



Food for Progress USDA Regional Agriculture Innovation Network Request for Application

Program Name:	USDA Thailand regional Agriculture Innovation Network
RFA Title:	Cassava Equipment / 10008-25-RFA-01
Date Issued:	January 19, 2025
Amended:	March 17, 2025, for administrative items
Closing Date:	5:00 PM ICT June 30, 2025
Estimated Award Date:	On a rolling basis

SECTION 1: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to solicit applications from prospective grantees to support the implementation of the Thailand Regional Agricultural Innovation Network (USDA RAIN), a USDA Food for Progress project implemented by Winrock International (Winrock).

Through a series of targeted grants, USDA RAIN will enhance the availability, accessibility, and adoption of agricultural inputs and technology that improve cassava production and input supply chains in the project's priority provinces. The objective is to promote two machines that the project considers to be key climate-smart innovations (CSi) in the cassava value chain: An all-in-one cassava planting machine, and a rapid weeding machine

These innovations improve efficiency and management in cassava cultivation by saving farmers time and helping address challenges that include labor shortages and an aging agricultural workforce.

The grants will focus on driving agricultural productivity, strengthening input supply chains, and enhancing competitive market systems to foster a more supportive enabling environment. The grants are expected to benefit 10,000 smallholder farmers (5 hectares or less) across Khon Kaen, Chaiyaphum, and Nakhon Ratchasima provinces, and engage over 20 local machinery service providers and starch factories.

USDA RAIN intends to support equipment manufacturers, retailers, or other suppliers to expand and enhance a sustainable network of service providers specializing in cassava planting and weeding equipment. This network will ensure long-term farmer access to essential services, boost smallholder farmer profitability, and create a resilient market system for cassava production.

1.2 GRANT OBJECTIVES

This RFA solicits grant applications that are designed to:

- 1. Enhance Agricultural Productivity.** Promote the adoption of innovative machinery, such as the all-in-one cassava planting machine and rapid weeding machine, to improve cultivation efficiency and reduce labor dependency.
- 2. Address Labor Shortages and Workforce Challenges.** Support timely and effective agricultural management practices, addressing challenges such as labor shortages and the aging workforce in the target provinces.
- 3. Strengthen Local Service Providers and Supply Chains.** Build the capacity of at least 20 local machinery service providers and key stakeholders, including starch factory change agents, to improve the accessibility and reliability of agricultural inputs.
- 4. Increase Farmers' Access to Technology.** Enable 10,000 smallholder farmers across Khon Kaen, Chaiyaphum, and Nakhon Ratchasima provinces to adopt advanced agricultural technologies for



sustainable and competitive farming.

5. **Foster a Competitive and Sustainable Market System.** Develop an enabling environment to support efficient input supply chains and establish competitive agricultural market systems, ensuring long-term sustainability for local farming communities.

SECTION 2: GRANT INFORMATION

Anticipated number of grants. USDA RAIN expects to award up to six (6) grants under this RFA but reserves the right to award fewer or none based on the quality of applications received and availability of funding.

Estimated number of grants. USDA RAIN expects an individual grant amount may range from 500,000 to 1,300,000 THB. The final amount awarded will depend on award activities and final negotiations.

Anticipated start date and duration of grants. The anticipated period of performance is 3 to 6 months, depending on the negotiated award activities.

Types of grants to be issued. Winrock will determine the appropriate grant mechanism, in consultation with the applicant during the negotiation process, based on the pre-award assessment of the applicant, nature of the award activity, and estimated total cost of the award.

SECTION 3: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants. This solicitation is open to all organizations including non-profit and for-profit non-U.S. organizations. To be minimally eligible for funding, applicants must comply with the following conditions:

1. Be legally registered or otherwise authorized to conduct business in Thailand.
2. Agree to be subject to a pre-award assessment to examine that the applicant has sound management in the form of financial, administrative, and technical policies and procedures.
3. Provide a documentable, measurable minimum cost-share requirement.
4. Provide a UEI number at the time of award. If the applicant already has a UEI number, it should be included in their application. Otherwise, applicants will be expected to get a UEI number before an award is issued, which can be obtained here: <https://sam.gov/content/home>

SECTION 4: INSTRUCTION TO APPLICANTS AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 PRE-APPLICATION (CONCEPT NOTE)

USDA RAIN intends to partner with applicants who submit a successful concept note to co-create their applications. USDA RAIN technical specialists will provide guidance and support in completing an application over **a two-week period** once an applicant is notified their concept note is successful. Technical and cost applications are not required until USDA RAIN notifies a potential applicant of a successful concept note and both parties agree to a submission schedule. Potential applicants should expect to work closely with USDA RAIN technical staff over a two-week period to develop applications that demonstrate effective and sustainable grant implementation.

4.2 TECHNICAL APPLICATION

Applicants will develop applications based on their understanding of the program's needs, their prior institutional experience and their determination of the approaches that would be feasible and successful. In all cases, applicants shall clearly explain the rationale for the proposed approaches chosen.

Applications must clearly state the objectives and the expected results of the activity within the life of the funding period and define an implementation plan with a proposed time frame and budget. On-going monitoring and reporting of the funded activities will be the responsibility of the applicant. A technical application template is provided as an attachment to this RFA.

4.3 COST APPLICATION

Cost applications will be submitted separately from the technical application. Applicants shall submit a summary and detailed budget in Microsoft Excel with budget notes identifying how the applicant would allocate any grant funds received during the term of the potential agreement. The budget notes should explain and justify the need for the costs proposed in the budget. The notes should help the reviewer understand why an item of cost is necessary and how it will be used to support the activity for which it will be incurred. A cost application template is provided as an attachment to this RFA

4.4 GRANTEE CONTRIBUTION

To be competitive, applicants are encouraged to provide significant contribution (cost-share) or investment (leverage) of their own resources demonstrating their commitment to the proposed activities. The amount should be such to demonstrate commitment to the proposed grant activities to be competitive.

- **Contribution** may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, including real property, equipment, supplies, and other expendable property.
- **Investment** refers to the resources that a partner brings to a public-private partnership, and it includes financial contributions, third party contributions, donated services or property, or intellectual property.

Profitable, growing and well-run commercial businesses are expected to provide significant contribution or investment. Small, remote, or otherwise disadvantaged organizations may negotiate to contribute less.

To be counted, a contribution or investment must:

- Be verifiable. The applicant must be willing and able to provide sufficient documentation to support all recorded cost-share.
- Not included as contributions for any other USG-assisted program or come from any other USG assistance.
- Necessary and reasonable for efficient and proper accomplishment of the objective(s).

4.5 SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Co-creation. Potential applicants should expect to work closely with USDA RAIN technical staff to develop applications over a two-week period after notification of successful concept note. This will be to ensure that applications demonstrate effective and sustainable strategies for project implementation, aligning with the goals of the grant program and addressing key commercial issues.

Format. Applications may be submitted in English or Thai and may not be more than four (4) pages, using Times New Roman, font size 12, single-spaced (AngsanaUPC font size 16 for Thai). The page limit does not include Annexes and CVs of proposed staff included as part of the application. A complete submission, at a minimum, will include the following:

- Technical Application (4 pages)
- Cost Application (Excel)
- Annexes
 - A copy of the applicant's valid Company Registration Certificate
 - Value Added Tax Certificate (if any) or Tax Registration Document
 - A completed and signed technical application
 - CVs for personnel (if necessary)
 - A completed and signed budget application
 - Budget supporting documents, including the budget narrative, as applicable



- Organizational chart (if any)
- Operation policies and procedures (if any)

Delivery. Applications must be submitted electronically via email to Rain.Consultant@winrock.org and reference 10008-25-RFA-01, Attention: **Chanakan Kupachaka, Technical Director**. Applications must be submitted no later than the time and date agreed upon during co-creation with USDA RAIN staff.

Applications that are submitted late or incomplete run the risk of not being considered for review.

Receipt time for electronic submissions is when the application is received by Winrock’s internet server. Please do not send files in ZIP format.

Withdrawal. Applications may be withdrawn by written notice via email received at any time before an award is made. Applications may be withdrawn in person by an organization or its authorized representative if the representative’s identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the application before the award is made.

SECTION 5: APPLICATION EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

5.1 MERIT REVIEW

The criteria below are tailored to the requirements of this RFA. A total of 100 points is possible. The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by a weighted points system.

In evaluating the applications, Winrock will examine overall merit and feasibility, and specific criteria relevant to each component. USDA RAIN expects to issue up to six (6) awards resulting from the overall highest scores to their respective applicants. Applicants should note that these criteria 1) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and 2) serve to identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications.

Merit Review Criteria	Total Points
<p>Technical Approach and Work Plan</p> <p>1. Technical feasibility and appropriateness – 40 The evaluation will assess the technical application’s quality, clarity, appropriateness, and feasibility. This includes the integration of CSIs into the activity, alignment with target value chains with strategies to enhance crop productivity sustainability and market competitiveness, and relevance to the identified provinces where possible.</p> <p>2. Work Plan – 25 Innovativeness and detailed planning in the activities specifically in the RAIN target provinces and populations, and the work plan for achieving activity objectives, including risk mitigation strategies.</p>	65
<p>Organizational Capacity, Business Orientation and Sustainability</p> <p>1. Organizational Capacity – 10 Extent of applicant’s capacity to implement complex projects, including staff expertise and prior experience.</p> <p>2. Business Orientation and Sustainability – 10 Assess the long-term viability of the intervention, including partnerships, business models, and integration with local systems. Willingness and plan to continue the intervention as a long-term business and the extent to which the funded activity will result in building and strengthening the capacity of the community and local</p>	20



organizations.	
2. Positive Outcomes for/Inclusion of Smallholder Farmers, Women, and Youth Applications should clearly identify the anticipated benefits to USDA RAIN’s target populations through a thoughtful presentation of realistic outcomes.	5
4. Proposed Contribution (cost share) or Investment (leverage)	10
Overall Rating (out of 100 points)	100

5.2 REVIEW PROCESS

Potential applicants should expect to work closely with USDA RAIN technical staff to develop applications that demonstrate effective and sustainable grant implementation, after being notified by USDA RAIN of a successful concept note submission. After a potential grantee submits their application, a USDA RAIN evaluation committee will review grant applications and score them using the merit review criteria indicated above.

Cost applications will not be scored but will be reviewed and evaluated for reasonableness and effectiveness based on the scope of activities being proposed.

It is anticipated that awards will be made within three months after the submission deadline. Final negotiations and the award will be managed by Winrock.

SECTION 6: OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Disclaimers. The issuance of this solicitation does not commit Winrock to make an award to any prospective grantee responding to this solicitation. Prospective grantees will not be reimbursed for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Winrock reserves the right to reject any and all applications, or to make an award without further discussion or negotiation.

All awards will be negotiated, denominated and funded in Thai Baht (THB). All costs funded under the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable.

Conflict of interest. Applicants must provide disclosure of any past, present or future relationships with any parties associated with the issuance, review or management of this RFA and anticipated grant. Failure to provide full and open disclosure may result in Winrock having to re-evaluate the selection of a potential applicant.

Other conditions:

- Applicants must agree and be willing to sign and submit required certifications before a grant is issued.
- For those selected for a grant award, Winrock will conduct a pre-award risk assessment.
- Issuance of grant agreements will be subject to applicable prior written approval by Winrock funder, as needed.
- Applicants may only submit one application per prime organization under this RFA.
- Individuals are not eligible to receive funding under this solicitation.
- Applications must remain valid for at least 180 days.
- Application forms should be signed by an authorized agent of the applicant’s organization.
- Applicants that submit applications that meet or exceed the evaluation criteria will be notified of next steps in the application process.

Additionally, the following items cannot be purchased under the potential resultant grants:

- Any purchases or activities deemed unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by



Winrock, including any grantee headquarters expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed activities

- Private ceremonies, parties, celebrations or "representation" expenses
- Previous obligations and/or bad debts
- Expenses related to overtly religious purposes
- Expenses intended to influence the outcome of elections or other political processes
- Fines and/or penalties
- Creation of endowments
- Alcoholic beverages
- Real property (land, including land improvements, and structures thereto)

The following items are also ineligible or restricted under USDA-funded grants:

- Prohibited goods under USDA eligibility rules, including military equipment, surveillance equipment, commodities and services for support of police or other law enforcement activities, abortion equipment and services, luxury goods, and gambling equipment, and weather modification equipment
- Restricted goods under USDA eligibility rules, such as agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, including motorcycles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, used equipment, contraceptive products, USG-owned excess property or fertilizer.
- Construction or infrastructure activities of any kind

SECTION 7: ANNEXES

- Annex A – Technical Application template
- Annex B – Cost Application template