

# **Weather and Climate Information SERVICES for Africa (WISER)-FUNDED Climate Research for Development (CR4D) Research Grant Management**

## ***Background***

The Weather and Climate Information SERVICES for Africa (WISER) Programme, funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), is working with the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the UK Met Service to improve the generation, uptake and use of the weather and climate information across Africa. The ACPC leads the pan-African Policy and Enabling Environment Component (PEEC) of WISER project to deliver outputs on, among other, building the intellectual leadership in climate science in Africa through innovative evidence generation and learning. ACPC is being delivering this output through the implementation of the WISER Funded Climate Research for Development (CR4D) research initiative. The CR4D is supported by the partnership between the ACPC-ECA, the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The initiative facilitates the integration of the African climate research community (scientists and institutions) with end-user CI needs. The overarching mission of CR4D is to facilitate a Pan-African Collaborative Platform and Network of African climate science, services, policy, and practice communities as well as development partners and other stakeholders to co-explore, co-design, coproduce and co-communicate CIS, thus improving access, quality, and usability as well as mainstreaming CI into African development planning. CR4D has its own governance structure that encompasses the Secretariat, the oversight board, the scientific advisory committee (SAC), and the institutional collaboration platform (ICP). ACPC is the Secretariat for CR4D and a partner in the WISER programme.

## ***WISER-funded CR4D Grant Management***

The operationalization of the WISER-funded CR4D research grant management is one of the critical steps leading to the delivery of some of the CR4D-related outputs promised under the PEEC-WISER. This grant management framework envisaged to pilot a small but potentially scalable research grant management facility. In this regard, DFID and ACPC jointly developed the principles for selecting a partner institution. These principles underscore, inter alia, that the WISER funded CR4D grant managing institutions (i) must be African-owned and Africa based institution with strong legitimacy in the African climate science and climate policy communities; (ii) operates a transparent, high-quality, independent and objective research commissioning, grant administration, and management systems; (iii) runs a research programme with longevity and scalability to ensure that such research programme lasts long and attracts funding from additional donors in the long-run; and (iv) conducts open competition and full transparency in decision making to ensure that the review and selection of projects meets technical and operational standards. The overall objective of the CR4D grant management mechanism is, therefore, to provide both research programme funding and an efficient and responsive research commissioning and management facility that able to deliver against the CR4D research priorities.

## ***Roles and Responsibilities of the Grant Manager***

The roles and responsibilities of the WISER-funded CR4D grant manager are expected to cover, but not limited to,

- a) *Research commissioning* – i.e. issuing of research competition ‘calls. The focus and priorities for research is expected to be set by the CR4D Scientific Advisory Committee (CR4D-SAC) while the Secretariat, CR4D-SAC and grant manager will develop the core science elements of the call documentation. The Grant Manager will facilitate the reviewing process but a separate committee (i.e., Project Executive Committee, PEC<sup>1</sup>) will make decisions on shortlisting and final selection of granted projects. Alongside standard competition ‘calls’, the grant manager may also be asked to support other pieces of related work, including detailed scoping work, support to grantees and learning related work. Budget to cover this will come from the separate budget line, details of which, including the scope and value will be agreed during the inception period. The grant manager may also be required to work closely with specific sectoral or thematic working groups established by the CR4D Secretariat and CR4D-SAC with regard to the design and set up of calls etc.
- b) *Grants administration and management*: including financial due diligence of grant recipients as required.
- c) *Tracking/monitoring of progress and outputs*. At the overall Grant Manager ‘Programme level’ as well as at individual ‘sub-Project’ level.
- d) *Grant Implementation support*. This might include (limited) advice to grantees on reporting and financial/administrative requirements, advice on their own monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes, advice on research uptake and communications. This may be delivered directly to grantees or via collective workshops /writeshops etc.
- e) *Raising awareness of CR4D in the African research community*: ensure adequate number and quality of responses to CR4D research calls/competitions.
- f) *Working closely with the ACPC Secretariat for CR4D*: where requested by the Secretariat, the grant manager will work with the CR4D-SAC or it’s Working Groups on WISER-funded research grants.

## ***Selection of the Grant Manager***

The selection of the grant manager is done in two-steps.

1. During the implementation of the WISER phase I, a call for consultancy was announced by DFID/ACPC to select an institution that can identify/explore research grant managing institutions. Dalberg has won the bid and collected the necessary information using various means including phone interviews, direct consultation of the institutions, Dalberg internal network and desk work. It gathered a long list of institution that satisfies the above principles. However, such long list of institutions later reduced to 13 using governance and fiduciary standard questionnaires. In the second step, the remaining institutions were ranked each other on four criteria: (1) partnership/donor experience, (2) current size of grants portfolio (3) climate network, and (4) in-house climate expertise and experience.

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<sup>1</sup> PEC comprised of representatives from CR4D Secretariat (2), the CR4D-SAC (2), the Oversight Board (1) and DFID WISER-CR4D team (2).

Rankings against each criteria were then combined with weight and five institutions have been shortlisted. These institutions were finally evaluated using a sensitivity analysis. Based on the scoring results, the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), the African Academy of Science (AAS), and the African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) received the highest weighted score and become eligible to be selected as the grant managing partner.

2. In WISER phase II, an invitation letter was sent to the top three institutions (ACTS, AAS and ATPS) to submit their respective short proposal in response to ACPC/DFID project document (22p) entitled “*Weather and Climate Information SERVICES for Africa (WISER)-FUNDED Climate Research for Development (CR4D) Research Grant Management*”. The three institutions responded positively and submitted their proposal following the outline below.

**PART I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- This should provide a brief overview of your response to the DFID funded CR4D grant management project document, how it is intended to execute it (overall approach and methods used), the envisaged duration of the processes (including inception stage), what are the proposed major outputs, the amount of resources required to implement the proposed activities, and others. (Max. 1 page)

**PART II. TECHNICAL**

**2.1. General Information...about the institution (Max. 2 pages)**

- Past experiences of the institution in research grant management
- Composition and appropriate expertise in the institution to carry out the role of research grant manager.
- Evidence of experience of working with researchers in climate-related fields
- Project management and governance arrangements used in the grant management
- Experience with financial management and grant administration procedures required to effectively manage a small grants research programme including post-award reporting and oversight processes.

**2.2. Specific (Max 4-5 pages)**

- Understanding of the role of the grant manager
- Proposed method of implementation
- Activities to be undertaken, including a basic work plan
- Outputs to be delivered (taking into account the attached RBB form)
- Proposed Quality Assurance Mechanisms (identified risks and mitigation action).
- Proposed project management and governance arrangements needed to ensure independent, efficient and effective delivery of research commissioning and grant management
- Information on the expertise and experience of the persons who will be involved in DFID-funded CR4D grant. (i.e., brief CVs of personnel showing educational and technical background and experience)
- Understanding of the need to ensure an appropriate level of due diligence of prospective awardees prior to disbursement of funds.

**PART III. Financial – (Max 3 pages plus charts and work plan documents taking into account the attached RBB in the project document). All prices must be for the duration of the contract and priced in US Dollars. Hence, the response includes:**

- A summary note of your Financial Methodology that explains how it offers best value, demonstrating that fees and expenses have been competitively priced.
- Payment Mechanisms should be structured to support performance management and effective delivery.
- A financial Plan that clearly links all costs to the activities and outputs detailed in the work plan.
- Pricing details using your own Commercial Pro Formas

### *Evaluation of the grant manager's proposals and scoring*

The submitted proposals were evaluated by both DFID and ACPC along three major criteria that further split into sub-criteria with weight (Table 1). The African Academy of Science (AAS) is ranked the top by both DFID and ACPC and selected to be the grant manager for WISER-funded CR4D research. It is expected to announce two subsequent calls during the implementation period of WISER phase II.

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Weight	AAS	ACTS	ATPS
<b>Understanding of the role and overall methodology and approach.</b>	Overall understanding of the TORS and relevance of the proposed approach in meeting the TOR	10	8.8	8.3	8.7
	Clear understanding of their specific role and how they fit into the broader CR4D / ACPC / DFID context within which they (the grant manager) will operate.	5	4.0	3.5	3.7
	Clear workplan and staffing relevant to the specific role of grant manager and realistic strategy to implementation. Covering main tasks, sequencing of activities, inputs, deliverables and reporting.	10	6.5	7.0	7.0
	Evidence of experience of working with researchers (preferably in the climate field), and understanding of the research into use process.	5	4.8	4.3	4.7
	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Capability to implement and manage complex competitive grant award schemes in an independent, open and transparent manner</b>	Composition and appropriate expertise of the supplier: quality and track record of the lead organisation, reflecting a suitable range of experience and expertise in independent, open and transparent 'end-to-end' <sup>[1]</sup> research commissioning <sup>[2]</sup> and management, including of undertaking peer-review processes, running selection panels and liaising with expert advisory committees, Governing Boards and funders.	20	17.8	15.8	16.3
	Team leadership: Skills and track record of team leadership, demonstrating research commissioning and management and experience of leading and working with researchers and research funders.	10	8.0	6.3	6.7
	Relevance and quality of other wider team personnel, and composition/balance of team as a whole, including input days and balances of expertise, covering all aspects of the ToR.	10	6.8	5.5	5.7
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Effectiveness of programme and project level and financial management processes.</b>	Project management and governance arrangements, to ensure independent, efficient and effective delivery of research commissioning and grant management process, setting out responsibilities for team/consortium members, team co-ordination and reporting arrangements, as well as governance arrangements and quality assurance and risk management.	10	8.0	7.0	8.0
	Understanding of and experience with financial management and grant administration procedures required to effectively manage a small grants research programme. Includes post-award reporting and oversight processes.	15	13.8	12.5	9.5
	Understanding of the need to ensure an appropriate level of due diligence of prospective awardees prior to disbursement of funds.	5	4.5	4.5	3.3
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>74</b>

### ***Due Diligence Evidences***

As required by the UN due diligence process, the three institutions have submitted the following documents together with your letter of intent: (i) the registration document of the institution in host country; (ii) The annual report of your institution including financial status etc; and (iii) the latest audit report.

### ***Conclusion***

Based on the scoring results, the African Academy of Science (AAS) is selected to be a grant manager for WISER-funded CR4D research grant. Under the WISER phase II project, it is expected that the AAS will run two separate but sequential research competitions or ‘calls’, with the second drawing on lessons from the first and making any necessary adjustments as agreed with all parties involved in this endeavour. The grant manager is also expected to implement ACPC and DFID terms and conditions in relation to the calls announcement, record compilation, awarding the successful grantees, quarterly technical and financial reporting, post-award management processing, research data achieving, monitoring and evaluation of the records and establishment of the feedback system. The transfer of funds will, therefore, be scheduled around the calls timetable, with the first tranche transferred prior to the selection of the winners of the first call. As part of the documentation, the grant manager shall provide a summary budget that sets out the payment schedule when recommending the final selection to the PEC. It is also assumed that the grantees will be paid in advance, so the grant manager will set out the estimated total grantee payment for the first 6 months in its report to the PEC. Therefore, the expected outputs in compliance with the management Grant Life Cycle, and the same outputs as during the first round will be delivered during the second round.

### ***The way forward***

1. Procurement of the grant manager institution: following the UN and DFID procurement policies, we need to procure the African Academic of Science (AAS) as a winner grant manager. In this regard, the standard terms and conditions for accountable grants has been developed by ACPC and DFID. The next step is finalizing the procurement process including the due diligence on the grant manager institution and sign MoU with the AAS.
2. Amending the existing MoU: the amendment is need to include the budget and management of WISER funded CR4D grant management mechanism. In this proposed fund-flow, DFID will disburse the allocated budget for the CR4D grant management mechanism to ECA account, the 13% PSC will be deducted and the remaining money will flow to the procured grant manager institution. The proposed fund flow and reporting flow for WISER-funded CR4D research grant management mechanism is shown in Fig 1 below.
3. In case of multiple donor: if and when other donors join, the grant manager will be expected to be sufficiently flexible to be able to also accommodate potentially different terms and conditions relevant to the joining donor.
4. Document to be submitted by the grant manager: the grant manager shall provide a detailed work plan in a month time after receiving a notification letter. It also expected to submit a summary budget that sets out the payment schedule when recommending the final selection to the PEC.

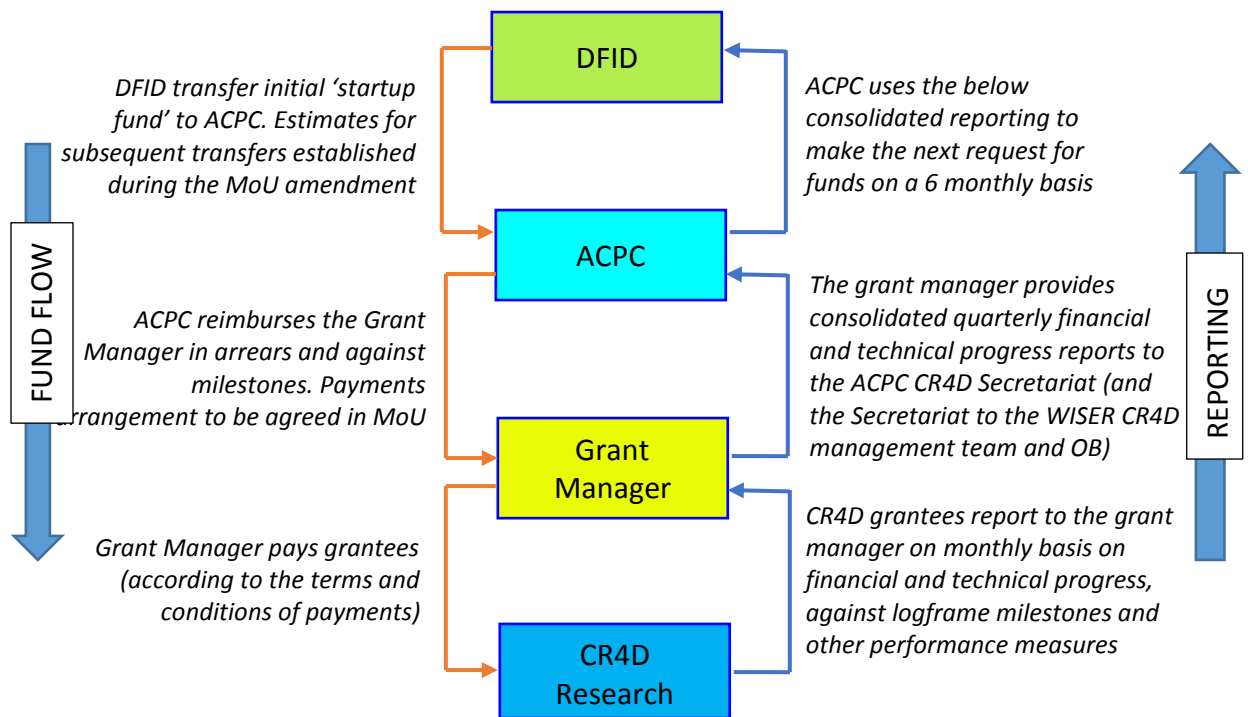


Fig 1. The fund flow and reporting procedure for CR4D grant