

## Fourth Call for Proposals of the Benefit-sharing Fund Terms of Reference

### 1. OVERVIEW

The Bureau of the Eighth Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty (the Bureau) is calling for nominations of two experts from each FAO Region to join the Panel of Experts for the Fourth Project Cycle of the Treaty's Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF).

Expertise is required in plant genetic resources and climate change, as well as extensive knowledge of international policy and programmes on agrobiodiversity, and of the ITPGRFA. Further selection criteria is detailed in Section 3.

Each Panel Member will be responsible for screening an estimated 25 - 30 project proposals of approximately 8.5 pages in length. The review is expected to take place over the 12 March – 13 April 2018 period. It is envisaged that Panel Members will also attend a 5-day meeting in Rome during the week of 16 April 2018 to finalise project selection. Additional inputs may be sought from Panel Members on an ad-hoc basis over the period in which full project proposals are being finalized.

Panel Members are not remunerated, however, costs related to attending the meeting of the Panel in Rome will be covered.

Annex 2 of the revised Operational Procedures for the Use of Resources under the Direct Control of the Governing Body<sup>1</sup>, *Policy on Conflicts of Interest and Related Standards of Conduct for the Benefit-sharing Fund* is applicable to the Panel of Experts. It is the responsibility of each individual Panel Member to observe its terms.

### 2. BACKGROUND AND MANDATE

The BSF supports projects in developing countries that have ratified the International Treaty. The Fund supports global efforts to guarantee food security and build resilience in the face of climate change, through the management and conservation of PGRFA. Since its inception in 2009, the BSF has supported 61 projects across three project cycles.

The Fourth Call for Proposals (CFP4) was launched on 15 December 2017. At least USD 5 million will be invested in high-impact projects. This is the first project cycle implemented following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, which contains specific targets on plant genetic resources (Targets 2.5 and 15.6). The Governing Body is currently reviewing the Treaty's Funding Strategy. CFP4 implementation will need to take into account this new policy environment.

The BSF's grant-making process is defined by the project cycle steps contained in the revised *Operational procedures for the use of resources under the direct control of the Governing Body*.<sup>1</sup> The procedures adopted by the Treaty's Governing Body note that the "independent Panel of Experts will conduct the screening of pre-proposals and appraisal of pre-proposals." The Panel of Experts is designated, from a Roster, by Bureau Members in consultation with their Regions, and its Terms of Reference made publically available. The Secretary of the International Treaty has requested Bureau Members to nominate experts from their respective regions.

The Panel of Experts will be responsible for the screening and appraisal of project proposals. The Bureau will approve the final list of pre-proposals and full proposals based on the work of the Panel. The Secretariat will provide support throughout the process. The various steps, responsibilities and overall methodology in undertaking the screening and appraisal processes will be further detailed in the *Methodology for the screening and appraisal of project proposals* that will be prepared by the Secretariat.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-be595e.pdf>

### 3. KEY FUNCTIONS

- Undertake the screening of pre-proposals against a set of criteria listed in Appendix 2 of the CFP 4 and in accordance with the CFP4 methodology developed by the Secretariat and approved by the Bureau. Each pre-proposal will be screened by 3 experts;
- Participate in the meeting of the Panel of Experts in Rome for the purpose of (1) developing a common understanding of the priorities and themes of the CFP4 of the Benefit-sharing Fund and being updated on other relevant Treaty developments; (2) finalizing the individual screening of pre-proposals; (3) approving by consensus and in coordination with other members of the panel, shortlists of pre-proposals to be recommended for approval to the Bureau;
- Provide advice on an *ad-hoc* basis related to strengthening specific aspects of pre-proposals for their further development to a full project proposal;
- Undertake a short appraisal of full project proposals according to the CFP4 methodology and provide any recommendations for their further development.

### 4. PANEL MEMBER NOMINATION / SELECTION CRITERIA

- Expertise in conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, in particular in relation to climate change, food security and poverty alleviation;
- Extensive knowledge of international policy and programmes on agrobiodiversity in general and of the ITPGRFA in particular;
- Extent of experience in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes in climate change and food security;
- Extensive knowledge of national and regional plans/programmes and priorities related to the Treaty implementation;
- Proven ability to work effectively in multidisciplinary teams in PGRFA conservation and sustainable use
- Languages: English (all regions), French (Near East and North Africa Regions), Spanish (GRULAC)

### 5. TIMELINE AND MAIN STEPS

- Secretariat filters all received pre-proposals according to the eligibility criteria established at point 1 of Appendix 2 of the Fourth Call for Proposals **by 9 March 2018;**
- Secretariat codes all eligible pre-proposals according to the type of projects ( single country / multicountry), groups eligible pre-proposals by region and submits to the Experts for screening against the criteria of Appendix 2 of the Fourth Call for Proposals and according to the methodology for the screening elaborated by the Secretariat **by 16 March 2018;**
- First screening by the Independent Panel of Experts of the eligible pre-proposals **Deadline: 13 April 2018**
- Briefing for the Panel of Experts on the programmatic approach of the Benefit-sharing Fund, including the Fourth Call for Proposals and revision of the Funding Strategy **16-20 April 2018, FAO HQ, Rome, Italy**
- Second screening by the experts divided in groups and approval by consensus of Shortlists A (single country) and Shortlists B (multi-country) projects divided by regions to be invited to develop full projects **16-20 April 2018, FAO HQ, Rome, Italy;**
- Invitations to submit full project proposals sent out to shortlisted partners **by 1 May 2018;**
- Delivery of helpdesk workshops to the selected applicants **11-12 June 2018;**
- Submission of full project proposals **by 1 July 2018;**
- Experts review the full proposal portfolio against the overall Goal of CFP4 and its Outcome Matrix and make any further recommendations for improvement to project partners before submitting the final recommended project portfolio to the Bureau for approval **by 30 July 2018.**