

The Mekong Thought Leadership and Think Tanks Network Program

Call for Fellowship Applications

The Mekong Thought Leadership and Think Tanks Network Program, supported by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), is providing fellowship opportunity hosted in **Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam**.

The fellowships are intended for **entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders** who are **Mekong citizens** (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam) with research, policy, and/or practitioner experience on water, energy, and climate sectors.

Launch of the Call: 9th March 2023

Application deadline: 31 March 2023, 23:59 (Bangkok/Indochina time)

Submissions of applications will only be accepted through online submission platform:

<https://sei.submittable.com/submit/256432/mtt-call-for-fellowship-applications-round-1>

BACKGROUND

The Mekong Thought Leadership and Think Tanks Network Program, supported by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), aims to work with national and regional knowledge-based policy influence organizations (KBPIOs) in the Mekong subregion to enhance their capacities to effectively engage stakeholders involved in policy processes. In particular, the program will work with KBPIOs to support strengthening policy and practice in relation to equitable water security, energy security, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation. This will be combined with communications based on high quality research, practical advice generated by the program, and cross-learning among relevant organizations in the region.

The program views that investing in diverse entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders working in research and policy engagement is essential to enhance their capacity in producing and promoting practical and sustainable solutions. Therefore, the program will also spearhead capacity building for entry- or mid-level professionals through fellowships and trainings.

This call is looking to recruit 8 fellows who will undertake work as outlined in the sections below.

OBJECTIVES

There are three main objectives for the fellowship program.

1. To strengthen knowledge, capacity, and skills of diverse Mekong entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders in policy research, engagement, and communication, as well as effectively integrate gender equity and social inclusion within each of these.

2. To support the implementation of the program in enhancing effectiveness and inclusiveness of policy engagements in the intersections of water security, energy security, and climate change mitigation and adaptation sectors, as well as in the crosscutting dimension of gender equality and social inclusion across these.
3. To provide opportunities for diverse entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders to increase their networking with other professionals across sectors, especially water, energy, climate change, as well as gender and social inclusion, across the Mekong subregion.

COMPONENT AND HOST INSTITUTIONS

This fellowship's call for applications seeks 8 diverse entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders who are interested to work in the following program components and host institutions:

1. **Component 1.** Development of home-grown regional network/alliance of KBPIOs. Hosted at Institute of Policy and Management (IPAM), Vietnam. (1 position available)
2. **Component 2.1.** Identification of knowledge gaps on water-energy-climate nexus. Hosted at Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI Asia), Bangkok, Thailand. (1 position available)
3. **Component 2.3.** A scoping study of knowledge-based policy influence organizations (KBPIOs) that address water, energy, and climate issues in the Mekong subregion. Hosted at Unit for Social and Environmental Research (USER), Chiang Mai, Thailand. (1 position available)
4. **Component 2.4.** Gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI). Hosted at Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI Asia), Bangkok, Thailand. (2 positions available)
5. **Component 3.** Inclusive engagement with policy, practice, and the public beyond dialogues for effective changes. Hosted at Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI Asia), Bangkok, Thailand.
6. **Component 4.** Professional development of agents of change. Hosted at National University of Laos (NUOL), Lao PDR. (1 position available)
7. **Component 5.** Media and communications. Hosted at Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI Asia), Bangkok, Thailand. (1 position available)

TASKS

A. General Tasks

The fellow is expected to contribute to the program's general activities, such as:

1. Attend meetings and relevant events organized by the program.
2. Engage with partners and other fellows in the program.
3. Report on progress of fellowship.
4. Actively engage with SUMERNET Young Professionals (SYP), which is a dedicated team of the Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET) working to inform and engage young professionals who are passionate about a just and sustainable Mekong future.
5. Engage in other outreach activities of the program.
6. Engage in other activities depending on available time and common interest of the fellow, host institute, and mentor.

B. Specific Tasks

Depending on the component/activity chosen, the fellow will identify their preferred topic, the specific tasks of which may include:

1. **Component 1.** Tasks may include: (a) supporting the review of existing networks/alliance and best practices of KBPIOs in the Mekong subregion; (b) contributing to design strategies to strengthen a regional network/alliance of KBPIOs; and (c) providing assistance to organize meetings among regional network/alliance members.
2. **Component 2.1.** Tasks may include: (a) collating scientific papers and reports from relevant organizations at national and regional levels; (b) conducting literature reviews and summarizing existing knowledge; (c) identifying knowledge gaps in the links between water, energy, and climate in the Mekong subregion; (d) interviewing key experts; (e) coordinating with other components/activities to prioritize topics for flagship and rapid response studies; and (f) preparing knowledge products, such as a report and/or journal article.
3. **Component 2.3.** Tasks may include: (a) assisting the follow-up study with selected KBPIOs to enhance and nuance interpretation of the findings from the scoping survey, focused on themes such as knowledge management, science-policy linkages, research-orientation, and policy impact of research.
4. **Component 2.4.** Task may include: (a) supporting the GEDSI scoping study; (b) assisting in the development of the program's GEDSI strategy; (c) co-designing and implementing capacity development and support/coaching to other program teams to integrate GEDSI; (d) leading the research on gender equality and social inclusion in relation to the nexus of water, energy, and climate; and (e) producing relevant GEDSI-focused research outputs and participation in related research dissemination events.
5. **Component 3.** Tasks may include: (a) working with the component leads and advisors to undertake a mapping of policymakers across national and regional scale to assess current status of GEDSI in policy-making circles.
6. **Component 4.** Tasks may include: (a) working with component leads to undertake a literature review, conduct interviews, collect data collection as needed; (b) designing training materials collaboratively; and (c) writing reports related to fellowship program.
7. **Component 5.** Tasks may include: (a) supporting in planning and organizing media capacity building trainings relating to contextual and in-depth reporting of environmental topics; (b) assisting the communication team to work with research partners to share and exchange their expertise and knowledge during the partnership period; and (c) supporting communication guidance for research partners to simplify complicated topics or key findings to make products suitable for a non-technical audience, including policymakers.

DURATION

The duration of this fellowship is for **12 months**. Part-time arrangements can be negotiated. Changes to the fellowship duration will be based on an evaluation of the fellow's work and with the agreement of all parties concerned, including: fellow, host institution, mentor of fellow, and/or the leads of the component/activity, and if relevant, the fellow's home institution.

ALLOWANCE

One fellowship grant is for a maximum of **AUD 25,000**, covering the below expenditures.

1. Return flight, work permit and visa for fellow to be physically with the host institution.
2. Travel cost for the fellow to join regional forum and other activities.
3. Health and travel insurance.
4. Monthly allowance for the fellow.
5. Housing allowance.
6. Overhead to host institute.
7. Honorarium for mentor of the fellow.

Detailed breakdown of the grant will be finalized between the fellow and host institute with MTT program Secretariat (SEI Asia) approval, prior to the start of the fellowship period.

QUALIFICATIONS

A. Required

The following qualifications are expected of applicants:

1. Entry- or mid-level professional working on water, energy, or climate issues.
2. Citizen of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, or Vietnam.
3. Education qualification as appropriate for the role, but generally considered to be:
 - a. Master's degree with at least 2 years' experience; or
 - b. Bachelor's degree with at least 5 years' experience.
4. Available to commit to a 12-month fellowship full-time or longer than 12-month fellowship part-time.
5. Be physically based with the host institution for at least 6 months during the fellowship period.
6. Working knowledge of English along with their native language of the Mekong subregion.

B. Preferable

Applicants with the following qualifications will be given priority in the selection process:

1. Experience in working in at least one of the thematic areas:
 - a. Water security
 - b. Energy security
 - c. Climate change mitigation or adaptation
 - d. Gender equality, disability, and social inclusion
 - e. Water, energy, and climate nexus
2. Applicants who are currently working or affiliated to a partner of the program (see **Annex 1**).

We encourage applicants from socially disadvantaged groups.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

A. Application submission deadline: 31 March 2023

Applicants need to submit their application through an online form available at this link: <https://sei.submittable.com/submit/256432/mtt-call-for-fellowship-applications-round-1>.

The following documents will be required to be uploaded:

1. **Recent Curriculum Vitae (CV)** – mandatory.
2. **Motivation letter** (500 words maximum) – mandatory. The letter should address the following questions:
 - a. What is your motivation to apply for this fellowship opportunity?
 - b. How is your current work/study relevant to this position?
 - c. What are your expectations/hopes for this position?
 - d. What unique perspective and insights do you bring to this position? (Please address here cultural, minority, gender, etc. issues)
3. At least **one reference letter from current or former work/academic supervisor** – mandatory.
4. Relevant samples of work (report, paper, other media, etc.) – optional.
5. Letter of recommendation from the current home institution or previous institution – optional.

B. Application review and scheduling interviews: 10 April 2023

The submitted applications will be screened and reviewed based on the criteria set in this call.

C. Panel interview: 21 April 2023

Only shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview with the fellowship selection panel. The interview stage will result in the recommendation of selected fellow(s) to be approved by the Program Steering Committee (PSC).

D. Endorsement by PSC and announcement: 25 April 2023

The recommendation from the fellowship selection panel will be considered by the PSC. The endorsement of the PSC will be the final decision for the selection of the fellow(s). The final decision will be announced by **2 May 2023**.

E. Start date of fellowship

Subject to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the application process of visa and work permit, and handover period in the home institution (if applicable), fellows will start the work with the host institution as soon as possible, **ideally by mid-May 2023**.

The fellow may do the work online or remotely first, if necessary. The fellowship starting date will be determined taking into consideration the conditions listed above and will last for a period of 12 months (or longer as per agreement with the host institution) from the starting date.

CONTACT

For inquiries, please contact: Mr. Boripat Lebel, Unit for Social and Environmental Research (USER), Thailand. Email: boripat@sea-user.org.

ANNEX

Annex 1. List of program partners

1. Stockholm Environment Institute - Asia Centre (SEI Asia), Thailand
2. Unit for Social and Environmental Research (USER), Chiang Mai University, Thailand
3. Centre for Change Governance, University of Canberra, Australia
4. Cambodia Research and Development Institute (CDRI), Cambodia
5. Faculty of Engineering, National University of Laos (NUOL), Lao PDR
6. Thailand Environment Institute (TEI), Thailand
7. Institute of Policy and Management (IPAM), Vietnam
8. International Water Centre Alumni Network (IWCAN), Australia
9. University of New South Wales (Canberra) (UNSW), Australia
10. Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute (IFReDI), Cambodia
11. Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC), Cambodia
12. Department of Environmental Science, Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), Cambodia
13. National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), Lao PDR
14. Northern Agriculture and Forestry College (NAFC), Lao PDR
15. National Economic Research Institute (NERI), Lao PDR
16. GMS Research Center for Environment and Sustainability, Mahasarakham University, Thailand
17. School of Public Policy, Chiang Mai University (CMU), Thailand
18. Mae Fah Luang University (MFU), Thailand
19. Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand
20. Chulalongkorn University (CU), Thailand
21. Viet Nam National Mekong Committee (VNMC), Vietnam
22. Western Highlands Agriculture and Forestry Science Institute (WASI), Vietnam
23. Viet Insight, Vietnam
24. WWF Regional, Asia Pacific
25. Mekong River Commission Secretariat (MRCS)