**Guidelines and Eligibility Criteria**

**ASF Sub-Fund on Innovative Development, Economic Reform and Growth (IERG)**

The IERG 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. Nevertheless, SCE’s endorsement in consideration of the eligibility criteria below, 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 IERG Sub-Fund is subject to a cap of USD150,000. All projects funded through the APEC Support Fund and its Sub-funds must be capacity building projects that primarily benefit developing economies.

**Eligibility Criteria for the Sub Fund**

Drawing on the direction set in *the APEC Accord on Innovative Development, Economic Reform and Growth* endorsed at the AELM in 2014 (Annex C 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 IERG Sub-Fund, the project must contribute to at least one of the following priorities:

* Overcoming the Middle-Income Trap;
* Implementing the APEC Initiative of Cooperation to Promote Internet Economy;
* Implementing the APEC Cooperation Initiative for Jointly Establishing an Asia-Pacific Urbanization Partnership, including establishing a cooperative network of sustainable cities in APEC economies, organizing sustainable urban development forums and policy dialogues, and carrying forward relevant projects that advance sustainable urbanization goals;
* Implementing APEC Initiatives on Blue Economy cooperation;
* Implementing the “Healthy Asia-Pacific 2020” initiative;
* Carrying out relevant projects that promote experience sharing, policy dialogue, capacity building and practical cooperation, directly contribute to the goals and priorities of the APEC Accord on Innovative Development, Economic Reform and Growth, and primarily benefit developing economies.

Project Concept Notes applying for the IERG 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 must 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 of your Concept Note by your group, and ensure that the Concept Note meets APEC requirements.

2. Following endorsement of your Concept Note by your group, and after the Final Submission Deadline for all Concept Notes as advertised on the APEC website, 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.

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. Following the rules that apply to all APEC Concept Notes, if a Concept Note is found to be ineligible, the Concept Note may not proceed any further in the APEC Project Session in question, either under the IERG Sub-Fund, or any other APEC project fund (including the ASF General fund).

4. Committee members who have a dissenting view are encouraged to provide their reasoning. Any responses from Committee members that are provided late will not be included in the process. Any reasoning that is provided on why your Concept Note is ineligible will be shared with you. Committee members will not be identified individually with the decisions they make on eligibility.

5. Concept Notes that have been considered eligible for the sub-fund will then be scored by SCE using the APEC Scoring Template. Eligibility does not guarantee funding. Consistent with the process described in the Guidebook on APEC Projects, the Secretariat will calculate which Concept Notes can be funded based on order of scores (highest to lowest), and in consideration of the total amount that is available under the IERG Sub-Fund, for the APEC Project Session in question.