

Guideline for the Project Proposal

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Overview of the framework

Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects

Tasks and Responsibilities of the Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher

Guidelines and Templates for the Expression of Interest and the Concept Note

Expression of Interest Template and Guidelines

Concept Note Template and Guidelines

Guideline for the Project Proposal (this document)

Project Proposal Template

M&E Toolbox

- Project Log frame
- Gantt chart
- Risk register
- Budget Template

Template for CVs of the Project Coordinator and Researchers

Guideline for Project Administration

Grant Agreement Template

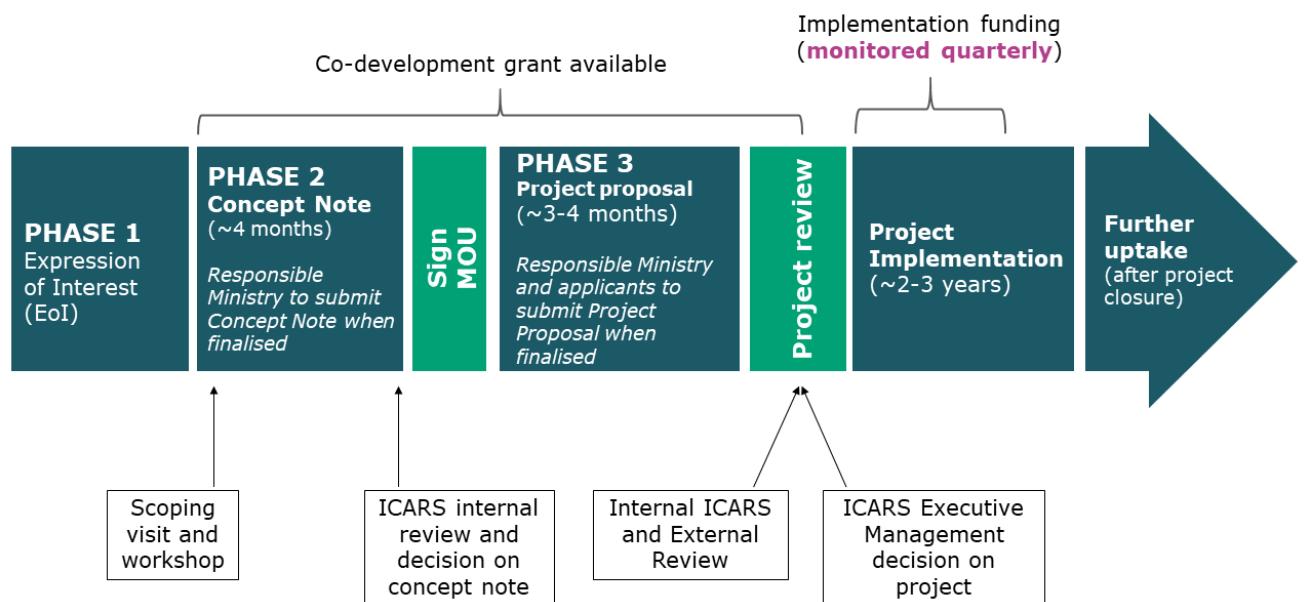
ICARS policies ([Our policies – ICARS \(icars-global.org\)](#))

Audit instructions

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on how to develop the Project Proposal as illustrated in Figure 1. For information about the application process as a whole, please see the *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*. The Responsible Ministry (or ministries) should ensure that the Project Proposal complies with what is stated in this guide, and in the *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*, using the templates provided. If in doubt, please contact your ICARS Advisor(s). The Responsible Ministry must also ensure synergy with other related ongoing or planned research projects/activities in the country and ensure that the Project Proposal is developed using the best national research expertise.

FIGURE 1. PHASE DESCRIBED IN THIS GUIDELINE



2. Developing the Project Proposal

The Project Proposal consists of a description of the Proposal and three appendixes. Please use the templates provided when preparing the Project Proposal and the appendices. All documents must be prepared using A4, Verdana font size 9 and 1.5 spacing. Additional appendices may be included after consultation with the ICARS advisor(s).

TABLE 1. DOCUMENTS TO INCLUDE IN THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

Mandatory Documents	Length	Submitted in
<i>Project Proposal</i>	A maximum of 20 A4 pages, excluding basic information (Table 2) and references	PDF-format (final version)
Appendices		
<i>M&E Toolbox</i>	No limit	Excel-format
<i>Budget</i>	No limit	Excel-format (XLS, XLSX)
<i>CVs of the Project Coordinator and key researchers</i>	A maximum of two A4 pages per project participant	PDF-format

The templates provided for the Project Proposal are structured around separate sections with additional appendices. All sections must be completed, and no new sections should be added. The Project Proposal provides the details on all aspects of the research project and includes the background and relevance of the proposed research, the aim and objectives, theory of change, study design and methodologies, governance and management arrangements and intentions for scale up. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) toolbox includes the Logic Framework (Log Frame), Gantt Chart and Risk Register. You will also need to submit a detailed, well-motivated budget in accordance with ICARS budget guidelines, as well as researcher CVs as appendices.

Once ready, please submit the final Proposal on the ICARS online submission system, which is used for official correspondence on project document submission and responses from ICARS.

The online submission system can be accessed here: <https://submission.icars-global.org/>

It is important to ensure that the proposal is clear and focused.

TABLE 2. BASIC INFORMATION

Heading	Content
<i>Date of submission</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of submission of the Project Proposal
<i>Project title</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project title
<i>Start date and end date</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the research project is anticipated to commence When the research project will end <p><i>*Please note that the specific duration of the research project is agreed upon with ICARS before submitting the Project Proposal and is usually 2-3 years in duration.</i></p>
<i>Total budget</i>	
<i>Responsible Ministry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the Responsible Ministry (or ministries) applying for the grant Name of the department within the ministry responsible for the application Name of the head of the department within the ministry
<i>Project Coordinator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full name Title and academic qualifications Name of the research institution or ministry where the Project Coordinator is employed Name of the department where the Project Coordinator works Name of the head of the department where the Project Coordinator works
<i>Lead Research Institution and Lead Researcher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of Lead Research Institution Full name of Lead Researcher Title and academic qualifications

Heading	Content
<i>Co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the department where the Lead Researcher works • Name of the head of the department where the Lead Researcher works
<i>Finance Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name the ministry or research institution/university that will take fiduciary responsibility for the funds disbursed by ICARS
<i>Key researchers listed with CVs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List name, title and institution of the project coordinator, lead researcher, other key researchers and other individual implementation participants listed under "CVs of the Project Coordinator and Researchers". • Researchers should collectively provide expertise in the multiple disciplines that are needed to execute the project, for example expertise in economics, biomedical sciences, implementation sciences, policy analysts, etc.

TABLE 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Heading	Content
<i>Project Summary/Abstract</i>	<p>1. A half page summary of the research project, including rationale, relevance, aim, objectives, project methodology and expected outcomes.</p>
<i>Background and Literature Review</i>	<p>This section should cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AMR challenge to be addressed in the context of the National Action Plan on AMR • Recent, relevant literature (including country-specific grey literature) on the AMR challenge. Please be specific in the literature selected, using the best available and recent data, and ensure data presented is relevant to the project being proposed. • How this project will enhance knowledge in the scientific field concerned. • How this project will address real-world challenges in your country <p><i>All references in this section, and throughout the proposal must be cited and included in the reference list at the end. You must use a consistent citation format.</i></p>
<i>Aim and objectives</i>	<p>2. Describe the aim and objectives of the research project, clearly showing that the project <i>is implementing/testing intervention(s)</i>.</p> <p>3. You should include one overarching aim, and several SMART¹ objectives.</p> <p>4. Include an objective focussed on understanding implementation barriers and enablers towards sustainable scale up of effective interventions.</p>
<i>How and why will your programme have an impact?</i>	<p>5. Describe how and why the research project is expected to bring about the desired change in AMR in the country.</p> <p>6. This is the theory of change</p> <p>7. Describe the underlying logic of how this project will progress from identifying an AMR challenge/problem, moving through the proposed mechanisms of change to how this would result in the expected outcome(s) and finally contribute to the overall intended impact.</p> <p>8. Impact could be in one or more of policy/legislative, societal, behavioural and economic aspects of the research project.</p> <p>9. The theory of change should be aligned with the log frame contained in the M&E toolbox.</p>
<i>Methodology</i>	<p>1. Describe the study design and qualitative and quantitative methodology that will be used to address the aim and each objective. Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Study setting/location (e.g., sites) ◦ Target population ◦ Sampling methods (if a sample size calculation is required, you should either indicate <i>how</i> this will be done, or complete the calculation as a part of proposal). ◦ Description of the intervention/s to be tested/implemented

¹ **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-Bound

Heading	Content
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary and secondary outcomes <p>2. Describe the methods that will be used to measure intervention impact that might include but is not limited to economic, societal, behavioural and policy impacts.</p> <p>3. Consider having separate methods sub-sections on the economic and behavioural components of your research project. You should ensure that you have had subject matter expertise in the development of these sections to ensure rigour and accuracy.</p>
<i>Additional stakeholder involvement</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe how the Project Proposal has been co-developed with relevant stakeholders from inception. This includes both the co-applicant institutions/universities and public, private and non-governmental partner stakeholders. You are encouraged to engage a wide range of stakeholders to ensure practical solutions are developed. 2. Include any stakeholder engagement activities that have already taken place during the project proposal development (or earlier, including during the concept note phase). 3. Describe how you will ensure the continued participation and engagement of, and coordination with, the relevant co-applicant research institutions/universities and partner stakeholders throughout the research project. 4. Outline how the research project integrates with related national and international activities and describe specific partnerships that have been/will be developed.
<i>Project organisation and management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the project will be governed overall and managed day-to-day including the roles and responsibilities of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Committees (steering and/or operational) ○ Responsible Ministry (or ministries) ○ The Lead Research Institution/University/Lead Researcher ○ The co-applicant research institutions/universities ○ Partner stakeholders (public, private and non-governmental) ○ The Project Coordinator ○ The Lead Researcher ○ ICARS
	<p>You may wish to include an organogram as a figure in this section.</p>
<i>Ethical considerations and approvals</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Describe the national/institutional ethical approvals and other permissions that will be needed to conduct the study and publish the results.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. If there are any known timelines for local ethical approvals, please ensure that these are built into the proposal.
<i>Approach to large-scale implementation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the Responsible Ministry (or ministries) will work with relevant research institutions, partner stakeholders, and other stakeholders as relevant to ensure sustainability and facilitate large-scale implementation of the identified solution(s). • Describe the implementation research methods you will employ to facilitate uptake once proof of concept has been demonstrated. • Describe how the evidence-based solutions will be translated and/or integrated into one or more of policy, programmes and practice by the relevant stakeholders. • Describe the documentation of the implementation process to prepare for scale-up • Implementation outcomes that you will explore towards a scale up plan, such as the acceptability, adoption, appropriateness, costs-effectiveness, feasibility and sustainability of the intervention should also be explained here.
<i>Publication and dissemination strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the results of the research project will be communicated and disseminated to different stakeholders locally, nationally, and across the global community. • In addition to academic publications and conference dissemination for the scientific community, the results should be communicated to a wider range of relevant stakeholders using diverse communication channels such as policy briefs, technical reports, guidelines and standard operating procedures for implementation and scale up, workshops, multimedia etc.

**Please note that ICARS' communications team will support this effort.*

Heading	Content
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List all publications, reports and other references used in the Project Proposal in a standardised reference format. • All citations in the proposal MUST have a reference.

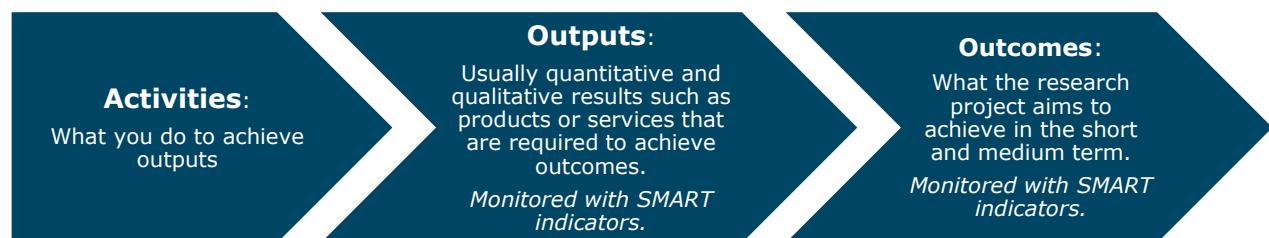
3. Appendix 1: The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Toolbox

To facilitate project development, its implementation and the monitoring and reporting of project progress, ICARS has developed a M&E Toolbox. The M&E Toolbox is an excel workbook comprised of the following five M&E tools, each as an individual spreadsheet: Logic Framework (Log frame), Gantt Chart and Risk Register.

3.1. Log Frame

The Project Proposal must contain a draft log frame which is a table that summarizes a project's operational design and the logical flow between planned activities, expected outputs and desired outcomes. It is a critical planning tool. Please refer to the ICARS M&E Guideline (this will be shared by your Advisor) which provides in-depth information about the log frame, its different elements, and the log frame's role in progress monitoring.

To fill in the log frame, aims and objectives must be translated into activities, outputs and outcomes.



Every project is different, and the specific outcomes, outputs and activities are to be developed in consultation, collaboration and cooperation between the research team and stakeholders involved in the project. ICARS will provide workshops (either virtual or in-person) to facilitate the log frame development, which is part of developing the full project proposal and theory of change. Please complete the log frame, with the assistance of your ICARS advisor.

You also will also need to define indicators for outputs and outcomes, which can be used to measure the progress towards/achievement of individual outputs and outcomes over the lifespan of the project. Indicators should be **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound (SMART)**. Your log frame components should match the methodology that you have described in the Project Proposal.

Finally, the log frame is a living document that may be revised as the project plans are further developed in the inception phase

3.2. Gantt Chart

The Gantt Chart illustrates the scheduled project activities defined in the log frame over the project period. It shows what activities are to be done and when during the project life cycle. You can read more about this in the ICARS M&E Guideline.

Please complete the Gantt Chart in the M&E Toolbox listing all the activities that will be undertaken to achieve the aim and objectives. Milestones are used to track whether key activities are completed on time, and you should include milestones as appropriate.

When developing your Gantt Chart, project teams should define activities by the month, to the extent possible during project development. The Gantt Chart can be adjusted to more specific timelines once detailed workplans are developed during project inception.

3.3. Risk Register

Please complete the risk register in the M&E Toolbox. List all the possible risks that may preclude the project activities being undertaken as designed and that may ultimately impact the success of the project. This includes whether the project is completed on time, within budget, or technical risks. You should include a description of the risk, the likelihood of it occurring (low, medium, high), the impact of the risk (low, medium, high) and the owner of the risk. Project teams should also consider potential measures that could be implemented to prevent/mitigate the risk in advance to plan ahead. Project teams will be required to update the Risk Register during the project lifetime as well.

You can also read more about it in the [ICARS Risk Management Policy](#).

4. Budget

As described in the *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*, the ministry/institution having the Finance Manager role is responsible for managing the finance, including financial reporting in addition to overall fiduciary oversight. See *Tasks and Responsibilities of the Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher* for more detailed information.

The Project Proposal must contain a budget for the research project, which should be developed using the *Budget Template* (to be requested).

1. Budget form 1: budget for each co-applicant research institution or university (including Lead Research Institution/University), partner stakeholders or subcontractors. *You may need to submit several versions for form 1 for this reason (e.g. Form 1a, Form 1b, etc).*
2. Budget form 2: total budget of the research project
3. Budget form 3: list of involvement in person-months for each researcher and project participant
4. Budget form 4: list of planned domestic and international travel arrangements
5. Budget form 5: budget notes that explain and elaborate on relevant budget items

It is important to involve ICARS Finance and Grant Manager in the budget discussions prior to submitting it for the approval.

The budget forms must be filled in USD with the amounts applied for from ICARS (not including co-funding). It is expected that the Responsible Ministry and co-applicant institutions or universities and partner stakeholders will provide additional resources to the research project in the form of co-funding. Co-funding may be provided in the form of monetary contributions **or** as payment 'in kind', i.e. by making equipment, office space, staff etc. available, in which case this should be detailed in the budget notes (budget form 5). The in-kind contribution should be expressed in monetary value. Where such value is not available, the market value of similar goods/service/provision must be used.

The budget of subcontractors must be included in the budget of one of the partner co-applicant research institution or universities or partner stakeholders if applicable, and should be clearly explained in the budget notes (budget form 5).

Eligible budget items (please see following text for further explanation of eligibility)

1. Salaries and emoluments
2. Tuition fees/educational grants
3. Expenses for trips and fieldwork
4. Research equipment and material
5. Publication, dissemination and outreach
6. Overhead
7. External audit
8. Contingency

Ineligible budget items

Only costs directly related to the project should be charged to the project.

The following costs will not be allowed:

9. Cost of alcohol is not allowed at any time.
10. Costs of non-project related activities, such as parties, socialising events, etc.

11. Office and other costs not directly related to the project, such as purchase of shared printer, kitchen and other shared equipment.
12. VAT in cases where the downstream partner is eligible for VAT refund.

Salaries and emoluments

This budget item covers salaries and emoluments for staff, depending on national structures for reimbursement of time spent working on the project. This reimbursement is termed "salary" in the remainder of this document for simplicity.

The salaries are expected to reflect the actual compensation ranges according to the local cost norms (e.g. organisational policies, salary brackets, comparable roles). The markup of up to 15% of the actual salaries is allowed to ensure sufficient engagement of persons working on the project. The specific salary rates should always be agreed with ICARS.

The partner must provide institutional documentation for the applicable national cost norms. Where such cost norms are not available, the relevant ministry / research institution must provide documentation confirming that the salary levels used in budget preparation are at the levels that exist for similar positions within the country. Salaries are either compensation/replacement salary paid to the institution for the time the staff allocated to the research project, or compensation payment for over-time, either hourly or performance based. Payment for consultancy fees is explicitly precluded.

ICARS will not cover salary for the time spent related to the research project in the Responsible Ministry (or ministries), since this is regarded as an in-kind contribution from the country. However, salary and economy travel costs of the Project Coordinator and other ministry staff for involvement in the co-operation and coordination of the research project can be covered, even if the person is working in the Responsible Ministry.

By signing off on the Project Proposal, the ministry/institution in charge of the financial management of the grant verifies that the budgeted project salaries and fees in the budget for co-applicant research institutions or universities, partner stakeholders and subcontractors comply with applicable collective labour agreements and national legislation. The ministry/institution must also ensure that current remuneration ranges at all co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders are applied and that salaries in the budget are based on gross salaries and do not include double payment or payments on consultancy terms.

It is the responsibility of the ministry/institution to ensure that the budget for salaries will comply with local tax structures and include any additional allowances, holiday allowances, labour market pension schemes, pension contributions, salary increases triggered by labour market agreements and seniority etc.

The lead research institution, responsible ministry, co-applicant research institutions and partner stakeholders are responsible for insurance of individual project participants (including during travel). Thus, ICARS cannot be held responsible for injuries and accidents in connection with implementing the research project.

Tuition fees/educational grants

Tuition fees, educational grants and research costs for master's and PhD students can be covered for the duration of the research project. The educational grants must follow the rules and regulations of the institution in question and at a national level. The grant is placed at the disposal of the institution and is intended to cover expenses incurred in connection with the grant, i.e. direct research costs, courses, brief trips, stipend for student living expenses and study periods at other national or international institutions. Throughout the research project ICARS will also provide supervision where needed, including through dedicated international research expertise.

When the research project has come to an end, ICARS does not have any financial commitments. Therefore, the institution in which the students are enrolled must clearly state in the budget notes that they will provide the financial support needed to finalise the master's or the PhD project, if it has not been completed by the end of the ICARS funding.

The research should be conducted within the borders of the partner country. ICARS may cover costs for PhD students enrolled outside the partner country if specific programs or competences, are not available nationally, or the quality of such education within the country is not at the required level for the project. .

If PhD costs are covered by the funding, travel expenses for planned trips and fieldwork for the students must be included in the budget under the budget item "expenses for trips and fieldwork".

Expenses for trips and fieldwork

For project staff, the project budget can only cover accommodation costs, per diem and other reimbursable costs according to their institution's policies, regulations and local cost-norms. However, should local per diem rates exceed ICARS applicable rates, ICARS rates must be applied. The cheapest fare should be applied, and frequent flyer points earned on the flights cannot be used for private purposes. Budgeted travel must be justified and directly related to project activities. The table outlining planned flights as part of the budget template must correspond with the travel expenses.

If a researcher is not covered by personal insurance or similar, an amount for health insurance per month for travel outside the home country may be included.

Travel expenses for master's or PhD students enrolled at institutions outside the partner country must be included under this budget item.

Research equipment and materials

Under this category, only equipment or any other device that is directly related to the project activity will be eligible for ICARS' funding. Equipment must have a clear justification for the project, and this should be included within budget notes.

All purchases must be in accordance with international and national procurement regulations. The budget items for project and research equipment cover the running costs and expenditure of acquiring necessary equipment, apparatus, literature, IT equipment, insurance, etc.

Project expenses must not include VAT, in the case that it is possible for ICARS, co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders to receive VAT refund.

Publication, dissemination and outreach

Under this budget item, expenditures for ongoing, current or subsequent dissemination and publication of research findings may be included, for instance:

6. Publishing of reports etc.
7. Minor publications for local dissemination
8. Production of material for dissemination through websites and other electronic media
9. Participation in conferences
10. Holding of workshops and seminars
11. Alternative forms of dissemination

Research results must be published open access in peer-reviewed journals in accordance with *ICARS' Intellectual Property and Open Access Policy*. Publishing costs should be included in the budget.

Travel expenses and salaries in connection with workshops and conferences must be included under their respective budget lines.

Please note that ICARS' communications team will support the project's communication and dissemination of research findings.

Overhead

Overheads are calculated as a fixed percentage of direct costs following the rates given below in Table 4. For partner private sector stakeholders and for-profit organisations the budget can only include salaries and travel expenses covering their direct contribution to the project activities, meaning that no overhead to cover indirect administration costs can be included.

The following indirect costs are considered to be covered by the overhead:

1. Management involvement in the cooperation and coordination of activities at participating research institutions and universities
2. Recurrent office and office set-up expenses (office furniture, rent, cleaning, stationery, transport, electricity and water, support staff, and other general recurrent expenses)
3. Expenses related to staff carrying out general administrative tasks, such as budget, accounting, HR, IT and legal tasks.

Additional funds cannot be allocated to these types of expenses that are greater than the overhead.

TABLE 4. MAXIMUM OVERHEAD RATES

Type of Institution	Maximum Overhead
LMIC-based research institutions, universities and non-profit organisations	15 %
Research institutions, universities and non-profit organisations based elsewhere	10 %

* For multilateral organisations the general norm to cover indirect costs is 10 % overhead. However in case the governing bodies of a multilateral organisation has a fixed overhead/indirect cost rate that is higher, ICARS may on a case-by-case basis make an exemption to this rule.

The overhead rates provided above are the *maximum* rates allowed. If a co-applicant research institution, university or partner stakeholder has an actual overhead/indirect cost rate that is lower, the lower rate will apply and the institution/university/stakeholder may *not* increase the funding request to the maximum overhead rate allowed. Co-applicant research institutions or universities and partner stakeholders are required to provide documentation if they have a general overhead/indirect cost rate.

Example

A participating non-profit organisation based in an LMIC has an organisational actual overhead/indirect cost rate of 8 %, i.e. for every 1,000 dollars in direct costs, it has 80 dollars in indirect costs. Rather than defaulting to the maximum rate of 15 % overhead, 8 % must be included in the budget.

The actual overhead awarded in a grant budget may vary up to the maximum overhead rate and is based on a case-by-case decision depending on factors including, but not limited to, the type of research project, the level of administrative effort required, the overall grant size and the extent of sub-awards.

Contingency

For flexibility purposes, contingency of maximum of 5% of the direct costs can be included.

It will be possible to use this amount for the cost items directly related to the project that were encountered in the process of project implementation and that were unforeseen in the process of budget preparation. These costs should not include items that otherwise should be absorbed by the project overhead. Utilisation of the contingency must be communicated and agreed with ICARS during project implementation.

Audit

The annual and the final accounts must be externally audited, and the audit is to include the entire set of project accounts, including the accounts of every partner institutions/stakeholders. The maximum amount to be used for audits is 4,500 USD per year and 7,700 USD for the final audit. The funds for audit are earmarked. Additional expenses will not be accepted, but must be borne by the research institution or ministry responsible for the financial reporting. The audit expenses are not subject to overhead. See *Guideline for Project Administration* for more information.

5. CVs of the Project Coordinator and Key Researchers

CV's of the Project Coordinator and key researchers must be enclosed. It is important that:

1. The individual CVs do not exceed five A4 pages (ensure to include experience applicable to the project, as well as key scientific publications and reports relevant to the application)
2. All CVs **must be compiled to a single PDF** where the names of everyone are clearly stated in a table of contents which constitutes the front page of the appendix.
3. CVs should be concise and specific to the project requirements, in line with the above page limit.

Projects can use their own template, or alternatively may use the ICARS *Template for CVs of the Project Coordinator and Key Researchers*. The same requirements apply regardless of the format used.

To streamline communications processes, each project should identify a communications lead that can directly liaise with the ICARS Communications Officer, Sephy Valuks (sephy@icars-global.org)

TABLE 5. CV CONTENT

Heading	Content
<i>Biodata</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State if the person is the Project Coordinator or a key researcher • Enter full name • Enter job title • Brief description of area of specialization • State the anticipated total involvement in person months throughout the research project
<i>Contact information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter address of work place • Enter phone number • Enter email address • Enter an URL (optional)
<i>Scientific qualifications and other qualifications of relevance to the research project</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly describe the qualifications (scientific and/or other) that the Project Coordinator/researcher can contribute with in the research project
<i>Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List educational activities of relevance to the research project
<i>Employment history</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the places of employment for the last 10 years
<i>Project management skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe project management skills and previous project roles of relevance to this proposal
<i>Key scientific publications and reports relevant to the application</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of the key scientific publications reports and other types of communication relevant to the application that the Project Coordinator/project participant has written or co-written (if any) <p>The Project Coordinator and each key researcher may maximum list 10 items and/or use maximum one page.</p>

5.1. Signature Page

When submitting the Project Proposal it is mandatory that the following project participants sign a signature page (no template provided), thereby confirming that the information in the application is correct and that the research project will be conducted according to the approved Project Proposal:

- The Responsible Ministry
- The Lead Research Institution
- Each co-applicant research institution or university
- Key partner stakeholders

In addition, the ministry/institution in charge of the financial management of the grant must sign to confirm that the budget in the Project Proposal is correct and that the research project will be implemented accordingly to that budget. In the event of any subsequent substantive changes affecting the information submitted the Project Coordinator must notify the ICARS Advisor.

6. Assessment Criteria

ICARS and the Technical Advisory Forum will assess the Project Proposal based on the following criteria.

Assessment Criteria	
Relevance	
12.	Does the research project respond to a well-defined and well-articulated AMR challenge, problem or knowledge gap as aligned with the National Action Plan on AMR or contained in national policies and other documents, which the Responsible Ministry gives high priority to address?
13.	Does the research project use an intervention/implementation research framework?
1.	Does the research project align with ICARS' five core principles? ²
2.	Is the AMR well-described in the proposal how the research project will support the country in mitigating AMR?
3.	Are the relevant scientific disciplines included in the research project? (e.g. human health, animal health, environmental, behavioural, policy and economic sciences)
4.	Is the research project developed based on a consultative process involving relevant public and private stakeholders?
Scientific quality	
5.	Is the project study design and methodology well-articulated and does it conform to international standards?
6.	Has the theory of change been well-articulated?
7.	Do the participating researchers have the required scientific qualifications and experience within the project area?
1.	Is it demonstrated that the application has been co-developed using the appropriate national research expertise (and, if needed, international expertise)?
Feasibility	
8.	Is the management structure of the research project well-defined and feasible?
9.	Does the Project Coordinator demonstrate sufficient management skills?
10.	Are the objectives and expected outcomes of the research project achievable within the duration of the research project?
11.	Is the time plan realistic?
12.	Is the budget realistic?
Effect	
13.	Are the expected policy/legislative, societal and economic impacts clearly described?
14.	Will the research project contribute to capacity and capability building within the country?
15.	Has the project taken into consideration potential risk factors and provided a clear mitigation strategy?

TABLE 6. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

² One Health is one of ICARS' core principles, and ICARS understands that AMR must be addressed across One Health, but projects and solutions may also be sector specific. Therefore it is not a requirement that individual projects operate across One Health.

7. Applying to ICARS and other Funders for Research Grants

Ensuring synergy and avoiding duplication is key for ICARS. By submitting the Project Proposal the Responsible Ministry and the Lead Research Institution confirms that the same or a similar project is not already financially supported by another body. If another similar project is ongoing or if the Responsible Ministry or one of the co-applicant research institutions or universities or stakeholders is submitting a similar application to another body for funding in parallel, the Project Coordinator must inform the ICARS Advisor prior to submitting the Project Proposal. If the ICARS Advisor considers the two projects to be complementary, the Project Proposal should explain the relationship between the projects. If on the other hand, the ICARS Advisor is concerned about an overlap between the projects he/she should take the necessary steps to ensure synergy and avoid overlap and duplication.

8. Legal, Regulatory or Ethical Issues

The Project must comply with relevant legal, regulatory and ethical requirements, including standards or authorization requirements (such as production standards, quality systems, research ethics, data handling and protection, use of animals). Key considerations relate to obtaining research permits, provision of information to relevant authorities, etc., and a plan for obtaining these.

The Lead Researcher and the Lead Research Institution must obtain all relevant ethical approvals and other required permits prior to the initiation of the project activities requiring approval. Compliance with these matters must appear in the annual and completion reports.

The project must also comply with ICARS policies: [Our policies – ICARS \(icars-global.org\), including ICARS' Conflict of Interest Policy – see the next section.](#)

9. Conflict of Interest

The Project Coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with [ICARS' Conflict of Interest Policy](#), including informing the ICARS Advisor about any potential or actual conflict of interest before submitting the Project Proposal, during the co-development process, as well as during project implementation, using Annex 2 of the ICARS conflict of interest policy.