

Securing Water for Food – Frequently Asked Questions

What is *Securing Water for Food*?

Securing Water for Food is a Grand Challenge for Development initiative that calls on entrepreneurs and the global business, science, and tech communities to improve the management of limited water resources for agriculture in developing countries. Through *Securing Water for Food*, we will source innovative, low-cost, energy efficient, scalable, and sustainable solutions to improve water access through diversification and maintenance of our limited water resources in three primary domains: 1) efficient use and re-use of water and wastewater; 2) innovative water capture and storage; and desalination for community systems.

What is your goal?

Through *Securing Water for Food*, we hope to use the transformative power of economic growth – in combination with science and technology – to bring scalable, low-cost solutions to better manage and provide limited water resources in developing and emerging markets.

What role do you think science and technology can play in solving this problem?

Science and technology alone cannot solve these problems as they are subject to complex relationships and dependencies. However, science and technology – including innovative and new business models – are integral to water management and sustainability systems. As populations grow and more people try to access limited water resources, it is critical that we employ best practices when it comes to managing and distributing water around the globe. By tapping entrepreneurs, businesses, scientists and innovators who are designing cutting-edge solutions, we can share and scale these practices to the benefit of all.

When are you releasing the solicitation for Securing Water for Food?

We anticipate releasing the call for innovations on or around **November 4**. The program will begin accepting Concept Notes through an online platform (located at securingwaterforfood.org) beginning **November 27, 2013**. The Concept Note application window closes **January 17, 2014**.

When will awards be made?

We expect awards will be made between July and September 2014.

I submitted a Concept Note in response to the Request for Information via email in September; do I still need to submit a Concept Note online after November 27?

Yes, you must submit a Concept Note via the online platform after November 27, 2013. The Request for Information was not a call for Concept Notes or proposals. USAID is unable to accept Concept Notes prior to the release of the final solicitation.

How will I know that the solicitation has been released?

The Securing Water for Food solicitation may be accessed on Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) website located at www.fbo.gov on or about November 4. It can also be accessed on Grants.gov website located at www.grants.gov. You may also download the solicitation from the Securing Water for Food website at www.securingwaterforfood.org

How many Concept Notes may I submit?

You may submit as many Concept Notes as you have innovations that meet the criteria in the solicitation.

Who is eligible to apply? Are individuals eligible to apply?

Organizations of any type or size may apply. Individuals are not eligible to apply for funding. Government entities cannot be the prime Applicant but can partner and/or sub to an Applicant on a proposal.

In what countries may eligible Applicants for Securing Water for Food funding be based?

Applicants can come from any country except for countries where USAID is restricted from providing foreign (North Korea, Cuba, Syria, and Iran).

In what countries may activities funded through Securing Water for Food be implemented?

Securing Water for Food seeks applications that have an operational focus in developing and advanced developing countries. A “developing country” means any country categorized by the World Bank as a low or lower middle income country according to its gross national income per capita. An “advanced developing country” means any country categorized by the World Bank as an upper middle income country according to its gross national income per capita. For a current list of these countries, please see <http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups>.

Applicants from organizations based in, or applications with an operational focus in the following countries are not eligible: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria.”

What is a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)?

Securing Water for Food will be released as a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA). A Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) is a general announcement of a U.S. Government Agency’s research interest, including criteria for selecting proposals and soliciting the participation of all offerors capable of satisfying the Government’s needs. A BAA provides for full and open competition in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR 6.102(d)(2)). The BAA is a solicitation method used when (i) the United States Government (USG) desires new and creative solutions to problem statements; (ii) when using a conventional statement of work could result in unintentionally stifling ideas and concepts given many possible approaches (iii) when fulfilling requirements for scientific study and experimentation directed toward advancing the state-of-the-art or increasing knowledge or understanding rather than focusing on a specific system or hardware solution; (iv) when the USG must be able to state its objectives in terms of areas of need or interest rather than specific solutions or outcomes; (v) when meaningful proposals with varying technical/scientific approaches are reasonably anticipated; and (vi) when evaluation will be based on a peer or scientific review.

What kinds of awards are available?

There are two “stages” of awards: Stage 1: Market-focused product/business development and Stage 2: Scaling/Commercial Growth. Financial awards made through this BAA may be in the form of grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and collaboration agreements - depending on the nature of the submitting organization and the proposal. All awardees will receive assistance to accelerate/scale their innovation.

Do I need a partner to apply?

All applicants must have a local presence or at least one local partner based in the country in which the applicant proposes to work. We strongly encourage multiple partners (local and international).

How do you define “partnership”?

A partnership is a formal agreement between two or more organizations that complement production, manufacturing, promotion, or distribution of an agricultural technology.

What activities are not eligible for Securing Water for Food support?

Currently, the Founding Partners view the following activities as low priority and unlikely to receive program funding:

- Applications that do not demonstrate a commitment to the stated development purpose, i.e., enhanced value of the agricultural chain, the promotion of food security, sustainable water resource development, and increased broad-based economic growth in the target countries.
- Applications focused on research and development for a product without a clearly defined market or the likelihood of commercialization within a three-year timeframe. This includes technologies that have not yet been piloted.
- Applications focused on sustainable water supply access without an explicit benefit to the food sector or agricultural products and services without a significant and sustainable water component.
- Large dam projects for water capture and storage.
- One-off water technology installations or pilot projects to support proven technologies for proven applications, unless they include an innovative component(s) to achieve scale, such as a new business model.
- Established, commercially viable technologies that are currently used throughout the eligible countries.

How will I know my application's status?

Via the online platform, each applicant will be able to view the status of their application.

May I contact Securing Water for Food to discuss my application?

Unfortunately, we do not have the staff capacity to talk with every applicant. However, we will hold at least two webinars in November and December. The exact dates and times will be announced on fedbizopps.gov, grants.gov, securingwaterforfood.org and Twitter (@securingwater)