



Pakistan Strategy Support Program

Call for Applications First Annual Competitive Grants Program Proposals Due 31 March 2012 (Call for Applications circulated 31 January 2012)

Research to Support a New Framework for Sustained Economic Growth of Pakistan

In May 2011 the National Economic Council of Pakistan adopted a new *Framework for Economic Growth* recommended by Deputy Chairman Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque and the Planning Commission. The new Framework aims at fostering sustained higher growth and enhanced quality of life through improved governance, vibrant markets, energetic youth and communities, and creative and connected cities. The *Framework* calls for Pakistan to adopt an ongoing process of reform to improve public service delivery, foster economic competition and international trade, enhance innovation and entrepreneurship, increase youth employment, and raise labor and total economic productivity.

In July 2011, with the support of the Planning Commission, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), in collaboration with Innovative Development Strategies (Pvt.) Ltd., launched the Pakistan Strategy Support Program (PSSP). The PSSP is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and guided by a National Advisory Committee chaired by Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque. The PSSP agenda overall supports the *Framework for Economic Growth* with a particular focus on agriculture and the rural economy. It addresses policies designed to increase agricultural productivity and sustainability, create more competitive agricultural input and output markets, and accelerate income growth, food security and poverty reduction taking into account intra-household, inter-sectoral, inter-regional, and inter-temporal growth dynamics.

Fostering innovation within the academic and policy-oriented research communities of Pakistan is vital to the new growth strategy. Under the leadership of Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque, the PSSP joins with the Planning Commission of Pakistan to announce a first annual Call for Applications for Research Competitive Grants. The Competitive Grants Program will be guided by a Research Advisory Committee comprised of fifteen senior Pakistani and international economic development scholars.

Program Description

Eligible Research

Proposals are sought for research that identifies key policy decisions that will support the new growth strategy; assesses empirically the impacts of those decisions; evaluates constraints to policy reform; and examines alternative policy recommendations to enhance their impact. This is a broad-based call for proposals across the four themes of the *Framework for Economic Growth* and encompassing the focus of the PSSP on agriculture, food security, and pro-poor growth within the broader economic context.

Categories of Grants

The PSSP Competitive Grants Program offers two categories of grants:

Small Grants: For project to be completed within one year, grants up to US\$20,000

Large Grants: For projects of one or two years duration, grants up to US\$50,000 per year

An applicant's choice of which grant size to apply for and their proposed budget should be commensurate with the scale of the proposed research. Grants awarded in Pakistan will be in Rupee equivalents at the prevailing exchange rate with Pakistan taxes deducted and deposited with the treasury on behalf of the recipient.

Applicant Qualifications

Proposals are solicited from faculty members and staff at national and provincial universities and research institutes within Pakistan. Proposals are also solicited from scholars at foreign universities and research institutes with interest in the economic growth and policy issues of Pakistan. Proposals are encouraged from Pakistani graduate students enrolled in Ph.D. and thesis-based master's degree programs at Pakistani and foreign universities, or from faculty members to support the research of these students.

Proposals from each of the three groups of applicants will be evaluated in separate competitive categories. Outstanding proposals from each category are anticipated to be funded. Proposals may be submitted by individual applicants or by teams of up to four co-investigators. Collaborative proposals by teams based at multiple institutions are encouraged.

Application Guidelines

Elements of the Grant Application

English is the language to be used in the PSSP Competitive Grants Program. Applications must include the following:

- Attached Application Cover Sheet
- Title Page, Abstract (up to 250 words), and Table of Contents

- Description of the proposed research including a problem statement; review of relevant existing studies; hypotheses maintained and to be tested; proposed technical approach to the research; sources of data; potential pitfalls facing the analysis; anticipated uses of the results; policy implications and potential beneficiaries; and list of references. This body of the proposal must not exceed 12 single-spaced pages with size 12 type font.
- For applicants who are faculty members and research staff, a brief curriculum vita (1-3 pages) for each Principal Investigator
- For applications for which a substantial portion of requested funds will be used to support a graduate student, (i) an official transcript of graduate coursework completed and list of planned additional course enrollment, and (ii) a letter of recommendation from the applicant's principal advisor (to maintain confidentiality, the letter of recommendation may be submitted to PSSP separately from the other application materials)
- Timeline for achieving each phase of the research
- Budget indicating proposed expenditures and a brief explanation of each cost. Budget may include such items as direct salary and fringe benefit costs for Principal Investigators, research assistants, or graduate students; graduate student tuition; data acquisition or collection including field surveys; travel (including for study leave abroad, presentation of the research, or other relevant purposes); equipment; and limited institutional overhead. The budget explanation should indicate any additional funding available or expected to be received in support of the proposed research. However, cost-sharing is not required for PSSP competitive grants.

Submission Process and Deadline

Applications must be submitted electronically to IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org. Complete applications will be acknowledged by return email within 14 days of submission.

Applications are due 31 March 2012 by midnight Pakistan Standard Time (PST). Incomplete applications and applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Operation of the Competitive Grants Program

Selection Criteria and Process

All complete grant applications will be reviewed by a scholarly review panel composed of members of the Research Advisory Committee (RAC, see description below). Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of importance of the topic and relevance to the challenges identified in the *Framework for Economic Growth*; cohesion and creativity of the proposed research; technical feasibility of the proposed analysis; and qualifications of the Principal Investigator(s) for undertaking the proposed study. Equal weight will be given to each criterion.

Top-ranked proposals will be invited for oral presentation (in person or by video) before the review panel in May 2012.

Selection decision and grant awards will be announced by 30 May 2012.

Disbursement of Funds

Disbursement of funds to successful grant applicants will occur in three tranches: one upon selection of the proposal for an award; one upon acceptance by the review panel of an interim research report (due at six months for one-year proposals and 12 months for two-year proposals); and one upon acceptance by the review panel of the project's final research report.

Expected Outputs and Grant Program Workshops

Grant recipients are expected to produce a research article or monograph of international peer-reviewed publication quality. Interim and final reports submitted to the review panel for approval of grant fund disbursements are expected to be intermediate products leading to this final published output.

The PSSP Competitive Grants Program will organize bi-annual research workshops. Small-grant recipients will be expected to make a presentation at the conclusion of their work. Large-grant recipients will be expected to make two presentations of their work: an initial presentation corresponding to their interim research report and a final presentation corresponding to their final research report. Travel expenses for these presentations should be included in the grant budget request. Members of the review panel and other invitees will participate in the workshops.

Grant Program Administration

Administration

The PSSP Competitive Grants Program is administered by the IFPRI Pakistan Strategy Support Program, which is responsible for administration of grant selection decisions made by the scholarly review panel, disbursement of funds based on fulfillment of the grant requirements by recipients, and other operational aspects of the program.

The Research Advisory Committee (RAC)

The PSSP Competitive Grants Program is guided by a fifteen-member Research Advisory Committee chaired by Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. The members of the RAC are internationally recognized scholars at institutions in Pakistan and abroad. Responsibility for organization of the RAC activities rests with two deputy co-chairmen who are senior scholars representing IFPRI and the Pakistan academic community.

Questions about the 2012 PSSP Competitive Grants Program

The Call for Applications for the 2012 PSSP Competitive Grants Program is available electronically on the Planning Commission web site (www.pc.gov.pk) and at www.pssp.ifpri.info. It can also be requested at IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org.

Questions about the 2012 PSSP Competitive Grants Program may be addressed to IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org. Questions will be answered by return email within seven days.

**First Annual PSSP Competitive Grants Program
Proposals Due 31 March 2012**

Application Cover Sheet

___: Small Grant ___: Large Grant (1 year) ___: Large Grant (2 year)

Submit with full application to: IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org

Principal Investigator	Department Head or Supervisor
Name (one sheet for each PI; lead PI should be identified)	Name
Address	Address
Email	Email
Telephone	Telephone
Proposed Budget	
Proposed Grant Start and End dates	
Statement of Intent By making this application, I verify my intent to undertake the proposed 2012 competitive grant project within the time period and budget as specified in the proposal. Type name or insert electronic signature (Formal agreements will be signed with successful applicants)	Statement of Support By endorsing this application, I verify my support for the principal investigator undertaking the proposed 2012 competitive grant project within the time period and budget as specified in the proposal. Type name or insert electronic signature