Request for proposals, hosting GODAN Secretariat

Dear Colleagues,

The Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) initiative is pleased to announce a request for proposals (RFP) aimed at supporting the GODAN Secretariat. I encourage members of GODAN to consider either hosting and/or funding the GODAN Secretariat during the forthcoming period of transition and transformation. The following information describes, in detail, elements to be considered for those wishing to either host or fund during this exciting new phase of GODAN.

Preparing for the next phase

GODAN was initially designed as a 5 year initiative to promote the proactive sharing of open data to make information about agriculture and nutrition available, accessible and usable. In this process, GODAN has become a unique global, cross sectoral network specifically focusing on agriculture and nutrition. Now a new host is sought to take GODAN to the next stage and without this involvement the gains made by GODAN could be lost. This is a significant period for GODAN, providing a pivotal role for the incoming host.

In July 2018 GODAN partners, representing public, private and non-profit organisations convened a meeting in London at which the future of the network was planned. The participants resolved to support GODAN in the next phase of its existence aimed at consolidating gains achieved since the programme's inception in 2013. This will enable GODAN to continue to strengthen partnerships and to develop means and tools to allow more direct partner to partner engagement, to support their agriculture and nutrition agendas.

The GODAN Secretariat proposed, and attendees supported, that the GODAN initiative will enter into a transition phase in 2019 to secure funding, and should enter a transformation phase from 2020-2022 as outlined in the business plan, where it will focus on sustainable operations to advance strategic goals, which includes extended capability and capacity. The transformation phase will be contingent on the receipt and acceptance of sufficient proposals for hosting and financially supporting the GODAN Secretariat. Meeting participants voiced support for this scalable approach. In addition, in kind contributions, in particular in relation to hosting services, will be welcome.

Request for Proposals

The GODAN Secretariat seeks requests for proposals (RFP), to solicit and gather proposals from interested organisations to:

1. provide financial support and/or
2. host the GODAN Secretariat, for the transformation period (2020-2022)

While the Secretariat is grateful for proposals received to date, all interested parties need to submit their interest through this official process where all applications will be evaluated together and be assessed following the criteria listed below. The Secretariat will make a final decision about the winning proposal by December 1, 2018.

GODAN's membership has grown exponentially since its launch, with close to 800 partner organisations from all continents reflecting a universal interest and desire to build on open data for agriculture and nutrition. We welcome proposals from across the globe.

Information for Applicants

Approach to Funding

In order to either fund or host the Secretariat an organisation must demonstrate that its values and policies align with the GODAN mission. Primarily, but not exclusively, an applicant needs to demonstrate a commitment to open government, open science, FAIR data, open data, and the 2030 Agenda. An applicant will be an existing or a new GODAN partner.

The GODAN Secretariat is open to proposals that offer funding in various forms, including but not limited to, direct funding or in-kind contributions. The Secretariat is also open to other ideas regarding funding that are not included within the RFP document. All proposals should be valued in US dollars, be they direct funds or in-kind contributions so that a like-for-like assessment of offers can be made. The RFP is an open process and GODAN encourages proposals from as wide a sphere as possible. This also means that GODAN intends to post all proposals and proposal reviews on its website. All submissions and corrections will be accepted until the closing date.

There is a table, below, providing values associated with each element required to be included in proposals. There are also further instructions in relation to the details to be included and annexes required to support the application. In reviewing the table please be prepared to provide a detailed description of each element of the offer with the associated dollar valuations, providing a total in US dollars.

Additionally, applicants should specify all conditions, including the time period linked to each element of the support.

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Consortium or Individual Applications

A proposal may include more than one organisation, if the merits for a consortium are well made in the application. This may enable a number of organisations to capitalize on their individual strengthening to provide a full package of services and facilities. Indeed, this approach is encouraged if it secures a wide range of funding and facility opportunities. However, organisations wishing to apply alone are welcomed.

Requirement for Hosting

The applicant seeking to become the hosting organisation must provide information sought in the table presented below. Here are some broad pointers which will inform the applicant's submission.

- Provide clear and detailed responses to all the questions in the table.
- Evaluate the benefits to be provided and specify what will not be included in the proposal.
- Outline specific issues that are important to the applicant, which need to be taken into account during the evaluation process.
- Stress strategic benefits of the proposed location and link to the hosting organisation or consortium. Include an assessment of the cost of operations in the proposed location, measuring it against alternative venues/cities.
- Provide specific costings and avoid general 'cover all' expense lines in the budget and other financial based elements to the proposal. For example, but not exclusively, the applicant should show costs as presented in the form required to be completed by all applicants:
    1. Describe how you would like to fund the GODAN Secretariat.
    2. What dollar amount would you like to contribute?
    3. What period of time would you like to fund the GODAN Secretariat?
    4. Describe the overhead support you can provide to GODAN Secretariat staff, including financial, HR, IT, administrative and logical.
    5. Would you provide tax breaks?
    6. Describe the insurance and risk management you could provide the GODAN Secretariat.
    7. Describe the taxation status, rental subsidies, health care, other benefits that may be provided to Secretariat staff.
    8. Where are your offices located? What makes it an affordable and attractive location with easy access to an international flight hub.
    9. Elaborate on any further ideas you may have to host the GODAN Secretariat.

Full proposal requirements

The full proposal should begin with the completed form (which can be linked to from this document). A document should be prepared by the applicant and submitted, not exceeding 10 pages, providing greater details on the support offered and should be accompanied by annexes, which will include a budget. Further documents, as described below in Section 3, Guidelines for submission to this RPF - Annexes should be included prior to submitting.

Innovation and ideas outside the formal response to the table of questions

The Secretariat is open to all ideas from potential hosts or funders. Please elaborate ideas which might not fit the set of questions presented in the table, but which are important to an innovative plan. To ensure clarity, place the ideas under a heading entitled, Innovations for the Future which should be present on a separate sheet of paper, if needed.

Conflict of Interest

Applicants should declare any potential or existing conflicts of interest during the application process. An understanding of the nature of GODAN's activities and future ambitions should be taken into account and considered against the applicant's on-going or future activities or intentions. Even if you feel there are no conflicts of interest, but perceptions might be otherwise, it is best to address the issue to provide clarity.

Expectations and Undertakings

Applicants may offer to commit to a fully integrated and costed plan that effectively covers the period of the new full two year period (2020-2022). This should include information about the organisation's or consortium's financial ability to secure and maintain the hosting agreement for the full period. If an applicant wishes only to support a portion of GODAN Secretariat's activities this too should be accompanied by a costed plan that effectively covers the period, 2020-2022. Those organisations aiming to offer partial support to GODAN Secretariat may wish to enter into a consortium so as to present a complete package of support, combining expertise and additional funding from one or more partners. It is advisable that applicants provide evidence of their ability to sustain support to GODAN, as described in their proposal document, and refer to their annual audited accounts over the previous five years.

Legal Entity and Governance

Applicants should provide evidence of the organisation's legal status within the jurisdiction in which they aim to provide the hosting arrangements for GODAN. This should include incorporation or founding articles that provide evidence of the organisation's up-to-date legal status. In addition, a list of present chairpersons, president, directors and senior executives need be included. Any pending or previous legal action regarding the status of the applicant's organisation, or against its chairperson, president or directors should be declared. Likewise, any rulings related to the applicant organisation's competence, standards or quality of service, as delivered by a regulator, court or legal body, either in the applicant's jurisdiction or international, should be declared.

> **Please fill out the form, along with the additional statements and annexes. Send them to hostingrfp@godan.info no later than November 1, 2018. For any questions or queries, please use this same address.**

Background information for applicants

Activities and tasks of the Secretariat

The operations of the Secretariat is organised into the following main activities, divided in turn into tasks. It has been imperative that wherever possible, the Secretariat has linked to, rather than duplicate the activities of others already active in this space and the host organisation will support this objective throughout the hosting period.

GODAN brings together agricultural, nutritional and open data fields and actors in order that:

- The management, publication and reuse of open data to support better decision-making in agriculture and nutrition, at the farmer level and within policy making;
- the successes in GODAN are understood and replicated in other sectors and in other open data work
- GODAN can learn from the successes elsewhere and
- GODAN partner network can benefit from some of the innovative work practices emerging in the Open Data field, and vice versa

Activity 1: High level advocacy for GODAN and the importance of open data across agricultural/nutritional datasets to support activities of key national and international stakeholders. Encourage prioritisation of agricultural/nutritional datasets as themes within ongoing non-sectoral open data activities. Provide service support, strategic guidance and identify initiatives of value for partners.

> *Task 1.1:* Present a visible focal point/public face for GODAN principles and those interested in agricultural/nutritional open data, both internally and externally. Identify/recruit GODAN ambassadors/local champions with partners, and supporting them in their advocacy activities on behalf of GODAN. Present GODAN and the general case for open data for agriculture/nutrition in relevant technical circles or events (including social media channels) and political meetings.

> *Task 1.2:* Undertake tangible advocacy activities to ensure governments and others including key private sector actors open up their agriculture/nutrition datasets, adhering to ethical and legal standards, protecting where appropriate intellectual property rights Act as a driver of institutional policy change through forming relevant partnerships. This will entail linking to partner countries, and potential partners in countries to sensitize them to the value of open data and to the steps required in making open data available and useful to end users. This will require a strong evidence base, drawing upon work under Activity 3 to determine the value of open data through examples from active countries or partner initiatives.

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Activity 2: Harmonise activities with partners, share knowledge and lessons, and identify evidence of impact of engagement in agricultural/nutritional open data activities.

Task 2.1: Identify, formulate or commission impact case studies to clarify the economic and societal costs and benefits of engaging in open data activities. The provision of tools, resources and recommendations of pilots projects. For instance regarding weather insurance for smallholder farmers, water productivity, genetic resources, market intelligence, crop/animal pests and diseases, land use and land use change.

Task 2.2: Establish and execute an open mapping mechanism for on-going activities in the agriculture/ nutrition open data space (i.e who is doing what). This has two complementary objectives. (i) to ensure better harmonisation amongst relevant actors, to overcome fragmentation of effort and reinventing the wheel and to help ensure that new open data initiatives are based on an empirically sound understanding of 'what works'. (ii) to identify use cases that demonstrate the wider societal and economic impact of open data for agriculture and nutrition. GODAN can support these developments by brokering partnerships and maintaining an overview of global activities through stakeholder mapping and alignment on a proactive basis.

Task 2.3: Liaise with actors to minimize overlap and exchange lessons/good practices. Open data for agriculture is just one topic within a bigger debate on open data, and linked open data. Strategically place GODAN's challenges on the broader agenda, and where relevant, establish more formal links.

Activity 3: Manage a framework of national and international events and dialogues to stimulate end-user engagement with open data, and to build the GODAN community of practice.

Task 3.1: Organise and host a major annual agricultural/nutritional open data showcasing event including supporting hackathons (and subsequent follow-up activities) to stimulate sustained practical engagement and innovation with agricultural/nutritional datasets. Utilise the conference to identify priorities for the coming year, emerging opportunities, policy windows and lesson-learning.

Task 3.2: Coordinate and strengthen the existing GODAN partner community and facilitate exchange of ideas and information within the network through preparation of joint advocacy materials, briefing reports, examples of good practice and lessons learned in implementation and other relevant promotional materials.

Task 3.3: In addition to the annual showcasing event, prioritise and develop a variety of additional events to meet the needs of the activities of GODAN within defined budgets. Events could include, but are not limited to regional or thematic workshops or country visits combined with stakeholder sessions as required.

Activity 4: Operational organisation of GODAN and the Secretariat itself.

Task 4.1: Following the successful recruitment period, GODAN aims to build trust among partners, addressing challenges and influencing policy. Strengthening the GODAN network is an important task for the Secretariat, by actively supporting the partners, providing strategic guidance, or by helping partners network effectively, both in and between the public and private sectors to develop activities and good practices under their own initiative.

Task 4.2: Organization of the Secretariat and a general responsibility to manage the fund and allocate against specific activities, annual reporting, monitoring and evaluation requirements, financial management and forecasting according to the administrative requirements of the funding organisations and organisation/minute-taking of ExCo meetings.

Task 4.3: Develop and implement a communication strategy for GODAN including making full use of social media tools. This should include development of a website/partner forum using open source tools and software and could also include production of a monthly e-newsletter to share partner news, funding opportunities, research findings, forthcoming meetings of interest etc.

Task 4.4: Explore the use of online fora and tools to enable maximum participation by developing country partners in GODAN events and debates. Where necessary, establish a mechanism to potentially support face to face participation in events by developing country participants/small start-ups and other potential end users) so that their voices can be heard in open data debates.

Task 4.5: Undertake any other relevant activities as required by funders during the inception phase.

Description and explanation of the GODAN RFP process

1: Selection criteria

1.1: Submission deadline: All submissions must be sent to GODAN's email: hostingrfp@godan.info and be received no later than Thursday November 1, 2018 at 17:00 GMT

1.2: Questions to GODAN: In the interests of transparency and fairness to all applicants GODAN is able to answer questions supplied by applicants up to Wednesday October 10, 2018. The answers will be dessimented on Friday October 19, 2018 in one document to all applicants so that everyone may benefit from feedback provided to GODAN.

1.3: Revision of proposals: Applicants are able to revise their proposal up to the deadline. However, should there be revisions to the initial submission, the final version must be clearly marked 'final submission'. Failure to do so may result in an earlier version being evaluated by the GODAN selection team.

1.4: Evaluation Criteria: The hosting of the Executive Secretariat of GODAN will be decided according to the following criteria. After the evaluation of eligible proposals submitted within the deadline and upon selection of the winning offer, GODAN will establish the proposed hosting organisation meets all the requisite administrative, legal and commercial requirements in their home jurisdiction and internationally. Should two or more bids be close in scoring, GODAN may call for a best and final evaluation round before concluding the process.

Criteria	Weighting
Technical Proposal	
Demonstrates good understanding and clear rationale for the role of the Secretariat and need for GODAN.	10%

Vision and quality of approach for the organisational structure and operations of the GODAN Secretariat, including delivery of each of the main activities and associated tasks
    1. *Activity 1*
    2. *Activity 2*
    3. *Activity 3*
    4. *Activity 4*
	25%

Demonstrated understanding by the host organisation on key open data issues within the agriculture/nutrition sectors. Provide evidence of a track record and credibility in these sectors.	15%
Demonstrated understanding by the host organisation/consortium of key debates and issues within the open data area. Track record and credibility amongst these networks.	15%
Track record and programme management expertise by the host organisation, together with the quality of the proposed CV's for the Secretariat's positions, if relevant.	10%
Demonstrable strong international networks in the agriculture/nutrition/open data sectors and strategy for links to and use of appropriate GODAN partners to avoid duplication of effort.	15%
Approach to incorporating environment and gender considerations including social exclusion.	5%
Approach to risk identification, mitigation and management.	5%
Total allocation	**100%**
Commercial Proposal	
Track record of the host organisation/lead partner in sound financial management.	25%
Value for money of the proposed budget and indicative cost breakdowns to deliver required activities (operational costs, travel costs, salary costs, overhead costs etc).	35%
In-kind funding including facilities and staffing to be provided to the Secretariat by the host organisation/consortium .	20%
Approach to ensuring value for money on digital spend and other activities of the Secretariat including leveraging pro bono support from other GODAN partners and achieving economies of scale.	10%
Approach to integrating co-funding offers of other GODAN partners to ensure harmonisation and minimal duplication of effort".	10%
Total allocation	**100%**

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1.5: Scoring Methodology

The Proposal review team will apply the following scoring methodology:

6	Excellent, addresses the requirements of the ToR and where relevant, demonstrates fine tuning to make a match with Funder expectations, and is of a quality and level of detail and understanding that provides confidence in certainty of delivery and permits full contractual reliance.
5	High degree of confidence that they can meet the requirements of the ToR (and where relevant, strong evidence that they have tailored their response to meet these). Demonstrates that they have a thorough understanding of what is asked for and that they can do what they say they will; translates well into contractual terms.
4	An understanding of all issues relating to the delivery of the ToR and tailoring the response to demonstrate that proposals are feasible so that there is a good level of confidence that they will deliver; can be transposed into contractual terms.
3	Understands most of the issues relating to delivery of the ToR and addresses them appropriately with sufficient information, but only some relevant tailoring and so only some confidence that they will be able to deliver in line with expectations.
2	Some misunderstandings of the issues relating to delivery of the ToR and a generally low level of quality information and detail. Poor appetite to tailor when asked and so fails to meet expectations in many ways and provides insufficient confidence in their ability to deliver.
1	ToR issues are scantily understood and flimsy on quality information, with minimal tailoring, if any, where relevant. Provides no confidence that the issues will be addressed and managed at all in line with expectations.
0	Complete failure to address the requirements of the ToR.

The scoring methodology will be applied to each of the Selection Criteria. The total score for each Criterion will comprise of the score awarded (0-6) multiplied by the weighting allocated to each Criterion.

2: Guidelines for submissions to this RFP - main document

In addition to completing the form the applicant is required to provide a detailed proposal document. Applicants should adhere to the descriptions (in the table, above) as this will ensure content is reviewed and analyzed in accordance with the GODAN selection process.

2.1: Limit submission to 10 pages, excluding the budget proposal, proposal summary, and supporting documentation.

2.2: Submitted proposal must be written in English or submitted with English translation and saved on 2000 and/or Excel 2000 or newer versions. GODAN does not accept zip files. PDF files are only accepted for signed documents.

2.3: Include a proposal summary of approximately two pages (this should be included in the 10 page limit).

2.4: Page numbers, headers and footers need to clearly identify the submission along with the submitting organisation(s).

2.5: The completed proposal must be submitted to GODAN from your organisation's headquarters with an email that clearly identifies it has come from an authorised office bearer or from the submitting organisation's official email address.

2.6: Only a submission signed and authorised by a senior officer empowered to make the offer will be accepted by GODAN.

2.7: It is advisable to follow the sections and subsections provided in the RFP. Use of keywords in the table is also advisable.

2.8: Address each of the Technical and Commercial elements, as listed by GODAN in the RFP table (above), responding to each of the applicable questions outlined as clearly and thoroughly as possible.

2.9: Clearly identify what services, equipment, commodities or in-kind support is being provided in the proposal, as relates to each area of the RFP.

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3: Guidelines for submission to this RPF - Annexes

There will be a requirement to provide detailed information in annexes, specifically to present budgets, financial information, organisational status and incorporation and other details as outlined in the RFP. The following list provides guidance to applicants but should not be treated as exhaustive. Annexes are additional to the 10 page limit for the proposal.

3.1: The budget should be expressed and itemised in U.S. Dollars (USD). Please present in Excel format. This should be a detailed breakdown of costs and funds and each cost will be attributed to a specific line item. Reference to general costs or non-specific costs should not be included.

3.2: When presenting in-kind contributions, this should be justified as a USD value and needs to be presented as a figure that can be evaluated by the GODAN selection team.

3.3: Provide a budget narrative in Word, with each line item justified.

3.4: The budget and the budget narrative should both be signed and authorized by a senior officer empowered to make the offer to GODAN on behalf of the applicant or on behalf of the consortium.

3.5: Include all required signed Certifications and Assurances (related to applicant's legal status, possible legal claims against the applicant or its senior officers and other documents related to the applicant's ability to operate within its home jurisdiction and internationally).

3.6: Provide a location-specific Safety and Security Plan for the proposed site(s) for GODAN. This should include an analysis of the preferred location measured against other cities which seek to attract and are home to international entities. Additionally, provide an insight and assessment of costs related to operating from the preferred location, taking into account living costs, convenience to efficient transport hubs and quality of life for potential GODAN personnel.

3.7: Ensure the applicant's organisational Code of Conduct is provided and is consistent with international best practice, providing protection to all personnel who might be discriminated against because of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or political affiliation. There should be established provisions to address bullying or sexism in the workplace. The Code of Conduct needs to be presented as a living document with descriptions of key actions or improvements made to it over the last 3 years and any planned changes.

3.8: A Risk Assessment and Mitigation Assessment analysis needs to be provided (no more than one page).

3.9: To support point 2.8 in the guidelines for submissions to this RFP (above), the applicant should provide a page on logistic requirements. This provides a description of logistics and operational structures, describing the management structure from the funder's side, aimed at supporting GODAN's activities. It should identify and outline the main tasks and responsibilities post holders from within the applicant's organisation have regarding this RFP. An organisational diagram showing how the GODAN hosting is managed is required. It will also show what facilities are directed to support GODAN activities.

3.10: A consortium bid should provide evidence that each party within the consortium agrees to all elements contained within the proposal and that senior officers authorised to commit each contributing party to the proposal has signed and agreed to the elements contained in the proposal. The lead organisation in the consortium is required to provide a document with the authorisations and appropriate signatures representing all parties involved in the proposal.

3.11 Should a hosting proposal cover only part of the services required (example: Office space or admin services) then the proposal should clearly state that the submitting party agrees to work/combine its services with other entities either chosen by itself or by the Secretariat.

We look forward to receiving your proposal and encourage all our partners, interested organisations and institutions to seriously consider the opportunities provided within this RFP. It opens the way for the GODAN initiative to develop its support for global efforts to make agricultural and nutritional relevant data available, accessible, and usable for unrestricted use worldwide.

Should there be any questions arising from this RFP please contact us on hostingrfp@godan.info and we will endeavour to answer all your questions.

Thank you for your ongoing support and with anticipation for a closer working relationship as we move into the transitional and transformational period for the GODAN Secretariat.

With best wishes,

Andre Laperriere
Executive Director
Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition