REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

TRANSFORM – HOLISTIC NUTRITION RESEARCH POULTRY LAYERS--INDIA

Funding Opportunity Title	Holistic Nutrition Research–Poultry Layers, All India
Announcement Type:	RFA
RFA Number:	***TR-HNR-RFA 2024-02***
Issuance Date	March 19,2024
Deadline for Questions	April 5, 2024
Deadline for Application submission	April 19, 2024,
Estimated Start Date of Award:	September – October 2024
Submit Questions to:	Transform_Ops@cargill.com
Submit Full Applications to:	Transform_Ops@cargill.com
Website with RFA and general information:	https://www.cargill.com/sustainability/transform-current-opportunities

I. Funding Opportunity Description

In alignment with the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), Cargill Inc. ("Cargill"), has received funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) via a cooperative agreement to implement the Transformational Strategies for Farm Output Risk Mitigation (TRANSFORM) project. TRANSFORM will engage global market actors, from backyard and industrial farmers to their respective governments, in sustainably strengthening the animal-sourced-food system and enhancing global health security by preventing emerging zoonoses, transboundary animal diseases (TADs), and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in major animal agriculture value chains in India, Kenya, and Vietnam.

Animal health is the cornerstone for achieving this goal. TRANSFORM's strategy focuses on improving animal health so significantly that the risk of disease and zoonotic pathogens is considerably lower, animal production is considerably higher, and the use of antibiotics as a treatment for illness, to prevent disease, or to enhance performance is significantly reduced. In this way, animal health improvements reduce the risk of AMR and other threats to human health. In alignment with the Global Health Security Agenda, TRANSFORM will take a systems approach to address this complex challenge, working across four inter-related components:

- **On-farm Practices:** TRANSFORM is addressing transboundary animal diseases, zoonoses, and antimicrobial use at the source, working with farmers, intermediaries, and private sector companies to encourage adoption of on-farm biosecurity, farm management and antimicrobial use practices that improve animal health. When improved farm management and biosecurity practices are adopted, animals are healthier, the need for antibiotics is reduced, farmer livelihoods increase, and threats to human health are reduced.
- **Holistic Animal Nutrition Research:** TRANSFORM is utilizing locally led applied research to determine the ability of immune-supporting in-feed additives to improve animal health. By researching

animal nutrition solutions, TRANSFORM aims to identify market-driven solutions that can improve immune response to disease, reduce zoonotic pathogens, increase productivity, and avoid the need to use antimicrobials.

- **Antimicrobial Use Stewardship:** Industry-wide commitment is essential to changing behavior at scale. To foster change across the poultry meat industry, TRANSFORM is engaging companies and associations to adopt or endorse science-based antimicrobial use stewardship principles. By encouraging a mindset shift to avoid the need to use antimicrobials, yet when needed use responsibly, animal management is elevated to the first line of defense against antimicrobial resistance.
- **Access to Finance:** Without the financial capital to invest in improved farm management practices, farmers are unable to implement the biosecurity measures necessary to protect their animals from disease. Partnering with local financial institutions, TRANSFORM is mobilizing private capital to provide loans to farmers to invest in improved farm management and biosecurity practices that will increase animal health and improve productivity.

As part of project activities, the USAID TRANSFORM project implemented by Cargill is seeking applications from research organizations to conduct research on the combined effects of immunity supporting in-feed additives on mitigation of zoonoses and food-borne pathogens, post-vaccination responses, and antibiotic use in sector 1 or 2 poultry layer farms in India. Sector 1 and 2 farms are commercial entities with high levels of biosecurity. A sector 1 operation is part of a vertically integrated organization.

This new research will determine whether feeding a *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* fermentation product (SCFP; specifically, Diamond V XPC) and at least one other qualifying immunity supporting in-feed additive, to be proposed by the applicant (e.g., a phytoadditive, probiotic or essential oils), can:

1. Reduce the prevalence of zoonotic food borne pathogens including *Salmonella*, *Escherichia coli*, *Campylobacter* spp. and *Clostridium perfringens*.
2. Improve the post-vaccination antibody titer response to a Fowl Pox, Newcastle disease, Infectious bronchitis, and a Marek's disease vaccine.
3. Reduce the need for antimicrobials and consequently minimize the risk of antimicrobial resistance development; and improve health and performance culminating in an attractive return on investment (ROI) for the producer.

II. Application Process

To be considered for conducting this research, applicants must respond to all the requirements and instructions of this RFA.

Documents to be submitted - Applicants are asked to submit a full research protocol that responds to the scope of work and activities described for the research in Section I above. Applicants must submit the research protocol using the template attached (Annex A). Applicants must also include a preliminary budget reflecting the costs for the proposed protocols using the template attached (Annex B). Finally, a self-assessment questionnaire (Annex C) is also attached and should be submitted with the protocols and budget.

To supplement the submission of Annex A, B and C, applicants should also include:

- The curriculum vitae (CV) of the proposed Principal Investigator
- Descriptions/ pictures the facilities where the research will be conducted (laboratory/ farm)
- Copies of up to 3 relevant publications involving the Principal Investigator
- Brief description of 3 research projects completed by the Applicant's organization. Preference will be given to examples of projects financed by international donors. Applicants may also share a link to publicly available final reports for any of the referenced projects if available.

Applicants are asked to submit the protocol, CVs, description of facilities, copies of relevant publications, description of completed projects, budget, and self-assessment to Cargill by April 19, 2024 by 17: 00 Indian Standard Time (IST) via e-mail to Transform_Ops@cargill.com. Please include in the Subject Line of the e-mail: "Application for **TR-HNR-RFA 2024-02**" and the name of your organization.

Evaluation and selection -Cargill will review applications on the basis of the criteria and instructions set forth in this RFA. Applications will be evaluated by a technical committee. Evaluation of the protocols will be based on applicants' demonstration of:

a. An experimental design capable of addressing the objectives, and experience of Principal Investigator (50%)
b. Evidence of successful collaborative research including cross-departmental or cross-organizational projects in Animal health (20%)
c. Institutional capacity to deliver results and manage international donor funds (30%)

If required, applicants may be asked clarification questions, or be asked to provide a virtual presentation of protocols and their application before the committee finalizes its selection. Based on the committee's recommendation, the successful applicant(s) will be invited to make final revisions needed for submission to USAID.

Once USAID has approved protocols, the Applicant will submit a detailed budget and other administrative documentation required for award negotiation. If an entity is selected, Cargill will issue an award (sub-award or a fixed price contract) under the USAID TRANSFORM project to be implemented in accordance with Cargill procedures and USAID and U.S government regulations. Applicants will also need to follow environmental mitigation measures applicable to the procurement and use of agricultural and health commodities. Applicants will receive a copy of the environmental plan which will be included as part of any resulting award. Awards will be awarded after approval by USAID. Costs incurred before signing of the subaward agreement will not be reimbursed.

III. Budget and number of Awards

Cargill expects to award one (1) subaward under this RFA. Cargill may choose to extend this RFA until funding has been awarded. The number of awards and amount of available funding may be subject to change.

Cargill has estimated an award budget of approximately USD 60,000 to USD 80,000. Nonetheless, applications budgets will be reviewed based on cost effectiveness, reasonableness, allocability and allowability.

Subawards will be Fixed Amount Sub-Awards to be entered into between Cargill and the selected applicant. Payments will be made on the basis of completed milestones incorporated in the subaward documents, that will be negotiated prior to being awarded.

TRANSFORM estimates subawards awarded under this mechanism will not exceed a period of performance of fifteen (15) months including the implementation of the trial, analysis of results and drafting of the manuscript for publication.

IV. Additional Information and Notifications

Applicants are responsible for all costs of preparing and submitting their responses to this solicitation. Cargill reserves the right to reject any and all applications received in response to this solicitation and is in no way bound to accept any applications.

TRANSFORM welcomes applications from organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID; however, Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful Applicant(s) will be subject to a responsibility determination assessment by Cargill.

Applicants may be public or private universities, research institutes or private firms, registered in India with capacity to perform applied poultry research in India.

If short-listed, applicants will be requested to provide proof of registration/s as part of the full application process for this award. Offerors must not be included in any list maintained by the U.S. government of entities debarred, suspended, or excluded for US Government awards and funding.

Any resulting award, if any, will include terms and conditions required within Cargill's cooperative agreement with USAID including mandatory and required standard provisions. Cargill expects to issue a fixed amount subaward to the selected applicant(s) which will be subject to USAID approval. Cargill reserves the right to change the mechanism type during award negotiation. During award negotiation Cargill will engage in final review, negotiation, responsibility determination, definition of milestones and payment amounts, and will craft an award instrument with the apparently successful applicant.

In addition, before receiving an award, the applicant is required to provide a valid ***Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)*** number which can be obtained via www.sam.gov.

Applicants receiving award funds will be required to comply with USAID required rules and regulations, including:

- **Branding:** All USAID-sponsored assistance awards are required to adhere to branding policies and revised marking requirements for grants and cooperative agreements in accordance with ADS 320. www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/320.pdf. Cargill will include relevant branding requirements in any resulting subaward.

- **Combatting Trafficking in Persons (TIP):** Any resulting subaward will include clauses related to TIP.

- **Safeguarding Against Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, Child Abuse and Child Neg** Any resulting subaward will include clauses related to child safeguarding measures.

- **Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions:** In accordance with ADS 303.3.8, Cargill will request the selected recipient to submit signed copies of required certifications and assurances. Cargill will provide the template to the selected applicant. Copy of the terms can be found at https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mav

- **Standard provisions for US and Non-U.S. nongovernmental organizations receiving fixed amount awards**: Accessible via https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mat. These will be included in any resultant subaward.

Cargill and USAID TRANSFORM employees may not ask for, and applicants are prohibited from offering any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, item of value or compensation to obtain or reward improper favorable treatment regarding this solicitation. Any improper requests should be reported to Transform_Ops@cargill.com
We thank you for your interest in the USAID TRANSFORM Project. Should there be questions related to this request for application, interested applicants may submit queries to Transform_Ops@cargill.com by April 5, 2024. Responses to questions received will be shared with all interested partners via e-mail or published in our website at https://www.cargill.com/sustainability/transform-current-opportunities.

Cargill looks forward to receiving applications for this opportunity. Please submit the full application to Transform_Ops@cargill.com by April 19, 2024 no later than 17:00 IST.