

## **Guidelines and Eligibility Criteria**

### **ASF Sub-Fund on Connectivity**

The Connectivity sub-fund is overseen by the SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE). Any interested economies, from any APEC fora, may apply this sub-fund by submitting project concept notes which fall within the scope of the sub-fund and the ambit of APEC funding criteria. Nevertheless, SCE's endorsement will be the determining factor as to whether a project is eligible to access the sub-fund.

The funding of a single project applying for the Connectivity Sub-Fund is subject to a cap of USD150,000. All projects funded through the APEC Support Fund and its Sub-funds must primarily benefit developing economies.

### **Eligibility Criteria for the Sub Fund**

Drawing on the direction set in *the APEC Connectivity Blueprint for 2015-2025* endorsed at the AELM in 2014 (Annex D of the 2014 Leaders' Declaration), the proposed criteria are intended to be in line with the priority areas specified in the aforementioned document. Therefore, to be considered as eligible for the Connectivity Sub-Fund, the project must contribute to at least support projects in following aspects:

- Physical Connectivity, with a focus on resolving infrastructure financing bottleneck through public private partnerships (PPP)s and developing a regional network of PPP centers;
- Institutional Connectivity, including by addressing issues of trade facilitation, structural and regulatory reforms as well as transport and logistics facilitation, modernization of customs and border agencies, regulatory coherence and the international interoperability, harmonization of local policies with existing international agreements, the application of secure and trusted ICT and e-commerce environment;
- People-to-People Connectivity, including facilitating the movement of people across borders, and the exchange of innovative ideas, such as issues of business travel mobility, cross-border education, tourism facilitation, and skilled labor mobility;
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Review on implementation of the APEC Connectivity Blueprint for 2015-2025;
- Information/best practices sharing, capacity building and policy dialogues that are consistent with the principles and targets set by the APEC Connectivity Blueprint for 2015-2025.

Project concept notes applying for the Connectivity Sub-Fund will be checked against these criteria for their eligibility.

### **Process for Applying for the Sub Fund**

1. Submit your concept note to the Program Director for your group by the 'internal deadline' that is advertised on the APEC website. Your concept note should indicate which sub fund you are applying for at the relevant place on the template. Your concept note must address the eligibility criteria for the sub fund. Your Program Director will help to facilitate endorsement and scoring of your concept note by your group, and ensure that the concept note meets APEC requirements. There are approximately two weeks for this process.
2. Following endorsement and scoring of your concept note by your group, your concept note will be provided to SCE, who will consider your concept note against the eligibility criteria for the sub-fund and decide whether it is eligible to access the sub-fund. There are approximately two weeks for this process.

3. Concept notes will be considered eligible for the sub-fund unless there is a dissenting view raised by one or more members. If there is a dissenting view, the concept note will be considered ineligible for the sub fund. Any responses from Committee members that are provided late will not be included in the process. Committee members will not be identified individually with the decisions they make on eligibility.
4. Committee members who have a dissenting view are encouraged to provide their reasoning. Any reasoning that is provided on why your concept note is ineligible will be shared with you.
5. Concept notes that have been considered eligible for the sub-fund will then be considered for funding under the sub-fund as part of the project session. They will be considered following the same procedures as all concept notes applying for project funding, and will compete with other concept notes that are eligible for the sub-fund. They are not guaranteed of funding.
6. Concept notes that have been considered ineligible for a sub fund cannot be considered for funding under that sub fund. But they can still be considered for funding under the ASF General Fund. They will be considered following the same procedures as all concept notes applying for project funding, and will compete with other concept notes in the ASF General Fund. They are not guaranteed of funding.