

Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines for Accessing the Strengthened and Enhanced APEC Agenda on Structural Reform (SEAASR) Sub-fund

Operating within any APEC fora, economies can submit Concept Notes (CNs) that meet the scope and eligibility criteria of the SEAASR Sub-fund.

Before applying for funding, all prospective Project Overseers (POs) are encouraged to review the Guidebook on APEC Projects, and relevant guidance in the Project Overseers (PO) Toolkit. These resources are available on the APEC website: www.apec.org

To be considered eligible for the SEAASR Sub-fund, CNs must describe projects that support the implementation of SEAASR-aligned structural reforms in developing APEC economies. CNs must include an explanation of how the proposed project will support an economy's SEAASR Individual Action Plan (IAP). Proposed projects may primarily benefit a single economy but should have lessons for APEC members more broadly. Consistent with the ASF General Fund, a limit of USD 150,000 shall apply with respect of APEC-funding for an individual CN.

CNs must demonstrate that projects will focus on identifying developmental needs and building the capacity of individuals and institutions charged with the responsibility of undertaking structural reforms. The building of this capacity could involve, for example, acquiring a particular set of technical skills, obtaining new knowledge, or gaining experience through hands-on work.

All CNs seeking access to the SEAASR Sub-fund must be endorsed by the proposing forum and have at least two co-sponsors. Following the Final Submission Deadline that applies to the Project Session in question, an SEAASR Sub-fund Assessment Group will first undertake an assessment of each CN seeking funding from the SEAASR Sub-fund, for the purposes of determining eligibility.

The Assessment Group will consist of:

- The Economic Committee (EC) Chair
- The EC Program Director, APEC Secretariat
- Economies which have contributed to the SEAASR Sub-fund
- The Host economy, where the Host economy is a developing economy. (Where the Host is a developed economy, the EC shall decide on which developing economy should occupy this role.)
- The APEC Policy Support Unit (PSU) will provide advice and feedback on CNs only.

The Assessment Group will refer to APEC's Project Quality Criteria of *relevance, impact, effectiveness, sustainability, and efficiency* when assessing submitted CNs. The Assessment Group will operate in a transparent and fair manner, with any EC member entitled to observe proceedings.

The EC will have full decision-making authority in relation to the endorsement of CNs proposed within the EC. Eligible CNs that have been endorsed by the EC, or another proposing fora, will be scored by the EC, in its role as the forum responsible for scoring all CNs found to be eligible to access the SEAASR Sub-fund. For those CNs that are assessed as eligible, and subsequently recommended by the Secretariat to BMC for in-principle approval, the Assessment Group may provide feedback on a CN to the Project Overseer (PO) to be taken into account during the development of the Project Proposal.

Following the rules that apply to all APEC project funds, if a CN is found to be ineligible to access the SEAASR Sub-fund, the CN may not proceed any further in the APEC Project Session in question, either under the SEAASR Sub-fund, or any other APEC project fund (including the ASF General fund). The Assessment Group will provide the ineligibility reasoning to the PO.

Priority projects

Priority will be given to projects that benefit APEC economies that are eligible for official development assistance (ODA) with an implementation period of at least 12 months. This does not preclude non-ODA eligible APEC economies from applying for and receiving funding, or projects of shorter timeframes from being proposed if they are in line with the purpose of the Sub-fund and otherwise meet these Eligibility Criteria.

Administration of the sub-fund

The APEC Secretariat will be responsible for the administration of the SEAASR Sub-fund. It will be subject to the procedures governing the APEC Support Fund, as set out in the Guidebook on APEC Projects.

Operating within any APEC fora, economies may submit CNs that meet the scope and eligibility criteria of the sub-fund. The implementation of SEAASR IAPs is overseen by the economies on the Economic Committee. Applications from outside the EC should check with the economy representative on EC to ensure that their CN addresses an economy's SEAASR IAP.