

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
AN ORGANIZATION TO SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN GEOSPATIAL DATA IN AFRICA

1. Can private companies submit qualifications for the RFQ?

Yes, companies are eligible to apply to the RFQ, particularly if the organization has a history of providing sub-grants and sub-contracts and experience in the geographic region.

2. Can a group submit qualifications?

Yes, self-organized groups are eligible to respond to the RFQ.

3. Can we be considered for a role as a sub-contractor and/or sub-grantee?

Yes, we will keep track of all submitters for consideration as a primary grantee as well as potentially a sub-contract or sub-grant recipient. Please, alert us if you specifically would like to be considered as a sub-grantee or sub-contractor.

4. We noted that geospatial expertise is preferred but not required. How much should respondents to this RFQ highlight their geospatial expertise? Is there an existing vendor that you already have identified to provide these technical aspects of the project?

Please, highlight any geospatial expertise you feel would be important as a managing partner grantee. There is not an existing vendor that we have identified to provide the technical aspects of the project.

5. We understand the RFQ is looking at the organizational capability and that an individual or a consortium may respond. In an event of a potential consortium, is the expectation that partners and negotiations of the partnership be identified in the RFQ, or can an organization provide information on its ability to strategically identify partners and in the next level the actually naming of partners can be done.

The preference is to have all of the partners identified within the initial submission for the RFQ. We understand this is a busy time of year for travel. If you do not have the specific other partners identified, we would expect you to describe the potential partner and the specific capabilities of the partner.

6. If partners are to be identified in the RFQ, is there a consideration on your side on exclusivity?

From a technical standpoint, we want the geospatial data to be as open and accessible as reasonably possible to countries, development actors and entrepreneurs. We have no exclusivity to any one type of technology.

7. We are based in Africa but our HQ is in Ottawa. Would you consider AICD and World Bank as co-partners?

Yes, we definitely will consider organizations that are not located in Sub-Saharan Africa.

8. Can an UN agency apply for the grant?

Yes.

9. In case of dual consortium (2 organizations partnering), do you have special guidelines to follow in consortium formation?

We want one contact person for the grant application process. At this point, there will likely be a single grant recipient within any consortiums and sub-grants for other partners, however depending on the specific case we may consider a different grant structure.

10. Would you consider an intergovernmental organization with strong political convening power and South African cooperation if it can convene local as well as local organizations and policy makers on the ground to work together including may be other international orgs as appropriate?

Yes.

11. Would you facilitate networking/collaboration between applicants for consortium formation?

We will provide a web form on this site for those to indicate that they are interested in forming a collaboration.

12. Are there any other restrictions being placed on successful partners in the managing partner consortium?

Not at this time.

13. Given that we currently implement BMGF-funded projects in Africa, is there any potential limitation or defined clause in this grant that we should be aware of?

At this point in time we are not aware of a specific clause for this grant to a managing partner grantee.

14. Our GIS department is growing, however, we have a well-demonstrated ability to implement and sub-grant projects within Africa, based on our multi-hub, multi-country location administrative structure. Is the Foundation more focused on the Geospatial expertise or would our institutional strength/impact in Africa be a more desirable plus?

The open RFQ was designed for a range of organizations who are interested to respond. Geospatial expertise is not a requirement of the managing partner grantee.

15. The RFQ asks that we include an appendix that outlines current active grants. To clarify, are you looking for a list of grant funds that we are responsible for disbursing to other organizations? (that list is quite large.) Or are you looking for projects we are implementing in Africa - either as contracts or grants - with funds from donors and foundations?

We are looking for projects you are implementing in Africa as contracts or grants with funds from donors and foundations however it is useful to understand how many partner organizations and at what funding level you work with across Sub-Saharan Africa. Please, list the active grants you think are most pertinent to providing evidence that the organization fits well with the criteria for a managing partner grantee.

16. Is there a limit to the number of active grants you would like provided in the Appendix to the application? If an organization has many active grants, this list could span several pages.

Please, list the active grants you think are most pertinent to providing evidence that the organization fits well with the criteria for a managing partner grantee.

17. Is there a scoring guide for this RFP?

There is not a sharable scoring guide for the RFQ.

18. Is there a template for this RFP response?

There is not a template rather guidelines outlined on the website: <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/How-We-Work/General-Information/Grant-Opportunities/Geospatial-Data-in-Africa>

19. Do I need to register our interest anywhere to make sure to get notifications of such events or any other information dissemination?

Any questions submitted by e-mail to us, we will add the contact information to a list that will receive e-mail updates.

20. Can further detail be provided at this stage to the timing of the process after submission of RFQs, esp. after August 15th? Notification, program definition meeting(s), and start of program.

At this point in time we want to remain flexible given it is an open RFQ. Once we have down-selected for the next stage of the proposal process we will have a clearer understanding of the timeline. We plan to give an initial planning grant to the selected organization at the end of 2016 or very early 2017.

21. Should the proposal to produce a complete map of sub-Saharan Africa be focused only on the four specific core geospatial data layers mentioned in the RFQ: (1) road networks, (2) settlement names & locations, (3) key points of interest, and (4) water bodies?

With the selected managing partner grantee. We can have discussions about if they think that the base map needs to be more robust or provide more information than that. From the experiences we have had with the development of public health Those are definitely the layers we wanted to put forth to ensure that the organizations respond have at least the capabilities of managing a project that can produce those layers within a map.

22. Just to confirm: the three-page limit for the RFQ application does not include the requested items for the appendix, and there is no page limit for the appendix?

Yes, there is not limit to the appendix. Please, refer to the list of items to be included for guidance.

23. Is it possible to add additional partners after pre-selection of the proposal?

Yes, however we do ask that you list the qualities of a partner that you plan to add later within the RFQ.

24. How will expressions of interests be evaluated and will submissions be accepted on a rolling basis?

Applications will be accepted through August 5, no later.

25. Would you consider subdividing the RFQ into smaller components which organizations can apply for?

This RFQ is to identify a primary managing partner grantee. That partner will provide sub-grants and sub-contracts for the list of activities within the project grant. The RFQ grant will not be split into multiple smaller grants.

26. Does being a partner in a group managing partner bid restrict the ability to seek sub-contracts or grants from this fund or other Gates grants.

No. It would not preclude receiving other grants or contracts from the selected managing partner grantee or other grant opportunities.

27. Is it possible to submit a proposal for just a few countries?

For the managing partner grantee, we are seeking a partner who can administer grants to multiple organizations in multiple countries. If you are interested in engaging in particular countries, please, specify what countries you would want to engage specifically.

28. Can you provide more details on the number of countries or which countries in Sub-Saharan Africa you would like to target with this grant? Is the project focused on Sub-Saharan Africa and, if so, can you be specific which countries? or is the scope for the whole of Africa?

We initially will begin with a few countries in East and Central Africa as exemplars of the impact of increased capacity to ensure sustainable maps. At the same time, we intend to ensure there is a complete map of all Sub-Saharan African countries.

29. Is there a financial cap on the program that you are able to disclose?

We intend to begin with a small group of countries as exemplars. The initial investment from the foundation looks like it will be USD \$5-10M with the understanding that if necessary we will work with the managing partner grantee to secure further partnership and commitments.

30. Would the data generated under this project fall under the Gates Foundation open access policy?

The foundation is currently crafting an open geospatial data policy that responds to the unique characteristics of geospatial data. There is an intent to have as much of the data as reasonably possible made open. There are areas around country public domain and other privacy sensitivities that will need to be taken into account.

31. What proportion of the funding is anticipated for grant money?

At this point we do not know how the funding will be apportioned; we anticipate that the entire amount would be disbursed as a grant.

32. Is this activity a combination grant-making and capacity-building, or is there a greater emphasis on one or the other?

We intend to work with the managing partner grantee to determine the appropriate activities for each country context.

33. Which role does the foundation see for itself in (a) consortium formation, and in (b) definition of the mentioned Innovation pilots?

The foundation will not participate in a managing partner grantee consortium formation. As with many grants we will work with the grantee to identify appropriate sub-grantees or sub-contractors for specific parts of the grant including discussion of the shaping of innovation pilots.

34. Knowing that base mapping means different things to different stakeholders, to what extent will the foundation's ideas for this program be directed by its mission? E.g., the energy sector has specific base map requirements, and so does the public health sector.

Standards is definitely going to be a strong part of this. We want to ensure that our standards fit with the country government sector. One of the things we are looking at, is having a group of standards advisors who will engage with this project and with the managing partner grantee.

35. Is the expectation that country capacity development to maintain the maps will be done for all the Sub-Saharan countries? Or may a needs assessment be used to determine focus countries?

Ideally, the long term vision is to initially do a basic map of all of sub-Saharan Africa. Two to three exemplar countries will have more extensive engagement for honing effective approaches to ensure sustainable maps in every country in Sub-Saharan Africa.

36. Do you envision a minimum number of countries to be selected to collate additional development data layers?

Yes. The vision will be to select two to three exemplar countries for both sustainable capacity building and applications of additional development layers. One of the objectives is to show the power of geospatial data to be an integrator of information as well as a method to improve decision making, service delivery, and resource allocation.

37. Do you have a preference for these additional data layers such as health, agriculture, and finance?

The project will likely begin with additional data layers including global health, agriculture and finance, as these are focus areas of the foundation. We would want that information of our current partners to be included in the data layers to improve decision making.

38. Is the Foundation looking for a sustainability plan as part of the RFQ response? If so, is there a preference towards creating a business model (eg, development organizations pay to access content) or aligning with an existing spatial data institution?

This is a request for qualification for a managing partner grantee. This is not a request for a vision on how the group would execute on the project. A more detailed application will be requested from those selected for the second round. The selected managing partner grantee will include more detail in their planning grant. It is fine to align with an existing spatial data institution, please indicate the institution.

39. Within the areas of development for which additional data layers will be added, are there certain sectors which are considered a priority area for this project?

The foundation has strong relationships with partners in the areas of health, agriculture and financial services and anticipate that additional data layers from these areas would be a priority. We realize that

there is a continuum of pertinent geospatial data. We would anticipate the primary managing partner grantee to identify other data layers that could be added to the exemplar country datasets.

40. By what criteria would certain countries or geographical areas be considered priority for the development of additional sector-specific layers?

The foundation has a set of priority countries for each of our strategic program teams. The priority countries will likely be one of these as there will be access to funded work that has resulted in sector specific data layers.

41. What is the funding portfolio outlook and is there any chance that the final grant will be awarded under a collaborative scheme?

At this time, we envision providing a grant to a managing partner grantee who will then disburse funds based on the project needs to a variety of partners. If a collaborative group is selected as the managing partner grantee we can revisit this; our preference at this time is to have a single grant recipient.