

## **Process:**

# **How the CARTA Research Hubs will be selected**

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The selection will take place in two steps: 1) Expression of Interest (Eoi), and 2) submission of Extended Concept for the establishment of a research hub. Submission of the Eoi is open to all CARTA African partner institutions while submission of the Extended Concept is by invitation only after positive evaluation of the Eoi.

### **1) Expression of Interest**

Each Eoi will be evaluated by at least:

- Two individuals with a track record of strong commitment to CARTA, one of them from an African partner institution, one of them from a non-African partner institution, who are not directly involved in any of the hubs; and
- One content expert.

The evaluation will focus on:

1. The strength of the research plan and its alignment to the national priorities in the countries where the partners are located and the regional agenda;
2. The strengths of the partnership, their potential to apply a multidisciplinary approach, and their track record, e.g. research grants won in this area, proposals written and led, publications relevant to the research area, international standing in this area and their capacity to generate new and needed knowledge;
3. The capacity to engage relevant stakeholders to co-design the research priorities and the research and research training strategies;
4. The ability to incorporate CARTA partners and CARTA graduates in the short, mid and long-term plans of the hub; and
5. The strength of the plan to incorporate the CARTA model through adaption and/or adoption of CARTA interventions to strengthen both the training of ECRs and a research-conducive environment.

Upon review of the Eoi's, recommendations for each of them and compiled scores will be submitted to a panel of five people composed by:

- The 2 CARTA co-directors;
- The chair of the CARTA BoM;
- 2 individuals with a track record of strong commitment to CARTA, one of them from an African partner institution and one of them from a non-African partner institution, who are not directly involved in any of the hubs and are different to those who reviewed the concepts

## 2) Invitation for Extended Concept

Up to five team will receive an invitation to submit an extended concept for the establishment of a CARTA research hub. The five extended concepts will be evaluated by at least:

- Three content experts (1 lead reviewer and two additional people); and
- Two individuals with a track record of strong commitment to CARTA, one of them from an African partner institution and one of them from a non-African partner institution, who are not directly involved in any of the hubs; and

The evaluation will focus on:

1. The innovativeness and soundness of the research plan;
2. The strength of the 2-3 year implementation plan leading to the submission of a strong competitive fundable proposal. The plan should include the scope of work and set of deliverables for two competitively selected postdocs and who will mentor them. These postdocs will be funded through another pot of funds other than that allocated to the research hubs;
3. The alignment of the proposed research with the national priorities in the countries where the partners are located, and with the regional priorities, and the commitment of the relevant stakeholders to the process;
4. The strength and feasibility of the co-design plan;
5. The integration of a multi-disciplinary perspective and systems thinking into the approach;
6. The strength of the plan to incorporate CARTA interventions to strengthen the training of ECRs at different stages;
7. The long-term capacity of the partnership to implement a sustainable research program in the area proposed;
8. The ability to incorporate CARTA partners and CARTA graduates in the short, mid and long-term plans of the hub;
9. The strategy to engage stakeholders at all stages;
10. The strength of the monitoring and evaluation plan and risk management plan;
11. The plan and demonstrated capacity to implement interventions that establish and/or strengthen a research-conducive environment; and
12. The appropriateness of the budget to sustain the activities proposed in the 48-month period and its appropriateness to support the establishment of the hub.

Upon review of the Extended Concepts, recommendations for each of them and compiled scores will be submitted to a panel of eight people composed by:

- The five lead reviewers, who will present the case for the Extended Concept that they have reviewed, including a summary of the evaluations of the five reviewers;
- The two CARTA co-directors and the chair of the CARTA BoM.

If there is conflict of interest, panel members may be replaced by other members of the BoM. The recommendation of the panel will be submitted to the CARTA Board of Management for consideration and approval.

**Up to two hubs that are considered fundable by all members of the panel will be awarded a Research Hub Grant. The call may be left unfilled if none of the applications is considered competitive by all panelists. In such a case, the call will be re-opened again.**