

# **REQUEST FOR ENGAGEMENT** INTRODUCTION AND GUIDANCE Spring 2012

### BACKGROUND ON THE GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE:

The mission of the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) is to forge, optimize, and sustain knowledge partnerships between the people and institutions of higher education and research. GKI defines a knowledge partnership as one that builds the capacity of individuals and organizations to create new knowledge or introduce relevant knowledge where it is needed. Aligning the resources of developing and developed country universities and research institutions to address shared development challenges pertinent to science, technology, and innovation (STI) guides our work.

The Global Knowledge Initiative arose from the 2008 Higher Education Summit for Global Development convened by the US Secretaries of State and Education and the Administrator of the US Agency for International Development. Attended by more than 200 university presidents, heads of technology firms, and foundation representatives, the Summit identified the need for a "clearinghouse for resources and information to help build knowledge partnerships that can tackle development challenges." GKI was created to respond to this call.

The GKI leadership team includes several world-class scientists, among them leaders of major professional scientific networks, the Prime Minister of India's Minister on Public Information Infrastructure and Innovation, and the Director of the Library of Alexandria. Incubated by the US National Academies and now housed within the American Association for the Advancement of Science, GKI represents a network of high-caliber researchers, professors, entrepreneurs, students and STI professionals committed to engendering a more participatory approach to global STI collaborations.

# THE LEARNING & INNOVATION NETWORKS FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SOLUTIONS (LINK) PROGRAM

Defined by insights gleaned from GKI's year-long global needs analysis, the LINK (Learning and Innovation Network for Knowledge and Solutions) catalyzes focused partnerships aimed at delivering solutions to defined challenges. The challenges LINK targets are those pertinent to scientific and technical research, scientific and technical education, and/or innovation and entrepreneurship. LINK Round III will be hosted in East and Southern Africa and will focus on challenges that connect to or build on the principles laid out in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP) or the related 2011 Johannesburg Communiqué. For more information on the scope of challenges solicited through LINK Round III, please see the corresponding handout entitled "CAADP and the 2011 Johannesburg Communiqué."

Building off the success of LINK Round I hosted by the National University of Rwanda, LINK's challenge-focused approach helps partners:

(1) Locate and render accessible the technical, human, institutional, knowledge-based, and financial resources needed for collaborative problem solving. In Phase I, LINK partners define a problem they confront in terms of its potential to be tackled collaboratively. Together with GKI, teams catalogue science, technology, and innovation (STI) resources available to them and measure the STI gaps that hinder progress. (See the GKI 2012 publication <u>LINK Analysis: Rwanda</u> for more information regarding the insights garnered through Phase I research and analysis.)

- (2) Enable partners to collaborate through competitions, trainings, and capacity building initiatives. GKI helps partners identify and collaborate with people and institutions offering the resources they need to fill those gaps. Beyond matchmaking, LINK builds team members' collaboration process skills to work effectively across different disciplines, sectors, and communities.
- (3) **Connect** seekers and solvers together with the global network of problem solvers to bring solutions to scale. GKI uses web-enabled collaboration platforms and our linkages with science associations, academies, and others to identify complementary initiatives and partners and plug them into purpose-driven networks using web-enabled platforms.

Through LINK, GKI builds the basis for sustained collaborations in training, research and innovation to solve challenges in the lab, the classroom, and in the community. This novel approach to building purpose-driven networks capable of collaborative innovation is being scaled across Africa, Asia, the US, and elsewhere by the Global Knowledge Initiative. See our website at <u>www.globalknowledgeinitiative.org</u> to learn more about LINK and our efforts to support the National University of Rwanda's Faculty of Agriculture in their work to rid the country's specialty coffee sector of a potentially devastating taste defect.

### TIMELINE FOR THE LINK PILOT PROCESS

LINK is still in its pilot phase. As such, the timeline presented below offers estimations. Partners should consider this timeline preliminary and subject to change as the LINK pilots mature. GKI is taking this more flexible approach because it is committed to learning through the LINK pilot process and improving it based upon lessons learned. As well, though this timeline is presented in a linear fashion, the research and training activities undertaken after the pilot institution is selected may happen concurrently.

Action	Anticipated Completion Date
Hold regional stakeholder meetings	Tanzania: October 2011
<ul> <li>Introduce GKI and the LINK process</li> </ul>	Rwanda: January 2012
<ul> <li>Issue guidelines for "Request for Engagement"</li> </ul>	Completed cycle by February 2012
<ul> <li>Attendees submit statements of interest</li> </ul>	
Partners submit completed "Request for Engagement"	(8 weeks from completed cycle of
	stakeholder workshops) 30 April 2012
Review "Requests for Engagement"	(4 weeks to complete) 28 May 2012
<ul> <li>See section V for review process details</li> </ul>	
Announce selected pilot(s)	(2 weeks to formalize with agreement) June 2012
Initiate Phase I with selected pilot institutions (i.e., commence	(9-12 months to complete)
with the "locate" activities described below)	
<ul> <li>Conduct research and analysis on the National Science,</li> </ul>	May/June 2013
Technology and Innovation (STI) Context	
<ul> <li>Train institutional representatives in the Knowledge</li> </ul>	
Partnership Landscape Analysis (KPLA) methodology	
<ul> <li>Perform KPLA to gauge collaboration potential of</li> </ul>	
institutions in STI and identify opportunities	
<ul> <li>Frame submitted challenges for collaboration using</li> </ul>	
challenge mapping	
Convene pilot institutions to validate findings from Phase I,	(at close of Phase I research/analysis
refine challenge map, and begin scouting for partners	activities)
Pilot institutions invited to submit full "Proposal for Pilot	(2 months to complete)
Challenge Activities"	
Review full "Proposals for Pilot LINK Challenges"	(2 months to complete)
Announce winning teams and their pilot LINK challenges for	(1 month to formalize)
Phase II match-making and crowd-sourcing activities	
Undertake Phase II and III activities with pilot LINK team	

# WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SUBMITTING YOUR "REQUEST FOR ENGAGEMENT"

The LINK process begins with a Request for Engagement submitted on behalf of a university or research institute representative, also known as the "principal investigator" (PI). A PI, who must be identified in the Request for Engagement, will serve as the lead point of contact with GKI and the coordinator of his/her institution's involvement in the LINK pilot process.

The Request for Engagement serves as a preliminary inquiry for participation in the LINK pilot. A template for the Request for Engagement to be submitted by the PI can be found on page 6. To be considered for involvement in the LINK pilot process, PI's must answer each of the questions provided in the template to the best of his/her ability. Responses to these questions should be captured in no more than 10 pages, 11-point font. Upon submission to GKI, the Request for Engagement will be reviewed via the process outlined below. *PI's are asked to submit the completed "Request for Engagement" to Sara Farley, GKI Chief Operating Officer, via email to sara@gkinitiative.org by 30 April 2012.* 

Should the PI's Request for Engagement be selected as a LINK pilot, the PI commits to:

- Participate in all Phase I trainings and research activities as requested
- Solicit relevant colleagues, students, etc as LINK team members, who will also participate in Phase I trainings and research activities as requested and per the feedback of the PI
- Coordinate LINK team members', department's, and institution's involvement in LINK
- Identify reports, documents, policies, surveys, etc. to be used in building three analytical building blocks—(1) the Collaborative Innovation Index, (2) the national science, technology, and innovation context analysis, and (3) the sectoral context analysis—that GKI devised to paint a detailed picture of the context for partnership
- Co-design a Phase I work-plan with GKI and LINK team members, including LINK team objectives and partnership criteria
- Take part in the "Knowledge Partnership Landscape Analysis" (KPLA) interview process, including disclosing collaboration activity, identifying colleagues within their respective institution who may participate, and providing introductions to those colleagues
- Provide speedy responses and feedback to the GKI staff

If the Request for Engagement" submitted is selected as a pilot institution, **<u>GKI commits to</u>**:

- Train the PI and his/her LINK team members on the Phase I collaborative innovation skills
- Analyze the collaboration data provided through KPLA process
- Manufacture a synthesis of this data that will be made available to the university representatives and colleagues identified
- Harvest and map challenges to identify those for which enhanced partnership may provide a pathway to solution
- Work with the PI and pilot team to design partnership criteria, then use the criteria to scout for partners and facilitate the creation of a purpose-driven network
- Provide speedy responses and feedback to the PI and pilot institution partners

Those interested in submitting a Request for Engagement should recognize that GKI is NOT a funding organization. Rather, GKI is a non-profit that works with institutions of higher education and research seeking to optimize their knowledge partnerships and enable more effective problem-solving. As such, the Request for Engagement in Phase I LINK activities should not be considered those amenable to a standard "research grant" application. Rather, LINK pilot winners receive a scholarship from GKI for skills building and research support to be applied throughout the Phase I "Locate" activities. The in-kind contribution of services and resources on behalf of GKI to pilot institutions is valued at approximately US\$200,000.

GKI does not have the funding available to provide all who submit Requests for Engagement with full-scale Phase I support. However, there are a number of actions we will take on an inkind basis to raise the visibility of the important work being done by PIs who are not selected as pilot winners. We will help these "Challengers" find some of the partners and resources they seek by performing the following activities:

- Construct a "Challenge Profile", which is a professional, polished, and compelling story of the PI and the challenge he/she is working to address.
- Broadcast the work of the PIs and their challenges on our website and to at least 5 international partners, including university deans, funders, science associations, etc.
- Promote the PIs and their challenges at an upcoming "Collaborative Innovation Colloquium." This Colloquium will be hosted at a prestigious US-university in the hopes of attracting collaborators to our PIs' challenges.

### REQUEST FOR ENGAGEMENT REVIEW PROCESS

All Requests for Engagement go through an internal review and a Technical Committee selection, performed by GKI's sterling, international review committee of top scientists. The selection criteria used to perform the external review are listed below.

Criteria for Technical Committee review of "requests for engagement":

- *Relevance of the Challenge*. The PI's challenge should be one that:
  - Constitutes a shared challenge between developed and developing countries
  - Relates to science, technology, and innovation
  - Solving the challenge will improve the lives of thousands, if not millions
  - Is germane to the lives of people living on less than \$2 per day
  - Connects to and/or builds off of work to achieve CAADP goals or the climate change priorities of the 2011 Johannesburg Communiqué. Examples include, but are not limited to: agricultural land management, water management, seed technology, pest management, deforestation, soil preservation, crop value chains, or desertification.
  - Solving the challenge clearly requires the participation of partners
  - The status of work underway toward solving the challenge should *demonstrate progress* toward a clearly stated outcome
- *Impact of Enhanced Partnership.* The PI must explain in specific terms how enhanced partnerships (with local, regional, and/or international collaborators) will advance progress on the challenge presented within a 3-year timeframe. The PI must provide examples of his/her unmet resource needs related to that problem a partner would help address and must express a demand for partnership as a mechanism to meet specific resource needs.
- *Track Record of the PI*. The PI must have sufficient personal qualifications / experiences to contribute to solving the challenge presented.
- Commitment of the PI. The PI must have a proven commitment to solving the challenge presented, in terms of personal hours and institutional resources committed. The PI must also articulate a commitment to integrating student training into the LINK project activities and to joining a community of implementers focused on making discernable progress toward implementing a solution within 3 years.

#### ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator (PI) for a LINK project, proponents must be MSc/MA or PhD holders and employed at a higher education or research institution within the target region of the LINK project: all OFAC-approved East and Southern Africa countries (for OFAC-*excluded* countries, please see <u>here</u>.). Also, LINK projects are designed to add value to ongoing efforts to solve development challenges through the application of science, technology, and innovation. As such, eligible PI's must have a stated and proven commitment to solving the challenge presented, even in the absence of the LINK project.



# **Request for Engagement Template**

#### Part I: Contact Information for the Principal Investigator

- 1. Name of Principal Investigator
- 2. Role at institution (faculty member, administrator)
- 3. Department
- 4. Institution
- 5. Full contact information (Mailing Address, Cell Phone Number, Office Phone Number, Email Address)

### Part II: Exploration of the Challenge and the Potential for Enhance Partnership

CHALLENGE STATEMENT

- 1. What development challenge involving science and technology are you addressing? (GKI prioritizes challenges: (1) that are shared by developed and developing countries, (2) whose solution will improve the lives of thousands, if not millions, of people, (3) that are germane to the lives of people living on less than \$2 per day, and (4) Connects to and/or builds off of work to achieve CAADP goals or the climate change priorities of the 2011 Johannesburg Communiqué.
- 2. What outcome to this challenge do you seek to achieve?
- 3. What is the current status of your work addressing this challenge?

#### NEED FOR PARTNERSHIP IN SOLVING A SPECIFIC PROBLEM

- 4. What specific research, technical, training, or innovation problem related to this challenge do you want to solve through international partnerships with scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs, or others?
- 5. What resources do you want a partner to help you access? These may be technical, human, institutional, knowledge-based, or communications-related. Please provide specific examples (e.g., My lab does not have the equipment it needs to test soil samples and I need someone who can help me conduct the analyses or obtain the equipment).

#### STATUS OF CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS

- 6. What are you not getting from your current partners that you need? Please provide specific examples (e.g., Most of my partnerships are focused on capacity building but what I really need is a reliable Internet connection).
- 7. What steps have you taken to fill this gap?
- 8. Can you identify potential partners using the literature, Internet or other means? If so, please do.

#### Part III: Exploration of the PI's Personal Qualifications and Commitment:

- 1. What personal qualifications / experiences make you particularly well-suited to address the challenge you present? (Please attach a resume/CV outlining your qualifications).
- 2. What percentage of time do you spend working on this challenge?
- 3. What resources (technological, human, financial, institutional, knowledge, communications) are you and your institution currently investing to address this challenge?
- 4. How are you engaging undergraduate and graduate students in this work?
- 5. What progress do you expect to make over the next 3 years toward solving the specific problem you have defined and toward implementing a solution?

Submit completed Requests for Engagement by email to GKI Chief Operating Officer, Sara Farley: sara@gkinitiative.org