

GENERATION CHALLENGE PROGRAM

COMMISSIONED RESEARCH Process for Recruiting and Awarding Projects

The research, research support, and capacity building activities of the Generation Challenge Program (GCP) are carried out by Consortium members and their partners. Contracts for this work are awarded through a competitive grants process and a commissioned grants process. The rationale behind having a competitive grants program is to have an externally refereed and transparent process to seek innovative approaches to solving difficult problems of immediate relevance to the GCP and to attract new partners to the Program. The purpose of a commissioned research program is to assure that the full spectrum of the GCP's agenda, as set forth in its Medium Term Plan (MTP), is adequately covered. Thus, commissioned research grants will cover research and research support areas not addressed by competitively awarded grants.

Much commissioned work will be of a support nature or will be from a sole provider. Thus, it is not well-suited to a competitive grants approach. However, it is essential to the future of the GCP that the commissioned research grants be seen to be awarded fairly and in a way that assures the best product for the most reasonable investment. Our guiding principle in awarding commissioned work is to take all measures to assure that we do the job that is expected of us such that high quality products will reach our intended beneficiaries in a timely manner. This document presents the process by which commissioned research will be awarded.

Identification of Research Projects. The GCP management team has developed a detailed Medium Term Plan that specifies a range of activities and outputs that will be completed over the next three years. Commissioned research projects will be requested based on these activities and outputs. These will be identified in two rounds each year. The first round will identify the highest priority activities (defined as those whose completion is critical to the execution of the remainder of the research agenda) that will not potentially be covered by a competitively awarded grant (i.e. there is no grant proposal already in the pool of those being considered for funding that covers the high priority activity). The second round will take place after the selection of the competitively awarded grants and will identify activities that will complete the research agenda as put forth in our MTP. The Sub-Program Leaders will develop brief project descriptions of the activities envisioned, the expected outputs, an indicative budget and a timeline. The full management team will review and agree upon the identified projects.

Identification of Teams. Over the last nine months the GCP management team has interacted intensively with the researchers in the Consortium and has developed an excellent picture of relevant capacity within the Consortium members. The performance of Consortium members as determined by their reporting in the annual research meeting and other indicators of commitment and capacity will be critical to the development of activities and the identification of teams. The Sub-Program Leaders will identify

individuals whom they believe are best suited to assemble a team of scientists and other experts to undertake a commissioned project. This selection will be justified by the Sub-Program leader as part of his or her submission of the commissioned project to the management team. The full management team will review and agree upon those people identified to lead the development of each project. These individuals will be invited to identify and bring the best people to participate in the commissioned research (including those from non-member institutions, as needed) and to develop a work plan similar in nature, detail, and rigor to those developed for the competitive grants program.

Internal Review of Commissioned Proposals. The full management team will review the Commissioned research proposals for the following: 1) Appropriateness of the proposed undertaking to the activities and outputs required; 2) Specificity and detail in the design of the activities as a predictor of quality; 3) Evidence that the partners are the most suited to do the work (e.g. they bring the necessary mix of skills, experience, and capacity); 4) A reasonable budget that matches the activities. Those commissioned proposals that meet with the GCP Management Committee's approval will be sent for external review.

External Review of Commissioned Proposals. The GCP Director will send proposals for commissioned research to three external experts in the field for their assessment. They will review the proposals using the same criteria as the Management Committee. In addition they will be asked to make a judgment as to whether the proposal is acceptable or unacceptable.

Transparency. The descriptions of the commissioned research will be posted on the GCP Web site, including the rationale for selecting the lead scientists or experts. The successful commissioned proposals will also be posted, along with the assessments of the Management Team and the anonymous external reviewers. Unsuccessful proposals will not be posted; however, projects for which unacceptable submissions were received the process repeated until an acceptable proposal is submitted.