



Horticulture Collaborative Research Support Program (Horticulture CRSP)

Request for Trellis Fund Project Proposals

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Trellis Fund is to link horticultural graduate students in the U.S. to agricultural NGOs/universities/government agencies and graduate students in developing countries through a unique funding structure. The Trellis Fund will enable the developing-world organizations (DWO) to conduct adaptive research and extend horticultural information to local farmers and build the capacity of graduate students in the U.S. and developing countries. Proposals can address horticultural production (including irrigation and fertilization), pest management, postharvest, nutrition or marketing problems that face local farmers. Proposals can also address related social and economic processes.

The DWO will complete and submit a proposal in response to this RFP, and Horticulture CRSP will match selected proposals with a U.S. graduate student. In completing the Trellis Fund proposal, the DWO will identify a horticultural problem facing local farmers and the type of expertise they seek in a U.S. horticultural graduate student. The proposal will also require the DWO to indicate the project goals, activities and gender program.

The Trellis Fund will finance up to 15 projects in 2012. It will support the DWO's farmer outreach program with a \$2,000 contract, which can be used to provide honoraria to the DWO staff for conducting adaptive research and extending new information to farmers. The DWO can also use the funds to pay for educational materials, demonstration plots and transportation costs for their staff to conduct farmer trainings. The Trellis Fund will also pay fellowships to U.S. graduate students to cover their travel expenses to visit with the DWO and for corresponding with the DWO via email. The graduate student will be required to travel to visit the DWO for 1-2 weeks, to meet his/her project partners and the clientele farmers. Whenever possible, Trellis Fund projects should also include a graduate student from a local university.

The Trellis Fund expects the DWO to reach at least 180 farmers, an average of 30 farmers per month over a six-month period between September 1st 2012 and September 1st 2013. At least 90 of the farmers must be women.

The Trellis Fund aims to empower smallholder farmers with new information as well as build longstanding relationships between DWOs and U.S. researchers. The creators of the Trellis Fund believe that small organizations can do amazing work, but they are often excluded from grant opportunities because of economies of scale. We invite you to work with us to demonstrate that programs aimed at small organizations can accomplish big impacts.

FOCUS COUNTRIES

| | | | |
|------------|---------|-----------|------------|
| UGANDA | SENEGAL | GUATEMALA | BANGLADESH |
| ZAMBIA | GHANA | NICARAGUA | TAJIKISTAN |
| RWANDA | MALI | HONDURAS | NEPAL |
| KENYA | LIBERIA | HAITI | CAMBODIA |
| MALAWI | | | |
| ETHIOPIA | | | |
| MOZAMBIQUE | | | |
| TANZANIA | | | |

ELIGIBILITY

The Trellis Fund accepts proposals from NGOs in our target countries.

DURATION AND TIMING

Awardees of Trellis Fund contracts will have a 12-month window to implement a six-month project. The award period will be 09/01/12 to 09/01/13.

TRAINING

Disseminating new information to local farmers is the primary goal of the Trellis Fund. The DWOs can reach out to local farmers in the manner that they believe will work best. They can use the Trellis Fund money to travel to farmers, to bring farmers to them for farmer field days or they can develop educational materials. Farmers cannot be paid to attend meetings or be reimbursed for travel, but the organization can directly pay for their transportation (i.e. hiring a van or bus).

PROPOSAL-WRITING INSTRUCTIONS

Full applications for Trellis Fund awards must contain the following elements:

1. Cover Page: **(1 page maximum)**
 - Project Title
 - Lead organization applying for the award
 - Names, titles, mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of project leaders and collaborators
 - Signature and contact information for authorized official from the Lead Organization
2. Project abstract: **(1 page maximum)**
 - Project summary (150 words maximum)
 - Targeted country
3. Objectives – should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (bulleted list)
4. Justification **(200 words maximum)**
 - Statement of the problem facing local farmers
 - Approach to addressing the problem
 - Expected impacts
5. Graduate Student Engagement (50% of total review points!) **(2 pages maximum)**
 - Type of expertise that you seek from the U.S. graduate student
 - Student's trip to your organization
 - A. Plans for the student's modest accommodation for 1-2 weeks (This cost will be covered by the student's fellowship. Do not include in your budget.)
 - B. Project review and planning activities
 - C. Site visits to clientele farmers
 - D. Other activities
 - Student collaboration via email and Skype after visit
 - List expectations and assignments of the student that will occupy him/her for 100 hours over the course of the project, for example, consultations, development of specific educational materials, or other creative means. Be specific!

- How often will you communicate with the student?
 - Who will communicate with the graduate student?
6. Activities and methodology required to accomplish each objective **(2-3 pages maximum)**
- Provide a detailed plan for how you will reach 180 farmers. Projects that don't reach 180 farmers are eligible if adequate reason is provided.
 - Provide a schedule/timeline for the adaptive research and extension activities
 - A. How many training activities will you conduct?
 - B. How will you organize the farmers?
 - C. What experience do you have working with the farmers?
 - D. How many farmers will attend the trainings?
 - E. Will you travel to the farmer's fields or will you bring them to the NGO for training?
 - F. What other means of communication will you use (radio, television, etc.)
 - Who will disseminate information to local farmers?
 - How will you identify a local graduate student who can participate in the project? If not possible, please explain.
 - Will you conduct training programs on horticultural-related nutrition?
 - Will you have a demonstration plot?
 - Will you create educational materials?
 - How will you track adoption?
 - Gender – What percentage of farmers reached will be women? Assess the gender issues in your project (Appendix B).
7. Statement of institutional experience in the proposed regions **(1 page maximum)**
8. Curricula Vitae for project leaders and key project personnel **(1 page maximum per CV)**
9. Budget, using the Horticulture CRSP Interactive Budget (<http://hortcrsp.ucdavis.edu/main/trellis.html>)

SUBMISSION

Trellis Fund Applications are to be submitted electronically in PDF format by e-mail to hortcrsp@ucdavis.edu. Budgets must be provided as an Excel spreadsheet using the Horticulture CRSP budget form that accompanies this document.

Document Layout:

Paper size: standard 8.5" x 11"

Line spacing: single spaced

Margins: 1 inch on all sides

Minimum font size: 12 point

DUE DATE

All applications must be received by close of business June 06, 2012 (5:00 p.m. Pacific Daylight Savings Time). Applications received after the deadline may not be considered for funding.

EVALUATION PROCESS & CRITERIA

Impartial reviewers from the Horticulture CRSP Management Entity and Trellis Fund leaders will evaluate all applications. The primary criteria for evaluating proposals are:

50 Points - Graduate Student Engagement: How well does the DWO engage the graduate student and a student in the focus country?

50 Points - Project Impact: How well will the proposed project empower horticultural farmers with new information? How relevant is the adaptive research to local growers? Do the project activities have a viable plan to reach at least 180 farmers/stakeholders? Are at least half of the participants women? How well is the gender of stakeholders taken into account? How well qualified is the DWO team to conduct the project? Does the DWO have sufficient experience working with local farmers or the relevant postharvest/marketing stakeholders?

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The projects will be responsible for answering the following questions in their final report:

- a. How many farmers were provided with new horticultural information as a result of this project?
- b. How many women farmers were provided with new horticultural information?
- c. How was the information delivered to stakeholders?
- d. How many farmers adopted new practices as a result of this project?
- e. How many women farmers adopted new practices as a result of this project?
- f. What practices did they adopt?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For clarifications and questions, please e-mail Elana Peach-Fine at elanahortcrsp@gmail.com. We will also be holding a question and answer session Wednesday, May 9 at 8 am PST. See the Horticulture CRSP website after May 1 for more information about this session.

APPENDIX A: BUDGET (<http://hortcrsp.ucdavis.edu/main/trellis.html>)

Instructions

The goal of this program is to fund adaptive research and extension. We expect to fund research and extension-related costs. Horticulture CRSP will issue contracts as fixed-price agreements. The payment of the contract will occur in two installments, dependent upon successful completion of the project's objectives.

Recipients are encouraged to cost-share on Horticulture CRSP project expenses as evidence of institutional commitment and support for the program; however, this is not mandatory.

Do not include the U.S. graduate student's accommodation costs in your budget. He/she will use his/her fellowship for the cost of air travel and modest accommodation. The student will have a limited budget and can only afford to stay in reasonably-priced accommodation or with a host family.

The Trellis Fund cannot finance travel costs of government employees in countries where it is prohibited by USAID's in-country mission.

Use the Excel budget form that accompanies this document.

APPENDIX B: GENDER ASSESSMENT

MINIMUM USAID GENDER GUIDELINES:

1. USAID guidelines on gender consider that ALL projects should be gender sensitive.
2. USAID guidelines ask everyone to do their utmost to include women as at least 50% of beneficiaries in ALL areas of your project. This means that if you cannot do so you need to provide justification as to why, or when possible find a creative way around constraints.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Gender refers to social characteristics of men and women, such as their different roles within the family or in farming and the types of behavior expected of them (for instance, women are gentle and faithful, men are strong and free). These issues speak to the ability of women and men in specific communities to carry out certain farming activities, to be able to travel outside their immediate area for training and meetings, to be sufficiently educated to participate in training, and so on.
2. Gender stereotypes will vary among cultural groups. It is necessary to be aware of how they function in your particular cultural group because they will affect constraints for both sexes. For instance, if you want to add more weeding on a man's crop and weeding is a woman's task in that culture, you may not get your technology adopted. Include in your proposal an assessment of how you will deal with this.
3. Gender issues also speak to who farms which crops and/or which practices they do in farming. What are the differential usages of men and women regarding natural resources (water, firewood, etc.)? For instance, women's inability to participate in formal employment or their restraints in mobility may result in their using natural resources to get cash. For instance, in Africa women may cut down trees to sell the wood because they have no other income source.
4. Gender issues also exist in regard to scientists, extension agents, and students. This includes both numbers and in men's and women's perspectives.
5. Consider that one of the CRSP goals is to sensitize host country stakeholders at all levels - farmers, extension agents, local and national government officials, researchers, university faculty, etc. - to gender issues.

ASSESSING GENDER ISSUES IN YOUR PROPOSAL

General:

1. Review your lists of farmers and consider the gender issues with each group
2. In writing your proposal, make the sex of your participants explicit
3. Go beyond numbers to consider gender stereotypes that might hamper participation of one group or other and how you might creatively develop solutions.

Farm/Enterprise level:

Specify the gender division of labor for Horticulture CRSP activities in your target area. Make it clear in your proposal what these are and the implications for your proposal.

1. Identify constraints on women - mobility, resources, etc. - so you can include ways of dealing with this in your proposal.
2. Clarify whether you will be dealing with men or women producers, marketers, and other stakeholders, or both. If not with both, please explain why not.
3. 50% of the farmers reached must be women. Trellis Fund proposals that reach an even greater percentage of women are more likely to be funded.

Extension level:

1. Aim at working with a minimum of 50% women. If necessary figure out how to find relevant women in or near the communities who might be able to work as assistant extension agents. We will give special consideration to projects that include qualified women as the paid extension specialists.
2. At the community level take into account how men and women are organized into associations, how group activities are structured, and what tasks provide for group communication, such as doing laundry by the stream, or drinking tea under the shade tree.

APPENDIX C: BACKGROUND INFORMATION, HORTICULTURE CRSP***CRSPs***

- Collaborative Research Support Programs (CRSPs) are funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and have the following goals and characteristics:
- Coordinated, multi-disciplinary research programs that are collaboratively developed and cooperatively implemented, with shared responsibilities between US and host country institutions and scientists. CRSP goals are to support economic growth and to reduce poverty through the generation of knowledge and technologies important to the development of agriculture and natural resources of developing and transition countries, while also contributing to the improvement of agriculture in the US.
- Long-term activities, carried out largely in developing countries, following “global plans” of research goals and strategies to reach them. Research proposals are selected competitively and are subject to approval by USAID and by BIFAD.
- Development of the human and institutional capability of research organizations in the countries where CRSP activities are located. Research projects are a vehicle for this capacity development, as are graduate degree programs, research assistantships, and workshops. The institutional relationships established between CRSPs and host country institutions are intended to be enduring and to transcend the life of the CRSP.

HORTICULTURE CRSP GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES***Goals***

In addressing the priorities outlined in the RFA and the Global Horticulture Assessment (GHA), the Horticulture CRSP emphasizes challenges and opportunities in seven key areas – gender equity, sustainable crop production, postharvest technology, food safety, market access, and financing. Constraints in each of these areas can limit the opportunity for limited resource communities to participate in the value chain. Equally, in each area there are exciting opportunities to deploy innovative technologies, introduce new germplasm, and create innovative marketing partnerships and strategies that will facilitate their participation. The goals of the Horticulture CRSP are to realize the opportunity that horticultural development offers, of meeting the food needs and improving nutrition and human health in the developing world, while providing opportunities for diversification of income and consequent economic and social advancement of the rural poor and particularly women. The results of the research and training activities for the Horticulture CRSP will increase food security and improve the quality of life of people in developing countries while bringing an international focus to the research, teaching, and extension efforts of U.S. institutions. These goals will be achieved through collaborations between U.S. universities and national and regional institutions abroad that are active in horticulture research and development. Initial programs will target

developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America.

Objectives

The Horticulture CRSP objectives are:

1. To build local scientific and technical capacity,
2. To apply research findings and technical knowledge to increase small producers' participation in markets, and
3. To facilitate the development of policies that improves local horticultural trade and export capacity.

Strategies for achieving these goals and objectives include:

1. To develop knowledge pertaining to horticultural agriculture as a means of building sustainable human, economic, technological and institutional capacity via interventions and strategies, and
2. To organize and extend the knowledge developed in modalities that can be readily adapted and implemented for sustainable farming, value chain building, education, training, and decision-making at global, national, regional and local levels.
3. Integrated and cross-cutting strategies to achieve these goals are:
4. To identify the constraints to production, postharvest, food safety, marketing, environmental and enabling environment for stakeholders in horticultural value chains, particularly small enterprises and those led by women,
5. To build institutional and personal capacity through horticultural research activities and their applications
6. To invest in education, training, and extension of technology to smallholder producers, agricultural support personnel and institutions in host-country partnerships
7. To build and support linkages between producers and markets and their infrastructure through policy recommendation, information and technology interventions for gender-empowering, financial and socioeconomic solutions
8. To provide specific and flexible mechanisms through public and private partnership and stakeholder interactions to reduce poverty, improve nutrition, support gender equity, promote food security and invest in pro-poor educational and economic development of small holder production and competitiveness in high-valued horticultural products.

Major themes

The Trellis Fund Projects selected for funding by the Horticulture CRSP will address both Information Accessibility and Gender Equity.

Information accessibility

The Global Horticulture Assessment notes the desperate need in rural communities for information – on marketable crops and varieties, on production techniques, postharvest handling, and market requirements and access. Successful Trellis Fund Project applications will include strategies for extending information and technologies developed during the project, and eventually linkages to the developing Horticultural Knowledge Center.

Gender equity

In the developing world, women provide as much as 90% of the labor for the production of horticultural crops. Although they represent a reservoir of production and marketing knowledge of what are often termed 'women's crops' they usually are compensated with lower wages and less permanent positions than those available to men. Lacking knowledge of how

finance works and where to get it, as well as collateral to insure it, women have unequal access to technology and production inputs and therefore reduced opportunities for economic advancement. All Trellis Fund Projects should consider gender issues.