

Call for Proposals on the Global Taxonomy Initiative Training Courses to be Hosted in Developing Countries in 2018

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposal Format

Q: If we submit a draft proposal, should that be through the CBD Primary National Focal Point (NFP)?

A: No, only the final proposal needs to be submitted through the CBD-NFP. The draft proposal should be submitted for feedback, as soon as you have it ready, to Junko Shimura (junko.shimura@cbd.int), Fabiana Spinelli (fabiana.spinelli@cbd.int), Alex Borisenko (aborisen@uoguelph.ca) and Adriana Radulovici (aradulov@uoguelph.ca). The deadline for submitting the draft proposal is 15 November 2017.

Q: If there are several institutions submitting a proposal together, will the co-applicants be the head of the institutes or the faculty involved?

A: It depends on the specifics of the country and institution. Ideally the person that is doing the ground work (i.e., faculty or researcher) would also be overseeing the project. In some institutions, it would not be possible to move forward if administration members are not involved as lead applicants. Each institution needs to decide according to their situation.

Q: What is the difference between lead applicant and co-applicant? Can/do they have equal rights, project and financial responsibilities?

A: The lead applicant would have to be the entity (person and institution) fiscally responsible to the Secretariat for the execution of the project, including disbursement of funds to co-applicants and other participants. Thus, the lead applicant's organization should be legally incorporated in the respective country, have a clean fiscal solvency record, and demonstrated experience with managing external funds. As such, the lead applicant will have superiority in making administrative and financial decisions regarding the project. It's up to the individual teams to figure out who should be the lead. The co-applicants are people or institutions supporting (but not in charge of) project execution.

Budget and Funding

Q: How many applications will be funded?

A: Up to 8 proposal applications will be funded, with a maximum grant of \$ 20,000 USD each.

Q: Is it allowed to include reagents and consumables in the budget?

A: Yes, you can include both. In the budget tab of the application form, you can find a list of eligible and ineligible expenses.

Q: What is the difference between cash and in-kind match funding contributions?

A: Cash is any actual monetary amount that will be committed towards project execution. This amount may come from the operating budget of facilitating institutions or secured from a third party (e.g., external grant or endowment). Proof of payment will be required to demonstrate that funds have been used, for example, to contract a person to work on the project, or to pay for catering services for the

training events. In-kind is any indirect expense for a contribution that cannot be supported by receipts and/or invoices. For example, it can include using existing facilities (e.g., institutional laboratory bench space or audiovisual facilities) or allocating time of existing staff members that were not hired specifically for this project.

Q: Would there be a higher chance of being selected if there is counterpart funding?

A: Having a counterpart funding would increase the applicant's chances of obtaining a high score under selection criteria #6 on financial sustainability.

Q: What about post-project follow-up activities? Do we need to save some from existing funds for this, or is there any other opportunity to get funding or part of it from CBD?

A: No. The proposal should include a clear outline of the follow-up DNA barcoding activities. However, the funds offered through this call are catalytic funds that need to be spent within 1 year; no money can be saved for later use. This project is intended to help build a stronger connection with the CBD-NFP that may open future opportunities to apply for follow-up funding to implement the CBD.

Connecting with CBD Primary National Focal Points

Q: Is there another way to submit the proposal if we have trouble contacting the CBD-NFP?

A: No. The application needs to be submitted through the CBD-NFP of the lead-applicant's country. If you have trouble reaching out to your NFP, Fabiana can facilitate the connection. Given the time constraints for this application, it is important to establish this contact as soon as possible.

Q: Do the CBD-NFPs know that people from their countries might be reaching out to them about the proposal?

A: Yes, they received a [notification](#) on October 19th.

Q: Can the CBD-NFP be an applicant?

A: Yes, national focal points are welcome to participate as applicants, team members, or training instructors.

Collaboration and Joint Proposals

Q: Can one country submit more than one proposal?

A: The national focal point can choose to endorse multiple proposals, but only one proposal application per country will be selected.

Q: Can two or more countries submit a joint proposal?

A: Yes, particularly if two or more countries within a region cooperate to provide training and one of the partners has stronger technical capacity or can leverage more matching funds. Please keep in mind that the application form allows to select only one individual as the lead applicant, therefore only one country can be designated to lead each application. Additional collaborators can be inserted as co-applicants, team members, and training instructors. Although the proposal needs to be endorsed by and submitted through the lead applicant's CBD-NFP, it would help to have buy-in from focal points of all partnering countries.

Q: Is it possible to invite international speakers and trainers?

A: Yes. While it is important to leverage existing expertise in your country, we welcome regional collaboration. Budget allowing, it would be a good idea, especially for countries that are connected by railways/roads and could easily share, e.g., the same invasive species. It would also help to demonstrate your leadership within the region and your position to push the CBD objectives forward.

Training Course Details

Q: How long should the training course be?

A: It is ultimately up to the lead applicant, co-applicants, and team members to decide the duration of the training course to achieve the objective of the proposal. The minimum duration would be one week. However, any length of time that works well with the budget can be fitted into your proposal, as long as you submit a detailed timeline/schedule.

Q: What is the preferred number of trainees and what background/expertise should they represent? Can we invite university students to be trained?

A: It is best to invite at least 10 trainees, but this number should not undermine the feasibility of a successful in-depth training activity, given the budget and duration. Laboratory space is also a consideration to have when choosing the number of trainees as it is challenging to fit a large group in most labs. The trainees need to be strategically positioned to carry on barcoding operations in their institutions after the training activities are done and to advance the country's goals under the respective National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAPs). For this reason, preference should be given to practitioners, rather than academic researchers. Training students is not an expected outcome of this training activity, as students may move on with their careers with no further connection to this line of work.

Q: Is it a requirement to have one/some of the people that participated in the 2015-2016 GTI training as instructors?

A: It is not mandatory that they take the role of instructors. However, as per the application procedure and selection criteria, the lead applicant or senior team members must have participated in the 2015-2016 GTI training course in molecular diagnostic approaches or an equivalent specialized training course in DNA barcoding. It is important that the trained trainers are in a good position to design the entire project, to make sure that the proposed activities are helping implement the CBD, NBSAP, and Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Q: Are we allowed to use information materials and resources produced in previous GTI training courses for our proposed training activities?

A: Yes. You are encouraged to use any of the information provided to you through the GTI training courses. We will also provide *ad hoc* information packages to event hosts and organizers, that would include data spreadsheets, electronic lab books, Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) module (developed by the University of Guelph and SCBD), and any other material used during the previous GTI training. We are working on an online training module and we could share some elements of it as well.

Q: What relevant policy discussions should be included in the training activities?

A: We recommend having policy discussions about the implementation of barcoding workflows as part of standard government-accredited diagnostic protocols. Topics may range depending on the specifics of individual training events. For example, you may wish to discuss how the ABS regime may affect your network's use of out-of-country laboratories to sequence materials from your country.

Q: After the successful completion of our training activities, are we allowed to design a certificate of participation which may have endorsement or signature from CBD-GTI?

A: Yes, that is a great idea. It would also be a good incentive for participants.

Q: Is it a disadvantage to have few instructors/poor facilities?

A: It depends on the context. For a large country with advanced molecular facilities, using a small, low throughput third-party lab and few instructors would constitute a disadvantage, but for a country that is only getting started and has limited resources it would not be.

Q: We have a lab with basic equipment for molecular work (DNA extraction, PCR). Is that enough?

A: Institutions supporting training proposals may not have sequencing capacities. The training envisioned in this call for proposals takes participants through the molecular component of DNA barcoding consisting of DNA extraction and PCR, taking into account that sequencing services by third-party laboratories are available in many parts of the world. As a note, many countries already have lab facilities and it would be good to engage those ones rather than establish new facilities.