

Guidelines and Eligibility Criteria

ASF Sub-Fund on Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific and Global Value Chains (FTAAP and GVCs)

The FTAAP & GVCs sub-fund is overseen by the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI). 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, CTI's endorsement will be the determining factor as to whether a project is eligible to access the sub-fund.

A single project applying for the FTAAP & GVCs 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 Beijing Roadmap for APEC's Contribution to the Realization of the FTAAP* and *APEC Strategic Blueprint for Promoting Global Value Chains (GVCs) Development and Cooperation* endorsed at the AELM in 2014 (Annex A and B of the 2014 Leaders' Declaration), the proposed criteria are intended to be in line with the initiatives and guidelines specified in the aforementioned documents.

Therefore, to be considered as eligible for the FTAAP & GVCs Sub-Fund, the project must:

a) Contribute to the realization of FTAAP by supporting at least one of the following 4 initiatives which are considered as potential building blocks of the FTAAP:

- Carrying out the collective strategic study on issues related to the realization of the FTAAP;
- Increasing transparency of existing and recently concluded RTAs/FTAs by advancing work under the APEC Information Sharing Mechanism on RTAs/FTAs;
- Continuing the capacity building activities in pursuit of the FTAAP under the Action Plan Framework of the 2nd Capacity Building Needs Initiative (CBNI);
- Accelerating "at the border" trade liberalization and facilitation efforts, improving the business environment "behind the border", and enhancing regional connectivity "across the border"; and/or

b) Promote GVC development and cooperation according to one or more of the following 10 guidelines:

- Addressing trade and investment issues that impact GVCs;
- Cooperating on improving statistics related to GVC;
- Realizing the critical role of trade in services within GVC;
- Enabling developing economies to better participate in GVCs;
- Assisting SMEs to benefit from GVCs;
- Improving the investment climate for GVCs development;
- Adopting effective trade facilitation measures;
- Enhancing resiliency of GVCs;
- Encouraging public-private partnerships for GVCs; and
- Strengthening collaboration with other stakeholders on GVCs.

Project concept notes applying for the 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

(see below). 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 CTI, 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.