



AIMS

African Institute for
Mathematical Sciences

NEXT EINSTEIN INITIATIVE

AIMS Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program Midterm Evaluation – Request for Proposals

Questions Posed by Applicants
12 February 2018

Question	Response
Timing of the Evaluation	
1. Is there flexibility in the timeline?	<p>AIMS expects to contract the selected team of evaluators by early March and the inception phase will then kick off immediately. AIMS anticipates holding the inception workshop no later than the week of 12 March 2018. The end date of 30 June 2018 remains firm.</p> <p>AIMS should clarify the timeline as presented in the TORs: the midterm evaluation will in fact take place over four months, from early March to end of June 2018, and not nine weeks as stated. The data collection phase, however, must be completed by end of April 2018.</p>
2. The submission of proposals/EOIs is expected on February 23, but at the same time the contract is expected to start in February (data collection starts in March). Is the successful bidder going to be selected before the end of February? What should be put as the start date of the contract and inception phase?	
3. Is there any possibility to extend the timeline to begin in March to account for EOI process?	
Data Collection and Methodology	
4. What is the nature of baseline data available, and could it be used to contact participants in the program?	AIMS has baseline reports for the MCF Scholars program and these would be made available to the selected evaluators during the inception meeting. Depending on the nature of the evaluation framework proposed, AIMS will ensure that contact information for all key informants are provided.
5. What role will the Foundation/AIMS staff play regarding data collection? Will the Foundation provide letters of introductions to AIMS management, staff and faculty?	<p>AIMS will work closely with the selected team of evaluators to facilitate the data collection phase and provide all necessary introductions across the network and to its key external partners.</p> <p>It is important to clarify a possible misunderstanding: The Mastercard Foundation (MCF) is the funder and AIMS is the implementing partner of the program. The midterm evaluation was commissioned by AIMS; MCF has no direct role in the evaluation.</p>
6. To give us an idea of the total sampling frame for interview and focus group sampling, can the Foundation provide insight into	All of these details and more will be provided to the selected team of evaluators during the inception workshop with AIMS.



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The total Fellow/alumni population in each country? (3 data collection countries and other countries) • Total number of staff, and tutors? • Total number of teachers that participated in the teacher training initiative in Cameroon to date (out of 89 total as outlined in page 3)? <p>7. Will the foundation provide the contact information of these individuals who may be contacted for data collection purposes upon award?</p>	
<p>8. Obtaining local IRB clearances can take time: in terms of compliance with national data collection regulations, will the Foundation secure the authorization for data collection in each country due to the compressed timeline?</p>	<p>All necessary clearances will be obtained in collaboration with the AIMS Secretariat and/or the entity sites from where the data will be collected.</p>
<p>9. Are the AIMS campuses equipped with rooms/facilities that the contractor can use for focus groups and interviews?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>10. The development of the inception report will consist of the review of background materials, including baseline studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many baseline studies were conducted? • Has there ever been a survey conducted with program stakeholders? • Approximately how many background documents are expected to be reviewed for the inception report? • What surveying is done of the Scholars? Will the evaluator be able to review Scholar data pertinent to the evaluation? 	<p>All of these details and more will be provided to the selected team of evaluators during the inception workshop with AIMS.</p>
<p>11. We note that field visits are required in Cameroon, Senegal and Rwanda. Would you like the evaluation team to conduct telephonic interviews with</p>	<p>AIMS will be looking to the evaluation team to propose a methodology for collecting data from the three remaining AIMS centres in South Africa, Ghana, and Tanzania where field visits are not scheduled.</p>



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key informants in Ghana and Tanzania?	
12. Evaluation questions, Page 4: Under Effectiveness, the question reads, “How is the program nurturing scholars and their desire to give back? Are there any noted differences between girls and boys”? Is it understood that “girls and boys” in this question refers to the Scholars of the program? Or are there expectations to be analyzing beneficiaries beyond the Scholars and teachers?	Yes, this is referring to boys and girls in the MCF Scholars Program.
13. Evaluation questions, Page 5: Under Sustainability, the first question reads, “To what extent has AIMS received... to support its programs” Does this refer to the Scholars Program? Or AIMS’ implementation of all of its programs?	All AIMS programs within which is situated the MCF Scholars program.
14. To help us determine the approximate sample size for interviews, could you provide information on the number of participants in each of the 3 program areas since 2003?	This will be discussed in detail at the inception workshop with the selected team of evaluators.
French Language Skills	
15. Is it acceptable if the evaluation specialists responsible for field visits are bilingual and those who are not responsible for field visits do not speak French?	Yes.
16. We understand that all deliverables will be in English and that data collection will be conducted in French hence the need for bilingual data collection tools. What other needs for translation should we take into account?	The selected evaluation team will be required to function in Senegal in French, without the need for an interpreter, and in Cameroon in both English and French. No further translation is anticipated.
17. We are thinking of site visits reports, the supporting materials for the learning workshop and the final	Only the site visit report for AIMS Senegal will need to be translated to French. All other site visit reports, supporting material for the



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report. Would these pieces need translation as well?	learning workshop, and the final report can be prepared in English only.
18. Are the three consultants required to be from the countries listed? Will all the team members need to be speak both English and French?	No, they are not required to be from the countries listed. While bilingualism in French and English will be considered an advantage, only the evaluators conducting field visits to French-speaking centres will need to be fluent in French.
Budget	
19. Is there a particular format that you wish us to follow in preparing the budget, such as costing travel separately to professional fees?	Please separate fees (person days x daily rate) from expenses (travel, materials, supplies, equipment etc.) in your proposed budget.
20. Are you in a position to disclose a budget ceiling for the work, and what currency should the budget be prepared in?	AIMS is not able to disclose the available budget for the mid-term evaluation. It is recommended that the proposed budget be prepared in USD.
21. What are the costs that should <i>not</i> be included in the budget?	All relevant expenses should be included in the budget.
22. Should the budget include travel expenses?	Yes.
Other	
23. Where will the learning workshop be held?	Kigali, Rwanda.
24. Is there a page limit for technical proposals?	No.
25. Are you looking for a team within a larger, established organization, such as a university? Or would a team of innovative, independent evaluators be of interest?	AIMS is open to any composition of experts on the selected team of evaluators, whether they be independent evaluators or representatives of large organisations or universities.