

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN MALAWI

Issuance Date: 7/23/2018

Question Window Ends: 8/3/2018

Closing Date for Receipt of Expression of Interest: 8/16/2018

Closing Time: 11:59pm EDT

Contact Information:

Foundation for a Smoke-Free World

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New York, NY 10017 USA

Submit questions to: agl_procurements@smokefreeworld.org

Submit EOI to: support@smokefreeworld.org

Award Duration: 5 years, renewable

Award Amount: \$10 million

“New technologies and approaches are merging the physical, digital, and biological worlds in ways that will fundamentally transform humankind. New technologies, however remarkable they might seem, are fundamentally just tools made by people for people.”

– Klaus Schwab, World Economic Forum

Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (FSFW) seeks qualified consortia and organizations across the globe to submit Expressions of Interest to operate and manage a new Center for Agricultural Transformation in Malawi. The Center will embrace open innovation and collaboration in agricultural science and technology to achieve transformational impacts for Malawian smallholder farmers and the agriculture sector of the country.

OVERVIEW

Launched on September 13, 2017, FSFW is an independent, nonprofit organization, formed under and subject to the laws of the United States, dedicated to accelerating global efforts to reduce deaths and harm from smoking, with the ultimate goal of eliminating smoking worldwide. Recognizing that FSFW's mission entails an accelerated decline in global tobacco demand, FSFW's Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) will support efforts to develop and diversify tobacco-dominated economies, lessening their traditional reliance on the tobacco sector.

There has been substantial debate throughout the years regarding whether growing tobacco is, overall, good or bad for smallholder farmers.¹ High-quality data and rigorous analysis can shape and inform effective, evidence-based policy creation and resource deployment to diversify economies and lessen country dependence on tobacco—better preparing farmers for the future while strengthening their countries' economies through diversifying their agriculture production base.

The ATI recognizes that Malawi is a country with uniquely great need to diversify its economy to alleviate poverty and food insecurity. The economy is highly dependent on tobacco, and the Malawian people suffer from a disproportionate burden of poverty and food insecurity. Furthermore, current government, nonprofit, and private sector interest in the context render it a country with promising circumstances for change. As such, the initial programmatic focus of the ATI will be on Malawi, with the intention to ultimately expand into other tobacco-producing economies with a global scope.

The work of the ATI includes facilitating opportunities for farmers to diversify into alternative crops, access markets further along the agricultural value chain, and access other economic opportunities more broadly. To fulfill these ambitions, FSFW partners with philanthropic, nonprofit, academic, corporate, governmental, and community groups to identify alternatives to tobacco, enhance agricultural productivity, facilitate agribusiness commercialization, and strengthen public support. Please visit the FSFW website and watch the video “[The True Cost of a Cigarette](#)” for more context on the Foundation's approach to creating prosperity for smallholder farmers.

CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

As part of the ATI initiative to support tobacco farmers in their efforts to shift to more sustainable livelihoods, FSFW plans to establish the Center for Agricultural Transformation (“the Center”) in Malawi. Over the past century, science, technology, and innovation have played critical roles in human progress. Between 1960 and 2000, innovation into high-yielding crop varieties led to the “Green Revolution” across Asia and parts of Latin America, increasing caloric intakes by nearly 14% and avoiding human welfare crises.² More recently, the Green Revolution innovation model has been replicated on smaller scales by organizations like the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, which has had a hand in the creation of over 150 agribusinesses since 2003 through a focus on entrepreneurship and commercialization.³ Yet in Malawi and Southern Africa broadly, the innovation environment is weak. Successful innovation requires both technological aptitude for research and strong linkages to business.⁴ Many organizations within Malawi have been involved in the effort to transition

away from tobacco production, yet without connections between these actors and global agribusiness, innovation cannot take hold. The Center will be designed to close this gap by systematically creating, piloting, and scaling appropriate science, technology, and business models that will transform smallholders' lives and the country's agriculture sector in general.

The idea of agricultural centers of excellence is not new. However, few centers have combined aspects of research, smallholder farming, and large-scale commercialization in a manner that effectively facilitates agricultural development.

Critical to the Center is the role of innovation. This approach will set it apart from existing research and development (R&D) through an iterative grant-incubation structure that encourages creativity, experimentation, and cooperation. In addition to its primary research and commercialization activities, the Center will contribute to the public good through education, extension, applied research, policy engagement, and study tours.

Establishing the Center will be imperative to accelerating value-chain growth and inclusiveness, as well as to developing supporting technologies, infrastructure, and farming models. As a flagship component of the ATI, the Center will be a model for scalable innovation throughout Africa.

FSFW will incur the capital costs related to constructing the physical space to house the Center via a two-phased approach; these capital costs are outside the scope of this procurement. The first phase will focus on innovation within an existing infrastructure. FSFW will refurbish existing buildings and land to create a 21st century facility to support research, coworking, incubation, and education. While research activities are already underway, FSFW will initiate the second phase which will focus on building a new physical space for a flagship technology campus. The campus will scale the practices established in phase one in a lasting testament to FSFW's impact in Malawi and the region.

Scope of Work

FSFW seeks qualified consortia and organizations to operate the Center for Agricultural Transformation on an initial \$10 million, 5-year contract, with the expectation that successful teams will be able to apply for a second 5-year contract given successful progress on the Center's key activities. Malawian consortia and organizations are especially encouraged to apply. The intended impacts of the Center are transformational—it is not enough to maintain the status quo or make just incremental progress. These intended impacts are to:

- Serve as an international incubator and accelerator of knowledge, skill development, and positive change
- Be the anchor of a regional network of science and technology laboratories and entrepreneurship incubator-accelerators designed to transition small-scale tobacco farmers to alternative livelihoods
- Consistently grow agriculture yields and gross domestic product each year
- Increase and diversify the volume and value of processed output from agricultural raw materials, domestically and internationally
- Contribute towards the transformation of agriculture and development of the knowledge economy in one of the world's least developed countries

Interested partners should be able to manage each pipeline of activities as well as the operations of the Center overall through:

- **Science, technology, and innovation**
 - Embrace open innovation in research through prize contests, stage gate challenges, co-creation, pitch nights, and hackathons
 - Educate through study programs, tech demonstrations, dialogues, and conferences
 - Coordinate capacity building through study tours for academics, government agencies, and political leaders
 - Pioneer innovative use of data collection, analysis, and/or big data integration in Malawi
- **Business incubation and commercialization open to the general public**
 - Negotiate technology transfer and commercialization relationships with domestic, regional, and international agribusiness
 - Provide structured business, information and communication technology (ICT), and financial mentorship for entrepreneurs
 - Facilitate links to Venture Capital and other funding sources
 - Leverage funds through private sector commitments or other models
- **Operations management**
 - Oversee test plots and laboratories, physical spaces, partners, and activities
 - Manage all logistics and operations
- **Input into spatial needs and technical requirements, including but not limited to number and type of facilities (lab, lecture, coworking, lodging, recreation, etc.) required to successfully achieve the Center's objectives**

The ability to successfully combine all aspects of science, innovation, and business, and managing it all systematically, at a level that can drive transformation in Malawi and regionally is beyond the capacity of any one organization. Accordingly, ATI will rely on consortia to cover these areas completely. Success will be judged by distinct science, technology, and business key performance indicators, e.g. number of innovations developed, total revenue from investments, and others.

PROCESS

As part of the ATI's focus on open innovation, the partner itself will be selected through an open process based on Expressions of Interest and collaboration.

Stage 1: Expressions of Interest

- **Request for Expressions of Interest issued:** 23 July 2018
- **Question window ends:** 3 August 2018
- **Expressions of Interest due:** 16 August 2018
- **FSFW review process:** 17 August 2018 – 28 September 2018

Stage 2: Concept Note Development

- Concept note / detailed “pitch” development: 28 September 2018 – 29 October 2018

Stage 3: Collaboration and Co-creation

- Open collaboration summit (pitch day): 30/31 October 2018
- Final Concept Note development: 1 November 2018 – 14 November 2018
- FSFW formal review: 15 November 2018 – 29 November 2018
- Expected award: 30 November 2018
- Expected co-creation of workplan and budget: 30 November 2018 –

STAGE 1: EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Expressions of Interest must indicate how the consortia or organizations will approach the programmatic design and operation of the Center. Submissions are limited to 5 pages in length. Please see Annex A for a full Expression of Interest template.

The note must include, as a minimum:

- The vision for execution⁵
- A list of partners and responsibilities
- The expertise and experience in each focus area of the Center (relevant to the Malawian or Sub-Saharan African context)

Expressions of Interest should be submitted to support@smokefreeworld.org. If your Expression of Interest is not chosen, you will be notified accordingly. If your Expression of Interest is chosen, you will be invited to participate in the Concept Note Development and Collaboration and Co-Creation Phase.

FSFW will respond to questions related to this EOI as noted in the calendar above. All questions should be submitted to agl_procurements@smokefreeworld.org, and all questions and responses will be posted publicly on the FSFW website.

STAGE 2: CONCEPT NOTE DEVELOPMENT

Selected partner(s) will have the opportunity to further refine their vision in a detailed Concept Note. During this phase, parties will further determine additional partners and resources required to complete the project.

STAGE 3: COLLABORATION AND CO-CREATION

Potential partner(s) will also be invited to participate in a collaborative summit to further hone proposals. The summit will consist of a Pitch Day, in which partner(s) will present their full proposals, and a co-creation workshop in which all invitees will further develop the ideas presented in the Expression of Interest. The process requires collaboration; those unwilling to share ideas will not benefit from co-design and may not move forward. Additionally, FSFW might encourage parties to combine efforts and collaborate on the pitch in pursuit of the strongest possible consortium.

Concept papers and pitches will be reviewed by FSFW's Agriculture & Livelihoods Advisory Board, consisting of experts in Africa, agronomy, ecology, social impact, design, business, and development. Using its technical expertise, the Advisory Board will recommend whether to move forward with the project(s), including revisions/additions to the project, and potential partners and resources. No promise is made or enforceable right granted to anyone by this Request for Expressions of Interest.

FSFW and the Agriculture & Livelihoods Advisory Board will jointly make a determination whether to engage with a specific partner. FSFW will engage in final review, negotiation, responsibility, cost reasonableness, and timeline, and will craft an award instrument with the selected partner. Successful applicants will be required, at a minimum, to provide key organizational documents and background information as part of the due diligence process, and comply with the Foundation's **Grant Policies and Procedures**.

ANNEX A: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TEMPLATE

1. Applicant Information (1 page)

1. Applicant

1. Contact person
2. Organization name
3. Address
4. Telephone
5. Email
6. Applicant role

2. Name(s) and roles of each partner

2. Proposal (2 pages)

1. Project objective
2. Organizational design
3. Approach to collaboration and scalability

3. Specific Qualifications and Experience in Four Domains (2 pages) Demonstration of relevant experience in:

1. Science, technology, and innovation
2. Business incubation and commercialization
3. Operations management

4. Spatial Needs and Technical Requirements

5. Optional Attachments

1. Brief bios

1 Hu T, Lee AH. Commentary: Tobacco control and tobacco farming in African countries. *J Public Health Policy*. 2015;36(1):41-51. doi: 10.1057/jphp.2014.47.

2 Evenson, R.E., and D. Gollin. 2003. Assessing the impact of the green revolution, 1960 to 2000. *Science*, 300(5620): 758-762. doi: 10.1126/science.1078710.

3 infoDev. 2014. *Agribusiness Incubator at ICRISAT: India Case Study*. Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/306811468050045331/pdf/901240WP0Box380-icrisat-india0-web0.pdf>. Accessed July 9, 2018.

4 Payumo, J., Lemgo, E.A., and K. Maredia. 2017. Transforming Sub-Saharan Africa's Agriculture through Agribusiness Innovation. *Global Journal of Agricultural Innovation, Research & Development*, 4, 1-12. doi: 10.15377/2409-9813.2017.04.01.1.

5 Expressions of Interest should be free of any intellectual property that a submitter wishes to protect, because the Expressions of Interest may be shared as part of the collaboration and co-creation process. However, once submitters have been invited to engage in further discussions, submitters will work with FSFW to identify proprietary information that requires protection. Organizations making submissions grant to FSFW a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to use, disclose, reproduce, and prepare derivative works of any information contained in the Expressions of Interest. If FSFW engages with the organization regarding its submission, the parties can negotiate further protection for the organization's intellectual property. Organizations must ensure that any submissions are free of any third-party proprietary data that would impact the license granted to FSFW herein.