



Call for Fellowships

Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET)

(www.sumernet.org)

“SUMERNET 4 All” (S4A), the ongoing phase of SUMERNET (2019-2023), focusing on water insecurity in the Mekong Region is providing a **12-month fellowship** hosted at the SUMERNET Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand.

The fellowships are intended for **young and early-career (not older than 35 years) Mekong Region citizens** with researcher and/or practitioner backgrounds from the countries of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Launch of the Call: 27 June 2022

Application deadline: Saturday, 06 August 2022, 23:59 (Bangkok/Indochina time)

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

<https://sei.submittable.com/submit/229310/sumernet-call-for-fellowship-applications-2022-23/>

A. Background

SUMERNET is a regional research network focused on the six countries of the Mekong region. Its overall focus is to undertake research that influences and informs policy on sustainable development in the region thereby bridging the science to policy continuum. The network takes a participatory approach in identifying and finding ways to meet the strategic focus of S4A and utilize the rich research and policy engagement experiences of our partners. Through this approach the network aspires to transform the lives of communities affected by water insecurity in the Mekong Region. More details about S4A available here: <https://www.sei.org/projects-and-tools/projects/sumernet-4-all-engaging-with-water-insecurity-in-the-mekong-region/#sumernet-4-all>

One of S4A's outcomes is to enhance the knowledge, attitude, and skills of knowledge producers so that they can deliver credible, gender inclusive, human rights-based, conflict-sensitive, and poverty-reduction focused research on key water resource challenges in the Mekong Region. The knowledge producers can improve their research practice and contribute to enhancing the discourse on water resource planning, management and/or governance in the region. In S4A, among others, the programme focuses its interventions to improve capacity of young and early career professionals in the fields relevant to SUMERNET 4 areas of work: research, policy engagement, communications and project management (including monitoring & evaluation). **This fellowship call seeks applicants interested to work under Component 1: Multistakeholder engagement and/or Component 2: Research for Policy and Practice.** This call is looking to recruit **two fellows** who will closely work with the Coordinator for Component 1 and Component 2 to undertake work as outlined in **E. Specific Tasks** section below.

B. Objectives

1. To strengthen knowledge, capacity and skill of young Mekong citizens and graduate students with interests in research, policy engagement, development practice, communications and media work.
2. To help deliver credible, gender inclusive, human rights-based, conflict-sensitive, and poverty-reducing research, practice and communications related to addressing environmental sustainability in the Mekong Region.
3. To strengthen partnership and networking opportunities between their institutions of origin and the SUMERNET Steering Committee, SUMERNET Secretariat and other SUMERNET member institutes. Young professionals or graduate students from member institutes of SUMERNET are encouraged to apply and will be given higher priority for this grant.
4. To enhance a sense of ownership towards SUMERNET as a regional research network for the early career researchers, development practitioners, communication or media people, or graduate students.

C. Allowance

The SUMERNET 4 All Fellow will receive a **monthly allowance of approximately US\$ 750 (SEK 7,500)** to cover basic living costs and accommodation while residing in Bangkok, Thailand plus standard/economic level Alternative State Quarantine (ASQ) costs (if required), basic health/travel insurance, and relevant direct costs (return flight and transit accommodations) plus internet/communication costs. For the duration of their fellowship, SEI will arrange a Thailand visa and work permit fees to enable the fellow to legally live and work in Thailand.

D. Duration

The duration of this grant is 12 months. There is a possibility to extend the fellowship for another term of 6-12 months is dependent on the evaluation of the candidate's work and with the agreement of all parties concerned (SUMERNET fellow, SUMERNET Steering Committee, SUMERNET Secretariat, and also if relevant, the candidate's home institution).

E. Specific Tasks

Contribute to SUMERNET relevant work, specifically related to programme-wide activities (organized in Components) within SUMERNET 4 All. The applicants can identify with any of the two components as defined below to work with and gain hands-on experience. Please refer below to the expected role of fellow in each component:

- **For Multi-stakeholder engagement (Component 1)**, learn from and support this Component 1 in supervision, monitoring and capacity building activities of joint action projects, small grants and other policy and stakeholder engagement activities. Your role under this component is potentially to support SUMERNET Secretariat in advising grantee partners planning and implementing their policy engagement activities, analyzing policy impacts at research project and at SUMERNET 4 All programme levels, and in planning policy forum for SUMERNET which is organized annually.
- **For Research for policy and practice (Component 2)**, learn from and support this Component 2 in supervision, monitoring and capacity building activities of research projects and integrated

regional assessments and other research activities. Your role will be to carve out a project that adds value to your career and to S4A while helping grantee researchers deliver their work and extend its impact on policy and/or practice in the region. Examples of fellowship projects could include: how to design research and communication outputs that influence policy and practice for particular issues or applications; identifying and sharing insights for the development of local community actions or plans related to water resources; broader ideas on how to enhance the value and impact of scientific research across the Mekong; or undertake horizon scanning exercise for the Mekong to identify knowledge gaps related to water, food, ecosystems and climate change. Ideas that incorporate the goals of climate resilience and/or equitable development pathways will receive higher priority.

- Work with **Component 1 and Component 2** to undertake stakeholders, institutions and policy mapping to inform our pathways for policy engagement. This can lead to a position paper on policy pathways, pathways to impact or related aspects for SUMERNET.

In additions, as a SUMERNET fellow you will get the opportunity to:

1. Learn about the subjects and themes of interest from relevant staff and researchers at the SUMERNET Secretariat, Steering Committee and Advisors through mentorship and supervision.
2. Actively support the development of SUMERNET Youth Network (SYN) and engage with young professional members in relevant SYN and SUMERNET activities.
3. Other tasks that are considered relevant and effective in building the capacity of the fellow, including temporary placement in the SUMERNET grantee projects if there is significant interest from both fellow and grantee research partners.

F. Requirements

Required

1. Candidate is a citizen of one of the Mekong Region countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam) and is not older than 35 years at the start of the fellowship.
2. Holds at least a Master's degree in subjects relevant to the S4A programme of work.
3. At least 2 years of work experience in a field related to the S4A programme of work.
4. Available to commit to a 12-month full-time period of stay in Thailand based with the SUMERNET Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand.
5. Proficiency in English language along with their native language of the Mekong Region.

Preferable

1. Candidates who submit proof of previous work showing that they have relevant qualifications and skills or are recommended by individual who is a member of SUMERNET or institution who is affiliated to SUMERNET as current or previous partners will be given priority in the selection process.
2. Candidates with relevant work experience, education, and skills relevant to Component 2 (Research for Policy and Practice) and/or Component 1 (Multistakeholder engagement) will be given priority in the selection process.

However, any citizen of the five Mekong countries who feels they have the appropriate background and capacity is welcome to apply and will be given due consideration.

G. Application and Selection Process

1. Application submission deadline: 06 August 2022

Applicants need to submit their application through an online form available at this link: <https://sei.submittable.com/submit/229310/sumernet-call-for-fellowship-applications-2022-23/>. The following documents will be required to be uploaded:

- **Motivation letter** (entry in the submission form) – mandatory.
- **Brief abstract on task contribution and learning plan** – optional.
Applicants are encouraged to write a brief abstract of the idea she/he wishes to pursue. The abstract should be **500 words** or less and should identify with the tasks specified above that provides generic guidance to shaping ideas that you may be interested to work on during your time as a fellow with SUMERNET. The final choice and design of the fellowship tasks, including the specific aims and workplan, will be determined and developed during the first month of the fellowship.
- **Recent Curriculum Vitae (CV)** – mandatory.
- At least **one reference from current or former work/academic supervisor** – mandatory.
- **Relevant samples of work** (report, paper, other media, etc.) – optional.
- At least **one letter of recommendation from current home institution or previous institution** – optional.

2. Application review and scheduling interviews (08 – 20 August 2022)

The submitted applications will be screened and reviewed based on the criteria set in this call. The members of the panel review are the relevant Component Coordinator and project management staff of SUMERNET.

3. Panel interview (tentatively 22 -26 August 2022)

Only shortlisted applicants will be called for the interview with the SUMERNET selection panel. The interview stage will result recommendation of selected applicant(s) for approval by the SUMERNET Steering Committee (SSC).

4. Endorsement by SSC and announcement (26 – 31 August 2022)

The recommendation from SUMERNET panel will be considered by the SSC. The endorsement of the SSC will be the final decision for the selection of SUMERNET 4 All Fellow(s). The final decision will be announced in **by 31 August 2022**.

5. Start date of fellowship

Subject to the restrictions related to COVID-19 Pandemic, the application process of visa and work permit for staying in Thailand, the S4A fellows will start their duty at SUMERNET Secretariat as soon as possible in 2022, **ideally in the first week of October 2022**. The fellowship starting date

will be determined taking into consideration the conditions listed above and will last for a period of 12 months from the starting date.

H. Contact

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