Frequently Answered Questions:
Call for EOI for Innovation Investment Study

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Eligibility to apply

Q1: Can I apply as an individual expert?
No, CoSAI is not selecting individual applicants for this tender. We are asking for consortia, who will put together groups of experts themselves. Therefore, in order to be considered, you would need to submit your CV directly to a large institution or consortium applying for this tender, or else you could form an international network of individual experts to apply as a group – with the permission of your respective institutions.

Q2: Can we apply as a single organization?
Yes, if your organization is based in the Global South. See also Q3.

Q3: Can a Global South organization be the lead partner, or the sole applicant?
Yes, a global south organization can indeed be the lead partner, or the sole applicant.

Q4: Is there a requirement that there has to be a partner from the Global North?
There is no requirement for a partner from the Global North.

Q5: Can our Consortium include a CGIAR Center?
Yes it can, with the exception of IWMI, the CGIAR Center that is managing the call. However, please note the following important points:
- Having an CGIAR Center on your team will not confer any advantage over other applicants.
- A CGIAR Center should not be nominated as your sole ‘Global South’ partner, even if the Center has an address in the Global South.
- CGIAR itself is one planned case study (although not yet confirmed) so if there is a CGIAR Center on the team, your EOI should explain how you will manage any Conflict of Interest.
- Members of the CoSAI bid selection committee who have any major or recent involvement with a particular Center will recuse themselves if an applicant consortium includes that Center.

Q6: What does ‘a substantive partner from the Global South mean?’
‘Substantive partner’ means that there must be an agreement from at least one Global South organization to provide a minimum of one senior person to the applicant's core team. The Global South organization does not have to be the lead partner in the Consortium. For this purpose, please note:

- Global South organizations may be national (e.g. a university) or regional (e.g. a regional thinktank)
- CGIAR Centers or parts of Centers do not count as Global South organizations.
- Someone who is only planned to be contracted for a single national case study does not count as a ‘core team’ member
A Research Analyst does not count as a ‘senior person’.

Q7: Do we need a letter confirming participation from the partner organization(s)?
No, but please provide the name(s) of the organization(s) and a contact for each. Please see Content of EOI: (b): Names and contact information of other applicant(s) in the consortium and their respective role(s).

Q8: Our Consortium does not have any members based in Sri Lanka. Are we eligible to apply?
Yes, you are eligible! Apologies for the confusing title of 'Western Sri Lanka' on the application page. If you look at the actual Call for EOI, it only says that at least one partner should be from the Global South. (see also Q&A)

Q9: Our Consortium is all based on a single continent (in the Global South). Are we eligible to apply?
Yes, you are eligible! However please note that this is a global study and we will be expecting case studies from more than one continent, so please ensure that you have the relevant global experience on your team. At minimum, you should present evidence that you would be able to quickly set up appropriate partnerships during the inception stage.

Q10: Does the team leader need to be from an organization?
No. In terms of pure eligibility, the team leader can be an independent consultant (from any country). In this case, please put "Independent Consultant" in response to the Content of EOI: (a): Postal address, legal registration and electronic contact information for the lead applicant in the consortium. Please provide the name of a contact person with title, phone number, Skype ID and e-mail address.

However - this is a large piece of work, and we would most likely favour bids that have some institutional backup for the team. There is always a risk that for example someone gets ill, or someone does not do satisfactory work - and if there is an institution then they can fill the gap, while this is difficult for independent consultants.

Planning and presentation of EOI

Q11: Are the annexes counted as part of the 12 page maximum length of the EOI?
No. The 12 page limit refers to the main document. Annexes are extra and there is no set page limit. However, please note that CoSAI places a high value on clear and concise presentation, because the audiences for the final consultancy report will not have time to read a long-winded report. Your EOI is a chance to demonstrate your concise writing skills and your ability to focus on the most important information, both in the 12 pages and in the annexes.

Q12: You ask for "confirmation of dates of availability." Is a letter signed by the person enough?
Yes, a letter from each team member confirming the dates that they are available to meet their proposed commitments in the EOI is what we need. E-signatures are acceptable. Please date the signatures.
Q13: Can we meet the Research Analyst mentioned in the call? How is their role envisioned?
Sorry, it is not possible for you to meet the RA before submitting your application. She is a Chinese national with fluent English, with an MSc in Agricultural Economics. She will help the winning consultancy team with the data searches and analytical work, and will be paid for by CoSAI.

Q14: Do you expect the final report and other products of the study to be delivered in condition ready to print and distribute, i.e. professionally laid out, with photos?
No. The consultants are expected to deliver publishable, copy-edited content, but not the final design, layout and pictures, which will be carried out by CoSAI communications specialists. The study Oversight Group will work with the consultants to agree the final list of products from the study, and communications specialists will also be on hand to help develop the presentation of the final report.

Approaches and methods
Q15: Can you give us more information on the broader context of the work that CoSAI is leading to see where this work fits?
A: We are just about to officially launch the CoSAI website. It is still undergoing a few last small changes, but you can see it here and it should give you a better idea of context: https://wle.cgiar.org/cosai/

Q16: Is the aim of this study to inform the work of the Water Land and Ecosystems CGIAR Research Program (WLE)?
Not directly, no. Although CoSAI was initiated and is funded through WLE, CoSAI is an independent Commission whose objectives go beyond the CGIAR. A look at our website will give you a better idea of the context for this study. https://wle.cgiar.org/cosai/

Q17: Is the study envisaged to calculate monetary estimates of the amount of investment flows, or is the analysis expected to be a purely qualitative one?
A: Yes, the study is expected to make monetary estimates. Also please refer to the FAQ on precision of estimates.

Q18: How much precision is expected in the financial estimates produced by this study?
A: As explained in the Call for EOI, the study is looking for a very ambitious coverage of investment -- not only in traditional R&D but also in other types of innovation (policies, finance and institutions), both public and private sector. We recognize that some of this data is likely to be patchy and/or of poor quality – for example, compared to international data-gathering exercises on agricultural R&D, such as ASTI. However, CoSAI feels that in many areas of innovation, even rough estimates of investment flows would be a great improvement on no information. (Please also see the section in the Call for EOI on data quality.) The study Oversight Group will work with the selected consultants to review data availability and quality and decide on a reasonable degree of precision to aim for.
Q19: Does the EOI have to include a general overview of funding for innovation or can we pick 1-2 themes and focus on innovations in those themes only?
The study is expected to begin with a broad global overview of financial flows to all types of innovation in agriculture, drawing on whatever data is available. You cannot skip this general overview and only focus on a couple of themes. However, it is recognised that global data may be quite limited in some areas, so case studies will be important to enable a more detailed exploration.

Q20: Is the study expected to review the impact of past funding for innovation?
No, this study has the more limited (but still challenging) objective of quantifying funding flows according to their aims, and will not examine their impacts. Ensuring that the team has a good level of expertise in tracking and categorizing financial flows is very important for this particular study. Detailed experience of examining impact on the ground is less important.

Case studies
Q21: We have already planned several case studies. Will this help our bid?
Describing and lining up potential case studies will be an attractive part of your bid, because it demonstrates your team’s ability to think through the implementation issues, make practical proposals and arrange appropriate partnerships. However, case studies are not a requirement of the EOI - and it's not guaranteed that the Study Oversight Group will approve precisely the case studies that any one applicant proposes. So we would advise not to spend too much time developing very detailed case studies or raising too many expectations in your case study partners at this stage.

Q22: Do we need to include and cost in our EOI a plan for a pilot case study on CGIAR (referred to on pages 4 and 5 of the Call for EOI)? The footnote suggests that data availability is not confirmed.
This pilot is indeed a planned part of this study, and should be included in your plans and costings for the EOI. We are waiting for permission to use the data from the CGIAR Management Information Systems, and are fairly confident this will eventually be granted, but there is a slight chance that this case study may not be possible. The final budget for the whole study will be agreed at the end of the inception phase, depending on the number and complexity of case studies that are eventually approved.

Q23: Could you please distinguish the difference in terms of deliverable outputs between the 'Pilot case study' and 'four main case studies'? What is the expected length of the case study reports?
There is no particular difference in expected outputs - except that each case study should be of interest to the entity being studied, and the outputs (including length) are therefore expected to be tailored according to the interest of each stakeholder group.

Q24: How do you define an international funding organisation, in relation to a case study?
An international bilateral donor, development bank or private foundation are examples.

Q25: For a country case study, can we pick a particular area or theme within the country?
In general, CoSAI is more interested in getting a ‘broad-brush’ overview of a case study country than in huge detail on a small area (but of course for very large countries, a state or region may be appropriate).
Q26: What is the expected timing for the case studies?

Using CGIAR as a pilot case study is intended to help inform ongoing discussions about future research priorities within the CGIAR. We have recently learned that for this purpose, the results (or at least, some preliminary results) would need to be ready by September 2020. Other case studies are flexible in timing and this can be decided at the inception stage.

General remarks

It may be helpful for applicants to consider that the EOI is not the same thing as an inception report. In the EOI we are looking for evidence that the team have the expertise and track record to be trusted to carry out this challenging study to a high standard and good value for money — with some creative and pragmatic ideas about how to tackle the boundaries, the data challenges and the case studies. Ensuring that the team has a good level of expertise in tracking and categorizing financial flows will be particularly important. In the inception phase, the winning consultancy team will work with the study Oversight Group to finalise the choice of methods including the framework and metrics, and the selection of case studies. There is therefore no need for the EOI to contain very detailed proposals on all of these, although showing that you have thought through the issues, have experience of particular approaches and are able to mobilise quickly for case studies will be a distinct advantage.

Please also note the question in the FAQ regarding precision of data. We recognize that this study will be quite challenging, but we think it is also exciting to try to build a picture of where global investment is going, even if this is incomplete or imprecise in places. There will be a dialogue with our Oversight Group throughout who will help advise on case studies, frameworks and degree of precision.