



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

REDUCING FOOD LOSS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRY VALUE CHAINS THROUGH FOOD SYSTEM INNOVATION

1. What commodities do the research team need to work on in the project?

There are no restrictions on the commodities or value chains that can be the focus of the research project. It may include livestock, fisheries, grains, cassava, coffee, fresh fruit, or vegetables as examples. The research team will need to explain why they have chosen this value chain in the application form and be able to work closely with stakeholders in that value chain.

2. Can consultancy companies or NGOs be the lead organisation for this application?

Yes, nothing is restricting these organisations from leading the application, but this is a research project. Therefore, you will need to demonstrate to the assessment team that you have a team of researchers who can conduct the research and be able to enter into a contract with ACIAR should your idea proceed through stage 1 and stage 2. Examples of ACIARs standard contracts and IP conditions can be found [here](#).

3. Does the lead organisation need to be based in one of the countries that is the focus of the value chain research?

Yes, locally-based staff must be engaged on the project, especially now given the travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, having organisations based in the countries where the research will take place is important. This does not exclude involvement by Australian or Canadian-based researchers on the project, and their input is welcome.

4. If the same organisation has multiple ideas for projects on different value chains and in different countries can they put in more than one application?

It is a short application form so if the project ideas and partners involved are very different then two applications may be necessary. I would consider if this is the best approach however because there are limited funds on offer and one idea may be stronger than the other. Each application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria and ranked against the selection criteria independently.

5. I am part of an International organisation with offices in the focal countries but our head office is in the UK or Europe. Can we still be listed as the project lead in this application?

After discussion with the assessment team this organisation would not be eligible. In this case the lead organisation in the contract with ACIAR (should the application progress through stage 1) would be based in the UK or Europe (or Australia for that matter), which is not permitted. This does not prevent these international organisations being involved in projects led by organisations in the focal countries. There are some international organisations with offices in the focal countries and these would be eligible as the lead organisation, because they could contract ACIAR through that office. If you would like a specific case examined, please email sarina.macfadyen@aciar.gov.au with your organisational details.

6. What is the definition of food loss you are using for this process?

The term food loss incorporates the real loss of production output before it reaches a consumer because it is spilt, spoiled or lost. This includes a loss in value resulting from quality reductions or inability to store produce. We are focussed on food loss rather than food waste (e.g. post-consumer waste) because we think this is more of a problem for the food systems in our partner countries at this stage. We extend this definition to include some harvesting or slaughter activities that take place on-farm but can cause significant food loss.

We also recognise that whilst food loss may be concentrated in one part of the value chain, interventions may need to take place on-farm or at other stages of the value chain to address this problem.

7. What types of things can the budget include?

The cash contribution from ACIAR should be used to fund the direct salary costs of key technical staff, research operating costs, and travel costs. If your idea is successful at stage 1 you will be asked to fill in a detailed budget. The guidelines and an example of the full budget spreadsheet can [be found here](#). There is a full description of what ACIAR funds could potentially be used to support, noting that value for money is always considered important regardless of the budget item.

At stage 1 we are asking for a simplified budget that lists what funds you will need to complete the planned work (cash required, Q19), in-kind contributions provided by the organisations involved (Q20), and some justification of budget items (Q21). Historically, some organisations have been able to provide significant amounts of direct staff time as an in-kind contribution to the project, sometimes the in-kind consists only of staff overheads.