

**Michigan State University**  
**Mekong One Health Innovation Program (MOHIP)**  
**Call for the Research Proposal from Lower Mekong sub-region (Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam) Countries**

**1. Project Background**

The Mekong One Health Innovation Program (MOHIP) at Michigan State University in partnership with U.S. Department of State's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP), implemented in collaboration with the One Health University Networks of Lao PDR, Viet Nam, and Thailand, has the overarching goal of creating a transnational network of One Health researchers and practitioners to facilitate the sharing of One Health research, educational, and evaluation tools thereby enabling Mekong researchers and practitioners to devise evidence-based and informed health security policies and programs for the Lower Mekong sub-region. MOHIP has three core activities: organize a series of virtual webinars on issues pertinent to the region, offer a short course on "Health Security, One Health, and Zoonoses," and provide grants for local researchers in Lao PDR, Viet Nam, and Thailand to undertake research.

**2. Background**

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines One Health as "a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach — working at the local, regional, national, and global levels — with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment." Human population is on the rise. The movement of livestock and humans within and across countries is becoming increasingly common. There is a rise in the inter- and intra-country trade of livestock and poultry and their products. Because of deforestation and changes in the agricultural systems, animals and humans are living in close proximity and are coming in contact with each other more frequently. Wildlife habitats are disturbed, and wildlife venture out in search of food and shelter and often come in contact with domestic animals and occasionally with humans. These situations have been giving rise to disease conditions and diseases. In addition to the aforementioned challenges, the lower Mekong sub-region faces unprecedented environmental issues such as water and air pollution and climatic changes and associated diseases.

Within this context, to examine these issues, threats, and uncertainties and identify solutions to minimize their effects, MOHIP is committed to supporting One Health research (integrated public health, animal health, and environmental health) led by local researchers in the Lower Mekong sub-region. MOHIP is expected to foster stronger and sustained relationships between the U.S. and Mekong researchers and create a vibrant network that they will utilize to carry out timely research on health security issues involving the One Health approach. Mekong researchers will learn about successfully applying new One Health tools to research health security issues in the Lower Mekong sub-region and will apply the findings and resources to devise better health security solutions for the benefit of the Lower Mekong sub-region.

MOHIP is seeking unique and collaborative One Health research proposals from Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam researchers/practitioners that could examine One Health and health security priorities

of the respective countries. MOHIP team will work closely with the award recipients for project monitoring and to develop high-quality deliverables (i.e., publications and reports, new data sets, spatial mapping of vulnerability areas, etc.) that will be used to inform policies, facilitate planning and stakeholder engagement, drive implementation of research objectives, and contribute to the global collection of evidence regarding best practices for One Health.

### **3. Award Information**

The MOHIP will provide up to USD90,000 in support for all awards in its first year and an additional USD90,000 in the second year. This call is for the first year or first round of applications. MOHIP intends to award at least three awards for the first round of applications. There will be at least one award of up to USD30,000 for a period of performance of up to two years from each MOHIP country, i.e., Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Funding will be distributed in two installments. Interested applicants may submit applications for lesser amounts of funding and shorter periods of performance based on the needs of their research proposal.

Final funding levels will depend on a range of criteria and conditions, including content, quality, number of applications received, needs, and availability of funding. Applicants may be required to revise their budget, project scope, and timeline upon feedback from reviewers. Applicants are required to keep costs realistic in relation to the scope of their proposed activities. Issuance of this solicitation does not constitute an award commitment on the part of MOHIP, nor does it commit MOHIP to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any application.

### **4. Eligibility**

Applicants for MOHIP Research Program include the following:

- Not-for-profit organizations
- Social service agencies, hospitals, medical groups, medical schools, etc.
- State-controlled entities (government or social service departments)
- Academic institutions (colleges, universities, research centers)
- Consortia among non-governmental organizations, academic, and public entities
- Principal Investigator (PI) should be a citizen of one of the three MOHIP countries

Proposals focused solely on the development of teaching or academic programs, and those from commercial, industrial, and for-profit entities will not be considered for funding.

### **5. Partners/Collaborators:**

Applicants are permitted to have U.S.-based researchers or institutions as partners for research on a volunteer basis. MOHIP can facilitate linking the two sides. **Joint research proposals to study issues spanning three MOHIP countries are welcomed.**

### **6. Scope of Work and Deliverables**

#### **6.1. Objectives**

The main objective of the MOHIP research program is to conduct a One Health research project in the Lower Mekong sub-region (i.e., Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam). The research project can address the disciplines of animal health, human health, and environmental health utilizing a One Health approach involving the study of critical problems and issues facing the sub-region. As envisioned by the One Health approach, proposals with multisectoral or multidisciplinary efforts to address One

Health and health security issues are encouraged. **Projects examining the role of the environment in One Health issues facing Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam will be given additional consideration.**

**Deliverables:** Award recipients should i) should develop a comprehensive report covering the research details; ii) be prepared to provide a presentation at the Mekong One Health Symposium to be held in 2025 in the Lower Mekong sub-region (specific location to be determined); and iii) prepare and submit a manuscript in at least one peer-reviewed international journal to disseminate findings of the research project.

## 6.2. Timelines

Date of release of call for proposals: May 9, 2023

Deadline to submit the proposal: June 22, 2023, Eastern Daylight Time or New York Time

Notice of selection: July 14, 2023

Anticipated project start date: September 1, 2023

## 7. Instructions for applying

This section addresses the process for responding to this solicitation. Applicants are encouraged to review this prior to completing their applications.

### 7.1 Budget

Applicants are required to include a detailed budget with justification for the proposed research project in the template provided. Here is the link to the template. Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing any indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. The applicant must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate (IDC) methods:

- Method 1 - Direct Charge Only Eligibility: Any applicant
- Method 2 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both.

Please note, depending upon the country contexts and local partners, there could be additional overhead costs incurred on top of the 10% IDC. The entity implementing the research should have a business account in the country.

### 7.2 Format for proposal

Application should include the following components.

- A. Cover page
- B. Letter of support from the chair or division head that includes endorsement and rationale for funding and timing of the proposed project and commitment to the project.
- C. Project narratives must include the following. **The narrative should be of maximum ten pages excluding cover page, references, and resume.**
  - a. Problem statement and/or rationale of the project
  - b. Literature review
  - c. Research questions or goals

- d. Research strategy (including One Health approach)
  - e. Methods
  - f. Deliverable(s)
  - g. Work plan/timeline
  - h. How the research will contribute to improve health security situation in the Lower Mekong sub-region
- D. Budget and budget justification
- a. Budget: Use the budget [template](#) as a guide for completing the project budget.
  - b. Provide the rationale or justification for requested funds.
  - c. Items ineligible for inclusion in the budget justification include equipment, construction materials, etc.
  - d. Personnel: List of all key personnel who will support the research project. Include their biographies and intended role in the project.
- E. Resume of PIs and Co-PIs (maximum 2-pages): Should list professional positions and achievements; five recent and relevant publications, if applicable; former and current research grants, if applicable; and academic credentials.
- F. Letter of support from primary institution and collaborating institution, if relevant.
- G. Formatting: The proposal should be in 8.5x11 (portrait), 1-inch margins on all sides, no smaller than 11-point font (no restrictions on font), no tighter than 1.5- line spacing, and with the footer showing the title of proposal.

### **7.3 Submission and deadline**

Completed proposals should be submitted in electronic format **to mohip@msu.edu by email on or before June 22, 2023, 11:59 PM EDT with subject line ‘MOHIP One Health Research Program – Proposal.’** If you have questions about the submission process or encounter technical difficulties submitting your proposal, please contact mohip@msu.edu.

### **7.4 Unacceptable**

Proposals that are received after the submission deadline, and incomplete proposals will be unacceptable.

### **7.5 Proposal selection process**

The proposal application components and evaluation rubrics will be based on international research funding programs for developing countries. A panel of professionals from EAP, Michigan State University (MSU), local faculty, the International Advisory Board, and U.S. agencies with expertise in One Health will evaluate and select the research proposals that qualify for funding. Monitoring and evaluation metrics for the research projects will be established by MSU in consultation with EAP. The proposals will be selected through a blind review process. MOHIP team will work with EAP to finalize the selection of research projects for funding. The MOHIP team along with MOHIP country coordinators, will monitor and evaluate the research project milestones, deliverables, and outcomes.

### **7.6 Evaluation criteria**

The criterion will be scored on a scale of 0 to 10 (with ten representing “effectively addressed”).

The reviewers will look at the following criteria when assessing eligibility of proposals for funding:

- 1) Significance of the study: How effectively will the study address the gap in applying One Health principles and improving health security in the Lower Mekong sub-region?
- 2) Timeliness of Study: How timely is this research study in terms of topic, tools, or questions asked vis-à-vis research developments or regional/national trends and needs?
- 3) Intellectual Merit: Is the proposed model, strategy, or methodology sound and consistent with the basic disciplinary guidelines for quality and thoroughness?
- 4) Data Analysis: Is there a clear data management and analysis plan? Does the proposed analysis appropriately address the research questions? Is the analysis plan consistent with the design (e.g., exploratory vs. controlled)?
- 5) Researcher Readiness: Are the PIs and coinvestigators qualified to lead the research study? Do they have the necessary training, expertise, or leadership capabilities to manage the study to completion? For multiple PIs or institutions, what is the history and nature of the proposed collaboration? Will the study be appropriately staffed with trained assistants/coordinators?
- 6) Institutional Support: What is the extent of support provided by the institution(s) housing the study or the PIs toward the proposed research?
- 7) Likelihood of Completion: Are the research operational conditions described in the proposal consistent with the proposed timeline for completion?
- 8) Budget Efficiency: To what extent does the proposed budget conform with the goals and methods of the study? How is the budget making efficient use of MOHIP funding?
- 9) Selection & Protection of Human Subjects and Publishability: Where applicable, how will the subjects be selected? Is there a clear Institutional Review Board (IRB) review process in place to uphold integrity in research? Is the research design rigorous and scholarly enough to generate the publication(s)?
- 10) Participation in MOHIP short course: Did the principal investigator and/or co-investigator(s) successfully complete the MOHIP short course on 'Health Security, One Health, and Zoonoses'?

**7.7 How to submit:** Proposals should be submitted to [mohip@msu.edu](mailto:mohip@msu.edu) in a consolidated PDF file.

## **8. Orientation**

There will be an orientation and question and answer session to address questions related to this call for proposals. The date for the orientation will be announced via email.

## **9. Contact**

Please direct all inquiries and other communications to [mohip@msu.edu](mailto:mohip@msu.edu) with subject line 'MOHIP One Health Research Program - Inquiry.'