

WAAVP-AN GRANTS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Africa Network of the World Association for Advancement in Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP-AN), is a new Pan-African network of experts in Veterinary Parasitology, advised and endorsed by the World Association for Advancement in Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP) and supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).

As presented on its website www.waavp.org, The World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP) is a not-for-profit organization for scientists who study the parasites of non-human animals, encompassing helminthology, protozoology, and entomology.

WAAVP membership is open to veterinarians and others who are actively interested in the advancement of veterinary parasitology, anywhere in the world, with a strong social commitment.

WAAVP aims to encourage more inclusive and representative research in veterinary parasitology and to promote the exchange of knowledge and material between individuals and organizations interested in this field, towards improving our society and animal welfare in the context of One Health.

2. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

The main objective of these guidelines is to document defined principles, methods, and mechanism of funds management to govern the Network's project funding activities. Where necessary, the guidelines have specifically handled the risks of conflict of interests and segregation of roles during the grant award and management processes.

3. GRANT MANAGEMENT PROCESS-PHASES

The grant management process has seven phases which are (i) call for proposal, (ii) submission, (iii) selection and award, (iv) agreement, (v) disbursement, (vi) reporting and monitoring and (vii) closure as illustrated below.



The activities undertaken during these phases are all governed by the arrangements of these guidelines.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During the grant management process, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) will host the WAAVP-AN as an ACBF Program and provide legal cover for WAAVP-AN's activities. The Steering Committee of the WAAVP-AN, the Secretariat of the WAAVP-AN as well as the Proposal Technical Review Panel have specific roles to play.

4.1 The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

ACBF is the legal entity representing WAAVP-AN until WAAVP-AN become a legally recognized entity. Until such time that the legal situation of the network is established, ACBF will manage the sub-grants on behalf of WAAVP-AN. ACBF will sign grant agreements with grantees.

The ACBF will provide the following support:

- i. Provision of finance and administration support such as processing transactions including payments, banking facilities, and facilitating reporting on the use of funds.
- ii. The benefit of legal coverage to activities implemented by WAAVP-AN subject to applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

4.2 The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee approves all policies, manuals and procedures including the WAAVP-AN grants management guidelines. The Steering Committee also approves all amendments and revisions to the approved policies and guidelines. Furthermore, the Steering Committee validates the tools and templates provided by ACBF and revise them yearly where necessary, agree on the selection criteria as well as the priority areas and nominate the Proposal Technical Review Panel under the current exercise. The Steering Committee approves the annual work plan and budget prepared by the Secretariat. In so doing, it approves the number of Calls for Proposals for the period and the total grant amount to be awarded during the year. The Steering Committee receives the reports of the Proposal Technical Review Panel for its review, approval and/or grant award. The Steering Committee may request additional information from the Proposal Technical Review Panel to discharge its duty.

4.3 The Secretariat

The Secretariat provides the administrative support required throughout the process. The responsibilities of the Secretariat will include the following:

- i. Support the Steering Committee and Co-chairs.
- ii. Develop annual work plans/Budget for approval by the Steering Committee.
- iii. Manage the Call for Project Proposals and coordinate the review process. The Secretariat shall advertise the call widely, receive proposals and dispatch to the internal Scientific Committee and the external Scientific Advisory Panel.
- iv. Coordinate Steering Committee meetings and other relevant meetings involving the Network, prepare and disseminate minutes.
- v. Follow-up and monitor the implementation of decisions.
- vi. Facilitate the Network's capacity building, policy engagement and outreach activities.
- vii. Manage and update the website, internal communication, and social media platforms.

4.4 Scientific Advisory Panel

The Scientific Advisory Panel reviews submissions from potential awardees after a Call for Proposal and prepares a report for the steering committee. The Scientific Advisory Panel shall be composed of five (5) selected members of the Steering Committee and appointed external expertise. The report shall include inter alia, the list of submissions received, the review criteria, the proposals retained after the review and their brief description.

Annex 8.1. provides the derived plan for granting mechanisms (roles and responsibilities).

5. GRANT PRINCIPLE, OBJECTIVE, AND TYPE

The support under the grant aims for an improved control of veterinary parasites. Thus, the objective of the sub-grants is to support research grants; bringing the financial ability to drive veterinary parasite control to the members of the network, and support to initiatives that include any activity that demonstrates impact to drive improved control of Ecto/Endo parasitic diseases of animals on the African continent. The grants type can therefore range from research, training, meeting or conference organization, parasite management tools development among others.

6. ELIGIBILITY AND PROPOSAL SELECTION CRITERIA

6.1 Eligibility and Selection Criteria

The selection will be based on an open and competitive process that ensures that:

- (a) previously funded promoters are not eligible,
- (b) research projects are selected based on their feasibility and relevance,
- (c) the selection criteria are available to potential applicants and the outcome of the selection process is communicated to all the interested parties timely,
- (d) the sub-granting management is subjected to simplified procedures without compromising compliance and quality, and
- (e) equal access to the funding facility is applied to all applicants.

The selection criteria will be guided by an evaluation derived from a questionnaire with various scorings per different areas. Following the questionnaire evaluations, depending on the size of the grant, interviews will be held for short listed proposers for further screening. Annex 8.2. provides eligibility criteria and a suggested rating matrix.

7. MECHANISMS

The sub-granting process implies a Call for Proposals, the submission of applications, the selection and award of funding, the grant agreement, the financials, the technical reports and the grant closure.

7.1 Call for Proposals

The Call for Proposals for WAAVP-AN financial support will be advertised widely and timely on the WAAVP-AN website for at least 30 calendar days. The request will indicate the minimum requirements from the potential candidates, the deadline for the submissions as well as the format to use for the submission. Eligibility, ceiling and where applicable, potential applicants, base continent, and links to certain entities will be indicated in the call for proposal.

7.2 Submission

The proposals/applications submitted will be received at a specific address or Email Address and by a certain deadline. The submissions will be receivable within the specified window and will not be acceptable after the deadline.

7.3 Selection and award

The proposals received will be subjected to Due Diligence Checks for plagiarism prior to the assessment.

7.3.1 Fraud and Due Diligence Checks

After the deadline set for the submission of applications, all the files received will be subjected for Fraud and Due Diligence checks by the secretariat. This is a mandatory step prior to further proposal assessment. The Due Diligence process will be split into two distinct stages. The first stage involves checks conducted prior to, or at the application stage. The initial checks are shorter and of a lighter touch primarily to gather basic information on the partner and to highlight any potential issues or red flags for working with the partner. At the second stage, more expansive checks, are conducted at the award stage, for grants above a certain amount, and form part of the process of preparing the collaboration agreement prior to grant commencement.

7.3.2 Project Technical Assessment

The submissions cleared after the Fraud and Due Diligence checks are submitted for the review by an independent Scientific Advisory Panel formed by selected members of the Steering Committee and appointed external expertise. The reviewers shall use scorecards and/or checklists of pre-agreed criteria to ensure consistency and fairness in the assessment.

The Scientific Advisory Panel meeting discusses each proposal on its merits against the set criteria. The Panel members ensure that all applications meet requirements for eligibility and that Due Diligence, including the assessment of conflict of interest, has been conducted. If a member of the Panel declares a conflict of interest during the deliberations, he (she) must not take part in the review of the concerned proposal.

The review and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Panel on each application should be documented and submitted to the Steering Committee. These minutes should highlight the eligibility criteria met by the proposal, the strengths and weaknesses, the grant/fund requested and the recommendation to the Steering Committee.

7.3.3 Institutional Assessment

An assessment of the Institution/promoter will be conducted through desk review for eligible projects that meet the minimum technical requirements. Physical visits to sites will be considered for large grant amounts when necessary and depending on the availability of funds for an onsite Due Diligence. The Due Diligence which will use the ACBF Financial Management Checklist, aims to assess the key fiduciary controls and the ability of the promoters to duly account for the financial resources. The assessment will include previous performance of the promoters in managing similar grants, the adequacy of the procurement processes and financial management. The outcome of the assessment will be submitted to the Steering Committee for review, adoption, and consideration in the selection process.

7.3.4 Grant/Award Notification

Based on the report of the Scientific Advisory Panel and the outcome of the institutional assessment, the Steering Committee makes an informed decision about the request for the grant and duly informs the successful applicants. For each approved grant, an award notification letter is prepared and sent to the applicant. The award letter will not only announce the amount awarded but any other conditions attached to the grant and a time specific request for a written acceptance of the offer by the beneficiary. The unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the outcome after the review processes by way of letter drafted by the Secretariat.

7.4 Grant agreement

Upon receipt of the acceptance letter from the pre-awardee, the Secretariat drafts a grant agreement in such a manner as to provide for a robust financial and fiduciary control environment and mitigate risks in the disbursement of funds. The grant is approved with a clear budget and financing plan. If there is co-financing planned for a proposal, the grant agreement can be signed only upon verifiable commitment for other financier(s). The grant should be used to fund eligible activities, which are specified in the grant agreement.

7.5 Financials (Disbursement, Oversight, and Monitoring)

The individual grantee or grantee's host institution is expected to maintain a financial management system including adequate accounting and financial reporting mechanisms to ensure that it can provide to the WAAVP-AN, accurate and timely information regarding the project resources and expenditures.

The disbursement schedule for the grant-financed projects should follow a tranche disbursement system to better monitor compliance with the applicable procedures and processes. Depending on the amount involved or the type of support (contribution to the

budget of the activity), certain grants may be disbursed as a lump sum. Regular implementation support missions (virtual/physical) will be undertaken where necessary as part of the oversight and monitoring processes. The supervision is an essential part of the grant management which aims at ensuring a smooth execution of project activities with the agreed implementation plan and identifying the weaknesses and challenges that affect the implementation.

7.6 Technical reports

Projects funded should be regularly monitored to ensure a successful implementation towards the achievement of the project's objectives. Monitoring is a continuous process which helps to systematically capture project progress at a particular time in the implementation. The project should prepare and implement a monitoring plan describing the process of tracking progress and reporting on performance. Technical reports will be based on the BMGF/ACBF reporting templates and reporting timelines will be defined in the grant agreement.

The projects' results monitoring plan should include the expected outputs and outcomes, the indicators to measure progress, data collection methods, as well as the monitoring coordination arrangements.

7.7 Grant closure

The grant provides for the extension of the project closing date. A grant may be extended before the closing date upon request from the beneficiary, only if there is a justified delay in the implementation. The request for grant extensions shall be received from the Recipient at least two (2) months before grant closing date. Such extension if approved by the Steering Committee, shall be notified to the Recipient before the initial closing date.

The closing of a project is a process conducted to formally terminate and conclude all tasks related to the various project activities. Thus, three (3) months after the closing date specified in the grant agreement, the grantee will be required to prepare and submit the End of Project Report and Project Financial Report to the Secretariat for review and submission to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall then review the reports and upon approval, shall issue a Clearance Letter to the grantee. Any unused financial resources will be repatriated to a bank account to be shared with the grantee.

8. ANNEXES

8.1 Granting Mechanisms - Roles and Responsibilities

Action	How	Templates/Material required or to be used	Responsibility	When
Set up call mechanisms	Rules for granting summarized in one simple, practical template	Criteria for eligibility Grant profiling Priority areas	ACBF and SC	Before the call starts review each year for adaptation before the next call
Call for Proposals	Online Announcement, Social network communication, Directed mailing, Communication to the network	Template mail, Web page	SC, Communication team and Secretariat	Q3 yearly
Reception of applications	Online Deadline-the call for proposals will be announced on the WAAVP-AN website for at least 30 calendar days	Template for application, Full guidance for application, Checklist	Secretariat	2 months after announcement for Call for Proposals
Due diligence	Screen financial background and compliance, Screen for plagiarism	Financial Management Assessment Checklist, Plagiarism check tool	ACBF	1 month
Scientific and technical evaluation	Online mechanism, Selection meeting	Rating grill Template "Report and recommendation" document	Panel	1 month
Announcement of selected projects	Online Mail,	Template mail.	SC, Secretariat	Q4 next year
Manage funding,	Grant agreement	Standard agreement, Disbursement,	ACBF	Q2

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Disbursement and monitoring		Monitoring (virtual/physical)		
Yearly Report from Grantees	Presentation to the general assembly, Communication for the website Report on impact	Template for subgrant-report.	SC, Secretariat	Q1 each year

8.2 Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility - mandatory check list	Answer	Rate	Comment
The project lead is based in Africa	Yes/No	15	Mandatory
The project lead is a member of the WAAVP-AN	Yes/No	10	Mandatory
Selection criteria			
The project involves more than one institution	Yes/No	5	Desirable
The collaborating institutions are in Africa		10	Collaboration with group outside of Africa is encouraged but the Primary contact must be based in Africa and no money can be allocated to collaborators outside Africa
The project lead is a woman	Yes/No	10	Ye: give a higher rate
<u>Quality</u> The lead has a relevant track record and demonstrate capability to drive the project	Yes/No	10	Mandatory
<u>Relevance</u> The project fits into the priority areas identified		10	Mandatory
<u>Impact</u> The project has clearly defined outcomes	Yes/No	10	Mandatory
<u>Methodology</u>	Yes/No	20	Desirable

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The project demonstrates rigour (truth); value (credibility); applicability (transferability); consistency (dependability); and neutrality (confirmability).			
TOTAL		100	