GUIDE TO MAKING A GOOD APPLICATION - CONSULTATIVE RESEARCH COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

The Consultative Research Committee for Development Research (FFU):

- Members are appointed by the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation
- Assesses and Phase 1 and Phase 2 applications and advise on the prioritization of projects for funding by MFA (subject to the approval by Innovation Fund Denmark)
- Participates in the quality assurance of the projects based on progress and final reports
- Adhere with the policy on conflict of interest as in the Danish Research Councils.

Three criteria for assessment: SCIENTIFIC QUALITY, RELEVANCE, and EFFECT

The scientific quality of the proposal is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- *The research experience and qualifications of the project coordinator;*
- *The originality and innovative nature of the project, in terms of generating new knowledge.*

The relevance of the proposal is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- *The focus of the project is well-defined with respect to the selected theme;*
- *The project responds to national development priorities relevant for Danish development cooperation/Danish Strategic Sector Cooperation;*
- *Opportunities for enhanced public and private sector development.*

The effect of the research is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- *The potential direct effects with respect to the selected sustainable development goal(s);*
- *The collaboration with public and private stakeholders which could promote use and uptake of the research;*
- *The contribution of the project to strengthened research capacity.*

It must be clear that the proposal constitutes a genuine research project rather than being registration of data, commissioned research, a product development, demonstration project, technology transfer, consultancy, or development project.

In Phase 2, feasibility of the proposed research project will also be a criterion for assessment.

Recommendations:

- Do select a subject within the themes described in the Call.
- Do identify a research question which is not only intellectually challenging but also relevant and under-researched.
- Do formulate research questions and hypotheses that describe the innovative nature of the proposed research, how controversies in the literature may be addressed and how ‘conventional wisdom’ may be revised.

- Do explain carefully how the project contributes to new knowledge by positioning it in relation to existing research (not enough to provide a list of literature read).
- Do include components of research capacity development.
- Make sure that the main responsible researcher/researchers can allocate sufficient time (not necessarily a good idea to select a director or dean as main researcher).
- Do ensure a good balance between input from each of the project partners.
- Do follow up on recommendations, if any, from the evaluation of the phase 1 application, when writing the Phase 2 application.
- Be focused, realistic and feasible. It is not an advantage to cover very broad research questions or extensive empirical material. It is not an advantage to apply for multi-country comparative studies unless the rationale is clearly explained.
- Do present management structure and outreach clearly.
- Make sure that the research is analytical rather than descriptive.
- Consider that interdisciplinarity is an asset and make sure that you have the right competences in the team.
- Do try to move from 'grey' to internationally refereed publications.

Warnings:

- Do not apply for data collection projects without thorough explanation of how data will be used.
- Do not apply for "development projects", as the grants are for research.
- Do not apply for consultancy type of activities.
- Do not apply for Ph.D. projects without sufficient involvement of senior researchers (allocate enough time for the key applicant).
- Do not apply for funding for your entire institute (number of key researchers should be limited to approx. 5-6 from each participating institution).
- Do not address only a small part of the call text.