



# **Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation Program Launch**

**Accessing Program Services**

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The why of this Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation program has been succinctly presented by my colleagues. The role for technology and innovation and boosting productivity and incomes for smallholder farmers, and the global challenge of food security. Also presented was the fact that much of the technology needed by these foundational producers already exists. Some already successfully commercialized in specific markets, and other technology, which is late stage, post-prototype research outputs, but yet to penetrate any market in a meaningful way.

Bob Rabatsky also touched on some of the challenges and opportunities for the private sector in putting these technologies and innovations in the hands of smallholder producers, ensuring sustained farmer access and adoption. I'm going to speak more about the how to get farmer access and adoption of technology, and specifically how our Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation program will support the marketing and commercial distribution of technologies, technologies distinctly able to deliver significant production and income gains for smallholder producers, particularly women.

We will work with technology champions to integrate technologies into complimentary packages of innovations to maximize the value proposition of the individual technologies. Partnering for innovation will emphasize and support multi-tiered partnerships, a robust commercial network, matchmaking services, and innovation forums to create transformative connections that will leverage partnering for innovation funding way beyond direct grant support.

So how to get started. Today, we are launching a request for expressions of interest from technology champions who own or have access to cost effective technologies which demonstrate the most potential for smallholder adoption and impact particularly by women. The expression of interest is intended as the way in, an opportunity for the technology champion to briefly explain a significant challenge to increasing food production and a proven technology that will address the challenge. This is an opportunity to share why you believe that the technology is commercially viable.

Is the technology available in a market today? Also, to present what key constraint or constraints require assistance in order for the technology to reach the market with positive impact for smallholder producers. Partnering for Innovation also wants to know what isn't known about the technology and target market. We will accept first expressions of interest from potential partnering for innovation partners until January 31st. At that point, the expression of interest window will close. Don't worry. There will be other opportunities. We anticipate accepting expressions of interest twice a year. These expressions of interest will provide partnering with innovation an opportunity to identify technologies with a clear, near term, next step, and with designated implementers.

These technologies and partners might be good candidates for seed grant or catalytic grant support. Examples might include a post prototype technology which has been proven through in-field testing and may be ready for initial marketing. Such a proven technology may not yet have a long-term private sector champion identified. A near term seed grant could provide support for early stage marketing as economic proof of concept to attract private sector interest in investment and commercial marketing and distribution development. Another example might

be a private sector company that has successfully commercialized their technology in a particular market very different from the particular smallholder market.

A seed grant could provide support for first entry into the smallholder target market to better understand any challenges particular to the market, adaptations needed, and also to reduce the risk and cost of pursuing a completely new market segment and geography. The expressions of interest will be considered and ranked based on a few key themes. These include potential impact on smallholder farmers, how improved is the innovation over the previous generation of technology. How significant is the potential impact on incomes and production margins? Specific impact on women, how does the technology address labor burdens of female farmers? Scalability, how large is the anticipated market? Are there sufficient potential users in the targeted market who can benefit from the technology?

Environmental sustainability. Is the product or technology safe to use? Does it require special training for safe use? Partners submitting expressions of interest considered potentially appropriate for seed grants will be invited to submit a more complete application. These full applications will be reviewed by an external review committee to include private sector, agricultural professionals, and research experts. These seasoned professionals will provide varying perspectives and skill sets and innovative technology development, commercialization, gender impact, market promotion, and business and finance. Other expressions of interest will indicate high potential but outstanding questions in the need to either identify or coordinate with many stakeholders in the context of a multi-tiered partnership.

Technical assistance will be available to these partners towards clarifying these outstanding questions, which could include smallholder focus distribution model development, identifying and facilitating the development of complimentary partnerships, addressing pending concerns the private sector has had that to date have deferred a positive market entry and investment decision.

An example of a type of expression of interest that could fall into this category may be one where a technology has been proven in a developed market context and tested in select developing markets, but needs support to narrow the range of possible countries with smallholder market opportunities, or identify potential complimentary partners for investment extension and market development delivery. All respondents to the requests for expressions of interest as well as other stakeholders and practitioners working in this critical area of intersection between smallholder farmers in the private sector commercial delivery of technology and innovation are invited to leverage the partnering for innovation knowledge network.

The knowledge network will provide an interactive online forum combined with select physical events for collaboration. Other tools will be available to assist network participants to develop and market technologies on their own or through partnerships with other interested stakeholders. These include a clearinghouse of information and toolkits on innovative, agricultural technology for smallholders and public private partnerships, technology commercialization success stories, and interactive webinars, expert panel discussions, and moderated forums, innovation showcases, and expert commentary.

The details regarding the call for expressions of interest are available on the following website. [www.Fintrac.com/PI/EOI](http://www.Fintrac.com/PI/EOI), and there are hard copies available on the back table. I will now introduce one of Partnering for Innovations' facilitating partners, No Innovation.

*[End of Audio]*