REQUEST FOR BIDS

Contract Type: Agreement for Performance of Work (APW)
Issue Date: 27 April 2016
Closing Date/Time: 13 May 2016 at 23:59 GMT
Request for Proposal: Reader on Human Resources for Health Research

BACKGROUND

The Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, thereafter called the Alliance, is an international collaboration based at the headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland that aims to promote the generation and use of health policy and systems research as a means to improve health systems in low- and middle-income countries. For more information on the Alliance, please visit: http://www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/en/ Recently, the Alliance has played a critical role in efforts to strengthen approaches to health systems research with the introduction of the Health Systems Research Methodology Reader, the Implementation Research Guide, and the Participatory Action Research Methods Reader.

There is wide recognition that human resources for health (HRH) are a central element of a resilient, sustainable, and people-centered health system. Yet it is also an area in which evidence has yet to catch up with the pressing policy decisions that need to be made. Fortunately, since the 2004 JLI report and the 2006 World Health Report, the field has experienced a renaissance in terms of broadening of research topics, methods, and tools. However, there is currently no resource that summarizes key HRH issues and explores research approaches to address them.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORK

The Alliance invites proposals for the development of a Reader on Human Resources for Health Research. The aim of this reader will be to promote greater understanding of the varied research approaches that can be applied to HRH, spur interest and discussion on the value of and rigor required in HRH research, and provide resources that can be used for teaching and capacity development of researchers and practitioners alike. As such, the reader’s main audience will be:

- Health policy and systems researchers who wish to understand cutting-edge research approaches to address key issues in HRH;
- Policy actors who are interested in how HRH research can address HRH policy questions and what is required to support such research;
- Teachers and facilitators engaged in HRH and HPSR training, along with students who are new to the study of HRH from a health systems perspective.

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It is envisioned that this reader will reflect upon how research methodologies can contribute to understanding the diversity within HRH and HRH actors’ dynamic adaptations to local, regional, and global push and pull factors. It should also call attention to current research and methodology gaps and how they can best be addressed in the future. Finally, it should consider how HRH research, as a part of an engaged HPSR, can support more responsive research and evidence uptake for the breadth of stakeholders involved in HRH policies.

The reader would serve as an important resource to orient the health policy and research community to different dimensions of HRH challenges, and the array of research approaches and methods that have been used to address these. While the reader would not seek to synthesize HRH research findings, it would showcase high quality research studies from around the world. It would thus inform both researchers and policy-makers about different foci for HRH research, what might constitute good study designs for addressing different HRH research questions, and their strengths and limitations, with the aim of stimulating demand and refining expectations for more and higher quality HRH research.

**DELIBERABLES**

The deliverable will be a complete manuscript of the reader. This reader will include:

- An introduction to HRH issues, frameworks, and the organization of the reader;
- Summary of each priority theme identified;
- Relevant research articles with permission to reprint;
- Teaching materials that have been successfully piloted for use.

**REQUIREMENTS/COMPETENCIES**

Bidders for the contract should demonstrate the following:

- Expertise in HPRS methods and experience developing teaching and training materials;
- Relevant work in HRH, including a publication record to demonstrate breadth of experience;
- Knowledge of HRH issues and existing literature;
- Experience in participatory or consultative processes to develop guidance or similar materials;
- Knowledge of and access to a network of individuals and institutions involved in HRH research.

**ACTIVITY TIMELINE AND BUDGET**

This work is expected to take place between June 2016 and July 2017. The final draft will be due for copy-editing and formatting by July 2017. Alliance staff will periodically review progress on the draft and provide feedback to the bidder.

The maximum allowable budget for this work is US$175,000; however, the final budget will be contingent on the scope of the proposed work. Payment will be linked to satisfactory completion of the deliverable.
INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Format and content of the bid

Bids should be no more than 10 pages in length and include the following:

a) Motivation for applying: how this work fits within the bidder’s background and strengths;

b) Relevant background: brief description of relevant experience in HRH and knowledge of existing literature on the topic;

c) Proposed outline and process for developing the reader: including proposed priority sections and relevant research articles;

d) Short profile of anticipated institutions and team members: including the main bidder(s) as well as any collaborators;

e) Itemized budget for the work;

f) Contact details of the main bidder serving as the point of contact: including email and telephone number.

Joint proposal

Two or more entities may form a consortium and submit a joint proposal offering to jointly undertake the work. Such a proposal must be submitted in the name of one member of the consortium—hereinafter the “project leader”. The lead organization will be responsible for undertaking all negotiations and discussions as the main point of contact for WHO. The lead organization and each member of the consortium will be jointly and severally responsible for the proper performance of the contract.

Communication during the call period

A prospective bidder requiring any clarification on technical, contractual, or commercial matters may notify WHO via email at the following address no later than 3 working days prior to the closing date for submission of bids.

Email for submission of all queries: alliancehpsr@who.it

(use subject: WHO Bid Ref: Reader on Human Resources for Health Research)

The Alliance team at WHO will respond in writing via email to any request for clarification of the call that it receives by the deadline indicated above.

Questions are to be submitted by email to the above address. A consolidated document of the WHO’s responses to all questions (including an explanation of the query, but without identifying the source of inquiry) will be posted on the internet site where the bid itself is posted.

There shall be no individual presentation by or meeting with bidders until after the closing date. From the date of issue of this call to the final selection, contact with WHO officials concerning the call process shall not be permitted, other than through the submission of queries specified above or through a possible presentation or meeting called for by WHO in accordance with the terms of this call.
**Period of validity**

The offer outlined in the proposal must be valid for a minimum period of 120 calendar days after the closing date. A proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected by WHO. In exceptional circumstances, WHO may solicit the bidder’s consent to an extension of the period of validity. The request and the responses thereto shall be made in writing. Any bidder granting such an extension will not, however, be permitted to otherwise modify its proposal.

**Closing date for submission of proposals**

Proposals must be received by the WHO at the email address alliancehpsr@who.int (use subject: WHO Bid Ref: Reader on Human Resources for Health Research) no later than the 13 May 2016 at 23:59 GMT.

WHO may, at its own discretion, extend the closing date for the submission of proposals by notifying all bidders thereof in writing. Any proposal received by WHO after the closing date for submission of proposals may be rejected.

**Amendments of the call**

WHO may, at any time before the closing date, for any reason, whether on its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective bidder, modify the call by written amendment. Amendments could, inter alia, include modification of the project scope or requirements, the project timeline expectations and/or extension of the closing date for submission.

All prospective bidders that have submitted a proposal with regard to the call will be notified in writing of all amendments to the call and will, where applicable, be invited to amend their proposal accordingly.

**Clarification of proposals**

WHO may, at its discretion, ask any bidder for clarification on any part of its proposal. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing. No change in the price or substance of the proposal shall be sought, offered or permitted during this exchange.

**AWARD OF CONTRACTS**

**Award criteria**

Contracts shall be awarded based on a combination of criteria including the bidder’s motivation statement, exposure to or experience in HRH issues and research, the content of the proposal in terms of quality and comprehensiveness, and value for money.

However, WHO reserves the right to;

a) Award the contract to a bidder of its choice, even if the bid is not the lowest;
b) Award separate contracts for parts of the work, components or items to one or more bidders of its choice, even if the bids are not the lowest;
a) Accept or reject any proposal and to annul the solicitation process and reject all proposals at any time prior to the award of contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder (s) and without any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) of the grounds for the WHO’s action;
b) Award the contract on the basis of the WHO’s particular objectives to a bidder whose proposal is considered to be the most responsive to the organization’s needs and the activity concerned;
c) Not award any contract at all.

WHO has the right to eliminate bids for technical or other reasons throughout the evaluation/selection process. WHO shall not in any way be obligated to reveal or discuss with any bidder how a proposal was assessed or to provide any other information relative to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for elimination to any bidder.

NOTE: WHO is acting in good faith by issuing this call. However, this document does not obligate WHO to contract for the performance of any work nor for the supply of any products or services.

WHO’s right to enter into negotiations

WHO reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more bidders of its choice, including but not limited to negotiation of the terms of the proposal(s), the price quoted in such proposal(s) and/or the deletion of certain parts of the work, components or items called for under this call.

Signing of the contract

Within 30 days of receipt of the contract, the successful bidder shall sign and date the contract and return it to WHO according to the instructions provided at the time of receipt. If the bidder does not accept the contract terms without changes, then WHO has the right not to proceed with the selected bidder and instead contract with another bidder of its choice.

Please apply by email only to alliancehpsr@who.int (use subject: WHO Bid Ref: Reader on Human Resources for Health Research.

Closing date: 13 May 2016 at 23.59 GMT

Only successful bidder(s) will be contacted.