

U.S.-Israel Energy Center Webinar Sept. 4 2019 – Q&A

Note: the Questions and Answers are presented in two parts: General Questions and Budget Related Questions.

General Questions

Q: Do you anticipate this to be a one-off opportunity or for there to be additional rounds of this energy center funding opportunity in years ahead?

A: Right now there is only one Call for Proposals planned for the Energy Center, but it's important to mention that a winning consortium may add members during the program.

Q: Will you accept digital signature for the Cover Page?

A: Yes.

Q: Regarding the hard copy, will it need to be post dated 9/23? Or should it be sent earlier?

A: The hard copy can arrive to BIRD's offices after the deadline (not more than a few days). The deadline is for the soft copy upload.

Q: Hard copy submission instructions

*A: Address for sending, preferably by courier; one copy, double sided, unbound:
BIRD Foundation
Kiryat Atidim
Building 4, 15th Floor
Ramat Hachayal
Tel Aviv
for the attention of Chava Doukhan*

Q: For submission time (end of business), who's time? Israel/BIRD or USA (specify time zone)?

A: End of Monday, September 23, PST.

Q: The table of sales in section G includes only the end product that will be sold by only 1 member or we should add also sales of the members by them selves?

A: All potential sales should be included. If necessary, the table can be duplicated for different products/CMs.

Q: Organization chart- only the managers or until the last R&D emp?

A: Mainly the managers/leaders.

Q: For personnel biosketches, the EC handbook states "For each CM, attach short resumes (up to one page each) of key personnel who will work on the Program project." There is no

indication of any limitation on the number of resumes to include. In the presentation, it was stated that 3 resumes should be provided for each CM. Are submitters strictly limited to *only* 3 resumes per insitution?

A: 3 is a recommendation. You may include more, but not longer than one page each.

Q: Are Letters of Support from various organizations allowable? If so, how should they be included (is there a format for the letters that you prefer) and where (maybe section N)

A: Feel free to include them in an Appendix.

Q: The proposal preparation section identifies “up to 25 tasks” whereas the budget section stipulates “up to 15 tasks”. Which number should we use? Based on the call it appears these must be identical, i.e. the budget tasks are the same as the Program Tasks.

A: 25 tasks.

Q: Can we include potential sales beyond US and Israel ?

A: Yes.

Budget Related Questions

Q: Should all budgets be normalized to U.S. Dollars for all CM's?

A: Yes.

Q: Slide 24 O/H 25% and slide 26 5% G&A : are they going to the University OR used by the ILL and USL?

A: Each CM is entitled to 25% Direct Labor O/H and 5% G&A.

Q: Can we use equipment that was purchased in the past and still amortize for 3 years?

A: Yes.

Q: Is the cap on salary/fringe a cap of the total funds able to be charged for a person regardless of their total salary base, or should it be treated as a cap on the salary base before effort is calculated? Is it a yearly cap or a cap across the 5 years?

A: The cap is the maximum annual salary for full time, including fringe benefits.

Q: Does the sum total of all individual CM budgets have to equal the total budget numbers of all project tasks, especially considering project overhead costs and general expenses across all project tasks?

A: Yes, separate for the ILL and the USL.

The Total Budget for each CM is computed automatically as the sum of all Task Budgets.

The cumulative budget for each country (ILL budget and USL budget) is computed automatically as the sum off all CM budgets.

Q: If a trip involves more than one task do you want us to try to split costs between the tasks supported or load under the one most supported by the trip?

A: Depending on how significant the cost is. If the expense is few thousands, you can assign it to a specific task. Otherwise, try to split between the tasks supported.

Q: How should US side deal with actual direct salary costs that exceed \$150k/year? Is there an expectation that the amount over \$150k would have to come from cost share from the US participant?

A: Note that according to the budget preparation instructions the budget should present all expenses directly associated with the proposed program; the cost-share is included in the total budget (which is the portion not covered by the grant). The salary above \$150K should not be part of the budget and hence will not be considered cost share.

Q: Slide 24, would we use our US negotiated rate (NICRA)?

Q: What about overhead rate for US National laboratory who has a special overhead rate?

A: (1) If an entity has a regulatory commitment to use certain overheads and G&A (for example, because it has contracts with DOE), it will be possible to accommodate the required rates; (2) A U.S. university that has a negotiated overhead rate with the Federal Government should approach the BIRD Foundation staff to discuss the budget preparation.

Q: We anticipate having a philanthropic organization contribute funds that will be used as part of our match for the effort. They are not actively participating in the consortium per se. How should this be denoted both within the proposal as well as the budget? We anticipate all of the foundation's funds will be spent at one CM site.

A: The budget accounts for expected expenses, not for the source of funding. The contribution should be explained in the proposal (for example, in Section K). It cannot be included in the budget, which should be prepared according to the instructions in the Submission Procedures. The portion of the grant received by the CM should be agreed with the other team members.

Q: Most of the institutions involved have a standard salary escalator of 3% per year built into grant budgets. This does not appear to be an option as the BIRD template looks at a base salary (which includes fringes) and applies it evenly over the 5 years. How should this be handled?

A: You can use the 3% escalation when preparing the budget (for example, by using an estimated average over the 5 years).

Q: If the cost share contribution contains a portion of funds from an external source and would not incur overhead at the 5% rate, where would we include that on the sponsor template?

A: The budget accounts for expected expenses, not for the source of funding. Note that according to the budget preparation instructions the budget should present all expenses directly associated with the proposed program; the cost-share is included in the total budget (which is the portion not covered by the grant). Cost-share contribution from an external source should be mentioned in the proposal (for example, in Section K), but that (external) funding arrangement is not part of the submitted budget.

Q: In the budget, are fringe benefits allowable? If so, is it charged to labor or other expenses? The labor section appears to be limited to the salary itself. Are we allowed to charge tuition for students who are funded through this mechanism? If so, do we enter tuition in labor or other expenses?

A: Fringe benefits are included in the Gross Annual Salary. As for tuition, it can be accepted as part of direct cost of salary but there should be a direct link between the value of the tuition exemption and the specific student.

Q: There does not appear to be a typical budget justification, i.e. a separate text document that justifies each cost. Is this correct? We do see that the Note in Section 17.14.3, item #2

(page 43 of the Instructions) does allow for an attachment of an extended description in the Appendix if there is not enough room in the table.

A: Correct.

Q: The salary cap rule is still not completely clear. Our understanding is that no individual may charge more than \$150k/yr of salary+fringe to the Center in the US, and no more than \$100k/yr in IL. Is that correct?

A: Correct.

Q: You mentioned a \$150,000 salary cap. Does the Excel template sheet cut everything above it, or do the CMs have to limit to \$150,000.

A: The CMs need to limit.