

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Community Consultations on “Good Participatory Practice Guidelines for Biomedical HIV Prevention Trials” (CC-GPP)

Increasing community input to and familiarity with a new guidance document on the conduct of HIV prevention trials, with a specific focus on community engagement

SUMMARY

The AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC) is soliciting proposals from local and national civil society organizations (CSOs) in countries where HIV prevention research is planned or ongoing to review, pilot and provide input on a new guidance document which aims to set minimum standards for trial sites and sponsors with regard to community engagement.

Grants of US\$2,000-US\$10,000 are available for projects to be implemented over a period of eight (8) months, beginning 1 April 2008 through 31 December 2008.

The deadline for submitting applications is 29 February 2008.

Two categories of awards will be available:

- Awards for a single, one-time Community Consultation activity or event.
- Awards for expanded projects involving a series of activities, with special preference given to proposals which engage with a specific trial site or planned research study.

These CC-GPP grants form one component of AVAC’s ongoing work to ensure community input into well-designed, ethically-conducted HIV prevention trials. Groups that receive a CC-GPP grant will be expected to:

- Design and execute an activity or series of activities which directly engage with the text of the current version of the GPP guidelines (described below and available at http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2007/jc1364-gpp_en.pdf).
- Provide a written report on key findings and recommendations for future activities.
- Participate in at least one regional or international meeting (dates and locations TBD) to share results and experiences with other CC-GPP grantees. (Expenses for this meeting will be covered by AVAC separately from the grant award.)
- Contribute to local and regional information-sharing and advocacy efforts related to the conduct of ethical HIV prevention trials.

ABOUT AVAC

Founded in 1995, the non-profit AVAC seeks to create a favorable policy and social environment for accelerated ethical research and eventual global delivery of AIDS vaccines and other prevention options as part of a comprehensive response to the pandemic. The work described here focuses on the following goals:

- Translate complex scientific ideas to communities AND translate community needs and perceptions to the scientific community.
- Manage expectations about HIV prevention research.
- Hold agencies accountable for accelerating ethical research and development.
- Expand international partnerships to ensure local relevance and a global movement.
- Ensure that policy and advocacy are based on thorough research and analysis.
- Build coalitions, working groups and think tanks on specific issues.
- Develop and widely disseminate high-quality, user-friendly materials.

For more information, please see www.avac.org

ABOUT “GOOD PARTICIPATORY PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR BIOMEDICAL HIV PREVENTION TRIALS” (GPP)

The GPP guidelines were drafted by a multidisciplinary international group including community advocates, research staff, and NGO representatives. The group was convened by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and AVAC. A draft version of the guidelines were then further refined through broad consultation involving a wide range of stakeholders.

The guidelines were developed as a result of an international consultation convened by UNAIDS in June 2005 in Geneva of investigators, ethicists, community stakeholders, government representatives, and advocates. The consultation defined key elements needed for creating effective partnerships for HIV prevention trials and addressed lessons learned from years of prior advocacy, community consultation and site-initiated work

Topics of particular concern and importance include: community consultation in trial protocol development; the informed consent process; establishment of adequate community advisory mechanisms; and setting standards of HIV prevention and levels of care, including antiretrovirals, for volunteers who acquire HIV during prevention trials. Significant work has taken place on each of these areas over the past two decades; however, there has been no document which sets basic standards of good practice for addressing these issues with communities. The GPP document was designed as a tool to help fill this gap. It does not replace or eliminate the need for close adherence to international ethics guidance documents on the conduct of research in human subjects, such as the Declaration of Helsinki, the CIOMS guidelines, the companion document *UNAIDS/WHO Ethical considerations in biomedical HIV prevention trials* and others. The GPP document is grounded in a rights-based approach to health.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES of the CC-GPP GRANTS

1. To provide financial and technical support to community groups with the goal of expanding and deepening the level of community input into the GPP document, which will be revised on an annual basis. Reports from CC-GPP grantees will be compiled and submitted as part of a comprehensive civil society response to the document.
2. To build capacity for ongoing advocacy work on HIV prevention research and implementation, with a specific focus on countries where research is planned or ongoing.
3. To support community groups and research entities in pilot usage of the GPP document in the planning, execution and follow-up of specific trials.

IMPORTANT DATES

29 February 2008:	Deadline for submitting applications for CC-GPP grants
31 March 2008:	Notification of awards
1 April-31 December 2008:	CC-GPP projects initiated and completed

WHO CAN APPLY?

The CC-GPP Awards will be made to non-profit groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that do community-based work focused on HIV/AIDS. Priority will be given to groups with prior experience working on advocacy related to HIV prevention, prevention research, ethics and human rights-based responses to the epidemic. Grants will not be awarded to government groups, commercial or for-profit entities or individuals.

Applicant groups must demonstrate organizational capacity in fiscal management of award funds. Small or new groups with limited capacity to manage funds can submit proposals with a sponsoring partner

organization; these will be considered only if the terms of budgetary allocation, fiscal management, oversight and reporting are well-defined.

Proposals from networks or collaborations should be submitted by the lead group or NGO that will be carrying out the project.

While an organization can be involved in more than one application, it can only be the lead group and direct recipient of funds for one application.

This request for proposals seeks applications from groups working in countries where HIV is having a major impact on the population, where HIV biomedical prevention research is very active, and where new prevention clinical trials are underway or planned in 2008-09.

WHAT WILL THE CC-GPP GRANTS FUND?

CC-GPP grants are intended to support direct, community-level consideration of the GPP document and to build capacity for ongoing advocacy related to HIV prevention research.

Examples of funded projects include:

- a. One- or half-day consultations on some or all sections of the existing GPP document, with appropriate preparation of stakeholders.
- b. Local meetings with key stakeholders to get input into the GPP document as a guidance tool for engaging communities in HIV prevention research and clinical trials.
- c. Online (Internet) discussions of the GPP document or different core principles.
- d. Focus groups or affinity groups at pre-planned meetings or conferences, where prevention advocates will gather who will have input to offer on this topic.
- e. Pilot use of the GPP document to review past, existing or upcoming trials in a community or trial site. This review activity would require the applicant to demonstrate a relationship or connection of some kind with the trial site, though not necessarily a formal affiliation.
- f. Independent funding for community advisory boards to do work that trial sponsors may not be currently supporting.

Funds may not be used for

- Religious activities
- Electoral activities or political support
- Governmental activities
- Academic studies
- Individuals

In addition to providing financial support, AVAC is committed to providing technical support and related materials (including a user-friendly GPP summary document) to grant recipients.

Funding decisions will be arrived at through an international peer-review committee involving technical experts who have been involved with the development of the GPP guidelines which includes community advocates, researchers and NGO representatives.

Further information about GPP, this RFP and related information can be found at www.avac.org/gpp.htm.

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Application forms can be downloaded at www.avac.org/gpp.htm. If you have problems downloading the form, please contact AVAC at gpp@avac.org.

All applications should be sent via e-mail to gpp@avac.org or facsimile (+1-646-365-3452) no later than **29 February 2008**.