

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

This Request for Applications (RFA) is issued by the **Long-term Assistance and Services for Research: Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine (LASER PULSE)** at Purdue University. LASER PULSE is a five-year program implemented by a consortium comprising Purdue University (lead institution), the University of Notre Dame, Indiana University, Makerere University, and Catholic Relief Services. LASER PULSE is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Cooperative Agreement 7200AA18CA00009.

**Development Sectors of Interest:** *Youth Development, Civic Engagement, and Leadership; and Measurement of Resilience*

**Region/Countries of Interest:** Ethiopia

**Award Number and Size:** We expect to make five (5) research and translation awards for a period of 12 to 24 months for up to \$200K per award. There is an expectation of 10% cost-share for all awards.

### Application Submission Process and Timeline:

Issuance of Request for Application:	2 November 2020 6:00 pm Ethiopia time
Deadline for submission of questions on the RFA:	16 November 2020 6:00 pm Ethiopia time
Webinar to address questions regarding RFA: Ethiopia time	30 November 2020 4:00 pm
Deadline for receipt of Letter of Interest:	14 December 2020 6:00 pm Ethiopia time
Deadline for submission of Application: time	15 January 2021 6:00 pm Ethiopia
Selected awards sent to USAID for approval:	24 March, 2021
Expected award status notification:	July 2021

### Contact Information:

For programmatic questions, please email Dr. Betty Bugusu at [td@laserpulse.org](mailto:td@laserpulse.org).



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS	4
1. LASER PULSE BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	5
1.1 Higher Education Solutions Network 2.0	5
1.2 Comprehensive Success Factor Analysis (CSFA)	5
1.3 Embedded Research Translation	5
2. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION	8
2.1 Youth Development, Civic Engagement and Leadership	8
2.1.1 Context	8
2.1.2 Research Focus Areas	9
2.1.2.1 Research on sustainable, enabling strategies to overcome existing barriers to youth development programs	9
2.1.2.2 Research to inform and advance government programs for civic engagement, improved livelihoods, and leadership for youth	10
2.1.2.3 Research to increase youth resilience to shocks and stressors	10
2.2 Measurement of Resilience	11
2.2.1 Context	11
2.2.2 Research Focus Areas (All three areas MUST be addressed in the Application)	13
3. APPLICATION INFORMATION AND PROCESS	14
3.1 Letter of Interest (LOI)	14
3.2 Research gap identification	14
3.3 Eligibility and Leadership	15
3.4 Submission Instructions	15
3.5 RFA Question Period and Informational Webinar	15
3.6 Format and Review Process	16
3.7 On-line Training Requirement	16
3.8 Strategy for Gender Inclusion	17
3.9 Strategy for Embedded Research Translation	17
3.10 Project Duration and Funding	18
3.11 Research Output Reporting	18

3.12 Budget Preparation for Application	18
3.13 Budget, Budget Narrative, and Cost Share Documents	18
3.14 Application Summary Table	20
4. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS	23
4.1 Evaluation Criteria	23
4.1.1 Research Merit	23
4.1.2 Broader Impacts	23
4.2 Evaluation Process	24
5. APPENDICES	26
5.1 Appendix 1 – Comprehensive Success Factors	26
5.2 Appendix 2 – LASER PULSE Gender Analysis Considerations	27
5.3 Appendix 3 – Glossary of Selected Key Words	28
5.4 Appendix 4 – Application checklist	29
6. REFERENCES	30

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CDR	Center for Development Research
CSF(A)	Comprehensive Success Factors (Analysis)
HEI	Higher Education Institutes
HESN	Higher Education Solutions Network
Lab	USAID Global Development Lab
LASER PULSE	Long-term Assistance and Services for Research Partner University-Led Solutions Engine
SF Trees	Success Factor Trees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UIC	USAID Interest Countries
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

# 1. LASER PULSE BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

## 1.1 Higher Education Solutions Network 2.0

[LASER PULSE](#) (Long-term Assistance and SErvices for Research Partner University-Led Solutions Engine) is part of the Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) 2.0 portfolio of programs from the Center for Development Research (CDR) in the U.S. Global Development Lab (Lab) of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). HESN 2.0 leverages a vast network of higher education institutions, local stakeholders, private enterprise, and other development actors to increase the use of scientific research for development, refine and translate complex data, build local scientific potential, and test new and innovative development approaches.

## 1.2 Comprehensive Success Factor Analysis (CSFA)

A critical goal of LASER PULSE is to catalyze evidence-based research as part of the research translation process through useful products, policies, and practices that better address development outcomes. This goal is accomplished through participatory research question identification (i.e., bringing researchers and development translation partner(s) together), through improved capacity to conduct research, and by ensuring that the research results have been presented to decision makers in an accessible form. For this Request for Applications (RFA), LASER PULSE seeks Applications for two research sectors of interest in Ethiopia: (a) *Youth Development, Civic Engagement and Leadership*, and (b) *Measurement of Resilience* for Ethiopia. These sector focus areas were identified by the USAID/Ethiopia Mission, and refined through a systems level process called [Comprehensive Success Factors \(CSF\)](#). The CSF is an innovation science method used to identify the most important and interrelated suite of factors that define a given problem to be solved. The process is used to develop a view of the “conditions for success” that are typically required to address the specific category of a system that poses a challenge called “Success Factor Tree”. Specific sector focus was achieved by contextualizing “Success Factor Trees” (henceforth ‘SF Trees’) through an exhaustive search of research and grey literature. These SF Trees are contextualized to Ethiopia by seeking further input on gaps or missing factors from stakeholders. The stakeholders consist of a ‘scoping’ group (individuals with sectoral expertise), researchers, and development professionals. For Detail about the CSF process, see [Appendix 1](#).

## 1.3 Embedded Research Translation

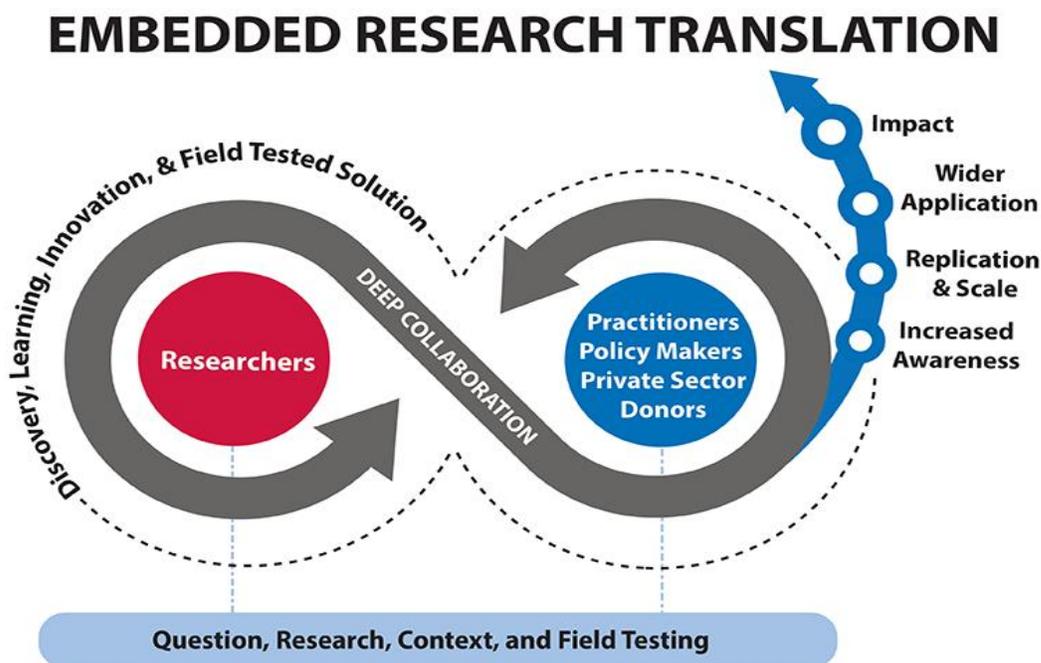
The key consideration for the LASER PULSE program is to ensure that research translation is embedded across all phases of the research project from co-defining the research question to disseminating findings. LASER PULSE defines *Embedded Research Translation* as:

*An iterative co-design process among academics, practitioners, and other stakeholders in which research is intentionally applied to a development challenge.*

Recognizing that research translation is an iterative, collaborative process, LASER PULSE promotes a model in which development solutions are derived through a co-creation process between researchers and development practitioners. Development practitioners are defined as individual persons engaged in the design, planning, and/or implementation of local, regional, national, or international development programs/projects. This definition refers to personnel of NGOs and community-based organizations; but it can also include individuals representing

governments or the private sector in an implementation capacity (e.g., extension agents) as opposed to a funding capacity. Under certain circumstances (e.g., co-creation of research questions), donor staff may also fall under this definition. In this RFA, LASER PULSE uses the term “Translation Partners” to refer to development practitioners that are, or are intended to be paired with researchers as part of a team submitting an Application. The researcher should ensure with the translation partner that results will be made readily available - both useful and usable, in format, language, and dissemination channels to the various stakeholder groups.

LASER PULSE’s Embedded Research Translation model (Figure 1) is rooted in deep collaboration between researchers and translation partner(s), and follows an iterative process from discovery, to field-tested solution, to wider application, and finally to impact.



**Figure 1.** LASER PULSE Embedded Research Translation model

The LASER PULSE’s Embedded Research Translation model incorporates four pillars in its approach: (1) an early and active **partnership** between researchers and translation partner(s), (2) a collaborative partnership **process**, (3) a targeted translation **product**, and (4) a **dissemination plan** with recommendations for replication and scale-up.

An Embedded Research Translation Strategy includes:

- 1) At least one translation partner such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, the private sector, and/or local government entities,
- 2) A collaborative co-design process between the researcher and translation partner(s),
- 3) A usable and appropriate research translation product applicable to:
  - a) policy (such as a policy brief or recommendation that can lead to changes in legal, constitutional, funding, accountability, feasibility, or implementation mechanisms) and/or

- b) practice (such as a program recommendation, new production/ processing methods, education curricula, guidebooks, technical manuals, training modules, or planning tools). Examples of tangible translation products include tools/devices, reports, multimedia products, or IT platforms.
- 4) A plan for dissemination to move beyond initial partnerships and toward a larger uptake of relevant findings in the field or region.

## 2. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### All Applications are required to:

- 1) Incorporate collaboration between researchers and a translation partner to ensure that the proposed research can, and will be, applied as a solution to the development challenge.
- 2) Outline anticipated intermediate and long-term policy or practice change(s) resulting from the research. This includes a strategy or plan that describes how the research project will embed *Research Translation* such that outputs are adapted into usable and appropriate products, policies, and practices.
- 3) Address considerations and impacts of gender in all aspects of the Application (see [Appendix 2](#)).

*The following section defines the scope of research to be funded by LASER PULSE through this funding opportunity. It provides the context and high-level research focus areas identified through the LASER PULSE Comprehensive Success Factor process (see [Section 1.2](#)). Applicants should use these focus areas to identify research gaps for formulating their research questions, as described under [Section 3.2](#).*

The USAID Mission in Ethiopia has identified (a) *Youth Development, Civic Engagement and Leadership*, and (b) *Measurement of Resilience* for Ethiopia as development research sectors for this RFA. Applications should target one of these two development research sectors. The contexts and research focus areas for this RFA within each of two sectors are described in the following sections.

### 2.1 Youth Development, Civic Engagement and Leadership

#### 2.1.1 Context

Ethiopia is experiencing the second-largest youth bulge in Africa today. Of the 102 million people in Ethiopia, an estimated 30 million are aged 15-29, and the number of people in this age group is projected to rise to 40 million by 2030 (*USAID, 2018a*). Many young Ethiopians, especially those in rural areas and peri-urban neighborhoods live in, or on the brink of, poverty (*USAID, 2018a, b*). According to the Education Development Center report (2012), youth, especially from rural and pastoralist communities, commonly face a number of challenges, including narrow skills sets, high levels of illiteracy, restricted access to land and other productive assets, and limited formal sector employment. Additionally, rural youth in Ethiopia face challenges including, but not limited to, poor health and nutrition, exclusion from decision making by elders, and vulnerability to external shocks (e.g., climate variability, food insecurity and conflict).

In recent years, youth issues have received greater policy and implementation attention in the country. The National Youth Policy of Ethiopia marks a major step in recognizing and promoting the rights of young people in the country (*OECD, 2018*). Ethiopia's youth also have the potential to play a significant role in the country's socio-economic and political development. The National Youth Policy (*MoYSC, 2004*) recognizes the importance of youth, "to participate, in an organized manner, in the process of building a democratic system, good governance and development endeavors, and benefiting fairly from the outcomes" (*OECD, 2018*). There are

many barriers that hinder youth's active participation in socio-economic, political and cultural life, including persistent gender inequality, youth poverty, and a lack of recreational activities. Young women represent a high-risk group in Ethiopia, being especially vulnerable to gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, early marriage and other harmful traditional practices. While the Ethiopian government is clearly aware of the need to engage its large youth cohort in productive activities and is starting to formulate specific policies and programs, there are opportunities to improve support for youth programs.

### **2.1.2 Research Focus Areas**

LASER PULSE seeks Applications on research-driven solutions with high-impact potential that (a) help development programs to overcome barriers for sustainable youth development, (b) advance national and/or local community level programs on youth civic engagement through research-based evidence, and (c) increase youth resilience to shocks and stressors. This might be different for married and unmarried youth, and might also vary according to their dependence on or independence from their families. Within these research focus areas, LASER PULSE also encourages Applications that address the special needs of vulnerable youth, especially women, youth with disabilities, rural youth, and those suffering from poverty, recurrent droughts, political unrest and ethnic conflicts, poor quality education, health problems, shortage of food and water, unemployment, displacement, and migration.

Specific Areas of Interest to LASER in this RFA include:

#### **2.1.2.1 Research on sustainable, enabling strategies to overcome existing barriers to youth development programs**

LASER PULSE seeks research Applications that through innovative, research-driven program design and intervention or through impact evaluation of existing programs, address the following gaps that have been identified in Ethiopian youth development programs:

- 1) Youth skills inadequacies, including language limitations, and lack of entrepreneurial skills, and skills for leadership and civic engagement.
- 2) Attitudinal barriers of youth, including the inability to engage effectively in peace-building and conflict resolution, self-efficacy, and the ability to identify with the common good.
- 3) Systemic or societal barriers to youth employment, including attitudinal barriers of employers, language barriers, or ethnicity- and gender-based discrimination.

*Examples of research questions may include, but are not limited to:*

- a) How might entrepreneurial, language, and leadership skills be measurably improved at scale among vulnerable youth who are out of school? How might these skills be measurably improved when social norms prevent youth from attending school?
- b) What modalities in addition to the Technical Vocational Education and Trainings (TVETs) are available and effective for improving entrepreneurial, language, and leadership skills for youth?
- c) Which accelerated learning programs for out-of-school youth function best in Ethiopia and why?
- d) What interventions might yield better outcomes for young women and young men, in terms of job creation, employment and civic engagement?

- e) How might youth development programs lead to a higher level of engagement with the political process, including a willingness to effect meaningful change and policy reform? How might youth development programs lead to positive recognition by the relevant elders?
- f) How can youth be enabled to become resilient and effective leaders in conflict resolution peace-building towards promoting common good and increasing self-efficacy?

### **2.1.2.2 Research to inform and advance government programs for civic engagement, improved livelihoods, and leadership for youth**

LASER PULSE seeks Applications that investigate government-supported, gender-inclusive civic engagement, improved livelihood, and leadership programs tailored to youth. Proposed interventions or evaluations must seek to improve goals set for the topic and address the following gaps that have been found in the Ethiopian context:

- 1) Commitment to improve the welfare/livelihoods of youth including: commitment to protect vulnerable populations; commitment to improve job opportunities for youth; commitment to lower socioeconomic zones.
- 2) Youth representation in leadership including lack of impactful youth participation in community affairs and development, lack of community recognition of youth efforts, and lack of minority and gender representation.

*Examples of research may include, but are not limited to:*

- a) Research on effectiveness of government interventions designed to promote increased youth assets - resources, skills, and competencies.
- b) Research to enhance government (Federal and Regional) capacity to support and enhance civic engagement and leadership skills of young men and women.
- c) Research on efficacy of existing government youth programs aiming to promote “meaningful youth participation”, including evaluation of active engagement among different populations (women, minorities, etc.)
- d) Research on how to increase economic prospects for youth and their capacity for civic engagement by promoting higher education reforms / policies / practices that better address the social and economic challenges faced by youth.

### **2.1.2.3 Research to increase youth resilience to shocks and stressors**

LASER PULSE seeks Applications that propose innovative applied research and its translation to increase resilience of youth to shocks and stressors such as:

- 1) Shock preparedness and mitigation for youth (e.g., availability of civil emergency response services, including health, fire, police).
- 2) Pathways for youth to become involved with shock preparedness and mitigation.
- 3) Youth engagement in conflict management mechanisms for communities or regions.
- 4) Youth engagement in economic resilience (e.g., Household savings, Asset ownership, Insurance).

*Examples of research may include, but are not limited to:*

- a) Research on best practices for improving transparency and accountability through involvement of youth in civic engagement and leadership at all levels and its impact on resilience

- b) Research on how youth status, agency, and engagement could be enhanced at the village level, or in peri-urban settings.
- c) Research on how youth can be engaged holistically?
- d) Implementation design or evaluation of existing programs for improved youth aspirations towards change and role in peace-building/conflict resolution/management.
- e) Research on the formal or informal mechanisms or actors that interact with youth as they migrate into secondary cities influencing their ability for meaningful civic engagement and leadership.
- f) Research on how youth development programs can increase access to more and higher quality youth-friendly services.

## **2.2 Measurement of Resilience**

### **2.2.1 Context**

For the purposes of this RFA, resilience means the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth (USAID, 2012).

Ethiopia’s economic growth and its expansion in the delivery of basic services in recent years have been among the most impressive in Africa. However, it continues to face enormous challenges due to rapid population growth, which is putting increasing pressure on resources<sup>1</sup>, and to increasingly frequent climatic and economic shocks (*United Nations Development Program, 2019; UK Department for International Development, 2012*). Ethiopia’s climate will get significantly hotter and wetter over the next 50 years, with increasingly erratic rainfall stressing crops, resulting in reduced yields. Economic shocks, including fluctuating commodity prices, also have a significant impact on a vulnerable population. Since the year 2000, Ethiopia has reduced the number of people living under the poverty line by 33 percent. However, 37 million Ethiopians remain either poor or vulnerable to falling into poverty in the wake of natural disasters and market shocks (*USAID, 2017*). The ability of vulnerable households and communities to break the cycle of poverty is extremely limited in the context of recurring shocks<sup>2</sup>. A lack of resilience to shocks can cause households to fall back into dire situations and increase humanitarian needs.

Increasing resilience to shocks and triggers is thus key to breaking the cycle of crises among chronically vulnerable households and communities and to ultimately reducing their dependence on humanitarian assistance.

Currently there are several resilience-building programs and activities under implementation in Ethiopia by the national or local Ethiopian government authorities and by non-governmental organizations. For example, the Ethiopian government’s Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP, 2014), with more than seven million beneficiaries, is the second largest social safety net program in Africa and has been supported by several international donors including USAID and the World Bank. PSNP has improved household food security and expenditures for the most

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<sup>1</sup> <https://allafrica.com/stories/201804250616.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/ijpr/2017/4513607/>

food insecure and the poorest households residing in different parts of the country in which the program operates. Another example is the “[Livelihoods for Resilience](#)” program (L4R) launched in 2017 by USAID and its partners CARE Ethiopia and Catholic Relief Services. In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, L4R assists poor households in the rural highlands areas of Ethiopia to diversify their livelihoods and graduate from the PSNP. Other examples of concurrent resilience programs in Ethiopia include those launched in partnership with the Ethiopian government and DFID known as Building Resilience in Ethiopia (BRE), that has maintained a [development tracker](#) for and with the European Union.

This RFA focuses on measurement of resilience, particularly robust resilience measurement methods, which are key to increasing effectiveness, outcomes, and sustainability of resilience-building programs. Resilience measurements and analysis can serve as the basis for effectively designed interventions and processes that successfully manage adversity and/or change in a way that enhances the well-being of an individual, household, or community. It can be used to adapt existing programs, identify opportunities to integrate activities and processes, as well as solutions that bring a number of co-benefits across local systems. For the purpose of this RFA, effective resilience measurement will help ensure that investments are deliberate, continue to target the most vulnerable households and communities, and that the most effective approaches are utilized to build resilience and meet development outcomes on Ethiopia’s journey to self-reliance.

USAID/Ethiopia already has a concerted effort underway across Ethiopia to measure resilience at the individual and household levels. Within the L4R Program, there exists the L4R Learning Activity, and within that activity is the Recurrent Monitoring Survey (RMS). The RMS, implemented by Save the Children, Technical Assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO) International, and Kimetrica, measures real-time household response to shocks and/or stressors to inform activity implementation. The survey collects information from hundreds of households as well as key informant interviews, to understand attitudes, practices, impacts and coping strategies. These data sets should be considered in the design and implementation of a resilience measurement framework, as well as any eventual analysis.

While many resilience measurement frameworks already exist, there are also some key gaps that need to be addressed to make resilience measurements usable and effective in an Ethiopian context. Prior systems-level resilience measurement and frameworks (Schipper ELF and Langston R, 2015) include, : (a) [Oxfam’s resilience measurement framework](#) (Hughes and Bushell, 2013), (b) [Stockholm University Resilience principles](#) (Stockholm Resilience Centre, n.d.), (c) [UNDP’s CoBRA framework](#) (2017), (d) Resilient Africa Network’s [approach to resilience measurement and analysis](#) (2013), (e) DFID’s resilience measurement framework, Sturgess, 2016, and (f) [Measuring Resilience Across and Between Scales and How to Do It](#), produced by TANGO International as part of the Resilience Evaluation, Analysis and Learning (REAL) Associate Award (Béné, C. 2018). All of these resilience measurement frameworks consist of the following elements: (i) the adoption of a definition of resilience, (ii) the identification of its characteristics and factors, (iii) the collection of various identified characteristics and factors across a large number of households/communities, (iv) their

agglomeration using appropriate statistical methods, and (v) a synthesis of the resulting learning for program design or adaptation.

Through CSF surveys with researchers and practitioner stakeholders in Ethiopia, and other consultations, LASER PULSE has identified the *following gaps in resilience measurement and its applications* that could be useful and effective in the Ethiopian context :

- 1) The need for a resilience measurement framework to include the measurement of community-level resilience across people, place, knowledge, and organization in order to complement existing measurement methods at the individual and household levels.
- 2) The application of a relevant resilience measurement framework to understand key questions.

### **2.2.2 Research Focus Areas (All three areas MUST be addressed in the Application)**

LASER PULSE seeks Applications that propose research to help build community systems-level (village and or woreda) resilience through the effective measurement of resilience in Ethiopia<sup>3</sup>. **Successful Applications are required to address all three elements below: i), ii) and iii).**

#### **i) Research to better understand what makes Ethiopian communities resilient to prevalent recurring and chronic shocks**

Applications should present a well-designed study at the community/village- or Woreda-level to address research to better understand what makes Ethiopian communities resilient to prevalent and recurring and chronic shocks. Research questions of interest include, but not restricted to:

- a) How does community systems building, community managed disaster risk reduction (CMDRR), contingency planning and preparedness lead to community resilience and empowerment? What are current management and coping practices?
- b) What are qualities of integrated systems demonstrated in local communities? (leadership/strategy, health/wellbeing/, infrastructure/ecosystem, economy/society)
- c) Is community disaster risk management a bottom-up or top-down approach?
- d) What are effective ways to convey information about shocks (e.g. early warning systems) locally?
- e) What are the qualities of locally empowered communities and leaders? What USAID and GoE interventions could be considered best practices that enable these groups?

#### **ii) Adaption of existing systems-level resilience measurement frameworks as part of the research study to address the research question(s) proposed in i) above**

The proposed approaches should adapt existing resilience frameworks to the Ethiopian context at the specific village/woreda level. Household level resilience should not be the focus rather the intent here is to apply a community level (village/woreda) resilience framework. Applications should also propose innovative approaches to their adaptation of existing resilience measurement frameworks. Such innovations could include but are not restricted to defining the appropriate characteristics of resilience, and/or in the methods to

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<sup>3</sup> <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/disa.12332>

collect data at scale and with reduced error, and/or in the use of data science and statistics to agglomerate the data, reduce uncertainty and improve the indicators of resilience.

**iii) Partnership with an entity that is interested in utilizing the research to increase resilience in that community, as the translation partner**

The application should include partnerships meant to bolster the efforts of researchers to translate evidence into meaningful program and policy change. Potential translation partners include, but are not limited to the Ethiopian government; local or international NGOs; bilateral or multilateral organizations, and private enterprises interested in utilizing woreda/community level resilience measurements in their work. In addition, strong support and collaboration with the local village/woreda government is also expected and applicants must provide a letter of support from the chief or woreda administrator, mayor, or other appropriate government official.

### **3. APPLICATION INFORMATION AND PROCESS**

This section provides specific information on the RFA including appendices that support the document.

#### **3.1 Letter of Interest (LOI)**

Applicants are required to submit a one page letter of interest (LOI) by 14 December 2020, seven (7) weeks before the deadline for submitting the Application (i.e. 15 January, 2021), using the provided [template](#). The LOI will include the following information:

- Lead Principal Investigator (PI) name and email address (**required, cannot change**)
- Lead institution (**required, cannot change**)
- Research sector stated in the RFA. If your Application is cutting across two or more of the identified sectors, please state so and select the main sector (**required, cannot change**)
- Research team/institutions/organizations (required, can change)
- Title (required, can change)
- Abstract/Project Summary (required, can change)

The LOI will not be evaluated for merit. LOI's can be submitted via this link:

[https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bvnGxUyIMkTR0vH](https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bvnGxUyIMkTR0vH) on the LASER PULSE website. If the Applicant is unable to access the website, please send your LOI to this email [awardsmanager@laserpulse.org](mailto:awardsmanager@laserpulse.org).

#### **3.2 Research gap identification**

Applicants should identify and justify, in the project summary and research plan, the sector of inquiry for their Application i.e. “Youth Development, Civic Engagement, and Leadership” or “Measurement of Resilience” (Section 2 of this RFA: 2.1 or 2.2). Furthermore, Applicants must clearly identify the research gap(s) that they are addressing within the identified sector under (i.e. 2.1.2.1 or 2.1.2.2 or 2.1.2.3 for Youth Development, Civic Engagement, and Leadership and Measurement of Resilience as described (no sub-choices). Applicants Researchers and their translation partners should work together to co-identify specific gaps within the themes and to co-design research solutions.

### 3.3 Eligibility and Leadership

Only academic researchers based at Higher Education Institutions, HEIs (see definition of HEI in [Appendix 3](#)) in [USAID Interest Countries](#) (UIC) (or go to <https://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work>) and in the United States are eligible to submit an Application. Researchers in Ethiopia are strongly encouraged to submit Applications as lead researchers (Principal Investigators) in collaboration with their translation partners in Ethiopia. Lead researchers from Ethiopia are encouraged, but not required, to collaborate with other researchers in the country or the US, as needed. If US researchers are leading the Application, they are **required** to collaborate with both an Ethiopian HEI researcher(s) and a translation partner(s) with a presence in Ethiopia.

Note: Collaboration with a translation partner(s) (e.g., a non-governmental organization (NGO), civil society, the private sector, or a government entity) is **required** for all Applications. The Principal Investigator (PI) is required to provide a signed [Letter of Commitment](#) from the translation partner(s) using the provided template. If the Applicant is unable to access the website, please send an email to [awardsmanager@laserpulse.org](mailto:awardsmanager@laserpulse.org).

Foreign government institutions are considered viable translation partners, however, they are not eligible to receive funding associated with this award and should not have a budget associated with the Application. Foreign government translation contributions can be applied as cost-share, however.

Note: The lead researcher coordinating the research team and submitting the Application will be considered the Principal Investigator (PI). Each PI is limited to submit one Application per RFA (regardless of sector). Other researchers and research translation experts representing partner institutions, other than the PI's institution, may be considered as Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) on a research team. For the purposes of this RFA, a Co-PI is defined as a key member of the research team (who is not the PI) that also serves as the point of contact for the partnering institution. An institution having more than one team member will specify their designated Co-PI. Co-PI(s) and research translation partner(s) are not geographically restricted but must demonstrate their experience in and/or knowledge of Ethiopia.

All members of the research team must be registered in the LASER PULSE Network. Please [click here](#) (or go to <https://stemedhub.org/groups/laserpulse/connect>) to register in the LASER PULSE Network.

### 3.4 Submission Instructions

Researchers interested in applying for an award in response to this RFA are encouraged to submit an Application via this link (<https://stemedhub.org/groups/laserpulse/funding/rfa-ethiopia>) on the LASER PULSE website. If the Applicant is unable to access the website, please send an email to [awardsmanager@laserpulse.org](mailto:awardsmanager@laserpulse.org).

The deadline for the Application submission is 15 January, 2021 at 6:00 pm Ethiopia time.

Late Applications will not be reviewed. Additions or modifications will not be accepted after the submission date. LASER PULSE is not responsible for late or incomplete submissions.

### 3.5 RFA Question Period and Informational Webinar

Prospective Applicants are encouraged to thoroughly review the [frequently asked questions \(FAQs\)](#) document for this RFA before submitting an Application. The FAQs document is provided as part of the RFA package.

Additionally, LASER PULSE will allow two weeks for prospective Applicants to submit any questions concerning the RFA. Questions should be sent to Pamela McClure at [awardsmanager@laserpulse.org](mailto:awardsmanager@laserpulse.org). Questions should be received no later than 16 November 2020 at 6:00 pm Ethiopia time.

LASER PULSE will organize a webinar on 30 November 2020 at 4:00 pm Ethiopia time to address questions submitted by Applicants. Specific details will be announced on the LASER PULSE website and other relevant avenues, at least one week prior to the webinar date. Notification of this event will also be sent to all members of the Network via e-mail. The purpose of the webinar is to discuss questions received (without attribution to the organization that sent the questions). The questions and answers (Q&A) received and discussed during the webinar will be posted on the LASER PULSE Application website as an amendment to this RFA. Similarly, responses to questions received during the webinar will be transcribed and made available as a supplement to the RFA. Additionally, the webinar will be recorded and made available on the LASER PULSE website.

### **3.6 Format and Review Process**

**Applications have a limit of 10 typed pages of core content**, excluding the cover page and supplemental materials (e.g., workplan, budget, references). Content details are provided in the Application summary table at the end of this section. Applications must be in English, with narrative portions prepared in MS Word or Open Office format, using Times New Roman font, size 11, or similar typeset in single line spacing on 8.5x11 inch sized paper. We will only evaluate the first 10 pages for Applications exceeding the 10-page limit of core content.

Applications will be reviewed by selected external reviewers, recruited worldwide and have relevant skills and experience on the topic and geographic focal areas, USAID personnel and the LASER PULSE Management team. Reviewers will evaluate the Applications based upon specifications listed in the Evaluation Criteria section ([Section 4](#)). Successful Applications are subject to final approval by USAID before notification of award.

### **3.7 On-line Training Requirement**

LASER PULSE provides on-line training modules on “research translation” and “gender inclusion into research”. These training modules are part of the technical assistance available from LASER PULSE and tailored to provide guidance and information for effective Applications that align with the RFA requirements.

Note: PI and co-PI(s) identified in the Application must have taken and passed both on-line training before submitting the Application. Other team members are also encouraged to take these training sessions as they explain important concepts needed to develop a successful Application. Please click [here](#) to take the on-line training (or go to <https://stemedhub.org/groups/laserpulse/courses>). Certificates of completion for each training module will be sent via email or can be downloaded directly from the training site.

### 3.8 Strategy for Gender Inclusion

Prior to developing an Application, Applicants should review the gender analysis guidelines in [Appendix 2](#). Applications should reflect that the research team is fully aware of the relevant gender considerations for the development solution proposed. The intention is not that the proposed solution be ‘about gender,’ but that the team should look at gender as a factor that is relevant for any work with human beings, or solutions that propose to benefit human beings.

Applications responsive to gender will ‘unpack’ certain nouns that mask the target group, but tend to default to a focus on a single sex. For example, terms such as: youth, farmers, entrepreneurs, armed group actors/fighters, and head of household often default to men or boys. Other nouns, such as teachers, caregivers, and parents, often tend to default to a focus on women or girls. Applicants should ensure that the target group is clarified and that the choice of focus population is supported by evidence that this is the population group in need for this sector. The LASER PULSE gender online training will show many practical examples where an improperly targeted group can lead to missed opportunity for impact in development solutions and research translation. The Application in response to this RFA should show how these gender considerations are addressed in research design, the development of tools, the research subject selection, the collection and analysis of data, and the proposed translation of the research.

### 3.9 Strategy for Embedded Research Translation

Applications should provide a concise summary of their research translation strategy that addresses the four pillars of LASER PULSE’s Embedded Research Translation Model: (1) partnership, (2) process, (3) product, and (4) dissemination plan. In addition, Applications should account for any translation activities in their budget. The summary shall include brief explanations on:

- 1) **Partnership:** A justification of the proposed research and translation partner team, including why the translation partner was chosen and any previous history of collaboration. Roles and responsibilities of researcher and translation partners should be explicitly defined with the expectation that all partners will be engaged throughout the research translation process.
- 2) **Process:** The collaborative process by which the researcher(s) and translation partner(s) will work together, from identifying the research topic to ensuring the research solution will be feasible for use. The description of the collaborative process may include information on communication type and frequency and how the team will facilitate collaborative engagement.
- 3) **Product:** The intended policy and/or practice-focused translation product(s), to be developed collaboratively from research findings. Translated products may include, but are not limited to: policy briefs, information briefs, guidebooks, training, multimedia products, production or processing methods, education curriculum, and technical manuals. Products should lead to changes in legal, constitutional, funding, accountability, feasibility, or implementation mechanisms or practice recommendations.
- 4) **Dissemination:** A dissemination plan for wider application and scale beyond the initial partnership and toward a broader uptake of relevant findings in the field or region. This can include meetings, events, and workshops, in acceptable formats (virtual, in person, live, or asynchronous, etc.), targeted toward influential stakeholders for further adoption. Please be sure to list the targeted stakeholders.

5) **Budget:** Please describe in the budget narrative.

### **3.10 Project Duration and Funding**

Subject to the availability of funds, LASER PULSE will issue awards in response to those Applications that best meet the objectives of this funding opportunity as evaluated by the selection criteria contained in Section 4 of this RFA. LASER PULSE anticipates to fund five (5) awards for a period of 12 to 24 months of research and translation for up to \$200,000 per award. There is an expectation of 10% cost-share for all awards (see section 3.13 for further details). While award(s) are anticipated as a result of this RFA, LASER PULSE reserves the right to fund any or none of the Applications submitted and for the amounts funded to vary from those described. Only one Application may be submitted per PI.

### **3.11 Research Output Reporting**

Applications must include a brief narrative describing the expected outputs of the proposed award. The research team should identify the various outputs, including the translated research products identified in Section 3.9 above, and provide an associated approximate timeline for delivery for each item. These items can be listed as bullet points within the text, with an estimated delivery date placed in parentheses after a given item's description or as a Gantt chart or other format. Note that traditional academic outputs such as journal articles, technical reports, posters, etc. should also be listed but it is anticipated that these are not the only research outputs that could be produced from the proposed work.

The PI of each successful Applicant team that is awarded will receive a Grant Award Reporting Guidelines document describing procedures on curation and submission of award information, research products, and research datasets. These guidelines will also contain a template for the research team to develop a brief data management plan that will be required as part of the post-award process. Once the award has commenced, output data compiled and reported by the PI shall consist of, but not be limited to: (1) the names and selected information of the PI and Co-PIs; (2) research products such as technical manuals, policy briefs, guidebooks, peer-reviewed publications, technical reports, and relevant datasets; and (3) presentations at convenings where translated research is disseminated to various development actors, including translation partner(s), policymakers, donors, or other development researchers. PIs will receive from LASER PULSE a Research Output Reporting Form (via an online survey) to facilitate the submission of required data and information for bi-annual reporting.

### **3.12 Budget Preparation for Application**

The project budget must be submitted using the [LASER Application Budget Template](#) in Excel, Google Sheets, or an Open Office format. If these options are not available please contact us via email, [awardsmanager@laserpulse.org](mailto:awardsmanager@laserpulse.org). Please follow the directions in the workbook when entering your budget numbers.

### **3.13 Budget, Budget Narrative, and Cost Share Documents**

The budget, budget narrative, and cost share documents should provide, in detail, the total costs for implementation of the program that the Applicant's institution is proposing using the [template](#) provided. Generally, each institution included in the Application will

be a direct subaward of LASER PULSE's Prime institution. Foreign governments are not eligible to receive funding and should not have a budget associated with the Application. Foreign government translation contributions can be applied as cost-share, however.

- 1) The budget must be submitted in Excel, Google Sheets or an Open Office format using the provided [template](#) with unlocked cells and all formulas available to enable LASER PULSE to check the calculations included. This budget template and budget narrative should be completed for each applicable institution that is planned to receive funding (i.e. the Prime and any sub-award partners) included in the Application.
- 2) The following major line items must be included within the budget narrative. When available, each major line item must be supported by detailed breakdowns of each expected sub-expense under that line:
  - a) Personnel (positions and/or names, rates, etc.)
  - b) Fringe Benefits
  - c) Anticipated Travel (if trips are known, please provide details, if not yet known, then overall estimates and number of proposed trips would be helpful)
  - d) Equipment and Supplies - Per USAID restrictions, LASER PULSE will not allow funding to the following categories/items:
    - i) Procurement of commodities listed below, but not limited to
      - (1) Agricultural commodities,
      - (2) Motor vehicles,
      - (3) Pharmaceuticals,
      - (4) Pesticides,
      - (5) Used equipment,
      - (6) U.S. Government-owned excess property, or
      - (7) Fertilizer
    - ii) Construction (e.g. alteration, or repair (including dredging and excavation) of buildings, structures, or other real property and includes, without limitation, improvements, renovation, alteration and refurbishment). The term includes, without limitation, roads, power plants, buildings, bridges, water treatment facilities, and vertical structures.
  - e) Other Direct Costs (see information in #5 below)
  - f) Indirect Costs
- 3) Further, please provide a breakdown of costs associated with the program for any identified partners (as sub-awardee), including any funded research translation partners, if applicable. Budget details should be clearly described and denoted for all sub-awards.
- 4) An estimate of the level of effort (either as a percentage or as a ratio to full time employment) relative to their role must be included for all personnel.
- 5) Please provide a breakdown of all anticipated other direct costs (i.e. the amount, type, and unit cost with as much detail as possible). Examples may include, but not limited to: consulting fees, participant support costs, workshop costs, maintenance or usage fees, program specific software, etc.

- 6) Cost sharing is required at 10% of the total funds requested. The cost share must consist of non-US Government funded contributions that meet the criteria detailed in [22 CFR 226.23](#). Cost sharing may include, but is not limited to: 1) Personnel effort and any associated indirect costs; 2) in-kind contributions (such as office or laboratory space, access to equipment, etc.); 3) cash contributions; or 4) any other costs. Cost-sharing documentation from the contributing entity must be provided at the time of Application submission (in most cases, this will be in the form of a letter signed by the authorized organizational representative). Within the budget narrative described above, please provide additional details outlining the cost-share expectations of the prime institution and any partner institution(s) (if applicable) with details, including dollar amounts and descriptions. The cost share (total 10%) can come from any of the partner organizations. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time.
- 7) Note: Purdue University may request additional detailed budget information following notification to an Applicant that it is under consideration for an award. If necessary, Purdue may conduct discussions to verify cost data, evaluate specific elements of costs, and examine data to determine the necessity, reasonableness and allocability of the costs reflected in the budget and their allowability pursuant to the applicable cost principles.

### 3.14 Application Summary Table

Section	Description
Cover Page ( <i>1 page maximum; does not count against the page limit</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Project title</li> <li>● Lead institution applying for the Award</li> <li>● PI, Co-PI(s): names, titles, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers</li> <li>● Sector of inquiry</li> <li>● Geographic Focus Area(s)</li> <li>● Project length (years, months)</li> <li>● Total budget requested (USD)</li> <li>● Signature and contact information for authorized official from the lead institution (email and phone number)</li> <li>● Contact information for the person responsible for negotiating the final agreement, if different from the above</li> </ul>
Project Summary ( <i>1 page maximum; does not count against the page limit.</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Project Summary: Applicants should clearly identify and justify the sector of inquiry for their Application i.e. “Youth Development, Civic Engagement, and Leadership” or</li> </ul>

	“Measurement of Resilience” (Section 2 of this RFA: 2.1 or 2.2) in the project summary
Research Plan (7 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brief background and local context of development challenge in Ethiopia</li> <li>● Description of research gaps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Applicants should clearly identify and justify the sector of inquiry for their Application i.e. “Youth Development, Civic Engagement, and Leadership” or “Measurement of Resilience” (Section 2 of this RFA: 2.1 or 2.2) in the project summary</li> <li>○ Clear identification of research question(s) and justification for research focus framed in the context of local, social, cultural, and economic background.</li> <li>○ Clear differentiation from past published research and description of innovative concepts and methodology.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Research methods and approaches, including objectives and hypotheses</li> <li>● Description of how the project will leverage the team’s experience with community engagement, private sector, or government entities in Ethiopia</li> <li>● Strategy for research translation [partnership, process, research translation product(s), dissemination plan].</li> <li>● Integration of gender considerations into the research plan (see Appendix 2)</li> </ul>
Project Management (1 page)	Qualifications, roles and responsibilities of team members, including technical and administrative staff
Work Plan (not included in page limit)	Timeline for the entire project period by activity, indicating what, when, by whom and where, using the provided <a href="#">Workplan template</a>
Research Output Reporting (2 page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Link research activities to outputs/deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Describe research outputs intended as deliverables (e.g. journal articles and/or technical reports, white papers, and conference posters) with estimated approx. dates of completion.</li> <li>○ Describe research translated products (e.g. policy briefs, infographics, dissemination workshops) that follow from the translation strategy, with estimated approx. dates of completion for each item.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Brief description of output curation and management strategy (1-2 paragraphs).</li> </ul>

Budget (no page limits)	Use provided Excel Application <a href="#">Budget Template</a> (see budget details in Section 3.12 and 3.13)
Budget Narrative/ Justification (no page limits)	Detailed budget narrative that explains each cost including cost associated with research translation activities. Use the provided <a href="#">Budget Narrative Template</a>
Appendices	<a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Bk676fexrQI8VHZWnO9OhFUspqDNRKCBHGf5F-U2s2E/edit#gid=1171716792">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Bk676fexrQI8VHZWnO9OhFUspqDNRKCBHGf5F-U2s2E/edit#gid=1171716792</a>
List of References (Bibliography)	
PI Qualifications ( <i>maximum 2 pages each</i> )	Curriculum vitae (CV) of the PI (use the provided <a href="#">CV template</a> )
Collaborator qualifications ( <i>maximum 2 pages each</i> )	Curriculum vitae (CV) of any Co-PIs (use the provided <a href="#">CV Template</a> )
<a href="#">Letter of Commitment</a> from research translation partner(s)	Signed letter(s) of commitment from primary research translation partner(s) on the research project
<a href="#">Letter of support</a> from local community/woreda government (only required if the local community/woreda government is not the <u>primary</u> research translation partner)	Signed letter of support for project from the chief Woreda administrator, mayor, chief executive officer of the community where the data will be collected for research study.
Checklist for Application	See <a href="#">Appendix 4</a>

## 4. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

LASER PULSE will conduct a peer review for submitted Applications, followed by Consensus Reviewer Panel meetings organized by sector, to discuss the reviews based on the criteria listed below. Selected Applications will be recommended to USAID for final approval prior to notification of award. Applicants are highly encouraged to develop their Applications with these criteria in mind.

### 4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be rated based on two criteria: Research Merit (RM) and Broader Impact (BI).

#### 4.1.1 Research Merit

The research merit criterion encompasses two sub-criteria: (1) Attention to local context and leveraging local capacity, as well as (2) Technical merit:

- 1) Sub-criterion 1: Attention to local context and leveraging local capacity

*To what extent does the research plan take into account the local social, cultural, and economic contexts in Ethiopia in framing the development challenge, research questions, and research methodology/approach? To what extent does the Application appropriately leverage the team's experience with community engagement, the private sector, or government entities in Ethiopia?*

- 2) Sub-criterion 2: Technical merit

*To what extent is the technical plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? To what extent does the proposed research build off/ or everage the team's ongoing or completed projects? To what extent does the proposed research explore innovative concepts and methodologies?*

#### 4.1.2 Broader Impacts

This criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired outcomes for LASER PULSE; and will be judged based on these questions:

- 1) Sub-criterion 1: Embedded Research Translation

*To what extent does the Application reflect LASER PULSE's Embedded Research Translation model? Key considerations for the model are:*

- a) *Assessment of the appropriateness of the translation partner(s) and the extent to which the partner's (or partners') role(s) in implementing policy and/or program change is explicitly detailed.*
- b) *Extent to which the Application captures the collaborative process by which researcher(s) and translation partner(s) partners will work together, including how the research topic was identified*
- c) *Assessment of the potential impact of the research translation product(s) to be developed, including feasibility of the plan for wider dissemination and any budget-related considerations for the translation strategy.*

- 2) Sub-criterion 2: Gender Mainstreaming

*How well does the proposed research project identify relevant gender issues for the specific context and how has the consideration of these contributed to the overall research design? How will the team composition promote gender inclusive participation and contribute to inform the research focus and implementation at all stages?*

3) Sub-criterion 3: Other Societal Impacts

*What is the potential of the proposed activities to benefit the community/society beyond the scope of the project?*

## **4.2 Evaluation Process**

LASER PULSE staff will conduct a preliminary screening of Applications to ensure they are complete and conform to instructions and requirements.

The selected Applications will be separated into respective technical sector groups and reviewed by a panel consisting of technical experts assembled by LASER PULSE in consultation with USAID. The evaluation criteria emphasizes strengths and weaknesses of each sub-criterion and the overall adjectival rating for the main criteria (RM and BI). Each Application will be evaluated based on the main criteria (RM and BI) and sub-criteria described above. Reviewers are required to provide written narratives on the “strengths” and “weaknesses” of each sub-criterion and the adjectival rating based on the scale of “Excellent (E)”, “Very Good (V)”, “Good (G)”, “Fair (F)”, and “Poor (P)”, according to the descriptions in [Table 1](#). Additionally, Reviewers will also provide overall adjectival rating for the main criteria (RM and BI).

After the individual reviews have been completed, LASER PULSE will conduct a Consensus Reviewer Panel for each of the technical sectors, to deliberate on the review comments and determine a final consensus rating for each Application. The Consensus Panel will also recommend the Applications into one of three funding recommendation categories - “Fund”, “Fund if Possible” and “Do not Fund” - according to those final ratings. LASER PULSE, in consultation with USAID, will make the final selection of successful Applications based on the criteria listed above in addition to regulatory and geographic factors that may be relevant to individual Applications. USAID will provide final review and approval for the selected awards. While five (5) awards are anticipated as a result of this request for Applications, LASER PULSE reserves the right to fund any or none of the Applications submitted. All proposed activities that occur outside of the United States require concurrence of the respective USAID Mission(s) as such, Applicants may be asked to provide additional information to USAID if your Application is shortlisted for a potential award.

**Table 1. Rating Definition for Research Merit and Broader Impact Sub-Criteria**

<b>Adjectival Rating</b>	<b>Descriptive Statement</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Outstanding Application in all aspects. Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion and convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the RFA objectives. Weaknesses, if any, can be easily addressed.
<b>Very Good</b>	Strong Application in all aspects. Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion and convincingly demonstrates a likelihood of meeting the RFA objectives. Weaknesses, if any, can be easily addressed.
<b>Good</b>	Application addresses all aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the ability to meet the RFA objectives but shows some weaknesses, yet the positives of the Application outweigh the negatives.
<b>Fair</b>	Application does not address all aspects of the criterion nor is evidence presented indicating the likelihood of successfully meeting the RFA objectives. Significant weaknesses are demonstrated and clearly outweigh any strengths presented.
<b>Poor</b>	Application does not address all aspects of the criterion and the information presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet the RFA objectives.

## 5. APPENDICES

### 5.1 Appendix 1 – Comprehensive Success Factors

Developed at Purdue University, [Comprehensive Success Factors](#) (CSF) identifies key interrelated factors that define complex, multi-dimensional problems – such as those encountered in the field of global development – by applying a systems approach to delineate a set of conditions, termed “success factors”, which must be present in a given system (e.g., Basic Education sector) in order to enable large-scale impact.

The process as applied by LASER PULSE is briefly summarized as follows. Priority sector focus areas are provided by the host country USAID mission staff. The CSF team then undertakes a systematic, CSF-specific review of thousands of key documents (e.g., Country Development Cooperation Strategies, National Development Plans, NGO grey literature, academic sector-focused research, etc.) to yield the success factors for those focus areas. At the end of this process the Team has a success factor “tree” (Tree) for each technical area, which is essentially a list of all conditions along 12 system levels (such as ‘infrastructure,’ ‘security,’ or ‘behavior change’) noted as required for the sector to function successfully. Once the Trees are finalized, the Team creates a Qualtrics survey from which to gather information on those system conditions that are not present in the existing country context. The survey initially goes to a ‘Scoping Group,’ which comprises key leaders (NGO or donor leaders with long country experience, recognized local or international policy and think tank experts, etc.) who have a broad understanding of the sector at all system levels. The results from the Scoping Group are collected and presented to LASER, and a second round of surveys goes out to a Participant Group, which is a group of researchers and NGO practitioners who are likely Applicants for the LASER RFA. LASER reaches out to its network members, as well as other NGO practitioners based on the USAID Mission’s list of implementing partners, as well as recommendations from these partners about implementers from other donors, as well as local NGO or CBO partners. LASER reaches out to researchers based on network member researchers, donor recommendations, and higher ranked universities in the country.

This larger group provides additional input, which usually confirms the Scoping Group input, and sometimes adds additional detail. The input from these groups provides direction on where the LASER RFA should focus, given the identified gaps in the sector system. LASER creates country and/or sector-specific RFAs based on this process, which is further verified by the USAID mission and sector bureaus. After this final process, LASER is ready to release the RFA. We send out notification to our Network Members, as well as to host country researchers and NGO practitioners who are on our lists from the processes described above. If LASER has been able to hold a pre-conference Research for Development (R4D) workshop, we use that participant list.

## 5.2 Appendix 2 – LASER PULSE Gender Analysis Considerations

Researchers responding to this RFA must consider the questions below when designing Applications. *Please do not answer these questions as written in this Appendix. Instead, show in the research Application (focus, tools, analysis, recommendations, and translation plan) that these questions have been considered to the extent possible and relevant.*

**Note that gender does not mean women.** Gender refers to socially constructed norms and concepts about masculinity and femininity. These norms cut across all other aspects of an individual, as relates to his or her race, class, religion, ethnicity, ability, and age. Research has shown that gender norms are remarkably resilient across cultures [[World Bank Gender Portal](#)].

The LASER PULSE research Award Application will require Applicants to apply a ‘gendered lens’ to the research translation that they propose, so that LASER PULSE does not fund work that reinforces harmful gender norms, or fails to take advantage of opportunities to address gender norms to promote development and human rights goals.

### Research Considerations<sup>4</sup>

In formulating your proposal, please ensure that you have:

- 1) Discussed the relevant gendered social inequalities and/or gender gaps.
- 2) Identified any direct and indirect problem impacts and how they vary by gender.
- 3) Described how these differential impacts inform the research project design.
- 4) Described the relevance of gender considerations to any human subjects research.
- 5) Reviewed literature relating to gender differences and implications of gender to the research field.
- 6) Show that sex-disaggregated (by biological sex of subjects) and gender-sensitive data<sup>5</sup> (contextual/ situational) will be collected and analyzed throughout the research cycle, and included in the final publication and research translation products.
- 7) Demonstrate how differentiated outcomes and impacts on women and men are considered.
- 8) Ensure that all questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, etc. (when included) are also designed to unravel potentially relevant sex and/or gender differences in your data. Particularly, describe how translation products, including policy recommendations, physical products, or practices, could result in subsequent gender-differentiated outcomes.

### Resources for Gender Analysis

- [USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#)
- CARE Gender Marker Guidance: [https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/images/in-practice/Gender-marker/CARE\\_Gender-Marker-Guidance\\_new-colors1.pdf](https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/images/in-practice/Gender-marker/CARE_Gender-Marker-Guidance_new-colors1.pdf)
- <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/the-womens-empowerment-in-agriculture-index>

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from <https://www.genderportal.eu/projects/gender-eu-funded-research-toolkit-and-training>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/dev/38640915.pdf>

### 5.3 Appendix 3 – Glossary of Selected Key Words

**Comprehensive Success Factors (CSF)** - CSF is a systems approach used to identify various crucial constraints in any given technical area that must be addressed to achieve impact. It examines a mutually-exclusive, collectively-exhaustive set of pattern-derived issues tied to outcomes to identify the many underlying aspects of a system that must be addressed to overcome an observed challenge. This innovation science approach focuses on the multiple linkages between stakeholders, resources, and context needed to resolve a problem and so comprehensively sorts ‘symptoms’ from ‘causes’.

**Collaboration** - Willingness to work together in an open and supportive manner to advance the work of LASER PULSE to achieve its goals and objectives; applies to LASER PULSE staff in their interactions with USAID and research teams (e.g. HEI researchers, development actors) that are recipients of LASER-funded awards. Also applies to HEI researchers and development translation partner(s) involved in their funded research.

**Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)** - Each research team receiving an award will be composed of a Principal Investigator (PI) affiliated with the prime recipient, as well as one or more Co-PI(s). LASER PULSE defines Co-PI as a key member of the research team (who is not the PI) that also serves as the point of contact for their institution. If there is more than one team member from a given institution, said institution will inform LASER PULSE who will be their designated Co-PI.

**Development translation partner(s)** - Individual persons engaged in the design, planning, and/or implementation of local, regional, national, or international development programs/projects. This definition refers to personnel of NGOs and community-based organizations; but it can also include individuals representing governments or the private sector in an implementation capacity (e.g., extension agents) as opposed to a funding capacity. Under certain circumstances (e.g., co-creation of research questions), donor staff may also fall under this definition.

**Development Stakeholders** - Any entity involved in international development funding, promotion, and/or implementation, as well as the intended beneficiaries (e.g. local communities and their citizens).

**Higher Education Institution** - Based upon USAID documents, LASER PULSE defines a Higher Education Institution (HEI) as a tertiary education institution that provides educational opportunities that build on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialized fields. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialization. This may include public or private universities, colleges, and training institutes.

Based on the Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as those that provide education in the arts, social sciences and sciences and technology programs offered to undergraduate and graduate students who attend degree programs through any of the delivery modes, regular programs, continuing education and distance and virtual education (*Federal Negarit Gazeta Proclamation # 1152/2019*).

**Research Translation** - An iterative co-design process among academics, translation partner(s), and other stakeholders in which research is adapted for use and intentionally applied to a development challenge.

**Success Factor Tree** - An output of the Comprehensive Success Factors methodology employed by LASER PULSE; it is an extensive outline of the key factors that are likely needed to achieve commonly desirable outcomes when addressing a grand challenge within a given development sector. The tree is organized in a logic format that incorporates a hierarchy (e.g., leaves, twigs, branches, trunk) that conveys issue relatedness and/or dependence in and across categories.

**Translation Partners** - In this RFA, LASER PULSE uses the term “Translation Partners” to refer to development translation partner(s) (see definition above) that are, or are intended to be paired with researchers as part of a team submitting an Application.

#### **5.4 Appendix 4 – Application checklist**

##### **List of required documents for the Application**

- A completed Application (maximum 1 page summary + 10 pages of core content)
- Workplan (not included in the page limit); use template provided
- Detailed budget; use Application budget template provided
- Detailed budget narrative that explains all costs; use template provided
- Curriculum vitae (CV) of the PI (maximum 2 pages); use template provided
- Curriculum vitae (CV) of the Co-PIs (maximum 2 pages each); use template provided
- Signed letter(s) of commitment from each primary research translation partner(s), using the provided [template](#))
- Signed letter(s) of support from local community/Woreda government, using the provided [template](#) (*only required if the local community/Woreda government is not the primary research translation partner*)
- Certificates of completion from the PI and Co-PIs for two online trainings: 1) Gender Analysis in Research and Application; 2) LASER PULSE Research to Translation Training

## 6. REFERENCES

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USAID (2018b). USAID/Ethiopia cross-sectoral youth assessment situational analysis.

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