Scientific Content Writer
External Consultant

Organization:
FIND India, the global alliance for diagnostics seeks to ensure equitable access to reliable diagnoses around the world. We connect countries and communities, funders, decision-makers, healthcare providers, and developers to spur diagnostic innovation and make testing an integral part of sustainable, resilient health systems. We are working to save 1 million lives through accessible, quality diagnosis, and save US$1 billion in healthcare costs to patients and health systems. We are co-convenor of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator diagnostics pillar and a WHO Collaborating Centre for Laboratory Strengthening and Diagnostic Technology Evaluation.

For more information, please visit www.finddx.org

Project Background
The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic continues to ravage the World and India in 2021 and is a great threat to global public health. As of 16 August 2021, 205 million cases and >4.3 million deaths have been confirmed globally. In India, ~32 million confirmed cases have been reported so far with a rapid increase in the number of new cases during the “second wave” in the last few months. Daily cases touched highs of >300K, the highest in the World, during the last wave with delays noticed in every part of the care continuum including massive delays in testing. The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic highlights huge gaps in the testing capacity - a key element for timely isolation of infected persons and prevention of infection propagation in the community. Current testing challenges include sub-optimal capacity and utilization of the COVID-19 testing network, scarcity of efficient models for enhancing lab capacity, inefficiencies within laboratories to facilitate the rapid turnaround of quality tests, lack of coordination between public and private sectors to amplify and optimize India’s laboratory capacity and shortage of trained manpower at the COVID-19 labs. This makes delays in diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infections a critical point of failure in the COVID-19 strategic preparedness and response plan.

Objective and Primary Outcome:
Against the background and rationale stated above, FIND as SR to JHPIEGO, will use various technical assistance approaches to implement activities identified under the project. The project will deploy a learning laboratory approach in 3 intervention states and further propagate learnings and best practices to the remaining states covered by USAID’s Reaching Impact, Saturation, and Epidemic Control (RISE) project.

Project goal:
Laboratory strengthening, under the USAID-RISE project, commenced with capacity building, QMS, and other initiatives directed toward the RT-PCR labs. The USAID RISE project now proposes to provide technical assistance towards the creation and enhancement of state-level sequencing capacity via the provision of portable, low-cost sequencers at government laboratories (present in RISE hubs) and capacity building to operationalize the same.

The sequencing sites will be established in identified ICMR approved public sector RT-PCR labs that are conducting COVID-19 testing. The sites will be identified based on the availability of minimal essential infrastructure and staff. They will be supported by providing NGS equipment. The laboratory staff identified will be provided with complete training on wet and dry laboratory aspects of COVID-19 sequencing principles and protocols. These 12 Laboratories will be provided adequate support to become a part of the central consortium-INSACOG.
As a part of the proposed work, one of the key areas is the preparation of a comprehensive document on Next-Generation Genome Sequencing using different platforms. Also prepare protocols on NGS principles and procedures, SOPs, laboratory layouts/models, use of bioinformatic tools for data analysis, and the trainer manual.

**Location:** Anywhere in India or Abroad

**Activities and Deliverables**

The Technical Consultant will be responsible for:

- Support in the preparation of an easy-to-use manual on NGS. This comprehensive manual would include in-depth details on the NGS technology, lab set-up checklist: in preparing to Purchase a Sequencer - Instrument Selection and Laboratory Preparations and NGS workflow processes. A complete workflow on the information technology considerations and the bioinformatic analysis protocols. The validation and the quality aspects for both wet and dry lab aspects would also be covered under individual sections. In detail, the focus would be on the nanopore sequencer and its application for the sequencing of SARS-CoV-2.
- Support in drafting the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for library and sequencing and analysis protocols for the covid-19 sequencing and variant calling using the nanopore and Miseq platform.
- Aid in the preparation of specific training content for onsite training for wet laboratory techniques, computational tools, pipelines to process, and analysis of raw sequenced data including aspects of troubleshooting & possible FAQs.

**Skills and experience required:**

- MD/Ph.D. in biological sciences or molecular biology with experience in guiding fellows or interns.
- Strong scientific background in NGS and bioinformatics and good experience in scientific writing and various laboratory method documents, executive summaries, study reports, SOPs, and Validation reports.
- Deliver within stipulated timeline and meet deadlines.
- Ability to work independently, with minimum handholding and supervision
- Professional, mature, and confident.

**Nature of Appointment:**

30 days appointment with payment for preparing the tool kit and training material. The payment will be milestone based and will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.no.</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Percentage of payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>On signing of the contract</td>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Upon submission of the final draft of the tool kit and training material</td>
<td>Day 30</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Deadline to send your application:** 20 April 2022

Please mail a motivation letter, a detailed resume, last-drawn details, present location notice period, and three references to HR-IN@finddx.org

(But don’t wait until the deadline! We will start screening right away and if we find the right person, we will stop searching.)

Please note that only applicants meeting the profile requirements will be personally contacted. Applications sent by recruitment agencies will not be considered.