

## Question & Answer Report

### *Workshop on Strategies and Tips for Building Partnerships for New Student Training Programs between Colombia and the United States*

January 27, 2021

*Hosted by the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund at Partners of the Americas, the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá, and Colombia's [Instituto Colombiano de Crédito Educativo y Estudios Técnicos en el Exterior, Mariano Ospina Pérez \(ICETEX\)](#)*

Grant Competition Eligibility & Institutional Partnerships .....	1
Budget/Finances.....	3
Project Design & Mobility .....	4
Grant Responsibilities .....	5
Institutions who Indicated Interest in Connecting with Other Institutions:.....	6

### Grant Competition Eligibility & Institutional Partnerships

#### 1. Will there be a recording sent?

*Yes! This workshop recording along with all the workshop materials are published on our website at <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/workshops/>.*

#### 1. Is the proposal submitted by one institutional partner or is it a joint submission?

*The proposal itself is submitted by one institution. However, we recommend that the proposal be created in conjunction with your proposed partner institution(s).*

#### 2. According to the RFP, "Non-accredited Colombian HEIs are eligible to be a part of the partnership, but they cannot be the prime applicant of the grant proposal. Rather, they may only be a partnering institution" - this is different from previous rounds. Various previous 100K winners are not eligible to be prime under this new requirement, even though it led to some great capacity building for us. Why has this change been incorporated into this RFP? Did you have bad experiences in the past? Have you considered changing that requirement?

*Please note that the specific requirement that you mentioned is only for this grant competition and was determined in coordination with the competition sponsors. It is not a change in requirement for all Innovation Fund competitions. The goal of this grant competition remains the reinforcement of institutional capacity of higher education institutions within the area of internationalization. Although non-accredited Colombian universities may not serve as the prime applicant, they can still play a significant role in the coordination and implementation of the proposed project. The main difference between being a prime applicant and partner applicant is that if awarded a grant, the prime will be responsible for the management of award funds and reporting. Whether an institution serves as a prime or partner, we have confidence that capacity building will still occur from the exchange in knowledge and experience between all partnering institutions.*

**3. Can a non-accredited Colombian HEI be the main coordinator of the project?**

*Yes, a non-accredited Colombian institution can be the main coordinator logistically. In fact, we expect all partnering institutions to have an equal role in the administration of the project. On the proposal; however, the primary applicant must be an accredited institution. Similar to a third-party provider, NGO, or community partner, non-accredited institutions may provide certain services and expertise to the project and may lead certain aspects, but the prime institution will be responsible for overall coordination and reporting on project expenses and outcomes to the Innovation Fund.*

**4. Can the project coordinator come from any institution, given that many of the project ideas come from a wide variety of institutions, included non-accredited, even if it's an accredited institution that is the prime recipient of grant funds?**

*Yes. Proposals may include more than one project coordinator. Ideally, you will want to present a project coordinator for every higher education institution that will be involved in the project.*

**5. How is the process to choose a partner to collaborate? Does the program Leader chose one for us?**

*There are lots of ways to find a partner. You can work through existing partnerships or start new ones. Our staff can help to identify partners if you don't already have one. Feel free to reach out to us with your preferred academic themes and any other information that you think would be helpful. We also recommend that potential partners connect with their colleagues in Colombia and/or in the U.S. Please refer to the contact slide at the end of the workshop presentation for contacts from all of the 8 100K team leaders and presenters. The Innovation Network is also a great tool to find a partner. The directory can be searched by various criteria and we have also created forums where interested institutions can connect with one another.*

**6. Is there any limit in number of U.S. universities that are willing to participate in a project?**

*There is no limit on the number of institutions that can participate in any given project.*

**7. Can an accredited HEI in Colombia be the coordinator and main proponent of two proposals simultaneously? I read on the web page that there is no limit; however, it's the first time that we participate in the initiative and two institutions have asked us to be the main proponent.**

*Yes, institutions may submit multiple proposals. Applications must indicate the school, college, or department within the institution as the applying entity in the proposal cover page. Due to limited available funding, however, it is unlikely that multiple awards will be given to the same institution under a single RFP, even if submitted from different schools.*

**8. Is there a directory of U.S. universities by subject?**

HEIs can search the Innovation Network directory by joining the Innovation Network (registration is free). Once logged in, click "Directory" then go to "Advanced Search." Select "100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund" as the member type then click "continue." Here you can filter by country as well as areas of interest. If you are not already a member, join the Innovation Network by [clicking here!](#)

**9. Can only one Colombian HEI coordinate the project or can there be multiple HEIs?**

*The proposal itself must be submitted by one institution and that institution will be primarily responsible for all grant requirements. However, we recommend that the proposal be created in conjunction with the proposed partner institutions as well.*

**10. Along with the required partnership(s) as specified in the RFP, can we also include other organizations/entities?**

*Yes. In fact, proposals are encouraged to include partnerships with civil society, associations, government agencies, non-profit organizations, private sector partners, etc.—along with the main partnership between at least one U.S. HEI and one accredited Colombian HEI.*

## **Budget/Finances**

**1. Are there suggestions for managing/finding ways to stretch the budget to account for enough time for an international travel component?**

*There are a couple of strategies for finding ways to maximize the grant funding to allow for international travel. One option is to partner with a private, public, or non-profit organization to provide additional funds for the project. Another option is to coordinate with your university(s) to cost-share a large portion of the administrative costs of the grant in order to be able to use the grant funds primarily to cover mobility costs. For more information on the proposal budget, please refer to our [Proposal Design & Format Guidelines](#) as well as our [FAQs](#).*

**2. Can a portion of the budget be used to pay honorariums for the project coordinator?**

*If your project budget allows for the hiring of a coordinator and is a need that is identified and can be justified, then it is allowable. Please also keep in mind that the budget should show diverse cost centers in the grant funds requested and/or the HEI cost-share contributions.*

**3. Considering the changing regulations in terms of mobility, is it possible to include the Coronavirus test in the budget section?**

*Yes, COVID-19 tests could be included in the budget, so long as the cost is justified.*

**4. Is the 1:1 cost-share, preferable 1:1.5, still a requirement for this competition, even though it is not written in the RFP?**

*Yes, the 1:1 match remains a standard requirement of all Innovation Fund proposals. We would like to clarify that the RFP outlines specific requirements for this grant competition and serves to supplement the standard requirements presented in the Proposal Format & Design Guide page at <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/>. The RFP makes a reference to this web page on Page 11. Please refer to the link above for a complete description of the proposal requirements.*

*We understand that COVID-19 may affect/limit certain aspects of your project; however, it also presents other opportunities for cost-sharing. It is also important to note that cost-share includes in-kind contribution. Please see a detailed explanation of cost-share in the link above.*

**5. We would like to know if the HEI prime applicant can charge an overhead percentage? If yes, what is the maximum?**

*Indirect (overhead) costs may be requested as part of the grant, and there is no prescribed maximum indirect rate; however, given the size of the Innovation Fund awards, institutions may consider proposing significant counterpart (cost-share) funding to compensate for the lower amount of available direct program funds for the proposed project. Generally, we recommend cost-sharing indirect costs, but if this is not possible, then we recommend that you charge no more than 20% of the grant to cover indirect costs. It is important to note that cost-effectiveness is considered during the proposal evaluation process.*

**6. Is the grant money subject to any decrease or tax upon disbursement?**

*No, there is no tax or monetary decrease to the grant funds upon disbursement. However, it is important to note that award funds will be sent in dollars to the recipient institution and if the recipient is based in Colombia, the funds will be exchanged to pesos upon arrival.*

**7. Are the grant funds distributed directly to the primary applying HEI or are they distributed equally between the HEI in the U.S. and the HEI in Colombia?**

*The grant funds are distributed exclusively and directly to the primary applicant HEI.*

**8. Would it be possible to finance salaries from faculty that for example would deliver an online research seminar?**

*If your project budget allows for faculty salaries and is a need that is identified and can be justified in both the Technical Narrative and Budget Narrative, then it is allowable. Please also keep in mind that the budget should show diverse cost centers, including support to students, and that we discourage the use of the majority on the grant funds to be spent on faculty salary.*

**9. Is it possible to read these (and others) project's proposals? are there available online for general public?**

*You can view one sample proposal along with other templates & sample materials at <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/>.*

**10. How flexible is 100K in terms of goals/activities modifications considering COVID-19 uncertainty?**

*We work flexibly with all grant recipients to adjust expectations and timelines when the programs are disrupted due to COVID-19 or other issues.*

## **Project Design & Mobility**

**1. Can the Department of Casanare (Colombia) be included in the on-site mobility (students, teachers) of the project? Are there any restrictions? I ask this because I know that the U.S. State Department has some travel advice for U.S. citizens. Is there any mobility restrictions for U.S. students in Colombia? Which are the departments that cannot be visited in person in Colombia?**

*Travel restrictions for U.S. students are ultimately decided by the sending U.S. institution, who will have their own policies on international travel and safety for their students and faculty members. It is up to you to work with your U.S. partner and agree on where students can/cannot travel within Colombia. U.S. institutions also typically follow the travel advisory provided by the U.S. Department of State. For specific information on Colombia, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/colombia-travel-advisory.html>.*

**2. How do we navigate obtaining visas for the Colombian students? For example, for a two-week exchange, can students travel with a B-1 visa or do they need to apply for a J-1 visa?**

*The type of visa, under which Colombian students will travel, will be determined in collaboration with your U.S. host partner. We encourage you to work with them to determine the best visa option for the Colombian students based on the course/project activities that you will be proposing.*

3. Is there a maximum or minimum number of student participants or duration of time for the student mobilities?

*There is no restriction, preference, or pre-determined number of student participants nor duration of time for the mobilities.*

4. Should the same number of students participate from each of the countries?

*It is not necessary that the number of participating students be exactly reciprocal in both directions. There is also no preference that the projects have a greater number of students participating from Colombia or the United States. However, please note that, although not required, two-way mobility is preferred in the evaluation process.*

5. The faculty member is a new parent and wants to lead the program remotely. I.e. his students would go abroad but he would not travel. Does this make him ineligible?

*Yes, this would be fine. We have no restrictions on whether or not a faculty member could travel. Mobility requirements are for only student travel.*

### Grant Responsibilities

1. What type of reports are required once award the grant?

*Award recipients will be responsible for sharing information on a regular basis with the Innovation Fund staff on program activities through report mechanisms provided by Partners of the Americas.*

*Project reports will provide:*

- *Progress on program goals and objectives, including the development of grant activities and student and faculty travel;*
- *Successes, challenges, and lessons learned in program implementation and evaluation;*
- *Testimonials on how the grant benefits/impacts students and institutions; and*
- *Program expenditures and cost-sharing.*

*Please refer to page 12 of the RFP.*

## Institutions who Indicated Interest in Connecting with Other Institutions:

### **University of Texas at El Paso (Texas, United States)**

Miguel Velez-Reyes

[mvelezreyes@utep.edu](mailto:mvelezreyes@utep.edu)

### **Camacho University Institution (Cali, Colombia)**

Antonio José

[cooperacion@admon.uniajc.edu.co](mailto:cooperacion@admon.uniajc.edu.co).

"We are a higher education institution that works with vulnerable populations."

### **Fundación Academia de Dibujo Profesional (Cali, Colombia)**

Victoria Rivas

[investigacion@fadp.edu.co](mailto:investigacion@fadp.edu.co)

"Currently we are in an Alliance with Universidad Autónoma de Occidente and are seeking for an ally in the US interested in working in a research Project with a Design emphasis"

### **University of Texas (Texas, United States)**

Hernan Moreno

<http://moreno.oucreate.com>

"Hola a todos. Mi nombre es Hernan Moreno, profesor en la Universidad de Texas. Nací en Medellín y me encantaría hacer colaboración con Colombia."

### **UCEVA (Tuluá, Colombia)**

Diana Katherine Gonzalez

[internacionalizacion@uceva.edu.co](mailto:internacionalizacion@uceva.edu.co)

"We're currently looking for partners. We have two proposals related to engineering, we have also a intercultural and diversity approach in both projects."

### **Cristian Londoño**

[cristian.londono@udea.edu.co](mailto:cristian.londono@udea.edu.co)

"Dear all, I am currently working on Tutoring Projects for English as a Foreign Language Learning with tutors and peer-tutors. If there is any interest on your behalf in an alliance in this regard, I would gladly start a conversation. Thank you."