https://www.fsnnetwork.org/resource). Please note that these Micro Grants were awarded as part of a different program and any awards under this RFA need to be specifically tailored to the criteria of IDEAL and align with the IDEAL content focus area list above. Additionally these activities are only illustrative, and IDEAL welcomes innovative applications as well as practical solutions to carry out a wide range of food and nutrition security activities.

B4. Duration of Micro Grant Award

The duration of an award under this RFA may be up to 12 months from the date of the award. IDEAL, Save the Children Federation, and/or USAID reserves the right to cancel this RFA at any time.

B5. Funding Availability

Final funding levels for each award will depend on content, relevance, quality, number of applications received, needs, and competing priorities, with a ceiling of $50,000 US Dollars, subject to availability of funds. Acceptance of an application under this RFA does not constitute an award, nor does it guarantee that the application, if awarded, will be funded at the full dollar amount requested.

B6. Type and Number of Awards

The award(s) will be a Fixed Amount Award (FAA), which is a type of award that provides a predefined level of funding based on a schedule of pre-determined milestones and results rather than reimbursement based on actual costs.[3] By utilizing this awarding mechanism, IDEAL aims to reduce the administrative burden and encourage smaller organizations to apply. IDEAL plans to award multiple FAA grants under this Micro Grant RFA. The number of awards will depend on the quality of applications received, demand, and the availability of funding.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Save the Children Federation, Inc. or USAID nor does it commit Save the Children Federation, Inc. or USAID to pay for the costs incurred in the submission of an application. Save the Children Federation, Inc. and USAID reserve the right to reject any or all submissions received and to negotiate separately with

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[3] Please see 2 CFR 200.45 "Fixed amount awards" for more information

an applicant, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of Save the Children Federation, Inc. and the IDEAL donor, USAID.

B7. Authorized Geographic Code

The authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under this RFA is 937. However, local procurement is authorized within the parameters specified in 22 CFR 228.40, "Local Procurement." Code 937 countries include the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source listed in USAID's ADS 310.

B8. Post-Award Reporting B

Milestones

The type, number, content, etc. of milestones submitted and the timeline for submission shall be based on the successful applicant's proposed milestone schedule outlined in the application. At a minimum every Micro Grant recipient will be required to submit:

1. A final narrative program report, for which successful applicants will be provided a template, to be submitted upon completion of all small grant activities and before final payment is made
2. Milestones as outlined in the signed Micro Grant agreement

Before milestones can be disseminated or considered final and successful applicants issued final payments, all final milestone versions shall be approved by Save the Children for proper branding and marking (according to the IDEAL SGP Branding and Marking Guidelines) and meeting of agreed upon quality standards.

All resources, including final reports and milestones, generated through IDEAL funding will be shared on the FSN Network and USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse for use by USAID, FFP, IDEAL and any organizations implementing food and nutrition security projects.

Payment

Fixed amount payments will be scheduled in the award as Milestone Payments and will depend on the selected applicant's negotiated budget amount, the agreed upon amount for each Milestone, and successful completion of the deliverable(s) associated with each Milestone.

C. Applicant Eligibility

Prime applicants may be U.S. and non-U.S. nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), for-profit organizations, or institutions of higher education that can contribute to IDEAL's strategic objective of promoting systems-level approaches to improving the design, implementation and overall effectiveness of emergency and development food and nutrition security activities. Experience with USAID or FFP funding is not required to apply.

Applications by for-profit organizations cannot include profit in the proposed budget.

IDEAL will not accept applications from individuals. All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. Applicants must comply with all applicable Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Applicants are not required to have a DUNS number at the time of application but must have a DUNS number at the time of the award. Hence, applicants should be in the process of receiving a DUNS number to avoid any delays in the award process.

Applicants must have completed all required steps (if any) with the host government to legally operate their program by the time of award.

The following are **not** eligible to apply for grants under this RFA:

- Individuals

- Government entities, including ministries

- Multilateral organizations

- Firms operating as commercial companies or other organizations (including nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations) that are wholly or partially owned by foreign governments or agencies

In their cost applications organizations should indicate whether they have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with any US Government Agency. See budget templates in attachments below for more details. Organizations or institutions that do not have a NICRA are eligible for grants under this RFA either by using a de-minimus indirect cost rate (if requirements of 2 CFR 200.414(f) are met) or by direct charging all costs using a documented cost allocation methodology. All proposed costs must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles.

D. Selection Process and Schedule

D1. Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the technical criteria set forth in **Section F**, below. After evaluation of the applications, either award(s) will be made or, if deemed necessary

or desirable by IDEAL, written discussions/negotiations will be conducted with applicants who submit an application meeting a minimum threshold score. IDEAL reserves the right to conduct subsequent rounds of discussions/negotiations and/or request a revised application. IDEAL may also limit the number of applicants with whom such subsequent discussions/negotiations would be conducted or from whom revised applications are requested.

All applicants that pass the technical review stage will be required to complete a standard pre-award assessment to confirm programmatic and financial capacity to meet all applicable USAID rules and regulations for Fixed Amount Awards before the award is issued. This assessment requests information regarding relevant financial policies and systems, recent financial audits, programmatic experience with the project's target population and the organization's capacity to follow USAID stipulated award conditions. Any identified compliance risks will be incorporated into the Capacity and Action Plan in the sub award agreement.

D2. Schedule

This IDEAL Micro Grant RFA is open from the date of issue. Submissions are due by 5PM ET on August 30, 2019 for Round 1 or 5 PM ET November 1, 2019 for Round 2.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the deadline for each round and then will be read in the order they are received.

This IDEAL Micro Grant RFA may be amended at any time and will be posted on the FSN website.

D3. Questions

The point of contact concerning this RFA is Mr. Austen Musso, IDEAL Small Grants Manager, IDEAL_microgrant@savechildren.org. Questions on this RFA may be submitted in writing no later than [5 PM ET] July 15, 2019 with *IDEAL Micro Grant RFA,* the project name and the name of the lead applicant as the subject line. Answers to the questions will be posted on July 25, 2019 using the IDEAL Small Grants Program webpage on the FSN Network.

D.4 Target Selection Timeline

Due the nature of this SGP the overall timeline will be dependent on multiple factors. During past Save the Children Federation Micro Grant programs, successful applicants started their awards 3-5 months after application submission.   Within two weeks of submission, an IDEAL staff member will send an estimated review timeline for your application.

E. General Guidance

E1. Content of Applications

Applicants must submit applications in compliance with the guidelines under **Sections E2** and **E3** of this RFA. Applications that do not adhere to those guidelines will not be considered for funding. Applications must be in English.

E2. Micro Grant Application Format

Applications shall be submitted in accordance with the Application Submission Package of this RFA, included as **Attachments 1–3**.

E3. Application Submission

Application packages (to include application, budget narrative and detailed budget) must be submitted **electronically** to: IDEAL_microgrant@savechildren.org.

E4. IDEAL Program Branding and Marking Guidelines

As a condition of receipt of the IDEAL Micro Grant, adherence to the IDEAL Award Branding and Marking Guidelines is required. The guidelines will be sent to applicants whose applications are selected for further review or at the time of the award.

F. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation process set forth below. Awards will be made to the responsible applicants whose applications best meet the requirements of the IDEAL Micro Grant RFA. The IDEAL RFA Evaluation Committee (REC) will evaluate and score all applications independently and uniformly in writing, based on the selection criteria of this RFA.

IDEAL reserves the right to determine the resulting level of funding for the award(s).

F1. Evaluation Criteria (Maximum 100 Points)

1. Applicant Background (Maximum 5 Points)

- An organizational mission, objectives, and orientation that are in line with proposed activities

- Experience working in food security and/or nutrition, preferably with FFP-funded development and emergency food assistance programs

- Relevant experience within the past three years and capacity relevant to the specific activity being proposed

2. Contribution to IDEAL Activity Objectives (Maximum 35 Points)

For reference, see IDEAL's strategic objective and program goals in **Section B2-B3**.

- The project positively contributes to the food security and nutrition knowledge base or skill capacity either locally, nationally, or regionally

- Directly addresses at least one IDEAL content focus area

- Describes how the project results in learning relevant to multiple implementers in multiple countries

- Demonstrates innovation and creativity, such as testing promotion of a practice in a new way or new for context

3. Project Description (Maximum 30 Points)

- Clearly states the project's overall goal(s) and objectives, explaining how the objectives contribute to goal(s)

- Describes what interventions/activities will be implemented during the project, how and by whom; demonstrates that each major objective/deliverable/milestone can be achieved within the proposed timeline

- Provides in table format clear and well-defined milestones and due dates that can be used as milestones on which fixed payments will be based

- Describe how the final results and products will be utilized by the staff involved in this project, how it will be further rolled out within the organization and the expected organizational benefits once the project is complete

4. Quality Assurance, Documentation, and Application (Maximum 20 Points)

- Describes the process that will be used to ensure proposed activity's technical quality

- Describes how the proposed project or activity will be documented to capture field-level changes and learning in food security programming

- Provides a clear and strategic plan for 1) disseminating and 2) facilitating the application of all knowledge end products from the award with multiple implementers, communities of practice or other key food and nutrition security stakeholders

5. Cost Proposal (Maximum 10 Points)

See **Attachment 2: Budget Template** and **Attachment 3: Budget Narrative Template**. The cost proposal provides:

- The degree to which costs are allocable

- The degree to which costs are reasonable and realistic for the technical scope of work

- The degree to which costs are allowable by USAID

- A clear and concise budget narrative that provides justification for the costs proposed

G. Intellectual Property

Any materials developed under this award relating to intangible property such as intellectual property or patents are subject to applicable rules under 2 CFR 200.315, "Intangible Property."[4] If applicants have intangible property developed previously under non-federal awards and are planning to use the intangible property in this award, clearly identify the intangible property and its anticipated use in the application. Applicants must also specify if the applications include any proprietary information and mark it as proprietary, if applicable.

H. Other Applicable USAID Regulations

Awards will be administered in accordance with USAID policies and procedures. Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, the applicable OMB Circulars, and USAID Standard Provisions.

Awards to non-U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with the cost principles contained in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E and USAID Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations. Please refer to **Attachment 4** for applicable USAID Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards for both US and Non-US organizations.

I. Attachments

- Attachment 1: Program Narrative Template
- Attachment 2: Budget Template
- Attachment 3: Budget Narrative Template

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[4] In 2 CFR 200.315, "The applicant may copyright any work subject to a copyright that was developed under a Federal award. The federal government has the right to: (1) obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data under a Federal award; and (2) Authorize other to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes." For more details, see 2 CFR 200.315 and e-CFR 401 "Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights."

- Attachment 4: USAID Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards to Nongovernmental Organizations