Applying the lessons learned from polio eradication to global health

Request for Proposal

Proposal Deadline: August 21, 2017

Overview

Introduction

Over the past three decades, the world has made tremendous progress toward the eradication of polio. In 1988, wild poliovirus was present in more than 125 countries and paralyzed 350,000 people every year, primarily young children. That year, the World Health Assembly set a goal to eradicate the disease, and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was launched. Since then, immunization efforts have reduced the number of cases by more than 99 percent, saving more than 16 million children from paralysis. Today, polio is found only in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria. In 2016, there were fewer than 40 cases reported globally.

Polio eradication is one of the top priorities of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. As a major supporter of the GPEI, we are interested in supporting the partnership to document the lessons learned from polio eradication, ensuring these lessons inform future global health policy and implementation. This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks submissions from academic and training institutions interested in developing an academic and/or professional training program based on the lessons learned from polio eradication, with the goal of ensuring that future generations of global leaders successfully apply the lessons and best practices from polio eradication to other pressing public health challenges.

Background

The fight against polio has resulted in new ways of addressing human health in the developing world—through political engagement, funding, planning and management strategies, research, and more. The GPEI has trained and mobilized millions of staff and volunteers, identified and reached households and communities that had been untouched by other initiatives, and established a robust global surveillance and response system. In addition to being one of the largest global health initiatives ever undertaken, the polio eradication effort is also one of the most closely coordinated among country, regional and global levels, with strong data and management systems guiding governments and their partners to collaborate in evidence-based planning and operations.

But the vast expertise developed by polio eradication practitioners at the field level is not carefully documented in ways that are readily accessible to public health managers and implementers in other geographies or health programs. While the major accomplishments of the polio eradication effort will undoubtedly be recognized and reported by the global health community for years to come, there is a need to capture the practical details of how the program identified problems, recognized mistakes, and ultimately overcame implementation challenges so that other disease eradication and control initiatives as well as health service delivery systems have the opportunity to incorporate these lessons into their work to improve efficiency and outcomes.

In addition, the field level workforce behind the success of the polio eradication effort represents a strong pool of leadership for future global health programs. Many of these staff are from countries that have been historically affected by polio transmission and are amongst the most talented and experienced public health practitioners available. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is interested in identifying and cultivating these talented staff as a new generation of international global health leaders, with the ability to apply their expertise from polio eradication to successes in other health and development efforts.

Anticipated Outcomes

The proposed investment will support the development of an academic and/or professional training program that documents how the key lessons learned from polio eradication can be applied to other public health policy and programming. Either as a stand-alone academic program or integrated into public health graduate or professional training courses, these teaching modules/materials should aim to:

1. Raise awareness amongst public health graduate students, policymakers, managers, practitioners and future public health leaders, about lessons learned from the polio eradication program, both the successes and challenges;
2. Generate concrete opportunities for other health initiatives and service delivery programs to operationalize the lessons learned from polio eradication to improve outcomes and equity;
3. Promote experienced polio program staff from developing countries as global health leaders and experts at the international level by providing them with platforms to share their expertise regionally and globally, as well as opportunities to link with international professional and academic networks.

Graduate-level teaching institutions or a consortium of relevant institutions/partners are invited to apply to develop teaching modules or other learning materials on the lessons learned from polio eradication. The development and distribution of these materials is expected to involve close partnership with polio program field staff, providing them with opportunities to serve as international content experts.

Scope and Approach

Proposals are invited that outline a clear approach to developing teaching modules on the lessons learned from polio eradication. Modules should be widely accessible over time to a range of public health policymakers, managers, practitioners and graduate students. Because we consider the lessons learned from polio eradication a public good for the improvement of other global health efforts, projects are expected to maximize the open and equitable access to these lessons learned by a broad constituency on an ongoing basis. Teaching mechanisms may be incorporated into existing university-based curricula, packaged as free online learning resources, and/or as stand-alone lectures during global health training course, conferences, or symposia. Modules should be practical and implementation-focused, with an emphasis on operationalizing lessons and systems from polio eradication to benefit other programs in measurable ways. Modules and training materials may focus on functional areas where the polio program has particular expertise at the field level – e.g., microplanning to reach underserved, migrant and nomadic populations; monitoring and accountability strategies; management and coordination structures (e.g., Emergency Operations Centers); or community engagement – and/or on broader themes with regional/global significance, such as managing a complex global health partnership, data reporting and sharing, advocacy and resource mobilization, etc.

The development of teaching content is expected to directly draw on the expertise of existing polio program leaders and field staff, providing these staff with opportunities to serve as content experts at the international level and broaden their international professional networks. Modules and training materials may focus on functional areas where the polio program has particular expertise at the field level – e.g., microplanning to reach underserved, migrant and nomadic populations; monitoring and accountability strategies; management and coordination structures (e.g., Emergency Operations Centers); or community engagement – and/or on broader themes with regional/global significance, such as managing a complex global health partnership, data reporting and sharing, advocacy and resource mobilization, etc.

Rules & Guidelines

Eligibility

Funding Criteria

Individual institutions or a consortium of partners that have either academic teaching or professional training as a primary institutional focus are invited to submit proposals. Examples of such organizations include:

- Graduate teaching institutions in the fields of public health, government, management and other relevant academic areas
- International professional associations or learning networks with involvement in professional training or continuing education
- Training centers or institutes
- Technical agencies, implementing partners or organizations from other sectors may be included in consortia applications in which the lead organization is a teaching or training institution as described above.

Applications for multi-year projects are encouraged and will be accepted. Applicants are encouraged to budget to a level required to achieve what they consider a successful outcome based on the scope of work described in this RFP. An initial ‘Phase I’ investment of no higher than $500,000 for the first year of implementation will likely be undertaken, however, with any subsequent time or budget needs added based on strong justification thereafter. Proposals with budgets higher than $500,000 in the first year of implementation might be considered if accompanied with an extremely strong justification for larger resources. Following this initial Phase I grant, subsequent funding to support full-scale dissemination and implementation may be made available based on joint assessment of progress and strong justification for additional resources required to achieve the long-term project outcomes.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be selected for funding after submitting a full proposal package which is comprised of a proposal narrative, budget, and results framework and tracker.

Submissions received by the deadline will be evaluated on the following criteria:
• Experience/expertise in the development of high-quality, outcome-oriented adult learning mechanisms, either through degree programs, course materials, continuing education, training or capacity-building programs
• Ability to reach a broad range of public health policymakers, managers, practitioners and graduate students with these learning materials over time, particularly targeting learning audiences in developing countries and providing open access courseware
• Capability to monitor the implementation and outcomes of these learning materials over time, to ensure high quality and appropriate targeting
• Commitment to promoting talented polio program managers and implementers from developing countries as part of the next generation of global health leaders
• Overall strength and clarity of project design and implementation plan
• Budget

Successful submissions will:
• Clearly propose a project with the potential to improve the implementation of global health programming and service delivery based on the translation of lessons learned from the polio eradication effort to other areas
• Reflect a clear understanding of the GPEI strategy
• Demonstrate a strong commitment to strengthen partnerships with and capacity of public health institutions and sector leadership in developing countries
• Have a project duration of 2-5 years

Activities and Timeline

July 3, 2017 – 17:00 (PST): Request announced
July 24, 2017 – 17:00 (PST): Deadline for clarifying questions on the RFP, submitted to PolioLessonsRFP@gatesfoundation.org
July 26, 2017 – 07:00 (PST): Q&A call/webinar (connection instructions distributed to those indicating an interest to PolioLessonsRFP@gatesfoundation.org
August 21, 2017 – 17:00 (PST): Deadline for submitting full proposals
September 11, 2017 – 17:00 (PST): Finalist(s) notified
October 16, 2017 – 17:00 (PST): Deadline for finalist(s) to submit revised proposal
November 10, 2017 – 17:00 (PST): Award announced

How to Submit a Proposal

Response Requirements

To apply, please submit a full proposal package that includes the attachments listed below. Other attachments will not be reviewed:
• Proposal narrative describing the proposed project (up to 20 pages, using template and guidelines provided);
• Budget for the proposed activities (using template and guidelines provided);
• Most recent organizational financial statements (audited, if available);
• Biographical information or resume for project staff;
• Examples of previously developed teaching modules or course materials.

Submission Instructions

Submit your response online. You must complete the online submission form attach your completed proposal forms for the foundation to process your request. Please do not mail a duplicate hard copy after submitting your proposal online or send any additional attachments or information (videos, books, program materials, etc.)

Help Contact(s)

See the Application Portal for more detailed information or contact PolioLessonsRFP@gatesfoundation.org for questions.

More Information

References/Resources
Please carefully consider the following in your response:

- **Who can participate?** This is an open solicitation. We welcome submissions from organizations in all sectors (private, NGO, government, academic) and at all levels of expertise.

- **When are responses due?** Responses are due on August 21, 2017.

- **When will proposals be selected?** Finalists will be announced September 11, 2017.

- **Will I receive any compensation for submitting?** You will not receive any compensation for your submission even if it is used by the foundation or third parties in any way.

- **What will the foundation do with my submission?** The foundation and GPEI partner and representatives (from UNICEF, World Health Organization, the US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Rotary International, and the Task Force for Global Health) will review all submissions. We may also share your submission, or ideas contained within it, with the public or partners to ensure that good ideas and new innovations are broadly disseminated and available for use. With this in mind, please ensure that any materials you provide under this solicitation are your own, and understand that they foundation and others will have a right to use your submission freely, upon delivery, for noncommercial purposes.

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### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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### Key Terms and Conditions

#### A. Disclosure Notice

To help the foundation with its review of RFP responses, the foundation may disclose proposals, documents, communications, and associated materials submitted to the foundation in response to this RFP (collectively, “Submission Materials”) to its employees, contingent workers, consultants, independent subject matter experts, and potential co-funders. Please carefully consider the information included in the Submission Materials. If you (the “Applicant”) have any doubts about the wisdom of disclosure of confidential or proprietary information, the foundation recommends you consult with your legal counsel and take any steps you deem necessary to protect your intellectual property. You may wish to consider whether such information is critical for evaluating the submission or if more general, non-confidential information may be adequate as an alternative for these purposes.

Notwithstanding the Applicants characterization of any information as being confidential, the foundation the foundation is under no obligation to treat such information as confidential.

#### B. Disclaimer

This RFP is not an offer to contract or award grant funds. The foundation assumes no responsibility for the Applicants cost to respond to this RFP. All responses generated by this RFP become the property of the foundation.

#### C. Release and Verification

In exchange for the opportunity to be awarded a grant or contract, the Applicant agrees that the foundation may, in its sole discretion: (1) amend or cancel the RFP, in whole or in part, at any time; (2) extend the deadline for submitting responses; (3) determine whether a response does or does not substantially comply with the requirements of the RFP; (4) waive any minor irregularity, informality or nonconformance with the provisions or procedures of the RFP; (5) issue multiple awards; (6) share responses generated by this RFP with foundation staff, consultants, contingent workers, subject matter experts, and potential co-funders; and (7) copy the responses.

Applicant agrees not to bring a legal challenge of any kind against the foundation relating to the foundation’s selection and award of a grant or contract arising from this RFP.

Applicant represents that it has responded to the RFP with complete honesty and accuracy. If facts provided in Applicant’s response change, Applicant will supplement its response in writing with any deletions, additions or changes within ten days of the changes. Applicant will do this, as necessary, throughout the selection process. Applicant understands that any material misrepresentation, including omissions, may disqualify it from consideration for a grant or contract award.

By responding to this RFP, you are representing: (i) that you have authority to bind the named Applicant to the terms and conditions set forth above, without amendment; and (ii) that you agree to be bound by them.
D. Global Access and Intellectual Property

Intellectual property (IP) rights and the management of IP rights are likely to play an important role in achieving the goals of this project. To this end, the foundation requires that, even at this stage, all applicants seriously consider their willingness to submit a response in compliance with the foundation’s response requirements, a portion of which may ask for certain information and intentions regarding intellectual property concerns and Global Access. Specifically, the foundation requires that;

You will conduct and manage the Project and the Funded Developments in a manner that ensures Global Access. Your Global Access commitments will survive the term of the Agreement. “Funded Developments” means the products, services, processes, technologies, materials, software, data, other innovations, and intellectual property resulting from the Project (including modifications, improvements, and further developments to Background Technology). “Background Technology” means any and all products, services, processes, technologies, materials, software, data, or other innovations, and intellectual property created by You or a third party prior to or outside of the Project used as part of the Project. “Global Access” means: (a) the knowledge and information gained from the Project will be promptly and broadly disseminated; and (b) the Funded Developments will be made available and accessible at an affordable price (i) to people most in need within developing countries, or (ii) in support of the U.S. educational system and public libraries, as applicable to the Project.

The foundation will be selecting applicants based on the conclusion that their technologies and expertise will be most appropriate for the success of this RFP.

As part of the foundation’s review and evaluation of each response, the foundation will conduct due diligence with respect to each applicant’s ability and commitment to manage intellectual property in a manner consistent with the stated scientific and charitable goals of the foundation. Due diligence activities may include inquiry into an applicant’s:

1) Freedom to operate (FTO) and ability to freely use and acquire needed background technology;
2) Commitment to promote the utilization, commercialization and availability of Funded Developments for public benefit

The foundation encourages you to include this information in your response.

About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. We work with partner organizations worldwide to tackle critical problems in four program areas. Our Global Development Division works to help the world’s poorest people lift themselves out of hunger and poverty. Our Global Health Division aims to harness advances in science and technology to save lives in developing countries. Our United States Division works to improve U.S. high school and postsecondary education and support vulnerable children and families in Washington State. And our Global Policy & Advocacy Division seeks to build strategic relationships and promote policies that will help advance our work. Our approach to Grantmaking emphasizes collaboration, innovation, risk-taking, and, most importantly, results.

To learn more about the foundation’s work, visit www.gatesfoundation.org.