

The Cochrane Collaboration

Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP title: The Opportunities Fund

Proposals are sought from registered entities of
The Cochrane Collaboration for proposals to undertake projects
of their own initiative

RFP number: 20081708

RFP dated: 17 December 2008

RFP closing date for proposals: 4:00p.m. GMT, 23 February 2009

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RFP 20081708: The Opportunities Fund

Background

The Opportunities Fund provides entities with an opportunity to obtain core Collaboration funds to undertake project work of their own initiative. The Fund is organised as an annual competition applying for resources from a fixed budget. For this round of the Fund, an overall total of 100,000 GBP is available. It is anticipated that several projects will be funded, but there is no specified maximum per project. Grants will be awarded on merit and applicability to the aims of The Cochrane Collaboration's Strategic Plan.

Previous awards

For a summary of previously awarded projects, please visit www.cochrane.org:
http://www.cochrane.org/admin/cc_funding_initiatives.htm#oppfund

Section 1: Information about proposals and procedure

Purpose and theme

This call for proposals to the Cochrane Opportunities Fund is to solicit proposals for projects that address the Collaboration's Strategic Plan:

- GOAL 1:** To ensure high quality, Cochrane systematic reviews are available across a broad range of healthcare topics
- GOAL 2:** To promote access to Cochrane Reviews and the other products of The Cochrane Collaboration
- GOAL 3:** To ensure an efficient, focussed transparent organizational structure and management system for The Cochrane Collaboration
- GOAL 4:** To achieve sustainability of The Cochrane Collaboration

www.cochrane.org/admin/RevisedStratPlanAug05.doc

All proposals must address at least one Goal, and proposals that relate to Goals 1 and 2 will be particularly welcomed.

Eligibility

- 1.1 Proposals may only be submitted by registered entities of The Cochrane Collaboration.
- 1.2 An entity *may* be associated with more than one proposal.
- 1.3 All applications must originate from a registered Cochrane entity, and be signed by the entity leader (Co-ordinating Editor, Methods Group Convenor/Co-Convenor, Field or Network Co-ordinator, Centre Director, or equivalent).
- 1.4 Joint applications for collaborative projects involving multiple entities will be particularly welcomed.

Process and timeline

- 1.5 This request for proposals follows an eight (8) stage process, and The Cochrane Collaboration will make good faith to follow the timescale outlined below:
 - I. Request For Proposals (RFP) launch date: Wednesday 17 December 2008.
 - II. Closing date for submission of proposals: Monday 23 February 2009.
 - III. A sub-group of the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group (CCSG) will consider the proposals. The group will have at least five (5) members, and may co-opt other people where additional knowledge or experience is required.
 - IV. Peer review of proposals may be organised if thought necessary.
 - V. Clarification and discussion with proposers, as appropriate.
 - VI. Consideration of recommended decisions by the CCSG.
 - VII. Proposers will be informed of the CCSG's decision following its meeting in Copenhagen, April 2009.
 - VIII. Formal contracts will be drawn up between The Cochrane Collaboration and successful applicants.

Indicative funding amount and number of awards

- 1.6 The Steering Group has set aside a budget of 100,000 GBP for this round of the Fund. It is expected that this amount will fund perhaps four to six (4 to 6) proposals.

Financial and contract considerations

- 1.7 Successful proposals will be awarded a contract with The Cochrane Collaboration. Proposal awards will not be considered finalised until contracts have been successfully agreed and signed.

- 1.8 Applications for partial funding of proposals where other funds have been obtained elsewhere are encouraged, provided they meet the requirements for this call for proposals.
- 1.9 Payment of project costs will be staged through the period of the project on receipt of invoices. Payment of invoices will be dependent on completion of project deliverables.
- 1.10 In line with Collaboration policy, and those of other charities, only direct costs will be funded. Indirect institutional and related costs such as 'estates' and 'overheads' will not be funded.
- 1.11 Entity infrastructure costs will not be funded, except as required for direct delivery of the proposal.

NICK ROYLE
Chief Executive Officer
The Cochrane Collaboration
17 December 2008

Section 2: Instructions for submitting a proposal

- 2.1 **Requirements for Submission.** Each proposer is asked to submit their proposal electronically by e-mail to the designated e-mail address, ljones@cochrane.org, from an e-mail address to which points for clarification or additional material can be sent. To ensure that the e-mail passes the spam filter, please include the words “**RFP20081708 Opportunities Fund Proposal**” in the e-mail subject heading. The Cochrane Collaboration will accept the copy of the proposal submitted in this way as the true and original. The proposal should be submitted as an MS-Word .doc file, formatted for size A4 (letter) paper, with font size of at least 10 point in a sans-serif style (e.g. Arial).
- 2.2 **Deadline for proposals.** Proposals must be returned no later than 4:00 p.m., Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), on 23 February 2009. **Any proposal received after the deadline will be immediately disqualified.**
- 2.3 **Provision of Information – format for proposals.** The application should be in a minimum of a size 10, sans serif font (e.g. Arial), organised into the following five sections:
- Cover sheet (1 side)
 - Project proposal (maximum 2000 words)
 - CVs of the applicants (maximum 2 sides per CV)
 - Budget (in local currency of proposed project) (1 side)
 - Signatures page (1 side)
- 2.4 The contents of each sub-section should be organised as follows:
- **Cover sheet**
 - The Cochrane Collaboration’s funding call title and number (“RFP20081708 Opportunities Fund Proposal”).
 - Name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and title of the Principal Investigator (principal proposer) with whom The Cochrane Collaboration will correspond about the proposal;
 - Details of the Cochrane entity or entities from which the proposal has originated.
 - Title of the proposal.
 - Brief summary of the proposal (150-word limit).
 - Total cost of the proposal.
 - **Project Proposal (maximum 2000 words)**
 - Background and importance of the proposed project to The Cochrane Collaboration.
 - Goal(s) and Activity(ies) on The Cochrane Collaboration’s Strategic Plan to which the proposal relates.
 - Detailed Plan, with outcomes, outputs, deliverables, measurables and projected time lines.

- Involvement of other Cochrane entities and/or Advisory Groups.
 - Explanation of the suitability of the project team to complete this work.
 - Readiness of the project team to undertake the proposal.
- **Brief CVs of all applicants**
 - Full name.
 - Current position and employer.
 - Employment history.
 - Education and training.
 - Statement of relevant experience.
 - Declaration of potential conflicts of interest.
- **Budget (in local currency of proposed project)**
 - For each person for whom funding is requested, the full salary, time period and percentage of full-time equivalent (FTE) that the person will contribute.
 - Explanatory information about fees for all Products and Services outlined in the Proposal.
 - Full details of other costs.
- **Signatures**
 - Signature of the Principal Investigator (PI). In submitting a proposal, the PI must affirm that they accept the terms and conditions pertaining to the call; and that there is no legal, financial, ethical or other possible conflict of interest, as usually understood or according to The Cochrane Collaboration's policies, that would prevent the PI from participating in this call for proposals; or declare such a conflict so that the implications of this can be considered when the proposal is being assessed.
 - The proposal should be signed and dated by the leader of the relevant Cochrane Collaboration entity (Co-ordinating Editor, Methods Group Convenor/Co-Convenor, Field or Network Co-ordinator, Centre Director, or equivalent).
 - The proposal must be signed and dated by a representative of the PI who is authorised to bind the PI to the terms and conditions allied to this call for proposals, and to compliance with the information submitted in the proposal. Where this is the PI or entity leader, no additional signature need be included. Each PI submitting a proposal certifies to both (a) the completeness, veracity, and accuracy of the information provided in the proposal, and (b) the authority of the individual whose signature appears on the proposal to bind the PI to the terms and conditions set forth in this call for proposals. Proposals submitted without the required signature will be disqualified.

Section 3: Evaluation criteria for proposals

3.1 Essential criteria. Proposals must be:

- .1 Proposed by or through registered Cochrane entities.
- .2 Signed off by the leader of the relevant Cochrane entity (Co-ordinating Editor, Methods Group Convenor/Co-Convenor, Field or Network Co-ordinator, Centre Director, or equivalent).
- .3 In line with the specific criteria set out for this call for proposals.
- .4 In line with the Collaboration's Strategic Plan.
- .5 Proposing specific outcomes, outputs or measurable deliverables.
- .6 In line with the timeline specified in the call for proposals
- .7 Within the capacity of the entity or associates to deliver.
- .8 Compliant with the terms of the call for proposals.

3.2 Desirable criteria. Proposals may also be considered more favourably if they:

- .1 Involve collaboration between multiple entities.
- .2 Involve collaboration with relevant third parties.
- .3 Involve relevant collaboration across geographical, cultural and/or economic borders.
- .4 Attract funding from third parties (but must firstly meet criterion 3.1.8.).
- .5 Result in new knowledge, products, techniques or tools.
- .6 Benefit multiple entities, reviews, or other products.
- .7 Enhance the status of The Cochrane Collaboration with key stakeholders.