



## Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET)

### SUMERNET 4 All Rapid Response Research: Call for "Expressions of Interest"

SUMERNET announces a call for Expression of Interest (Eoi) for its rapid response grants. SUMERNET will award five grants in total over the period of its fourth phase under “SUMERNET 4 All” (2018-2023). Funding support will not exceed **400,000 SEK (~US\$ 45,000) per research project** to be completed **within 6-12 months**. For this call, not more than **four grants** will be awarded in 2021.

Launch of the call: 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021

Deadline of Eoi submission: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 23:59 (Bangkok/Indochina time)

Submissions of Eois will ONLY BE ACCEPTED through online submission platform:

<https://sei.submittable.com/submit/199485/sumernet-4-all-call-of-eois-on-rapid-response-research-2021>.

#### Background

The main goal of the ongoing SUMERNET 4 All programme phase is to “reduce water insecurity for all, in particular for the poor, marginalized and socially vulnerable groups of women and men in the Mekong Region”.

In response to the fast-evolving situation of water insecurity across the Mekong countries, SUMERNET 4 All is launching a rapid response mechanism **to fund research that will provide evidence that directly contributes to ongoing planning or decision-making processes at national or regional levels, which address challenges being faced and help reduce water insecurities for the poor, marginalized and socially vulnerable groups of women and men in the Mekong Region.**

The research priorities of this call are aligned with three research themes below:

1. Water access, rights, and allocation in times of water insecurity.
2. Governance and management of water-related disaster risks.
3. Transboundary interactions with water systems.

Expedited timelines apply throughout the process to ensure delivery meets rapid response needs. It is expected that contracting and start-up of successful project is equally expedited. The research project leader and team members are required to treat the award(s) arising from the call with urgency.

## **Details of this call**

The format of applications is based on a shortened version of the well-established SUMERNET 4 All collaborative research funding instrument. We emphasize that applications with involvement of policymakers and planners, practitioners and marginalized women and men are particularly welcome, as are those lead or co-lead by women.

### **Successful applications will have to fulfil the following aspects:**

1. Addressing current challenges on water insecurity of significant importance for the Mekong Region, in line with at least one of the above research themes of SUMERNET 4 All.
2. Providing evidence that directly contributes to ongoing planning or decision-making processes at national or regional levels to help reduce water insecurities for the poor, marginalized and socially vulnerable groups of women and men in the Mekong Region.
3. Rapid response research covers the whole of the Mekong Region or at least two countries as the study area.
4. A multidisciplinary research approach that includes gender and social equality, human rights, conflict sensitivity, and governance and poverty reduction as key targets.
5. Engagement with a diverse group of team members in the project that represent diverse genders, ages, races and are at different stages in their research career is an advantage, especially if the project has a female lead.
6. End beneficiaries of this rapid response research are the marginalized and most vulnerable groups in the Mekong Region.
7. Lead agency and Team Leader have extensive experience and proven capacity to manage the grant that engages with interdisciplinary experts in water sector for the Mekong Region.
8. Project team has proven experience and expertise to carry out the proposed rapid research.
9. Including realistic activities that could be implemented and completed within the proposed project period even though the pandemic may continue in the region.
10. Providing letter of support or request from target user(s) of future research findings to certify that there is a real need for this research while not compulsory will certainly be an advantage.

### **Expected outputs**

- One English manuscript for submission to an international journal.
- At least one public product (e.g., blog, video, op-ed, etc), with at least one product involving marginalized and vulnerable communities.
- One project report or other appropriate product including research findings and recommendations, which will be directly used to inform ongoing planning or decision-making processes as earlier identified.
- One policy engagement event.
- All activities and outputs must be completed within a period of 6-12 months.

## Who can apply?

**Lead Applicant (LA)** needs to demonstrate that she/he has the skills, knowledge and support necessary to direct the proposed research and to be actively engaged in carrying the research through its completion. The LA will need to show appropriate evidence of expertise and experience matched to the nature and context of research project. LA must be a formal SUMERNET network member. (You can apply to be a SUMERNET network member if you have not registered as network member yet using this link: <http://bit.ly/sumernetmembers>). If lead organization has prior experience in receiving the grant(s) from SUMERNET or other programmes of SEI, the application would be an advantage. However, they will need to demonstrate that their project team can perform the activities specified in the application, without impacting the work earlier committed with SUMERNET or related ongoing tasks in their organizations.

**Project team members** could be the experts from SUMERNET or other networks.

## How to apply?

The Expression of Interest (Eoi) form (available as attachment below) must be completed to ensure eligibility. Reference is made in the form to SUMERNET website where information on the programme's goal, objectives and priority themes, as well as operating approach, boundary partners, capacity development etc. is made. Please refer to this when submitting the Eoi.

All applications must submit an ***Expression of Interest*** and supporting documents **using the SUMERNET online submission** platform at <https://sei.submittable.com/submit/199485/sumernet-4-all-call-of-eois-on-rapid-response-research-2021>. (Email submissions will not be accepted.)

## Documents to be prepared for online submission:

- Completed Expression of Interest form
- CV of Project Leader
- CV of Project team members
- Annexes of activities, outputs, and budget (templates available) <sup>1</sup>
- Letter of research or support from target users of this research findings

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<sup>1</sup> This grant can cover the overhead cost of the applicant's organizations. The normal overhead rate of the organizations should be applied. However, total overhead cost applied to the project cannot be higher than 15% of total grant received in any case.