Q&A Urban Food Systems Program RFP

Q: Is it correct, that at this stage of the RFP, expertise required is more related to program and fund management and an expertise on urban food systems could be brought at a later stage, if the initial program co-design phase (February-October 2022) is awarded?

A: We do require technical expertise on program and fund management as well as thematic expertise on urban food systems. While we are open for a variety of constellations and partnerships, we do ask for a concrete proposal from the applicant on how to cover both aspects.

Q: Does the applicant need to have at this stage all the experts in the team or can the applicant show the ability to pull thematic experts as necessary according to the requirements of the project development?

A: It is not required at this stage to present a final version of a potential project team. It should be noted, however, that an expertise on urban food systems should constitute a core part of the program team and not just come in as consultancy on an ad-hoc basis.

Q: Is this RFP related to a mandate for a duration from February to October 2022 or for a program of 7- to 10-years duration?

A: There are two phases to this mandate. As noted in the RFP, the mandate is envisioned for the program and fund management of a program running 7- to 10- years. The period between February to October 2022 refers to a co-design phase between the selected organization and Fondation Botnar. Resulting out of the co-design phase in September 2022, the final application will have to go through our grant approval procedure. It can therefore not be fully guaranteed at this stage that the program will be approved. The selected partner organization will be mandated for both phases if the application is successful.

Q: Is the provided guidance of CHF 10’000’000 as pass-through funds related to a 7- or 10-year period? Is this estimation for a total over 7 to 10 years, or an annual figure?

A: The exact amount to be budgeted for the program is not yet defined. The CHF 10’000’000 provide an example for us to understand the rough ratio of pass-through funds and organizational costs. We are aware that such a ratio depends on multiple variables. This question is meant to provide us with an understanding of your knowledge about costs incurring regarding program and fund management, so including any insights, learnings or figures resulting from your experience will be helpful. This question is not meant to result in an exact figure but rather a range and what this range depends on.
Q: For this calculation, is it possible to suggest a hypothetical number of countries and/or cities, and a rough average grant size? This would make a major difference to this calculation due to economies of scale, efficiency gains, etc.

A: Number of countries/cities and average grant size are not defined yet as these are core questions that will be addressed in collaboration between the selected program and fund management organization and Fondation Botnar. However, your experience regarding economies of scale and your knowledge of the factors influencing efficiency are valuable insights. Please describe those insights according to your experience, how the difference in grant size affects the costs and how you would go about those challenges and what instruments and strategies you envision. This question is for calculation and illustration purposes.

Q: Regarding question 1.6 Please describe your experience managing custom programs/projects - can you please explain what is meant by custom? Does this refer to co-creation with a funder?

A: Yes, this question refers to the co-creation with a funder and to the experience you have in building up a conceptual framework of a new program as opposed to exclusively service delivery of a pre-determined program.

Q: Whilst climate change and climate resilience are not specifically mentioned in the call, are we correct to assume that any shift towards a more sustainable food system will address this topic? Could you explain if you have any specific expectations around this?

A: Yes, you are correct. However, we do not have any specific expectations at this point, other than it should be an integral part of the program. Please include your expertise and experience in this regard.

Q: In addition to the importance of youth engagement and leadership, does Fondation Botnar also seek to have a dedicated focus on the role of women and girls in this program?

A: Youth engagement should include everyone and at this stage of the program we do not put an explicit focus on women or girls, as we are still in a conception phase. When a specific aspect/challenge requires a dedicated focus on women and girls, then it should and will certainly be applied.
Q: Regarding the application form: is there any limitation on characters or words per question?

A: No there is not. We are, however, mindful of the time and resources of our applicants, so we encourage you to be as short and concise as possible. We will always reach out to you in case we feel something is missing or if we require more information on a certain question.

Q: In relation to the provided guidance of CHF 10'000'000 as pass-through funds: will this amount potentially be spread across the Foundation Botnar focus countries?

A: As stated above, this figure is for calculation purposes. The geographical focus and the number of countries of implementation of the program is not yet defined and will also depend on the expertise and networks of the selected program and fund management organization.

Q: Are attachments as in graphics allowed to support an answer?

A: Yes, you may include graphics if you think it is needed to support an answer.

Q: Regarding the co-design phase between February to October: could Foundation Botnar provide an approximate level of effort that will be needed during this period?

A: We can’t put an exact number on the level of effort required during this phase, as this depends on multiple factors. This phase will be agreed upon in close dialogue with the selected program and fund management organization and remain within reasonable and mutually productive limits.

Q: To what extent does your Theory of Change include or exclude accountability-related actions, e.g., civil society engagement to promote implementation of existing political commitments relating to the topic?

A: Rights-based advocacy relating to the accountability of governments and companies is one of the core pillars of our theory of change. We always strive to work systemically and with multiple stakeholders, which includes the engagement of civil society actors and advocacy and accountability-related matters.