



## Professional Development Seminar: Transdisciplinary Approaches to Integrating Policy and Science for Sustainability

### Training Institute Seed Grants (TISG) Program Description Letter of Intent and Full Proposal Guidelines

#### ***Objective of the TISG***

The Training Institute Seed Grant Program (TISG) will support research and capacity building at the science-policy interface projects. TISG objectives are: 1) to encourage network building among participants; 2) to promote the application of the training provided to pressing real-world issues that have a significant global change dimension; 3) to foster multinational and multidisciplinary collaboration; 4) to develop and strengthen proposal writing skills; 5) to develop and strengthen management capacity for international grants; 6) to increase the participation of small countries in IAI research programs and network.

The Principal Investigator<sup>1</sup> (PI) must represent an institution based in an IAI member country. Each PI may submit only one proposal.

Proposals must be multinational involving at least 3 countries or more.

#### ***IAI's goals and objectives***

IAI programs seek to generate new knowledge on the phenomena of global environmental change, and provide mitigation and adaptation options within their social, economic, institutional and legal contexts. IAI science has guided sustainable development decisions, public health initiatives, and law making as it has advanced the understanding of change based on science. Research on GC requires continual cooperation among researchers, institutions, states and regions. Networking and effective communication of results are therefore central goals of IAI science. The IAI seeks to achieve the best possible international coordination of natural and social scientific, medical and economic research on the extent, causes, and consequences of GC in the Americas, and on response strategies to address those challenges. Among the IAI's core objectives are to expand knowledge, to serve as an effective interface between the research and policy processes, and to achieve the communication of research results into informed decisions.

The IAI pursues the principles of scientific excellence, international and interdisciplinary cooperation, and full and open exchange of scientific information. The IAI recognizes a need for broad and early involvement of stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and interpretation of global environmental change research that provides knowledge for regional needs.

#### ***Evaluation Criteria***

The following criteria will be applied (appropriate to the proposed activity and considering that this is a seed grant program) during the review process, based on the application of the training provided and themes explored:

1. Scientific excellence and technical soundness;
2. Multinational and transdisciplinary collaboration;
3. Contribution to science, capacity building, or outreach and communication (depending on nature of the project);

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<sup>1</sup> IAI member countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela

4. Policy relevance and contribution to Science-Policy interface (stakeholder interaction, engagement with policy and decision-makers and knowledge dissemination);
5. Appropriateness of budget request for the proposed activity; and a management plan that supports international and interdisciplinary collaboration;
6. Sustainability of the work proposed; in-kind contributions are not required, but would be favorable.

IAI goals and objectives will also be considered in the review and final approval of the grants.

### **Review Process**

A selection committee will be set up and composed of the program coordinators and facilitators. The committee will evaluate the proposals and will award the grants based on the evaluation criteria outlined above, the application of the training provided, and on the IAI's goals and objectives.

### **Funding available:**

Funding available is a maximum of US\$100,000 per grant.

Grants will be a one time award for duration of up to 24 months.

### **Schedule of Activities for PDS:**

The PDS seed grant program will be developed in two phases:

Phase I: letters of intent (LoI), and

Phase II: full proposals.

### **Phase I:**

December 2, 2016: Submission of Letters of Intent (LoI) no more than 2 pages.

January 15, 2017: Feedback on LoIs by review committee / mentor.

February 15, 2017: Deadline for Re-submission of LoI (taking into account reviewers' feedback).

March 31, 2017: Deadline for submission of full proposal of no more than 6 pages.

May 15, 2017: Submission of final full proposals.

### **Phase I: Letter of Intent Guidelines (no more than 2 pages)**

#### **Content:**

#### **Project title**

**Project duration** (up to 24 months)

**Funding requested** (up to US\$100,000)

**Principal Investigator (PI) name and Institution** (grantee)

**Co-Investigators (co-PI)** (names, institutions, countries)

**Problem to be addressed** (e.g. research question, hypothesis)

**Project objectives**

**Project activities**

**Expected results** (deliverables, outputs)

**Project team** (areas of expertise - key words, interdisciplinary collaboration)

**Science-Policy interface**

Letters of intent (LoI) must consider:

- scientific excellence;
- interdisciplinarity - Please consider: How will your project integrate the biophysical and social sciences? Does the project team have the expertise to carry out the proposed work?;
- science-policy interface - Please consider: How will your project link to 2 crucial issues: development and adaptation - in the agriculture or water, health, cities, risk management sectors?; What you propose to

do is innovative and/or useful (locally, regionally)? Who is your beneficiary/end-user? How will you engage users in the project activities? What are your team's strengths – local data, knowledge, engagement with local decision-makers, communities?;

- be REALISTIC about what can be done with the funding requested in 24 months;

- avoid projects dealing with global climate models, or long-term (i.e., end of century) scenarios; preference is given to local applications with a clear benefit in the short to mid term. Consider using tools explored at PDS (techniques);

- In sum: be focused; clear; concise, but provide the necessary information to clearly state the problem to be addressed, the objectives, the deliverables, the capacity of the team to carry out the proposed work and deliver the results, and the feasibility and usefulness of the project to a "beneficiary/client/end-user".

### ***Phase II: Full proposal***

Read carefully the instructions below for the full proposal development.

The proposal length must be no more than 6 pages. The appendices and budget form are excluded from the page count.

Spacing and font size: 12-point font, single-spaced.

Language: Proposals must be submitted in English.

Full Proposals that do not meet all of these requirements will not be evaluated.

### ***Phase II: Full Proposal Guidelines (no more than 6 pages)***

Page 1- Include (1) Title of proposal and (2) proposal team. List Project PI, and Co-investigators/collaborators and contact information (address, phone, fax and email); (3) the funding requested in US\$; and (4) project duration and start and end date of the project- half a page;

Page 1- Executive Summary: The Executive Summary is very important, as it will be the primary mean by which the reviewer will start making a judgment of the proposal. State clearly the problem that will be addressed, and HOW the project will tackle this problem and the expected major results, as well as the necessary funding and your team's expertise for conducting the work - half a page;

Proposal Introduction/Background Information: In this section, provide a statement of the problem and the relevance of the project, review relevant previous work, what the project intends to do, how it will fit in with current efforts;

Objectives: Describe the objectives of the project;

Methodology/Approach: Describe the methods, data and tools that will be used;

Activities: Describe the activities to be developed to achieve the objectives, schedules/project timeline and/or locations;

Contribution of Project Team/Multinational & Transdisciplinary collaboration: (1) Describe the project team (PI, co-investigators and other project participants - e.g. stakeholders, policy makers, students), including their nationalities and affiliations and relevant previous experience and qualifications, and a brief explanation of their role in the project; (2) Explain the transdisciplinary and multinational approach of the

proposed work including the integration of natural and social sciences, enhancement of networks and partnerships;

Contribution to Science, Capacity Building, Outreach and Policy Relevance: Describe contributions to (1) science; (2) capacity building (if any); (2) outreach (if any); and (5) policy relevance – expected implications for decision making processes of the proposed work, as well as the interaction with stakeholders and end users of the project results (who and how);

Expected results: Outline (1) the expected results of the project and timeline; (2) specific products to be generated; (3) the beneficiaries of the work performed; and (4) the contribution to the IAI work;

Sustainability and Evaluation: Briefly provide (1) ideas for follow up activities and for the sustainability of the TISG after the initial funding; and (2) plans for assessing the results of the project (assessment);

Management plan: Briefly provide a management plan for the administration of the grant.

**Appendices** (on separate pages) will be excluded from the page count:

Budget Information: The financial amount requested; a break-down of the expenditures and justification (as well as other potential funders - in case it is not funded by the IAI or complementary funding is sought); and describe any in-kind contributions or cost-sharing and their relevance to the development of the project; use the TISG budget form.

Additional appendices: (1) include no more than 1 page curriculum vitae for each participating PI and Co-investigators; (b) References (if applicable).

TISG projects will be approved on a competitive basis and according to the TISG description and guidelines, evaluation criteria, IAI goals and objectives described earlier. Proposals that do not meet these criteria and objectives will not be funded.