



SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (STRIDE)

Suites 1004, 139 Corporate Centre, Valero St., Makati • Telephone No.: 02 8843 0787 • www.stride.org.ph

WIDENING APPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH WITHIN THE PANDEMIC GRANT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

I. Purpose

The USAID Science, Technology, Research and Innovation for Development (STRIDE) Program seeks concept papers from Philippine higher education institutions (HEIs), specifically from HEI-based principal investigators who have previously been awarded a STRIDE research grant. Concept papers are towards the Widening Applications of Research within the Pandemic (WARP) grant which aims to enable HEIs to apply its research activities towards solutions appropriate and/or adaptable within the operating environment (“new normal”) of the pandemic. In particular, the WARP grant seeks to leverage previously established STRIDE-supported research capabilities towards expanded partnerships and impacts to the local community.

The grant program has a potential pooled amount of Ten Million Pesos which can be distributed among successful proponents. Given the operating environment of the pandemic, it is encouraged that project concepts have budgets, timelines, and outputs that are reasonably achievable within an indicative Period of Performance (POP) of six months from the date of the award.

II. Background and Context

The STRIDE program is a USAID/Philippines initiative that aims to strengthen science, technology and innovation (STI) capacity for inclusive growth in the Philippines. It builds upon the shared vision with the Philippine Government’s 2017–2022 Philippine Development Plan in which self-sustaining, inclusive development can be achieved by “promoting science, technology, and creative arts to enhance innovation and creative capacity.” Consistent with USAID’s Journey to Self-Reliance framework, the program supports key Philippine institutions in the implementation of their own innovative solutions to achieve the country’s developmental goals. In the midst of the worldwide social and economic impact of COVID-19, USAID is responding with decisive action to support the self-reliance and resilience of partner countries and institutions on their own development efforts to the “new normal” of the pandemic.



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In the Philippines, USAID through the STRIDE project aims to support these efforts by further expanding the application of science and technology innovations and capabilities that have resulted from previous STRIDE-funded research. Since 2013, STRIDE has provided grants to almost 60 research groups at 20 HEIs throughout the country. Based on the experience from these R&D grants, several Philippine HEIs have demonstrated the potential to quickly apply STI capacity towards creating solutions for socio-economic goals. Recently, some of these research teams have already begun exploring the application of their research to technologies and innovations with some of the more pressing effects of the pandemic in their communities.

STRIDE aims to build upon these efforts by HEIs through the Widening Applications of Research within the Pandemic (WARP) grant, which will help enhance capacity and applicability of HEI-led innovations that have received previous STRIDE investments. Ideal concept papers should be able to clearly demonstrate how existing research capacity and/or output can be increased with the grant towards addressing a specific challenge offered by the new operating environment of the pandemic. Private sector engagement and strategic partnerships with local government partners are encouraged towards generating sustainable innovation outcomes from the grant program.

III. Grant value and scope of research

The total pooled amount for the program is potentially 10,000,000 Pesos towards project activities for an indicative period of performance of six months. Budgets, timelines, and deliverables should be reasonably achievable within the indicative period of performance of six (6) months and the operating environment of the pandemic. As such proposals do not necessarily need to maximize the total pooled amount of the program.

Activities proposed should be in any or all stages of science and technology research, development, and technology transfer. The proposed outputs could potentially fall under broad technical objectives such as enabling technologies and innovations for rapid monitoring and response to pandemic impacts, and providing sustainable solutions from research within the “new normal” or second-order effects of the pandemic.



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IV. Eligibility

Philippine HEI Principal Investigators that received research grants from previous USAID-funded awards through STRIDE, namely the CARWIN, PURE, AGILA, SID, and SPRIG grants, are eligible to submit concept papers. The Principal Investigator must be Filipino, an active faculty member of the applicant university, and is expected to receive authorization from the appropriate university official to conduct said research. Partnering with various institutions, e.g. private sector, government agencies, or other research institutions, in the conduct of the identified research is an advantage. The proponents must demonstrate that its principals and proposed team have a track record in the field and have demonstrated ability to work rapidly and collaboratively with its clients.

V. Application Process

The application process will take place in two phases as described below:

A. Phase One – Concept Paper

1. Applicants must submit a concise Concept Paper using the template shown in **Annex A** below, following the instructions contained in this document. STRIDE will acknowledge the submission of Concept Papers within three (3) business days.
2. STRIDE will review Concept Papers against the merit review criteria detailed below. Results will be sent to each applicant within ten (10) business days following the meeting of the review panel.
3. Applicants who do not meet the objectives, minimum eligibility requirements, or receives an inadequate rating will be rejected.

B. Phase Two – Full Proposal

1. Successful applicants from Phase 1 will be invited to a co-creation and ideation workshop which will be facilitated by relevant technical advisors. The ideation workshop will provide applicants with support to address weaknesses identified in their concept paper and further align concepts to STRIDE's objectives. A technical advisor will facilitate with the applicant the expansion of the concept note to a program description and grant



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application.

2. During Phase 2, applicants will submit a grant application in response to a Request for Application (RFA). Grant Applications will be evaluated based on the technical factors detailed in the RFA.

STRIDE reserves the right to give the award without discussion with any applicant. STRIDE may reject any or all concept papers, or cancel the competition, if submissions do not sufficiently demonstrate the ability to meet the stated initiative goals.

VI. Merit review criteria

Concept papers will be reviewed by a panel organized by STRIDE. The panel may include outside evaluators from relevant government agencies and other organizations. If necessary, STRIDE may discuss a concept paper with an applicant HEI.

All concept papers will be reviewed based on the criteria below. Note that the criteria are for the concept paper only. Additional criteria will be circulated as part of a full Request for Applications for Phase 2 applicants.

Technical Element	Definition
Technical Approach	The degree to which the proposed approach presents a cohesive plan that is technically sound, feasible, and cost effective. Results should be measurable with an initial plan to monitor relevant project impact.
Sustainability	The extent to which the Concept Paper's proposed approach is sustainable and increases the likelihood that the HEI, any partners, and its community will be able to continue the program's activities and/or



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	maintain its achievements.
Institutional Capacity	The degree to which the applicant demonstrates expertise and experience in the conduct of research and related activities; and the application of research to its community. In addition, the extent to which the concept paper demonstrates an appropriate management structure, organizational capabilities, expertise, and experience in project implementation.
Advancing STRIDE objectives	The extent to which the Concept Paper explains how the technical approach will improve the HEI's capacity for applying existing research or technologies towards inclusive growth, while considering the operating environment ("new normal") of the COVID pandemic in its community.

STRIDE will assess its level of confidence that the applicant will be able to successfully perform based on each of the technical evaluation criteria listed above. In doing so, STRIDE will utilize the following rating system for applicants in Phase 1:

Rating	Definition
3 points	STRIDE has high confidence that the applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performing with little or no intervention.



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2 points	STRIDE has some confidence that the applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performing with some intervention.
1 point	STRIDE has low confidence that the applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, or will be successful in performing even with intervention.

VII. Submission

Kindly submit a soft copy of the concept paper in PDF version, with total file size not exceeding 25MB, and with the email subject "STRIDE Widening Applications of Research within the Pandemic Grant" to the STRIDE program through email to Ms. Jayne Generoso at jgeneroso@stride.rti.org. The deadline for receipt is 5:00pm (Philippine time) of **September 7, 2020**. The applicant is responsible for the timely delivery of the proposal. Proposals received after the deadline will be disqualified.



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ANNEX A – Concept Paper Template

Name of applying HEI	
Project name	
Date of submission	
Proposed budget (Php)	
Proposed period of performance (in months)	
Name of project proponent	
Position of project proponent	
Email address	
Contract number	
Correspondence address	
DUNS number (if available)	
Background of HEI (maximum 500 words) <i>Introduce your HEI, research group, and previous STRIDE project. Include background, overall objectives, and key accomplishments. Highlight existing institutional capacity, past performance in research, and external partnerships with various institutions that are relevant to the proposed concept paper. 1 image or graphic to relay some information can be included in this section if desired.</i>	



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Introduction of the project concept (maximum 800 words)

State clearly the objective/s of the research project, and the general activities to be conducted to meet stated objectives. Briefly describe concrete project outputs and deliverables, as well as intended beneficiaries (with specific population and geographic information if applicable). Describe both intended results and possible outcomes/benefits for both the proposing institution and the intended beneficiaries. 1 image or graphic to relay some information can be included in this section if desired.

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Definition and measurement of success (maximum 500 words)

How do you define success for the proposed project? What will you demonstrate as concrete social and/or economic value of this project to both your research institution and intended beneficiaries? Describe an initial plan to measure and monitor such value or impact, with any initial quantitative/qualitative targets you may have.

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Sustainability (maximum 500 words)

How will you ensure that your offering is sustained beyond the Innovation Fund grant period? What systems, partnerships, and actions are planned to ensure that activities, impact measurement, and benefits of the proposed activity will continue beyond the project scope.

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Delivery and management (maximum 500 words)

Describe details on the delivery of project activities, including any scientific methodologies to be employed, and technology transfer and field work. Include any plans and the feasibility of utilizing existing staff, consultants, and external entities. Are there existing or identified personnel that can be responsible for the different facets of implementation of the project and for the deployment of the grant funds? Are there projected difficulties in completing staffing/expert requirements to complete the proposed work?

Use of funds (maximum 600 words)

Describe in general terms the utilization of the proposed funding towards specific project activities. How do you anticipate using this grant funding? Why is this grant necessary to move the project forward? Also describe any existing and complementary resources available that can be leveraged for the benefit of the project. Impact of the grant should be additive, rather than duplicative, with regards to other funding that your HEI and research group receives.