REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

DEVELOPMENT OF REPORTS ON GAPS IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION IN LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES TO ACCELERATE IMPROVEMENT

Proposals for: Development of a report and manuscript on priority PHC gap and research plan

Maximum amount: $20,000 USD

Closing Date/Time: Friday November 3, 2017 23:59 GMT

1. Background

In collaboration with the Primary Health Care Performance Initiative (PHCPI) and the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research ("the Alliance") at the World Health Organization, with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Ariadne Labs is developing a Primary Health Care Measurement and Implementation Research Consortium. This Consortium will bring together researchers and policymakers from multiple disciplines representing academic institutions, government agencies, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations to accelerate progress in primary health care (PHC) research in low and middle-income countries (LMIC). The ultimate goal of the consortium is to develop a robust PHC global research network structure and to secure the resources needed to carry out prioritized and policy-relevant PHC research to support better measurement, implementation, and improvement efforts in four priority areas for PHC in LMIC. This research will support country and global efforts to build the high-quality PHC systems that are needed to reach effective universal health coverage (UHC) and the health-related sustainable development goals (SDGs).

In July 2017, a group of international PHC researchers and policy makers convened in Boston to identify the priority research areas that will be the initial focus of the consortium. This meeting was informed by a rapid scoping review of PHC research in LMIC and resulted in the prioritization of four areas that represent the biggest gaps in knowledge in intervention or implementation and where research is most likely to catalyze improvements in PHC performance (Table 1). For each priority area, the expert group identified specific areas in which knowledge is needed as potential targets for new research. Additionally, the expert group generated an initial list of potential research questions related to each priority area (Annex 1). A meeting report describing the proceedings of the July 2017 priority-setting meeting can found here.

Table 1: Priority and research areas identified during the July 2017 Priority Setting Meeting	
Prioritized Research Areas	**Specific Areas identified for Research**
1) Quality, Safety, and Performance Management	• Data use • Quality management • Learning systems
2) PHC Policies and Governance	• Community engagement • Social accountability
3) Organization and models of care	• Workforce and team development • Scale • New models for management
4) PHC Financing	• Market structure • Political economy • Uptake of evidence

This RFP is being released to solicit proposals to produce reports that will further define key gaps in knowledge about how to measure and improve PHC, develop potential research implementation plans to support initial work of the research consortium, and create a manuscript inclusion in a proposed journal supplement.

Grantees selected through this request will develop reports in one of the four areas identified as high priority for future research (see Table 1). The reports will identify existing gaps and priority research questions and outline approaches to begin to address identified knowledge needs. The reports developed by grantees selected through this RFP will form the basis of the initial work of the Research Consortium and will be published as part of a special journal supplement in 2018. Each final report will be expected to include three core components:

- A **mapping** of existing gaps in knowledge in the chosen priority area, including areas where there is evidence of what works to improve the gap and where there are major gaps in evidence regarding how to measure and/or improve the area;
- Based on the results of the gap map, a list of **10-15 prioritized research questions** for the chosen topic area selected. This list should build upon questions identified during the expert convening (see Annex 1).
- A **research implementation plan** that proposes how to answer at least three of the prioritized research questions and defines how research – whether primary, synthesis, or knowledge uptake/translation – would be conducted to answer the questions within a network structure. Research implementation plans should include specific aims, study design, targeted geographic regions, potential research team and partners, overview workplan, and estimated total budget needed to conduct the research.

After development of the report, grantees will be expected to generate a manuscript for inclusion in a planned journal supplement

While selected grantees are developing reports, Ariadne Labs and the Alliance will generate a proposal for how a Research Consortium will be structured to carry out the priority PHC research, potentially including the work described in grantees' Research Implementation Plans. To facilitate this process, during the grant period, grantees will participate in virtual convenings to ensure that opportunities for intersectoral and crosscutting research are identified and to help inform the network structure for the Consortium.

We anticipate formally launching the Research Consortium in October 2018.

2. Proposal Requirements

<u>Format</u>

Proposals should be a maximum of 8 pages single spaced (not including cover page, references, CVs, budget, budget justification, or letters of support). Please use an 11 or 12 point font, 1 inch margins, and 8 1/2 by 11 inch format. All submissions should be electronic in a PDF as a single document with the exception of the budget which should be submitted according to excel template provided [here](#).

<u>Content</u>

Bidders should select a priority area (from Table 1) for the proposal. The proposal needs to describe how the bidder would develop the final report and include the following sections:
1. **Cover page (not included in page count):** Title, contact details for the bidder ("project leader") including institutional name, administrative emails, and telephone numbers
2. **Specific aims and motivation:** Specific aims and a motivation statement, including the team's rationale for bidding
3. **Background**: Describe background initial knowledge of the chosen gap and existing work to address measurement and improvement in PHC. This should illustrate the respondent's familiarity with the priority area chosen
4. **Proposed methodology for generating report:** Please state the *methodology* the team would take if selected as a grantee to develop the components of the **report**, including:
   a. *Knowledge and research gap map:* Including the approach you will take to identify where there is evidence of effective approaches and interventions designed to address the area of focus and where there are significant knowledge gaps in which additional research is needed.
   b. *Priority research questions:* How you will work from, and build upon, the initial list of prioritized research questions (see Annex 1), using the knowledge obtained through the Gap Map, to develop a list of 10-15 specific priority research questions in the topic area? This section should include information about what stakeholders you will engage and how prioritization will occur.
   c. *Research Implementation plan:* Describe how you will choose the top three focused priority research questions and develop a research implementation plan for them. The approach should also include identification of potential data sources and any preliminary primary or secondary analyses that would be done to support development of the plan.
   d. Plans for development of the report into a manuscript for inclusion in the Consortium supplement.
   e. *Engagement with LMIC stakeholders:* Please describe how the team will engage with or include policymakers and stakeholders in LMIC throughout the process of developing the report, as well as how the research described in the research implementation plan would involve policymakers, researchers, and/or stakeholders from LMIC.

5. **Short institutional profile(s) and profiles of anticipated team members:** This includes the relevant experience related to the priority research areas and activities, the team assembled, and any relevant previous work and capacity. This should include connections to policymakers and implementers to ensure a multidisciplinary approach to development. Full CVs up to 5 pages each should be annexed to the proposal and are not included in page count.
6. **Budget and timeline (not included in page count):** Budget should be submitted using the template provided, which includes the following line items:
   a. Personnel expenses (broken down by role, time covered, salary and fringe amount)
   b. Non-Personnel costs
   c. Other expenses (e.g. consultants, sub-contracts)
   d. Institutional indirect fees
7. **Budget justification (not included in page count):** Budget justification should explain all budget line items in detail and not exceed 3 pages.

3. Eligibility:

Non-profit, government, and academic institutions are eligible to apply. Proposals must have leadership by and/or substantial representation from researchers and/or policymakers from LMIC.

While participants of the July 2017 Priority Setting Meeting are encouraged to apply, no priority will be given to meeting participants in the selection process.

The following scoring will be used in reviewing proposals:

1. Applicant capacity (30%)
2. Description of proposed approach to develop the report and manuscript (30%)
3. Budget and budget justification (30%)
4. Overall quality and completeness of submission (10%)

4. Funding

The maximum amount of funding is USD 20,000 direct costs plus IDC up to 15% depending on the type of the lead agency and requirements of our funder (see budget template). Agreements will be concluded with a single entity, which will have the right to sub-contract to others if necessary.

5. Timeline of RFP and Report

Date	Action
November 3, 2017 at 23:59 GMT	Proposals due
December 20, 2017	Selected bidders notified
March 31, 2018	Draft of Gap Map and priority question list
May 1, 2018	First draft of full report
May 15, 2018	Review by funders
May 31, 2018	Final draft of report
July 31, 2018	Development of report into manuscript format for submission as part of the supplement

6. Further Instructions to Bidders

Closing Date for Submission of Proposals

Proposals must be received by Ariadne Labs at the e-mail address: bhuskey@ariadnelabs.org no later than Friday, November 3, 2017 at 23:59 GMT with the subject line "RFP Submission: [your name]."

Communications during the RFP Period

A prospective bidder requiring any clarification on technical or contractual matters can contact Brooke Huskey**,** bhuskey@ariadnelabs.org. All questions and provided responses will be posted [here](#).

Amendment of the RFP

Ariadne Labs may, at any time before the closing date, for any reason, whether on its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a (prospective) bidder, modify the RFP by written amendment. Amendments could, inter alia, include modification of the project scope or requirements, the project timeline expectations and/or extension of the closing date for submission. All prospective bidders that have submitted a Proposal with regard to the RFP will be notified in writing of all amendments to the RFP and will, where applicable, be invited to amend their Proposal accordingly.

Clarification of a submitted Proposal

Ariadne Labs may, at its discretion, ask any bidder for clarification of any part of its submitted Proposal. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing. No change in price or substance of the Proposal shall be sought, offered, or permitted during this exchange.

7. Award Process

External Review of Proposal

The Ariadne Labs/Alliance/BMGF team will commission an external review of all proposals received to select grantees.

However, Ariadne Labs reserves the right to:

A. Award the contract to a bidder of its choice, regardless of budget so long as below the stated limit
B. Accept or reject any proposal, and to annul the solicitation process and reject all proposals at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders and without any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for Ariadne Labs' action;
C. Award the contract on the basis of Ariadne Labs' particular objectives to a bidder whose proposal is considered to be the most responsive to the Organization's needs and the activity concerned;
D. Not award any contract at all. Ariadne Labs has the right to eliminate bids for technical or other reasons throughout the evaluation/selection process. Ariadne Labs shall not in any way be obligated to reveal, or discuss with any bidder, how a proposal was assessed, or to provide any other information relative to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for elimination to any bidder.

NOTE: Ariadne Labs is acting in good faith by issuing this RFP. However, this document does not obligate Ariadne Labs to contract for the performance of any work, nor for the supply of any products or services.

Ariadne Labs' Right to enter into Negotiations

Ariadne Labs reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more bidders of its choice, including but not limited to negotiation of the terms of the proposal(s), the price quoted in such proposal(s) and/or the deletion of certain parts of the work, components or items requested for under this RFP.

Signing of the Contract

Within 30 days of receipt of the contract, the successful bidder shall sign and date the contract and return it to Ariadne Labs according to the instructions provided at that time. If the bidder does not accept the contract terms without changes, then Ariadne Labs has the right not to proceed with the selected bidder and instead contract with another bidder of its choice.

Payment Schedule

Compensation shall be paid to the grantee, per the schedule below. Total invoicing by the Grantee shall not exceed $20,000 plus the applicable indirect cost.

Payment Schedule		
Amount to be paid	**Due Date**	**Deliverable**
50%	Upon signing of award (December or January 2018)	Fully-executed award
20%	March 31, 2018	Gap Map and three research questions.
20%	May 31, 2018	Final draft of report – all components of the report
10%	July 31, 2017	Report modified into requested manuscript format suitable for submission as part of the supplement