



Invitation for African institutions/organizations to submit applications to host the AAVP Office in Africa

African AIDS Vaccine Programme - AAVP

The Initiative sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Introduction

- *The vision of the African AIDS Vaccine Programme (AAVP) is an AIDS-free Africa through an effective vaccine*
- *The AAVP is a Network of African HIV Vaccine stakeholders, committed to promoting HIV vaccine development for Africa, through research, advocacy, partnership, and contribution to capacity strengthening and policy development*
- *To attain its vision, the AAVP has adopted a new 5-Year Strategic Plan 2007-2011, which is based on implementation of multi-disciplinary collaborative and training programmes across Africa.*

Since its inception, AAVP has been an active player in the field of HIV vaccine research and development (R&D). The programme's primary aim is to assist in developing appropriate (policy, legal, regulatory and ethical) frameworks in the context of the African continent and facilitate strengthening HIV vaccine R&D capacity in Africa.

In 2006, a new AAVP Strategic Plan 2007-2011 (http://www.who.int/vaccine_research/diseases/hiv/aavp/publications_news/en/) was developed following an extensive consultation with global stakeholders working in HIV vaccine R&D. All key stakeholders strongly suggested that the AAVP office should be located in Africa. This would provide the AAVP with a clear identity as the voice of African stakeholders involved with HIV vaccine R&D and enhance

AAVP's ability to participate in global HIV vaccine R&D opportunities. It was recommended that *AAVP should be further developed as a fully independent operational African programme outside of WHO, led by Africans and effectively connected with the international HIV vaccine community*. This recommendation was endorsed by the AAVP Steering Committee (AAVP SC), as well by the participants of the most recent AAVP Forum held in November 2007, in Abuja, Nigeria. The plans for the new AAVP Office in Africa should be presented at the next AAVP Forum scheduled from 14 to 16 December 2009 in Kampala, Uganda.

As noted in the AAVP Strategic Plan, the AAVP is committed to working together with all HIV Vaccine stakeholders in a collaborative and complementary manner consistent with the mission of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise (the Enterprise) and in alignment with the Enterprise's Scientific Strategic Plan <http://www.hivvaccineenterprise.org>

Objectives

The objective of this request for application (RFA) is to solicit bids from institutions/organizations in Africa that are willing to host the AAVP Office.

Expected Roles of the Host Institution/Organization in support of the AAVP Office

- Host the Director and Secretariat of the AAVP Office in Africa to be selected following the terms of reference as defined by a new AAVP Business Plan.
- Provide full administrative, financial, management and logistic support for the AAVP Office.
- Identify and make available adequate office space and communications means.

Expected Roles of the AAVP Office and its Secretariat in Africa

- Closely liaise with the AAVP SC and organize its regular meetings (1-2 times per year).
- Ensure networking between AAVP Coordinating and Resource Centres and facilitate the development of plans for activities in each of the work areas.
- Provide a leadership role in ensuring that AAVP fulfils strategic objectives under the advice of the AAVP SC.
- Lead fund-raising activities for AAVP.
- Provide support to the function, advocacy and fundraising activities of the AAVP High Representative.
- Provide the necessary mechanisms for the management, monitoring and reporting of the AAVP grants.
- Provide a leadership role in planning, organization and secretarial support for the organization of AAVP Forums that take place once every 2 years.
- Link and network with national, regional, and international HIV prevention and vaccine R & D communities consistent with the vision of the Enterprise.

Eligibility Requirements and Content of LOI

Any public/government or not-for profit private African institution/organization is eligible to be considered to host the AAVP Office, however, applicants must demonstrate the existence of certain criteria to qualify for further consideration. Interested individuals, institutions/organizations should submit a letter of intent (LOI) to the AAVP Secretariat using the attached eligibility form (Annex 1). The LOI should be no more than **four pages** in length and should contain detailed evidence of the following:

1) Background information

- Full name of the Institution/Organization and its affiliations.
- Name/Title of the Head/Director of the applicant Institution/Organization (attach a brief CV).
- Detailed postal and mailing address.
- Email address, Fax and Telephone numbers.

2) Requirements for the Applicant Institution/Organization

- An established track record in the area of HIV vaccine R&D or related activities and is recognized by the Government in the country of the applicant.
- Availability of good telecommunication facilities, including internet access and teleconference facilities.
- Demonstrated commitment in prior work to the Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV (GIPLA), gender equality and human rights, including the principle of non-discrimination.
- Capacity for good national, regional and international networking.
- Demonstrated experience in managing, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (financially and technically) internationally-funded grants.

3) Contributions to AAVP objectives and goals (maximum 2 pages)

Provide a short description of the institution and its vision how it will contribute to the overall objectives and goals of the AAVP as per the 2007-2011 AAVP Strategic Plan (http://www.who.int/vaccine_research/diseases/hiv/aavp/publications_news/en/)

Selection Criteria considered to be an asset

a. Host Institution

- Established public/government or not-for-profit private institution/organization recognized by the government with an excellent track record in coordinating/implementing large-scale health research programmes, preferably in HIV prevention or vaccine research and clinical trials.
- Sound and functional administrative, financial and management infrastructure.

b. Head/Director/of the applicant institution/organization

- Recognized and experienced senior official with technical experience in vaccine development.
- Demonstrated ability to network at the country, regional and international levels.

c. National criteria

- Existence of active national HIV prevention and treatment programmes.
- Existence of a National HIV Vaccine Plan/Strategy or evidence of inclusion of HIV vaccine R&D in National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plans.
- Clear national policies of support of collaborative international health related projects, in particular those relevant to HIV vaccine R&D.
- Government/Political support to host the AAVP Office.

d. Country specific

- Accessible by air, both for regional and international travel.
- Good communication and networking possibilities in the region and internationally.

Note: The LOI Eligibility form is attached in Annex I. Please complete and attach to the LOI submission

Evaluation and review process

To facilitate the review process, an independent international AAVP Transition Advisory Panel (ATAP) has been established to provide overall guidance and advice to the AAVP SC and the AAVP Secretariat to facilitate a step-wise process of AAVP transition towards a fully functional African-led programme based in Africa.

- 15 January 2009: Publication of the RFA.
- 15 March 2009: deadline for submission of letters of intent (LOI).
- 15 - 31 March 2009: Submitted LOI will be evaluated by ATAP and a short list will be established, whereby successful candidates will be selected, based on the above listed eligibility and selection criteria and invited to submit a full proposal by 15 June 2009.
- The week of 22 June 2009: First ATAP meeting to review full proposals.
- July - September 2009: ATAP Task Force will conduct site visits to a maximum of 3 short listed institutions/organizations who submitted the most successful full applications.
- October 2009: ATAP will review site visit reports and make a recommendation for the formal selection of an African institution/organization which will host the AAVP Office. A written agreement will be signed between the host institution/organization and WHO/UNAIDS-AAVP Secretariat. The selection process should be concluded latest by 1 November 2009.
- 14-16 December 2009: Results of the selection process will be announced at the AAVP Forum 2009 in Kampala, Uganda.

Letter of intent and completed eligibility form (Annex 1) should be sent by email or by express post to reach the AAVP address below no later than **15 March 2009**, 17:00 p.m. CET (Central European Time) or Geneva time to AAVP secretariat at WHO:

Dr Saladin Osmanov

Coordinator

WHO-UNAIDS HIV Vaccine Initiative (HVI)

Initiative for Vaccine Research (IVR)

World Health Organization (WHO)

20 Avenue Appia, CH 1211 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel: +4122 7914393 ;Fax +4122 7914865; E-mail: osmanovs@who.int

Annex 1: Eligibility Form (to be filled in and attached to the LOI)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has an established track record in the area of HIV vaccine R&D or related activities and is an institution/organization recognized by the Government. <p><u>Comments:</u></p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has good telecommunication facilities, including internet access and teleconference facilities. <p><u>Comments:</u></p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has demonstrated commitment in prior work to the Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV (GIPA), gender equality and human rights, including the principle of non-discrimination. <p><u>Comments:</u></p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has good national, regional and international networking capacity. <p><u>Comments:</u></p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant and its senior staff have demonstrated capacity for managing, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (financially and technically) internationally-funded grants. <p><u>Comments:</u></p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>