



Guideline for the Project Proposal

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Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects

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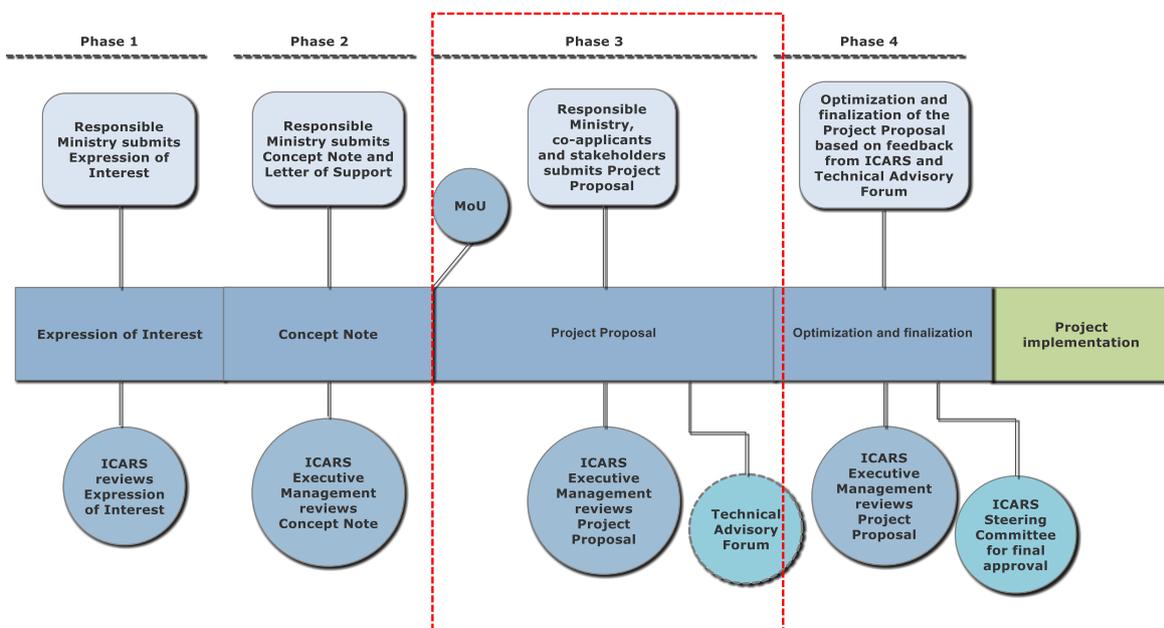
1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on how to develop the Project Proposal as illustrated in Figure 1. For information about the application process as a whole, please see the *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*.

If your country is interested in partnering with ICARS on an implementation research project, but have not yet forwarded an Expression of Interest (EoI) and a Concept Note, please see *Guideline for the Expression of Interest and the Concept Note* or contact ICARS for further information at contact@icars-global.org.

The Responsible Ministry (or ministries) should ensure that the Project Proposal complies with what is stated in this guide, and in the *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*, while using the templates provided. If in doubt, please contact the ICARS Advisor. The Responsible Ministry must also ensure synergy with other related ongoing or planned research projects/activities and ensure that the Project Proposal is developed using the best national research expertise. The Project Proposal will not be considered if there is doubt about the level of involvement and engagement from the Responsible Ministry.

FIGURE 1. APPLICATION PHASES OF FOCUS IN THIS GUIDE





2. Developing the Project Proposal

The Project Proposal consists of a description of the Project Proposal and four appendices. Please use the templates provided when preparing the Project Proposal and the appendices. All documents must be prepared using A4, Verdana font size 9 and 1.5 spacing. Any additional documents will not be considered.

TABLE 1. DOCUMENTS TO INCLUDE IN THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

Mandatory Documents	Length	Submitted in
<i>Project Proposal</i>	A maximum of 20 A4 pages, excluding basic information and references	PDF-format
Appendices		
<i>Log frame</i>	No limit	Excel-format
<i>Budget</i>	No limit	Excel-format (XLS, XLSX)
<i>CVs of the Project Coordinator and key researchers</i>	A maximum of two A4 pages per project participant	PDF-format

The Project Proposal provides a detailed explanation of all aspects of the research project, including a log frame, a time plan and a detailed budget. The templates provided for the Project Proposal are structured around 17 sections, each with its own heading. All 17 sections must be used and no new sections should be added. It is important to ensure that the proposal is clear and focused. See below for guidance on what to include in each section.

TABLE 2. BASIC INFORMATION CONTENT

Heading	Content
<i>Date of submission</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of submission of the Project Proposal
<i>Project title</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project title
<i>Start date and end date</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the research project begins When the research project ends <p><i>*Please note that the specific duration of the research project is agreed upon with ICARS before submitting the Project Proposal.</i></p>
<i>Total budget</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total budget of the research project in USD, as stated in the budget template
<i>Responsible Ministry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the Responsible Ministry (or ministries) applying for the grant Name of the department within the ministry responsible for the application Name of the head of the department within the ministry
<i>Project Coordinator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full name Title and academic qualifications Name of the research institution or ministry where the Project Coordinator is employed Name of the department where the Project Coordinator works Name of the head of the department where the Project Coordinator works
<i>Lead Research Institution and Lead Researcher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of Lead Research Institution Full name of Lead Researcher Title and academic qualifications Name of the department where the Lead Researcher works Name of the head of the department where the Lead Researcher works
<i>Co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of each co-applicant research institution/university/stakeholder Name of the responsible department/institution within research institution/university/stakeholder Describe the role of each research institution/university/stakeholder
<i>Finance Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name the ministry or research institution/university responsible for finance management
<i>Key researchers listed with CVs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List name, title and institution of the key researchers listed in "CVs of the Project Coordinator and Project Participants".

**TABLE 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

Heading	Content
<i>Summary/Abstract</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of the research project, including rationale, relevance, aim, objectives, project methodology and expected outcomes.
<i>State-of-the-art and rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of literature that is relevant and related to the research project. • A description of how the research project will provide new knowledge in the scientific field concerned. • A description of how the research project relates to other prior and on-going research and other relevant activities (national and international).
<i>Relevance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the relevance of the research project with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country priorities, policies, regulations and guidelines, including AMR National Action Plans. - Public, private and other stakeholders within the country. - ICARS' five core principles (country ownership, One Health lens, partnership, solution-focused, and sustainability).
<i>Aim and objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the aim and objectives of the research project.
<i>Outputs and expected outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the outputs and expected outcomes of the individual work packages in the table provided.
<i>Expected impact</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the expected policy/legislative, societal and economic impact of the research project.
<i>Methodology</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the study design and methodology to address the specified aim and objectives. • Describe the proposed interventions. • Describe the approaches to research capacity and capability strengthening. • Describe the mechanisms to facilitate the uptake and scale-up of solutions into policy, programmes and practice by the relevant stakeholders. • Describe how the economic and behavioural aspects of the intervention(s) are addressed. • Include the Implementation Research statement consolidating the study design, intervention/solution, implementation strategies and research outcomes.
<i>Ethical considerations and approvals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the ethical approvals and gatekeeper and other permissions that will be needed to conduct the study.
<i>Theory of change*</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how and why the research project is expected to bring about change in the country. Emphasise the methods/mechanisms to facilitate uptake of the research generated and how the evidence-based solutions will be translated into policy, programmes and practice by the relevant stakeholders.
<i>Work packages and milestones</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the research plan, including the individual activities in work packages. • Include a timeline for the research project with milestones for each activity, using the template provided.
<i>Project organisation and management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the project will be managed overall and day-to-day including the roles and responsibilities of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Responsible Ministry (or ministries) - The Lead Research Institution/University/Lead Researcher - The co-applicant research institutions/universities - Partner stakeholders (public, private and non-governmental) - The Project Coordinator - The ICARS Advisor
<i>Partnerships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline how the research project will draw on and integrate with related national and international activities. • If specific partnerships have been identified, please describe the rationale of choosing them and the role they will play.
<i>Stakeholder involvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the Project Proposal has been co-developed with relevant stakeholders. This includes both the co-applicant institutions/universities and public, private and non-governmental partner stakeholders. • Describe how the continued participation and engagement of, and coordination with, the relevant co-applicant research institutions/universities and partner stakeholders is ensured throughout the research project.
<i>Publication and dissemination strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the results of the research project will be communicated and disseminated to different stakeholders locally, nationally, and in the



	<p>global community. Keep in mind that, in addition to academic publications and dissemination in the scientific community, the results should be communicated to a wider range of relevant stakeholders such as policy briefs, workshops, multimedia etc.</p> <p><i>*Please note that ICARS' communications team will support this effort.</i></p>
<i>View to large-scale implementation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the Responsible Ministry, together with partner stakeholders and others, anticipate to do a large-scale implementation of the identified solution(s).
<i>Risk Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe identified risks for the research project at each stage of implementation and how they will be mitigated.
<i>References</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List publications and reports etc. used in the Project Proposal.

2.1. Log Frame

The Project Proposal must contain a draft log frame which describes the links and logical flow between planned activities, expected results (outputs) and desired changes (outcomes), including the associated indicators and targets. A full log frame must be developed and submitted to ICARS during the first half year of the research project. Please use the *Log Frame Template*.

The log frame should be used as a dynamic tool for improving the planning, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of the research project. The log frame should be regularly updated and be used actively in the ongoing dialogue between the Project Coordinator, the Lead Researcher, the ICARS Advisor and other project participants. In addition to highlighting the links and logical flow, the log frame is also a way to flag challenges and ways to overcome those throughout project implementation.

An updated log frame must be included in the annual reporting to ICARS. See *Guideline for Project Administration for more information*.

2.2. Budget

As described in the *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*, the ministry/institution having the Finance Manager role is responsible for managing the finance, including financial reporting in addition to overall fiduciary oversight. See *Tasks and Responsibilities of the Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher* for more detailed information.

The Project Proposal must contain a budget for the research project, which should be developed using the *Budget Template*.

- Budget form 1: budget for each co-applicant research institution or university (including Lead Research Institution/University), partner stakeholders or subcontractors
- Budget form 2: total budget of the research project
- Budget form 3: list of involvement in man-months for each researcher and project participant
- Budget form 4: list of planned domestic and international flights/travel arrangements
- Budget form 5: budget notes that explain and elaborate on relevant budget items

The budget forms must be filled in USD with the amounts applied for (not including co-funding). It is expected that the Responsible Ministry and co-applicant institutions or universities and partner stakeholders will provide additional resources to the research project. Co-funding may be provided in the form of monetary contributions or as payment 'in kind', i.e. by making equipment, staff etc. available, in which case this should be detailed in the budget notes (budget form 5).

The budget of subcontractors must be included in the budget of one of the partner co-applicant research institution or universities or partner stakeholders if applicable, and should be clearly explained in the budget notes (budget form 5).



Eligible budget items

- Salaries and emoluments
- Tuition fees/educational grants
- Expenses for trips and fieldwork
- Research equipment and material
- Publication, dissemination and outreach
- Overhead
- External audit

Salaries and emoluments

This budget item covers salaries for staff. The salaries are expected to reflect the actual salary ranges according to the local cost norms. The specific salary rates should always be agreed with ICARS. Salaries are either compensation/replacement salary paid to the institution for the time the staff allocated to the research project, or compensation payment for over-time, either hourly or performance based. Payment for consultancy fees are explicitly precluded.

ICARS will not cover salary for the time spent related to the research project in the Responsible Ministry (or ministries), since this is regarded as an in-kind contribution from the country. However, salary and economy travel costs of the Project Coordinator for involvement in the co-operation and coordination of the research project can be covered, even if the person is working in the Responsible Ministry.

By signing off on the Project Proposal, the ministry/institution in charge of the financial management of the grant verifies that the budgeted project salaries and fees in the budget for co-applicant research institutions or universities, partner stakeholders and subcontractors comply with applicable collective labour agreements. The ministry/institution must also ensure that current remuneration ranges at all co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders are applied and that salaries in the budget are based on gross salaries and do not include double payment or payments on consultancy terms.

It is the responsibility of the ministry/institution to ensure that the budget for salaries includes any additional allowances, holiday allowances, labour market pension schemes, pension contributions, salary increases triggered by labour market agreements and seniority etc. The co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders are responsible for insurance of individual project participants (including during travel). Thus, ICARS cannot be held responsible for injuries and accidents in connection with implementing the research project.

Tuition fees/educational grants

Tuition fees, educational grants and research costs for master's and PhD students can be covered for the duration of the research project. The educational grants must follow the rules and regulations of the institution in question and at a national level. The grant is placed at the disposal of the institution and is intended to cover expenses incurred in connection with the grant, i.e. direct research costs, courses, brief trips and study periods at other national or international institutions. Throughout the research project ICARS will also provide supervision where needed, including through dedicated international research expertise.

When the research project has come to an end, ICARS does not have any financial commitments. Therefore, the institution in which the students are enrolled must clearly state in the budget notes that they will provide the financial support needed to finalise the master's or the PhD project, had it not been completed by the end of the research project.

The research should be conducted within the borders of the partner country. This means that ICARS only where specific competences are not available nationally, will cover costs for PhD students enrolled outside the partner country. If that is the case, travel expenses for planned trips and fieldwork must be included in the budget under the budget item "expenses for trips and fieldwork".

Expenses for trips and fieldwork

For project staff, the project budget can only cover accommodation costs, per diem and other reimbursable costs according to their institution's policies, regulations and local cost-norms. The cheapest fare should be applied and frequent flyer points earned on the flights cannot be used for private purposes. Budgeted travel must be justified and directly related to project activities. The table outlining planned flights as part of the budget template must correspond with the travel expenses.



If a researcher is not covered by personal insurance or similar, an amount for health insurance per month for travel outside the home country may be included.

Travel expenses for master's or PhD students enrolled at institutions outside the partner country must be included under this budget item.

Research equipment and materials

All purchases must be in accordance with international and national procurement regulations. The budget items for project and research equipment cover the running costs and expenditure of acquiring necessary equipment, apparatus, literature, IT equipment, insurance, etc.

Project expenses must not include VAT, in the case that it is possible for ICARS, co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders to receive VAT refund.

Publication, dissemination and outreach

Under this budget item, expenditures for ongoing, current or subsequent dissemination and publication of research findings may be included, for instance:

- Publishing of reports etc.
- Minor publications for local dissemination
- Production of material for dissemination through websites and other electronic media
- Participation in conferences
- Holding of workshops and seminars
- Alternative forms of dissemination

Research results must be published open access in peer-reviewed journals in accordance with *ICARS' Intellectual Property and Open Access Policy*. Publishing costs should be included in the budget.

Travel expenses and salaries in connection with workshops and conferences must be included under their respective budget lines.

Please note that ICARS' communications team will support the project's communication and dissemination of research findings.

Overhead

Overheads are calculated as a fixed percentage of direct costs following the rates given below in Table 4. For partner private sector stakeholders and for-profit organisations the budget can only include salaries and travel expenses covering their direct contribution to the project activities, meaning that no overhead to cover indirect administration costs can be included.

The following indirect costs are considered to be covered by the overhead:

- Management involvement in the cooperation and coordination of activities at participating research institutions and universities
- Recurrent office and office set-up expenses (office furniture, rent, cleaning, stationery, transport, electricity and water, support staff, and other general recurrent expenses)
- Expenses related to staff carrying out general administrative tasks, such as budget, accounting, HR, IT and legal tasks.

Additional funds cannot be allocated to these types of expenses over and above the overhead.

TABLE 4. MAXIMUM OVERHEAD RATES

Type of Institution	Maximum Overhead
LMIC-based research institutions, universities and non-profit organisations	15 %
Research institutions, universities and non-profit organisations based elsewhere	10 %

** For multilateral organisations the general norm to cover indirect costs is 10 % overhead. However in case the governing bodies of a multilateral organisation has a fixed overhead/indirect cost rate that is higher, ICARS may on a case-by-case basis make an exemption to this rule.*



The overhead rates provided above are the *maximum* rates allowed. If a co-applicant research institution, university or partner stakeholder has an actual overhead/indirect cost rate that is lower than the maximum rate provided above, the lower rate will apply and the institution/university/stakeholder may *not* increase the funding request to the maximum overhead rate allowed. Co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders are required to provide documentation if they have a general overhead/indirect cost rate.

Example

A participating non-profit organisation based in an LMIC has an organisational actual overhead/indirect cost rate of 8 %, i.e. for every 1,000 dollars in direct costs, it has 80 dollars in indirect costs. Rather than defaulting to the maximum rate of 15 % overhead, 8 % must be included in the budget.

The actual overhead awarded in a grant budget may vary up to the maximum overhead rate and is based on a case-by-case decision depending on factors including, but not limited to, the type of research project, the level of administrative effort required, the overall grant size and the extent of sub-awards.

Audit

The annual and the final accounts must be externally audited, and the audit is to include the entire set of project accounts, including the accounts of every partner institutions/stakeholders. The maximum amount to be used for audits is 4,500 USD per year and 7,700 USD for the final audit. The funds for audit are earmarked. Additional expenses will not be accepted, but must be borne by the research institution or ministry responsible for the financial reporting. The audit expenses are not subject to overhead. See *Guideline for Project Administration* for more information.

2.3. CVs of the Project Coordinator and Key Researchers

CV's of the Project Coordinator and key researchers must be enclosed. It is important that:

- The individual CVs do not exceed two A4 pages (one page CV listing experience applicable to the project and one page listing key scientific publications and reports relevant to the application)
- All CVs must be compiled to a single PDF where the names of everyone are clearly stated in a table of contents which constitutes the front page of the appendix.

Please use *Template for CVs of the Project Coordinator and Key Researchers*.

**TABLE 5. CV CONTENT**

Heading	Content
<i>Biodata</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State if the person is the Project Coordinator or a key researcher • Enter full name • Enter job title • Brief description of area of specialization • State the anticipated total involvement in person months throughout the research project
<i>Contact information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter address of work place • Enter phone number • Enter email address • Enter an URL (optional)
<i>Scientific qualifications and other qualifications of relevance to the re-search project</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly describe the qualifications (scientific and/or other) that the Project Coordinator/researcher can contribute with in the research project
<i>Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List educational activities of relevance to the research project
<i>Employment history</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the places of employment for the last 10 years
<i>Project management skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe project management skills and previous project roles of relevance to this proposal
<i>Key scientific publications and reports relevant to the application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of the key scientific publications reports and other types of communication relevant to the application that the Project Coordinator/project participant has written or co-written (if any) <p>The Project Coordinator and each key researcher may maximum list 10 items and/or use maximum one page.</p>

2.4. Signature Page

When submitting the Project Proposal it is mandatory that the following project participants sign a signature page (no template provided), thereby confirming that the information in the application is correct and that the research project will be conducted according to the approved Project Proposal:

- The Responsible Ministry
- The Lead Research Institution
- Each co-applicant research institution or university
- Key partner stakeholders

In addition, the ministry/institution in charge of the financial management of the grant must sign to confirm that the budget in the Project Proposal is correct and that the research project will be implemented accordingly to that budget. In the event of any subsequent substantive changes affecting the information submitted the Project Coordinator must notify the ICARS Advisor.



3. Assessment Criteria

ICARS and the Technical Advisory Forum will assess the Project Proposal based on the following criteria.

TABLE 6. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Assessment Criteria
Relevance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the research project using intervention and implementation research as its framework? • Does the research project align with ICARS' five core principles? • Does the research project respond to a well-defined and well-articulated knowledge gap, e.g. in national policies and other documents, which the Responsible Ministry gives high priority to address? • Is it well-articulated how the research project will support the country in mitigating AMR? • Are the relevant scientific disciplines included in the research project? (e.g. human health, animal health, environmental, behavioural, gender and economic sciences) • Is the research project developed based on a consultative process involving relevant public and private stakeholders?
Scientific quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the participating researchers have the required scientific qualifications and experience within the project area? • Is the project design and methodology well-articulated and according to international standards? • Has the application been co-developed using the appropriate national research expertise (and if needed international expertise)? • Has the theory of change been well-articulated?
Feasibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the management structure of the research project well-defined and well-articulated? • Does the Project Coordinator have the required management skills? • Are the objectives and expected outcomes of the research project achievable within the duration of the research project? • Is the time plan realistic? • Is the budget realistic?
Effect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the research project contribute to capacity and capability building within the country? • Are the expected policy/legislative, societal and economic impacts clearly described? • Has the project taken into consideration potential risk factors and provided a clear mitigation strategy that takes into consideration the effect?



4. Applying to ICARS and other Funders for Research Grants

Ensuring synergy and avoiding duplication is key for ICARS. By submitting the Project Proposal the Responsible Ministry and the Lead Research Institution confirms that the same or a similar project is not already financially supported by another body. If another similar project is ongoing or if the Responsible Ministry or one of the co-applicant research institutions or universities or stakeholders is submitting a similar application to another body for funding in parallel, the Project Coordinator must inform the ICARS Advisor prior to submitting the Project Proposal. If the ICARS Advisor considers the two projects to be complementary, the Project Proposal should explain the relationship between the projects. If on the other hand, the ICARS Advisor is concerned about an overlap between the projects he/she must inform ICARS' Executive Management which will decide whether the overlap conflicts with ICARS' aim to generate new knowledge, ensure synergy and avoid overlap and duplication.

5. Legal, Regulatory or Ethical Issues

The Project Proposal must reflect possible legal, regulatory or ethical issues and considerations, including required standards or authorization requirements (such as production standards, quality systems, scientific ethics, data handling and protection, use of animals), as well as research permits, provision of information to relevant authorities, etc., and a plan for obtaining these.

The Lead Researcher and the Lead Research Institution must obtain all relevant ethical approvals and other required permits prior to the initiation of the project activities requiring approval. They must further ensure that the research is carried out in accordance with current international and national conventions and regulations. Compliance with these matters must appear in the annual and completion reports.

See *Guideline for Project Administration* for information about ICARS anti-corruption, anti-terrorism and anti-child-labour requirements.

6. Conflict of Interest

The Project Coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with *ICARS' Conflict of Interest Policy*, including informing the ICARS Advisor about any potential or actual conflict of interest before submitting the Project Proposal as well as during project implementation.