# Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) 2016/2017 Solicitation

## Full Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

**Invitation to Submit a Full Proposal**
In early March 2017, following the results of compliance checks and relevance evaluations in cooperation with the staff of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. Government (USG) agency partners, the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine invited eligible PEER pre-proposal applicants to submit a full PEER proposal. All other individuals are ineligible to apply. The deadline to submit full proposals is April 21, 2017. The PEER program will only consider proposals prepared and submitted by eligible researchers based at institutions in one of the PEER-eligible countries.

**Electronic Submission Instructions**
All proposals must be submitted electronically via the PEER online application site. *Paper and e-mail submissions are not accepted.* Please carefully review the full text of the program announcement, the instructions below, and the Frequently Asked Questions section of this Web site for further guidance on each required proposal element.

**Proposals must be submitted electronically via the PEER application website by 11:59 PM (U.S. Eastern Daylight Saving Time) on April 21, 2017.**

In order to apply online, please visit the PEER application website and log on using the same e-mail address and password used when you created your account when submitting your pre-proposal. On the landing page you will see a section labeled "Process: PEER Cycle 6." Within this section you will see that an application has been assigned to you. Select "Edit Application" to access the form that will be used to submit your full proposal. Specific instructions are included in each section of the online application and are also presented below. You can save your application as a draft at any time and resume it later. However, we highly recommend that you first review the required application sections online and prepare your answers accordingly in a separate Word document, making sure not to exceed the character count limit for each section. The online application system will count the number of characters for you (including spaces) as you enter your text in each section. **Please note that Zip files are not supported by this online application system. Please use only Microsoft Office, Adobe Portable Document Files (PDF), and JPG files when uploading your documents.** Before submitting your application, you can copy and paste each section into the online application and click the "Submit Application" button. Successful proposals will address the program's objectives as listed in the call for pre-proposals and the selection criteria listed below and will include clear statements of the project goals and explanations of how these goals will be achieved. When writing the full proposal, applicants should consider how their research will contribute to USAID's priorities in the country where the research will take place. Full proposals must expand on the research concepts and methodologies presented in the pre-proposal. **It is not permissible to change the application focus between the pre-proposal stage and full proposal stage.**

## 1. General Principal Investigator (PI) Data

Please answer the first set of questions in the indicated spaces. Some, if not all of the indicated spaces should be pre-populated with information provided in your pre-proposal. You may adjust the title of your full proposal if you wish.

List the duration of your project (from one to three years) and the proposed start date, which should be no earlier than September 1, 2017. All applications must have a U.S. Government (USG)-supported partner.

> For applications with an *extramurally funded USG-supported partner*, please provide the title, award number, and amount of the partner's U.S. federal grant. The USG-supported partner's award must remain active for at least 12 months after the expected start date of the PEER project (which may start no earlier than September 1, 2017) to ensure that both sides have resources available to support their collaboration.

> For applications with an *intramurally funded USG-supported partner* (i.e., partner employed as a staff scientist or researcher by an eligible USG-supported agency), please reference the partner's research project award, amount if applicable, and grant or contract number as provided by the partner agency. The intramural partner's appointment at the participating USG agency must extend for at least 12 months from the start date of the PEER research collaboration, beginning no earlier than September 1, 2017.

Awards will be made only to institutions, so individuals who have no institutional affiliation or whose institutions are not willing to accept and manage a grant for them are not eligible to apply. PIs may submit only one proposal in any one application cycle of the PEER program.

## 2. Project Summary

Please fill out both sections of the summary: scientific merit and development impacts. The summary should be written to be understandable by readers without technical expertise. Briefly and clearly state the goals of the project and the associated proposed activities; explain the role of the proposed USG-supported partner; and describe the anticipated outcomes of the project. The summary must include the following two sections:

> **A. Scientific merit.** *(Character limit: 2,500)*

> **B. Development impacts.** *(Character limit: 2,500)* Please provide only a summary of the development impacts of the project. You will have the opportunity to provide more information in Section 5. In describing development impacts, emphasize how the project relates to USAID country-specific development objectives. http://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/planning/country-strategies-cdcs

## 3. Project Description

Prepare the project description with reference to the review criteria and the guidance provided in this and the preceding sections of this solicitation. Please address each section of the proposal description concisely (within the character limits listed) and include citations in the text, with full references listed in the references section to be included as an appendix in Section 10. If needed, you may also upload up to a total of five figures and/or tables for the entire proposal. Incomplete proposals and those not submitted in the required format will not be considered.

> **A. Background.** Summarize the scope of the development challenge your research will address including issues relevant to both the international and local context. You can include in this section a brief summary of past work done on the proposed topic, as well as any evidence gaps that your PEER research will help fill. Include statistics that describe the magnitude of the development challenge and total population affected; when available, please include statistics that capture the scope of the challenge locally.*(Character limit: 5,000)*

**B. Project objectives.** Provide a clear statement of the research project objectives and/or research questions the PEER project will address. It is important that the project objectives are reasonable for the proposed timeline. *(Character limit: 2,500)*

**C. Research plan.** Describe the project design, procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific objectives of the project. If applicable, describe study populations and interventions. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and present alternative approaches to achieve the aims. **In addition, for projects involving human subjects, select agents, and/or animals, please complete the relevant portions of Section 8.** *(Character limit: 10,000)*

**D. Innovation.** Explain how proposed concepts, approaches, methods, tools, or technologies used in your research may represent an innovative or novel approach to a specific development challenge. *(Character limit: 2,500)*

## 4. Personnel

**A. Prior experience and relevant capabilities of PEER PI.** Briefly explain the qualifications of the PEER PI as they relate to the proposed project and illustrate how the project will build upon existing expertise. *(Character limit: 2,500)*

**B. Role of the USG-supported partner.** Explain the role of the USG-supported partner in the proposed PEER project and how the proposed research relates to his or her expertise and/or active award. Explain how the collaboration will leverage existing USG investments in science and technology and promote capacity building in the country or region where the research will take place. *(Character limit: 2,500)*

**C. Other collaborations.** Describe collaborations with local and international partners (other than your USG-supported partner). This includes in-country partners such as government ministries, non-governmental organizations, the USAID Mission, and research institutes/universities. Connections to private companies, international networks or resources, and international organizations should also be described if applicable. Explain the nature of these collaborations and describe what each partner will specifically contribute to the Research Plan. (*Character limit: 4,000)*

## 5. Development Impact

Before writing this section, please review USAID's website entitled "[What We Do](#)" and the website of the USAID [Mission](#) in your country to assist you in describing how your project would address USAID's interests and objectives in fostering sustainable development.

**A. Development impact** (*Character limit: 5,000*). Describe how your proposed PEER research will impact broader social good in your country or region. Describe any benefits of the research to marginalized groups, particularly low-income individuals, people with disabilities, women/girls, and other socially relevant categories. Explain how you will measure success of your research project, including indicators you may use to track progress.

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

- *Policy or program change:* How will the results of your research be used to improve local, regional, or national policies or programs? Will your research result in recommendations for government policymakers or NGO-sponsored programs?
- *Private sector implementation and technology adoption:* If the proposed PEER research involves the development of a new product or service, what opportunities are available for commercialization? How will access be provided to marginalized groups, particularly low-income individuals, people with disabilities, women/girls, and other socially relevant categories?

- *Community engagement:* How will the research benefit local communities? Describe opportunities for follow-up activities after the project ends, e.g., plans for building sustainability into activities or programs with local stakeholders.

**B. Research capacity building** (*Character limit: 5,000*). Explain how the project will build research capacity in your institution, country, and/or region. Plans for promoting the participation of women and underrepresented minorities are strongly encouraged  (e.g., low-income; low-caste; racial, ethnic, and religious minorities; indigenous peoples; gender and sexual minorities; and other socially relevant groups).

*Examples of research capacity building activities may include, but not be limited to:*

- *Training*: Provide examples of any seminars, workshops, conferences, or other training activities planned as part of the project, including estimates of the numbers and types of people to be trained (men/women, undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, laboratory technicians, industry professionals, policymakers, and other stakeholders).
- *Curriculum development:* Include examples of new courses, graduate or undergraduate degree programs, research methodologies, or tutorials to be developed as a result of the PEER project.
- *Research equipment:* Describe the benefit of any PEER-funded research equipment that goes beyond scope of the PEER work. For example, would purchased research equipment provide a new training opportunity for students or other faculty?
- *Data and infrastructure capacity:* Describe the benefit of any expansion in data-processing or Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure that would be made possible by the PEER award.
- *Network strengthening:* Explain how the PEER project will help improve connections to international technical and professional communities.

## 6. Data Sharing and Dissemination Plan (*Character limit: 3,000)*

USAID-funded research products must be made available and accessible to the public, industry, and the scientific community. *PEER awardees must submit a copy of any dataset created or obtained in performance of this award in a machine-readable, non-proprietary format to an online data repository of their choosing.* The submission must include supporting documentation describing the dataset, such as code books, data dictionaries, data gathering tools, notes on data quality, and explanations of any redactions. To read more about USAID's Open Data policy, please visit http://www.usaid.gov/data.  In this section, please describe a plan for ensuring that your data will be made accessible to the public. Your plan should address the following five
questions:

1. Which file formats will you use for storing your data and why?
2. Which online archive/repository/database have you identified as a place to deposit data? Hosting data on a personal website is not sufficient.
3. How will you document your data? Use of an existing metadata standard is highly recommended (e.g., EML, DDI, etc.).
4. Are there ethical or privacy issues with sharing your data? If so, how will these be resolved?
5. An "embargo" is when uploaded data is kept hidden from the general public for a specified amount of time. Will you request an embargo for your data and why?

Please also describe how the research findings will be disseminated to key stakeholders and the broader scientific community, e.g., journal publication of results, informational meetings for stakeholders, or other means appropriate to your field.

**7. Timeline** *(Character limit: 3,000, plus upload limit 2 MB)*

For the anticipated duration of the award, provide a list of major project activities and milestones along with the estimated time required to complete each. (If your timeline is in a spreadsheet or graphical format, you may upload it in Section 7 instead of entering the information in the textbox.)

**8. Supplemental Information**

    **A.    Supplemental information for studies with human subjects.** Section A should only be completed if your project involves human subjects. Otherwise, please continue on to Sections B and C. All foreign and international organizations receiving PEER funds are responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in research under this award and must comply with the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects ([45 CFR 46](http://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/efile/Default.asp)). If selected to receive funding, PEER projects involving human subjects cannot be initiated without prior submission and approval of a research protocol and a U.S. Federal-Wide Assurance (FWA)-registered Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the PEER-funded work. Additional instructions on protocol and IRB approval will be given to successful applicants prior to award initiation. The web page for electronic submission of new IRB registrations and FWAs, or update/renewal of existing registrations can be found at http://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/efile/Default.asp

        *I.    Protection for human subjects* *(Character limit 3,000).* In this section please provide a description and background information on any services, education, drugs, devices, interventions, tools, and approaches that involve human subjects. Additionally please identify:

            ● Direct and indirect risks to the human subjects involved in the study
            ● Informed consent process: Please explain how human subjects will be informed and protected from both direct and indirect risks

        *II.    Safety and monitoring of human subjects data* *(Character limit 3,000).* In this section please describe how you will monitor human subjects data collection to ensure quality and consistency. Please describe plans for assessing subject compliance to intervention (e.g., questionnaires, direct observation, pill counts, etc.).

            ● Describe how those responsible for data collection will be trained and monitored
            ● Discuss data entry and cleaning, and procedures for ongoing data management and quality assurance.
            ● Discuss plans for any sub-awards and how data coming from these sources will be monitored

    **B. Supplemental information for studies involving select agents** (*Character limit: 5,000).* All foreign institutions and international organizations who conduct research involving select agents must be in compliance with the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations involving Select Agents. (Please see [42 CFR part 73](#) for the select agent list; and [7 CFR part 331](#) and [9 CFR part 121](#) for the relevant animal and plant pathogens). In this Section, applicants proposing work with select agents must address the following key elements appropriate for their institutions:

        ● Any potentially hazardous materials and/or procedures included in the proposed research
        ● Safety, security, training, procedures for ensuring that only approved/appropriate individuals have access to the select agents
        ● Applicable laws, regulations and policies equivalent to 42 CFR part 73.

**C. Supplemental information for studies involving animals** (*Character limit: 5,000).* All foreign and international organizations receiving PEER funds are responsible for ensuring humane treatment of animals involved in research in compliance with the U.S. Animal Welfare Act. Successful applications involving animal will be required to submit a full Animal Use Protocol (AUP) prior to award initiation. In this section applicants should include:

- Identification of the species and approximate number of animals to be used, tracked, sampled, etc.
- Rationale for involving animals and for the appropriateness of the species and numbers used
- A complete description of the proposed use of the animals or the samples acquired from those animals
- A description of procedures designed to assure that discomfort and injury to animals will be limited to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of scientifically valuable research, and that analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs will be used where indicated and appropriate to minimize discomfort and pain to animals
- A description of any euthanasia method to be used

## 9. Project Budget

### A. Proposed budget total (in U.S. $)

- Single institution awards are anticipated to range in size from U.S. $40,000 to $80,000 per year for one to three years. A few larger and more complex projects (those involving multiple institutions, with one of them serving as the lead) may receive between U.S. $ 80,000 - $100,000 per year for up to three years**.**
- For single institution awards, as the total requested budget cannot exceed U.S. $80,000 per year for a maximum of three years, the total requested budget must not exceed U.S. $240,000.
- For multiple institution awards, as the total requested budget cannot exceed U.S. $100,000 per year for a maximum of three years, the total requested budget must not exceed U.S. $300,000. These total budget figures include indirect costs. If requested, indirect costs (costs supporting overall institutional operations and management) should be kept to a minimum and must be fully explained and justified in section 9.C.IV with details provided on what specific institutional infrastructure elements or support services are covered.

**B. Budget form** *(Upload limit: 2 MB).* Provide an itemized budget for the project using the budget form provided. Projects may last no more than three years, and proposals for multi-year projects must indicate the expected costs for each year by filling in the columns of the budget form accordingly. Value for the investment will be an important consideration in proposal evaluation and selection, so all costs should be reasonable and necessary. In addition to a comprehensive budget table covering the entire project, if your project involves more than one developing country institution, **please prepare a separate budget table for each**, so that it is clear what funds each institution needs, regardless of whether you would ask for all the funds to be disbursed to the lead institution or whether you would ask for separate awards to be made to each participating institution. The following requests are not allowed:

- Costs for the construction of new buildings
- Costs for the purchase of vehicles, although vehicle rental costs are allowed provided they are explained and justified.
- Contingency costs
- Customs duties, as normally awards supported with USAID funds are exempt from duties in countries receiving U.S. assistance. If the items to be bought will not be exempt from such duties, funds to pay these charges must come from other non-PEER sources and must be explained in section 9.C.V of the proposal.

**C. Budget request justification** *(Character limit: 3,000).* Provide an explanation and justification for any salary or stipend support requested, including a list of the positions to be supported and the role each will play in the project. Also provide an explanation and justification for proposed purchases of any equipment items costing more than $5,000. (Please see section 9.C (I-V) below for more details on allowable costs.) PEER funds may not be used to cover the USG-funded partner's salary, travel[1], or other expenses. In consenting to serve as partners on PEER projects, USG-funded partners must clearly understand that they cannot receive PEER funds and that, while they are encouraged to seek supplemental funds from their federal science agency, such supplemental support cannot be guaranteed.

I. **Travel Costs.** Provide the number, duration, location, and purpose for any project-related trips for which funds are requested, along with the titles or positions of the travelers. (Please see the section below for more details on allowable costs.) (*Character limit: 3,000*)

- Travel costs, salaries, and other expenses for participants who are citizens of countries that are not PEER-eligible are not allowed. This includes foreign collaborators or students from non-eligible countries. USG-supported participants should contact their agency program managers to request international supplements to their grants if necessary.
- International air travel must be by U.S. air carriers to the maximum extent such service is available as required under the [Fly America Act](http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191), http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191), so applicants should estimate their air travel budgets accordingly. First class or business class travel is not permitted**.**
- If visits to the United States lasting more than 30 days each are planned, applicants should include in their travel budgets an extra $100 for each such long visit to cover the cost of the medical examination that will be required as part of the visa application process.

II. **Equipment and Supplies.** Purchase of equipment and supplies required for the research is allowed. Where possible, projects should leverage existing durable equipment. Requests for durable equipment should be justified in terms of importance to successfully completing the research project. Please provide an explanation and justification for proposed purchases of any equipment items costing more than U.S. $5,000. Please also include plans for maintenance of the equipment during and beyond the project period. (*Character limit: 3,000*)

III. **Other Direct Costs.** This section should include items such as computer services, publication costs, workshops and conferences, or other specific costs that are not covered elsewhere in the budget justification section.

IV. **Salaries and Stipends** Salary support for the PI is generally not provided, but will be considered on a case-by-case basis if essential and fully justified. Salaries for other researchers and technical personnel (including project participants and substitute instructors required to cover the PI's usual teaching duties) are allowable, as are stipends for students involved in the project. Applicants requesting salary and stipend coverage in their project budgets must include in this section of the application form a list of positions to be supported, an explanation of their roles, and the percentage of their time that would be devoted to the project. (*Character limit: 3,000*)

V. **Indirect costs.** If requested, indirect costs (costs supporting overall institutional operations and management) should be kept to a minimum and must be fully explained and justified, with details provided on what specific institutional infrastructure elements or support services are covered. If your institution does not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with the U.S. Government, indirect costs can make up no more than 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in your budget. MTDC includes all salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first $25,000 of each subaward

you would plan to make to partner institutions involved in your project. MTDC does not include equipment, rental costs, scholarships and fellowships, and the portion of each subaward in excess of $25,000. *(Character limit: 3,000)*

**VI.** **Other funding.** List the source and amount of any other funds that you have received or applied for from other sources to support this project, including any support received directly from USAID. *(Character limit: 3,000)*

## 10. Required Attachments

In addition to the completed proposal form, please also upload the following items in your proposal submission (your application will not be complete and cannot be submitted without these attachments):

**A. Appendix**:

- *References*: Please include your references (literature citations), figures, and diagrams (if any) in a single document and refer to them in your project description (for example, Figure 1 in Appendix, etc.). It is strongly encouraged to include a list of references.
- *Figures and Tables:* Please ***do not exceed five figures/tables*** combined into one document, and do not include additional project narrative in this document. *(Upload limit: 4 MB)*

**B.I. Key personnel form**: Please complete the key personnel form to provide information regarding the PI and each co-PI and/or other key personnel.  Key personnel are defined as individuals who will contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of the project, whether or not salaries are requested. Consultants and postdoctoral researchers should be included if they meet this definition as well as any other significant contributors. *(Upload limit: 2 MB)*

**B.I. Key personnel form**: Please upload the CV of all key project personnel. If the project includes more than one developing country institution, be sure to include a CV for the key project participant at each institution, but do not include the USG-supported partner's CV, as that should be uploaded separately in section 10.c). Please do not submit electronic copies of publications or other background materials, as they will not be forwarded to reviewers. Each CV should be no more than two pages in length and include citations for no more than five to ten recent relevant publications or patents and all the CVs must be uploaded in one single file. A sample CV template is available for your reference. *(Upload limit: 2 MB)*

**C. Curriculum vitae (USG-supported partner):** Please upload your USG-supported partner's brief CV, which should be no more than two pages in length and include citations for no more than five to ten recent relevant publications or patents. Please do not submit electronic copies of publications or other background materials, as they will not be forwarded to reviewers. If the project involves more than one USG-supported partner, please combine their CVs into one single file before uploading. *(Upload limit: 1 MB)*

**D. USG award (grant) abstract:** If your USG-supported partner is extramurally supported, please upload a copy of the abstract of his or her USG award (grant).  *(Upload limit: 2 MB)*

**E. Letter of support from USG-supported partner:** The letter must be written on official institutional letterhead and must list the title and award number of the USG-supported partner's active USG grant, contract, or cooperative agreement or specify his or her employment status with a USG agency participating in PEER. The letter must provide details on how the proposed project relates to this USG-supported grant and explain the partner's expected role in the project and the level of integration of the proposed project with the partner's specific area of research. **The letter must be signed by the USG-supported partner.** In their support letters, partners should emphasize their level of commitment to the project, and such commitment should not be contingent upon receiving supplemental funding. **If the letter of support from your partner that you included with your pre-proposal was sufficiently detailed to address the**

**points listed above, you may upload the same letter with this full proposal. Otherwise, you should obtain a new and more detailed letter from your USG-supported partner.** *(Upload limit: 2 MB)*

**F. Letter of support from an official at the PI's institution who is legally authorized to make commitments on the institution's behalf:** If your project involves more than one developing country institution, please submit a separate support letter from each. The letter must be signed and written on official institutional letterhead and must include the following elements:

I. Confirmation that the institution supports the participation of its staff in the proposed project, would be willing to receive and administer any grant funds awarded, and would be permitted under local regulations to receive grant funds from a foreign sponsor

II. A brief description of the institution's structures and practices for project management and financial oversight, as well as a description of the process by which the institution could receive grant funds from a foreign sponsor

III. A brief description of resources that the institution would be making available (if any) to facilitate the project, whether in cash or in kind, for example, by paying the salary of the PI or other staff for the time he or she works on the project, providing substitute instructors to cover the PI's teaching duties so he or she is free to work on the project, or providing laboratory or office space, access to equipment, or office support staff. Examples of other grants your institution has received from foreign sponsors (if any), including the project title, sponsoring organization's name, amount, dates, and name and e-mail of contact person at the sponsoring organization. *(Upload limit: 4 MB)*

**G. Environmental consequences checklist:** All USAID-supported projects are required to comply with USAID Environmental Procedures (see Title 22 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Part 216 (22 CFR 216). Applicants will need to complete and upload a brief form indicating any special environmental conditions that may be involved in their projects. A copy of this form will be available on the application site.

## 11. Review Process and Criteria

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will convene review panels of experts who will evaluate proposals for scientific and technical merit and development impact using the PEER review criteria stated below.

As part of the peer review process, all proposals will:

- Receive a written critique.
- Compete for available funds with funding decisions based on:
  - Scientific and technical merit;
  - Development impact of the proposed project and relevance to USAID country-specific programmatic interests, as stated in the solicitation;
  - Availability of funds; and
  - Additional review criteria listed below.

All full proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria described below.

**Review Criteria**

An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be considered for funding. The proposal's scientific merit and development impact will be prioritized by reviewers.

1. **Scientific merit and study design:** This section is the most critical for determining scientific merit. The reviewers will evaluate (1) whether the background information clearly identifies a gap in evidence that informs the rationale and the study objectives; (2) how scientific knowledge and technical capability will be advanced; whether the overall study design, outcome measures, study population, intervention, and analyses are clear, well-reasoned, and appropriate to accomplish the objectives and specific aims of the project; (3) whether the investigators clearly recognize the limitations and difficulties inherent to their project. Adequate citations and references to pertinent literature are essential.

2. **Development impact:** This section is the most critical for determining the development impact of the proposed research. The reviewers will evaluate (1) whether the project addresses a development question in alignment with USAID development objectives in the proposed focus area; (2) the likelihood of a sustained development impact; and (3) the likelihood that current USAID or partner country programmatic practices or policy will be influenced. In addition, reviewers will evaluate:

   - Broader development impacts: What are broader development impacts of the project, including new or enhanced partnerships, collaborations or linkages with policy-makers, the local community, industry, and government stakeholders? Does the PI have existing collaborations with other researchers and/or relevant in-country organizations that enhance the proposed research project? What are the plans for outreach and/or community engagement? Are benefits for marginalized groups expected?
   - Research capacity building: Will the project strengthen research capacity in-country by involving a broader group of students, local researchers, marginalized groups, etc.? Are the institutional support, equipment, and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed?

3. **Investigators:** Are the PI, co PI(s), USG-supported partners and senior personnel qualified to achieve the research goals of the project by having the relevant education, experience, training, and/or accomplishments? Will the participation of the USG-supported partner enhance the proposed project? Does it appear that both sides are committed to working together and have a clear plan for how that collaboration will be carried out? How will the research, expertise, and/or resources of the USG-supported partner be leveraged in the PEER project? Does the study team include expertise in all the areas needed for the project to succeed?

4. **Innovation:** Does the project propose novel application, utilization, and/or generation of scientific methodologies or practices; challenge existing paradigms or programmatic practice; or address an innovative hypothesis? Does the research include the development of a new solution or intervention, or does it apply technology in a new way?

5. **Data sharing and dissemination plan:** Does the plan answer the five questions about preparation for data sharing? Does the plan discuss how the research findings will be disseminated to key stakeholders and utilized to improve scientific capacity, policies, and programs?

6. **Timeline:** Is the project timeline reasonable?

7. **Budget and period of support:** Is the project budget requested reasonable? If funds are requested for other institutions besides the PI's institution, are they consistent with the PEER project goals? What percentage of the PI's budget comes from leveraging or cost sharing from USG networks and other non-USG resources? Are all budget justifications appropriate?

8. **Supplemental information for studies with human subjects, select agents, and animals:**
   For proposed projects involving human subjects, select agents, or animals: are there clear plans for safeguarding the welfare of participants, and minimizing potential risks? Are the proposed studies compliant with cited U.S. laws and regulations? Has the PI demonstrated sufficient measures to mitigate risk or negative and/or unintended consequences of research in these key areas?