

Feed the Future CGIAR-U.S. Universities Linkages Program

Program description: The recently [launched](#) Feed the Future Food Security Innovation Center (FSIC) leads USAID's implementation of the [Feed the Future Research Strategy](#) by engaging U.S. universities, international research centers, the private sector, and local agricultural research and educational institutions in our partner countries to solve development challenges through addressing agriculture, food security and nutrition research priorities and building human and institutional capacity in agricultural research, extension and education. The FSIC supports seven interlinked research and capacity programs (Box 1) aimed at sustainably transforming agricultural production systems, ensuring access to nutritious and safe foods, creating enabling and supportive policies, and addressing the emerging challenges of climate change and natural resource degradation.

USAID has developed a revitalized program, the *Feed the Future CGIAR-U.S. University Linkages Program*, to support collaborative research between U.S. and CGIAR scientists in the seven program areas of the FSIC. This new program will concentrate on senior researchers and university faculty and their students. It would support researcher and graduate student subsistence and international travel to the CGIAR centers implementing the CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs) receiving Window 2 Funds from USAID (Table 1). A staff member within the lead center for each CRP would be tasked with determining center needs and research interests and sharing information about the program (with the help of USAID) to the U.S. academic community and other partners including the USDA.

Benefits of a new linkage program: The Feed the Future Food Security Innovation Center is managed by thematic program area rather than type of partner and emphasizes new dynamic collaborations across partners with different but complementary strengths to drive a focused food security agenda. These connections are not just at the level of research, but via connections to extension, commercialization uptake and end-users, to ensure that technologies developed by our research partners reach farmers in the field.

The new linkages program fulfills the following objectives: to bring high-level research expertise from U.S. universities and other partners to CGIAR centers to tackle agricultural research issues of relevance to smallholder farmers; to create new collaborations between CGIAR and U.S. researchers in each of the seven FSIC program areas; to facilitate CGIAR access to cutting-edge technologies (potentially at new partner institutions) not previously applied to international development; increase the internationalization of U.S. faculty and their students and their involvement in developing-country agricultural research questions; and to raise the visibility of CGIAR research on U.S. campuses and with other partners.

Eligible CGIAR Centers: Each of the nine USAID-supported CRPs (Table 1) has received funds under this program. The lead CGIAR center for each CRP is responsible for administering

linkage program funds for each CRP, to include all participating CGIAR centers within that CRP. Each CRP will develop its own guidelines and process for conducting this competition.

Activities to be supported: The program funds U.S. university faculty and graduate student exchanges as well as exchanges of USDA and other senior scientists to work on specific research projects. Specific examples include:

- Faculty or researcher travel from U.S. to CGIAR center or CGIAR center to U.S. (no U.S.-U.S. travel) and subsistence during stay at center
- Research activities for specified project
- Sabbatical leave for U.S. researcher to CGIAR center including travel, salary and subsistence.
- Graduate student travel and support for research at CGIAR stations

Research focus and U.S. researcher eligibility: CGIAR researchers actively participating in CRP research should develop collaborative proposals with a U.S. researcher and submit these to the lead center for their respective CRP. The proposed collaboration must fall within one of the seven program areas of the FSIC (see Box 1) and address priority research areas for the FSIC (see the Global Hunger and Food Security Research Strategy <http://www.feedthefuture.gov/resource/feed-future-research-strategy>). Projects involving researchers from U.S. institutions involved in the Feed the Future Collaborative Research Innovation Labs (formerly CRSPs) or other programs that the FSIC supports are especially encouraged, and researchers at USDA and other universities are also eligible.

Linkage Awards: Awards will be made by each CRP using a competitive review of proposals. Each participating CRP would have an internal call for linkage proposals for all CGIAR center scientists participating in that CRP. Proposals should be 5 pages or less and include a budget and research plans, a description of the proposed activity's relevance to one or more of the seven FSIC program areas, a description of cooperative activities, expected outcomes, and a letter of support from the U.S. partner agreeing to the proposal.

Reporting: The program will be managed by the USAID Bureau for Food Security's Office of Agricultural Research and Policy. CRPs will report annually on details of the projects funded and the outcomes.

Background: USAID has had a long history of fostering partnerships between U.S. universities and CGIAR institutions in agricultural research. In the past (mid 1990s-2007), funding was provided by USAID for U.S. university-CGIAR collaborative research linkages, representing a small percentage of the total funding to the CGIAR institutions. Grants were provided to the U.S. researchers/universities to work with the CGIAR institutions. These grants ranged from modest amounts to significant investments in support of graduate student or faculty research. The new funding model to the CGIAR centers for specific CRPs directs funding to specific CRP projects

and no longer earmarks specific funds for these U.S. university research linkages. Some programs (UC Davis - Borlaug LEAP and Purdue - Borlaug Fellows) fund developing country and American graduate students, respectively, to participate in research at CGIAR centers, but no other specific program currently exists to support faculty and senior researcher involvement from U.S. universities and or the USDA as the linkages program used to do and as this new *Feed the Future CGIAR-U.S. University Linkages Program* will do.

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Box 1: Program Areas of the Food Security Innovation Center

- The **Program for Research on Climate Resilient Cereals** helps smallholder farmers adapt to climate change and build resilience by developing new cereal varieties with enhanced yield and tolerance to drought, heat, salinity and low soil fertility and delivering these varieties in diversified, sustainable farming systems.
- The **Program for Research on Legume Productivity** increases the production and consumption of critical, protein-rich legumes, by developing disease and stress tolerant, high-yielding varieties, improving market linkages and post-harvest processing and integrating legumes into major farming systems to improve household nutrition and incomes, especially for women.
- The **Program for Advanced Approaches to Combat Pests and Diseases** harnesses U.S. scientific expertise and emerging molecular tools to develop new animal vaccines and crops and animals resistant to pests and diseases that cause significant production losses in tropical systems.
- The **Program for Research on Nutritious and Safe Foods** addresses undernutrition, especially in women and children, by increasing the availability and access to nutrient dense foods through research on horticulture crops, livestock, fish and dairy, food safety threats such as mycotoxins and other contaminants and on household nutrition and food utilization.
- The **Program for Markets and Policy Research and Support** works to achieve inclusive agricultural growth and improved nutrition through research on enabling policies, socioeconomics and technology targeting and by building the capacity of partner governments to effect sustainable change in areas such as land tenure, financial instruments, input policies and regulatory regimes.
- The **Program for Sustainable Intensification** works with smallholder farmers to incorporate sustainable, productivity enhancing technologies and farming practices into major production systems where the poor and undernourished are concentrated, and through intensification and diversification of these systems, to enhance resilience, nutrition and agricultural growth.
- The **Program for Human and Institutional Capacity Development** strengthens individuals – scientists, entrepreneurs, educators – and institutions, ensuring that food and agriculture systems in developing countries are capable of meeting the food security challenge and that women especially are poised to take advantage of new opportunities and provide critical leadership in agricultural research, private sector growth, policy development, higher education and extension services.

Table 1: CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs) Supported by USAID

CRP#	CRP Name	Lead Center	CGIAR Point of Contact	
			Name	Email
2	Policies, Institutions, and Markets to Strengthen Food Security and Incomes for the Rural Poor	IFPRI	Karen Brooks	k.brooks@cgiar.org
3.1	WHEAT-Global Alliance for Improving Food Security and the Livelihoods of the Resource-poor in the Developing World	CIMMYT	Victor Kommerell	wheatcrp@cgiar.org
3.2	MAIZE-Global Alliance for Improving Food Security and the Livelihoods of the Resource-poor in the Developing World	CIMMYT	Luz George	maizecrp@cgiar.org
3.3	GRiSP - A Global Rice Science Partnership	IRRI	Bas Bouman	b.bouman@cgiar.org
3.4	Roots, Tubers and Bananas for Food Security and Income	CIP	Graham Thiele	g.thiele@cgiar.org
3.5	Grain Legumes: enhanced food and feed security, nutritional balance, economic growth and soil health for smallholder farmers	ICRISAT	Dave Hoisington	d.hoisington@cgiar.org
3.6	Dryland cereals: Food Security and Growth for the World's Most Vulnerable Poor	ICRISAT	Dave Hoisington	d.hoisington@cgiar.org
3.7	More Meat, Milk and Fish by and for the Poor	ILRI	Thomas Randolph	t.randolph@cgiar.org
4	Agriculture for Improved Nutrition and Health	IFPRI	John McDermott	j.mcdermott@cgiar.org