



## PAKISTAN Strategy Support Program



### **Competitive Grants Program Third Round of Grant Selections**

### **Call for Applications**

**Proposals due 31 March 2014**

**(Call for Applications circulated 1 February 2014)**

## **Research to Support the Enhanced Economic Growth of Pakistan**

The Pakistan Strategy Support Program (PSSP) in conjunction with the federal Planning Commission is pleased to announce its third Call for Applications for research to enhance the economic growth of Pakistan. For Pakistan to achieve prosperity requires sustained and inclusive high growth. The Competitive Grants Program (CGP) is designed to support economic and other social science research that will inform the strategy of the Planning Commission for achieving its growth objectives. Fostering innovation within the academic and policy-oriented research communities of Pakistan is vital to the growth strategy.

The Competitive Grants Program is guided by a Research Advisory Committee (RAC) comprised of senior Pakistani and international development scholars. The 2014-15 Chairman of the RAC is Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning, Development and Reforms and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. Under its first two round of competition, the CGP has supported nearly forty research projects. Information on these previous rounds is available at [www.pssp.ifpri.info](http://www.pssp.ifpri.info).

### **Program Description**

#### Eligible Research

Proposals are sought for economic and other social science research that identifies key policy decisions that will support economic growth as envisioned in the *Vision 2025* strategy of the Planning Commission (visit Planning Commission of Pakistan's web page [http://www.pc.gov.pk/?page\\_id=73](http://www.pc.gov.pk/?page_id=73) for details of Vision 2025); 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

thematic areas of the *Vision 2025* agenda. This agenda includes Energy Security, Private Sector Led Growth, Modernization of Infrastructure, Improved Competitiveness, Internal Resource Mobilization, Institutional and Governance Reforms, Harnessing Human and Social Capital, and Revival of Public Confidence. Specific focal points include balanced monetary and fiscal policy, tax reforms, tariff rationalization, the facilitating role of the public sector, civil service reforms, integrated energy policy, privatization policy, mapping and development of cluster-based value-chains, agricultural development and foods security, water security policy, law and order and the justice system, education and innovation policies, devolution and local governance, pro-poor investment, telecommunication technology including 3G spectrum and beyond, tourism and growth, and urban and rural development policy. Particular emphasis is placed on research that closes the knowledge to doing gap to enhance sustainable and inclusive growth.

### Size of Grants

The third PSSP Competitive Grants Program offers grants from \$5,000 up to \$50,000 for projects designed to be completed in one year. The proposed budget should be commensurate with the scale of the proposed research.

### 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 that support Pakistani graduate students enrolled in Ph.D. and thesis-based master's degree programs at Pakistani and foreign universities. Special consideration will be given to proposals from institutions located in disadvantaged areas of Pakistan.

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. New applicants and those who have previously received a PSSP competitive grant award are eligible to apply.

## **Application Guidelines**

### Elements of the Grant Application

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

- Attached Application Cover Sheet (one for each Principal Investigator)
- Title Page, Abstract (up to 250 words), and Table of Contents
- Description of the proposed research including a problem statement; brief review of relevant existing studies (no more than 2 pages); 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 curriculum vita 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 by the 31 March 2014 deadline but 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); and equipment. Institutional overhead is limited to 15 percent of the total project cost. 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](mailto:IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org). Complete applications will be acknowledged by return email within 14 days of submission.

Applications are due 31 March 2014 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 RAC. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of importance of the topic and relevance to the objectives of *Vision 2025*; 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 at a workshop in early-June, 2014.

Selection decision and grant awards will be announced by 16 June 2014.

## Disbursement of Funds

Disbursement of funds to successful grant applicants will occur in three tranches: one upon completion of the contract for the awarded proposal; one upon acceptance by the review panel of an interim research report (due at six months); and one upon acceptance by the review panel of the project's final research report.

Contracts for the selected awards can be through an applicant's institution or on an individual basis with approval from their institution. Contracts for the awards announced in June 2014 are for projects to begin no later than 31 July 2014.

## **Expected Outputs and Grants 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 organizes a series of research workshops. Grant recipients are expected to make two presentations of their work: one corresponding to their interim research report and one corresponding to their final research report. Travel expenses for these presentations will be provided separately from the grant budgets.

## **Grants Program Administration**

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

### Questions about the PSSP Competitive Grants Program

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

Questions about the PSSP Competitive Grants Program may be addressed to [IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org](mailto:IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org). Questions will be answered by return email within seven days.

**Third PSSP Competitive Grants Program  
Proposals due 31 March 2014**

**Application Cover Sheet**

**Submit with full application to: [IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org](mailto:IFPRI-PSSPGrants@cgiar.org)**

Principal Investigator	Authorized University Representative
Name (one sheet for each PI; lead PI should be identified)	Name
Address	Address
Email	Email
Telephone	Telephone
Proposed Budget	
Statement of Intent  By making this application, I verify my intent to undertake the proposed competitive grant project within the time period and budget as specified in the proposal.  Type name or insert electronic signature (Formal contracts will be signed with successful applicants)	Statement of Support  By endorsing this application, I verify my support for the principal investigator undertaking the proposed competitive grant project within the time period and budget as specified in the proposal.  Type name or insert electronic signature
PI has previously received a CGP grant <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	