



INVITATION TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL FOR AN IMPACT STUDY

Can diffusion strategies adapted to the characteristics of CGIAR innovations enhance and sustain uptake?

Please submit proposals to SPIA (spia@cgiar.org) by July 15, 2020.

Background and context

As part of its mandate to support learning-oriented impact assessment, SPIA is inviting teams of academic researchers and CGIAR researchers to submit proposals for experimental impact evaluations testing the effectiveness of alternative dissemination strategies adapted to specific characteristics of an innovation. The objective of this set of studies is to causally identify whether diffusion strategies specifically adapted to the characteristics of innovations can lead to more sustained adoption. This knowledge would then contribute to identifying strategies that can enhance uptake of high-impact innovations, that might otherwise face significant constraints to adoption.

Background and scope of the call

Low agricultural productivity is a key challenge in many parts of the developing world. The development of agricultural innovations by the various CGIAR centers and research programs is therefore believed to hold great promise. Yet many of these innovations have not diffused through their intended target populations at significant scale, raising questions regarding the pathways between the development of innovations and their widespread diffusion.

Multiple constraints in the enabling environment may explain some of the puzzle of limited adoption and diffusion of innovations that are believed to be valuable for farmers. Many studies of agricultural technology adoption focus on the constraints generated by the enabling environment. By contrast, **this set of studies proposes to start from the characteristics of the innovations themselves, to understand how the specific aspects of the innovations are expected to foster or hamper widespread and sustained adoption in order to develop and test diffusion strategies that address these specificities.**

Different innovations have different traits and profiles of expected costs and benefits, all of which likely affect a farmer's decision to adopt and sustain their use. Even where innovations are ultimately beneficial for adopters, there may be aspects of an innovation that impede adoption and diffusion. These can vary substantially, for instance:

- The benefits from adopting some innovations may take time to be realized, potentially generating more costs than benefits in the years until they bear fruits (e.g. soil fertility improvements or tree planting)
- Some innovations have highly heterogeneous benefits depending on local conditions, and it may take time to fine-tune the proper combination of inputs adapted to each site (e.g. precision agriculture, integrated pest management, or sustainable livestock intensification)
- Certain benefits or costs are not easily perceived (e.g. biofortified crops)
- Innovations can be complex, data intensive or demanding in physical strength or human or social capital, and thus have heterogeneous benefits depending on capacities of individuals or communities that are expected to adopt them (e.g., mechanical innovations such as plows or pumps; institutional or market innovations, decision support tools)

To encourage take-up and large-scale impact of the CGIAR innovations, it is essential to provide users and development partners with practical, evidence-based guidance on cost-effective approaches to scaling.

Requirements for participation

- CGIAR research has contributed to the innovation that aims to be disseminated
- Each team must include at least one academic researcher, with a strong record in running impact evaluations and producing rigorous evidence.
- The hosting institution of the grant should preferably be an academic institution (contact us if you would like to suggest otherwise).
- Applicants must fit into one of the following 2 categories:

- A) Teams with an innovation that was submitted by one of the CGIAR centers to the [pre-call](#), which was preselected and matched with outside researchers.
- B) Academic researchers who already have an ongoing or forthcoming project of dissemination of an innovation developed by CGIAR should send an email to spia@cgiar.org before developing a full application, so that the fit for the call can be assessed.

Proposal should be sent to spia@cgiar.org . The deadline for submissions is July 15th, 2020.

Those who would like to submit a proposal but are not able to comply with the deadline should contact us before July 15th to allow for more flexibility (when necessary, given the current Covid-19 crisis).

Applicants can either submit a full proposal for an impact evaluation and fill form A or apply for pilot funding and fill form B (and eventually apply later for additional funding). There is no maximum amount but value-for-money of the study will be one of the evaluation criteria. A total of USD 1.2 million is available for this call. The funding can include a reasonable amount dedicated to operations. All studies funded under this call must be completed by the end of 2023. Proposals will be sent to referees for reviews and we expect to inform applicants of the decisions in September, to allow for project start in October 2020.

PROPOSAL TEMPLATE FOR AN IMPACT EVALUATION

Proposal should not exceed 12 pages (excluding references, CVs, Gantt Chart and summary budget table) and must contain the following sections:

Title of the proposed study	Project title and acronym (if any)
Organisation that will hold the grant	Indicate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full legal name • Organisation short name • Division or Department • Country • Type of organization • Name and title of the person who will commit the organization (sign the grant agreement)
Budget	Total funds requested from this call (in USD). Co—funding from other sources (in USD or in kind)
Duration	Proposed duration of the project in number of months and anticipated start and end date.
Abstract	Abstract not to exceed 150 words.
Research questions	What specific research questions will this study seek to answer?
The innovation and its characteristics	Describe the innovation to be assessed and the key characteristic(s) of the innovations that could constrain adoption by targeted users in the absence of a well-designed dissemination strategy.

CGIAR contribution to innovation	Brief summary, building on submission to SPIA's initial call for innovations.
Testing the theory of change (ToC)	Provide a ToC, that explains the pathways through which the innovation is expected to scale and ultimately contribute to development outcomes for target beneficiaries. Be as specific as possible about who the intended users and beneficiaries are and what the benefits are expected to be, including the primary outcomes and mechanisms to be measured. What specific assumptions and/or causal links of the ToC will the proposed study test? How will the different dissemination strategies proposed provide a test of the importance of accounting for certain characteristics of the innovation?
Methodology and activities	Description of the experimental design, as well as the activities to be carried out in the framework of the study. Include the identification strategy; sampling strategies; treatment of spillover, John Henry, Hawthorne, and/or survey effects; compliance; and the risk and treatment of attrition. If relevant, discuss expected impact heterogeneity and diversity across population sub-groups, particularly disadvantaged groups. Please include complete and realistic power calculation and sources for assumptions. Discuss both internal and external validity. How will you measure intermediate and final outcome indicators? What is the unit of analysis? When will you take measurements, and how frequently? How does this map to crop cycles, if applicable?
Geographic scope	List of all countries and/or regions within countries in which the work will be carried out.
Study outputs and deliverables	Description of the outputs generated by the study and list of verifiable technical deliverables. N.B. In compliance with CGIAR open access/open data policy, all data collected or generated in this study will be made publicly available.
Workplan	Inclusion of a timeline for the main activities over the life of the study in the form of a simple Gantt chart by month, as well as a brief narrative description of all activities in bullet form. Please include a contingency plan for covid-19 delays or other disruptions. N.B. all activities funded under this call, including a final working paper, must be completed by December 2023.
Detailed Budget	See separate excel sheet for the budget
In-kind contribution	Description of any inputs that will be provided by the lead contractor and/or subcontractors free of charge / in-kind.
Budget explanation (narrative plus additional tables if needed)	Provide a brief justification for different types and levels of expenditures. In addition, please describe how you have handled data collection costs in the budget template and what is the total budget for data collection. The referees will be asked to evaluate the value-for-money.
Statement of conflict of interest and ethical issues	Please state how potential conflict of interest will be addressed, especially in the organization, planning, analysis, recommendations and other parts of your study. Please explain any ethical issues you expect to encounter and how you intend to address them. If your proposal is approved, you will be expected to provide to SPIA copies of all IRB approvals at country level, center, university etc.
Partners	Please identify both implementing partners (those involved in the evaluation itself) and dissemination partners. These may be the same organization, or two different sets of organizations. The proposals will need to make a convincing case on the operational capacity and feasibility of

	<p>the study. A letter of support from all implementing partners (if any) needs to be attached to the proposal</p> <p>Is there indication that partners or other involved stakeholders would be interested in interim outputs or final results?</p>
Subcontractors	<p>List of all subcontractors including for each of them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal name • Justification for involving the subcontractor • Brief description of the work to be carried out
Principal Investigators, co-PIs, and other researchers	<p>For each researcher, please provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and institutional affiliation • Description of the roles and responsibilities in the proposed study <p>As an Annex please attach a short CV for each Principle Investigator, including field experience and publications directly related to his/her work in the proposed study (maximum 2 pages/CV)</p>

PROPOSAL TEMPLATE FOR A PILOT

Pilot Proposal should not exceed 5 pages (excluding references, CVs, Gantt Chart and summary budget table) and must contain the following sections:

Title of the proposed study	Project title and acronym (if any)
Organisation that will hold the grant	<p>Indicate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full legal name • Organisation short name • Division or Department • Country • Type of organization • Name and title of the person who will commit the organization (sign the grant agreement)
Budget	<p>Total funds requested from this call for the pilot (in USD).</p> <p>Co—funding from other sources (in USD or in kind)</p>
Duration	Proposed duration of the pilot in number of months and anticipated start and end date.
Abstract	Abstract not to exceed 150 words.
Research questions	What research questions do you expect that the study will seek to answer?
The innovation and its characteristics	Describe the innovation to be assessed and the key characteristic(s) of the innovations that could constrain adoption by targeted users in the absence of a well-designed dissemination strategy.
Testing the theory of change (ToC)	Describe the theory of change that motivates your investigation. What specific assumptions and/or causal links of the ToC do you expect to be a potential weak link and how is it related to the characteristics of the innovation?

Activities	<p>What activities will this grant fund? What data, tools, and methods do you expect to use to address your pilot research question(s)?</p> <p>Describe the intervention that you plan to test, or the strategy you will use to acquire the knowledge that would allow you to develop a full proposal for an impact evaluation at the end of the study.</p> <p>Establish a plausible link between the proposed approach under consideration, and the hypothesized characteristics of the innovation.</p>
Geographic scope	List of all countries and/or regions within countries in which the work is expected to be carried out.
Study outputs and deliverables	<p>Description of the outputs generated by the pilot and list of verifiable technical deliverables.</p> <p>N.B. In compliance with CGIAR open access/open data policy, all data collected or generated in this study will be made publicly available.</p>
Workplan	<p>Inclusion of a timeline for the main activities over the life of the study in the form of a simple Gantt chart by month, as well as a brief narrative description of all activities in bullet form.</p> <p>Please include a contingency plan for covid-19 delays or other disruptions.</p>
Detailed Budget	See separate excel sheet for the budget
In-kind contribution	Description of any inputs that will be provided by the lead contractor and/or subcontractors free of charge / in-kind.
Budget explanation (narrative plus additional tables if needed)	Provide a brief justification for different types and levels of expenditures. In addition, please describe how you have handled data collection costs in the budget template and what is the total budget for data collection. The referees will be asked to evaluate the value-for-money.
Statement of conflict of interest and ethical issues	<p>Please state how potential conflict of interest will be addressed, especially in the organization, planning, analysis, recommendations and other parts of your study.</p> <p>Please explain any ethical issues you expect to encounter and how you intend to address them. If your proposal is approved, you will be expected to provide to SPIA copies of all IRB approvals at country level, center, university etc.</p>
Partners	<p>If identified, please list both implementing partners (those involved in the evaluation itself) and dissemination partners. These may be the same organization, or two different sets of organizations.</p> <p>Is there indication that partners or other involved stakeholders would be interested in interim outputs or final results?</p>
Subcontractors	<p>List of all subcontractors (of the pilot study) including for each of them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal name • Justification for involving the subcontractor • Brief description of the work to be carried out
Principal Investigators, co-PIs, and other researchers	<p>For each researcher, please provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and institutional affiliation • Description of the roles and responsibilities in the proposed study <p>As an Annex please attach a short CV for each Principle Investigator, including field experience and publications directly related to his/her work in the proposed study (maximum 2 pages/CV)</p>