



Adaptation Research Alliance

Statement of Need for ARA Host Organisation

Summary

The Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) Steering Board is seeking to establish new institutional arrangements for the ARA (including its Secretariat) and is seeking Expressions of Interest from relevant organisations or groups of organisations with the interest and capacity to take on the exciting, high-impact role of ARA Host Organisation.

On behalf of the ARA's Steering Board, the Co-Chairs of the ARA are issuing this Statement of Need to assist with this search.

Interested parties are invited to register via this [link](#) for an **optional Q&A webinar on Thursday, 17 October 2024 between 14h00 – 15h00 GMT +2.**

Expressions of interest are to be submitted for the attention of the two ARA Co-Chairs: Rosalind West (Senior Climate Science Advisor: UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) and Anand Patwardhan (Professor: School of Public Policy, University of Maryland).

Submissions are to be made in the prescribed format and submitted to the Co-Chairs via the following email address (secretariat@adaptationresearchalliance.org) no later than the **EOI submission deadline of Thursday, 31 October 2024 at 23h59 GMT+2.**

Critical prescripts of the EOI submission process appear later in this statement of need. Readers are encouraged to review the document in its entirety with the understanding that the non-compulsory Q&A webinar forms the substantive platform for the resolution of any queries that may arise from this Statement of Need.

Background

Launched at COP26 in 2021, the ARA is a unique, global, multi-stakeholder coalition of organisations that seeks to link research and action to address the adaptation and resilience needs of the most vulnerable. The mission of the Alliance is *to accelerate and scale investments in action-orientated research in developing countries that address the pressing knowledge needs for adaptation and resilience of the most vulnerable and build capacity at all stages from research to action.*

Since its launch in December 2021, the ARA has made significant progress to establish a functioning and growing Alliance, attract a broad set of stakeholders, deliver results and demonstrate its value proposition. New ideas have been co-created for urban resilience (the SECURe framework), small-holder agriculture, and strengthening research – action linkages in LDCs. The ARA's 55 micro-grants have led to radical new collaborations and resilience solutions at the grassroots. As a part of its advocacy efforts, the ARA brought perspectives from the global South into UNFCCC processes such as the Global Stocktake and the Global Goal on Adaptation.

The ARA is governed by a Plenary comprised of all member organisations, who elect a Steering Board responsible for all operational and strategic decisions. The Steering Board elects two Co-Chairs. A Secretariat supports the Steering Board and Plenary and is responsible for implementing the priorities and programmes as decided by the Steering Board, as well as engaging with members, communications and outreach and other activities such as fundraising, donor / funder management (including reporting) and monitoring, evaluation and learning. Some of the priorities and programmes of the ARA are delivered through ARA member organisations, though oversight remains with oversight by the ARA Secretariat.

The ARA Secretariat is currently hosted by [SouthSouthNorth](#) (SSN), an NGO based in Cape Town, South Africa; which also provides administrative support, and financial management for the ARA. As SSN's role as the host of the Alliance Secretariat comes to a close, we are seeking to establish a long-term institutional home for the ARA, and effective mechanisms for the delivery of ARA activities and programmes. For this purpose, the Steering Board is seeking expressions of interest from qualified organisations or groups of organisations with the interest and capacity to take on this exciting role of institutional anchor for the ARA.

Since December 2021, SSN has overseen an ARA budget of approximately GBP 5 million. This budget has supported core Secretariat functions such as regular co-chair, Steering Board and Plenary meetings, member relationships, membership management and communications, maintaining a website and Slack functionality. The budget has supported a number of activities and programmes to carry forward the ARA mission.

These activities and programmes have been delivered by Secretariat staff and by ARA members, supported through the ARA budget:

- Evidence Reviews (2)
- Consultative Processes (4)
- Co-creation processes (4)
- Micro-grants (2 rounds)
- Tracking, Learning and Sharing (2 rounds with approximately 6 different learning journey activities),
- A diverse range of advocacy initiatives where the ARA Secretariat consulted with members on key issues on the Global Stocktake, Global Goal on Adaptation and New Collective Quantifiable Goal on climate finance, and
- A diverse range of communications and knowledge outputs.

The Secretariat has also created the [webpage](#) and backend Members Area to curate engagement between the Alliance. The new host organisation(s) would be expected to carry over the ARA's branding, any communications assets and the curation of existing knowledge products. The total headcount of the team deployed by the host organisation(s) over the period varied but averaged at approximately a team of eight (8) professionals providing a variety of roles.

Expectations of the host(s)

Host(s) are expected to deliver two primary functions:

1. **Managing the alliance and its governance.** This includes:
 - a) Oversight of ARA governance: supporting the Steering Board (SB) and the Plenary, identifying key decisions needed from the Steering Board, preparing supporting documents, papers and advice to enable the SB to make decisions, planning and organizing quarterly SB meetings and bi-annual Plenary meetings, conducting the election of SB members, supporting the co-chairs and ensuring that the requirements and aims of ARA Governance are satisfied.
 - b) Member coordination & management: managing addition of new members, maintaining member databases and communications with members.
 - c) Core communications: website, newsletter and strategic communications and engagement opportunities, including events.
 - d) Fund-raising and resource mobilisation: fundraise to cover ARA core costs and develop opportunities for funders to support other ARA-related activities delivered through ARA Members.
2. **Advancing the ARA's mission.** This includes:
 - a) Oversight of ARA's programmes and activity areas: Oversee delivery of the ARA's workplan, as defined annually by the SB. Report to the SB on whether the ARA is on track to meet its agreed objectives, including by collecting data for its log frame

from Members delivering on ARA-branded activities. Champion the ARA's mission in external fora. Offer vision and ideas to the SB and co-chairs about opportunities for the ARA.

- b) Delivery of ARA programmes and activities: Identify and engage members to deliver specific ARA programmes and activities or support the delivery of specific ARA programmes and activities directly, as needed and aligned with host(s) strengths and mandate.
- c) Branding: Manage the ARA branding, including ensuring that Members use ARA branding appropriately, in agreement with the ARA Secretariat/SB, and that branded activities contribute to ARA outcomes, consistent with the ARA mission.

What kinds of tasks will the host(s) undertake?

The following are likely tasks that the host(s) will undertake:

1. Grant management – receiving grants and awarding sub-grants & contracts for ARA activities.
2. Fund-raising – for both core costs and strategic activities, such as new action research programmes emerging from co-creation spaces or microgrants.
3. Monitoring, evaluation and learning – possibly with support from a delivery partner for tracking, learning and sharing emanating from the ARA's membership base.
4. Supporting networking and communications with funders, members, and activity partners.
5. Administrative and logistical support to the co-chairs, SB and Plenary.
6. Recruiting and managing a small core Secretariat – likely including a Head of Secretariat, executive / admin assistant, communications officer and programme officer.

What are desired characteristics of the host(s)?

Essential requirements:

1. Demonstrable skill and experience in the adaptation research–action space.
2. A high level of institutional commitment to the ARA's [Theory of Change](#), which will require strong strategic alignment between the ARA's mission and the organisational mandate of the host(s).
3. Strong commitment to [ARA Research for Impact Principles](#).
4. Demonstrated ability to receive and manage funds from donors, including onwards via sub-grants and sub-contracts.
5. Operating in the global South, with remit to work globally.

Desirable:

1. ARA member(s).
2. Based in the global South.

What is the ARA offering prospective host(s)?

1. The ARA has allocated resources including up to GBP 85 000 this financial year to support expenses related to the establishment of the new Secretariat (until March 2025) and to enable a smooth transition from SSN to the new host(s).
2. The current majority funder of the ARA, FCDO, is keen to encourage interest from other donors to support ARA on a match-funding basis going forwards. FCDO plans to provide up to GBP 500,000 for the new host(s) for 2025-26, and a level of match-funding for additional funds raised by the new host(s).
3. Existing donors to the ARA are exploring options to leverage current activities to generate further resources for the next financial year.
4. The ARA Steering Board and current Secretariat team will work closely with selected host(s) to support the transition and to fund-raise for the next financial year (after March 2025).
5. The opportunity to host the ARA provides the host(s) with unique visibility, leadership, voice, and direct connections to a dynamic network of funders and stakeholders who are committed to action research addressing the needs of those most vulnerable to climate change. The success of the ARA and the impact it is able to achieve depends critically on the host(s) who will serve as the anchor for the Alliance. In turn, serving as the anchor for the ARA could deliver significant strategic benefits to the host(s), including:
 - a. Access to the ARA membership and the potential for partnership and collaboration with the range of diverse organisations who are members.
 - b. High visibility in key policy processes, such as UNFCCC and IPCC processes.
 - c. Engagement with funders and donors, including those who are already members of the ARA.

Application process

1. Interested parties are invited to register via this [link](#) for an **optional Q&A webinar on Thursday, 17 October 2024 between 14h00 – 15h00 GMT +2** where the Co-Chairs will be available for questions. Any questions relating to this Statement of Need are requested *in advance* of this webinar, in writing, to the following email address: secretariat@adaptationresearchalliance.org. The webinar will address any written questions raised and any remaining questions from those in attendance at the webinar.
2. Outside of the webinar, no further questions for clarity will be offered by the Secretariat. A recording of the webinar noted above will be made available upon request within a set deadline following the webinar's hosting. Requests for access to the recording can be made via email request to secretariat@adaptationresearchalliance.org within seven (7) calendar days of the webinar. No requests later than this date will be answered.
3. Organisations or groups of organisations interested in this opportunity are requested to submit an EOI that addresses the expectations mentioned above and provide details on the tasks and the desired characteristics of the host(s), along with outline budget for FY25/26 and an indicative plan for FY26/27 and FY27/28. Additional areas to be covered should include but are not limited to:
 - a. Organisation type, mandate, structure, and geographic scope
 - b. Structure of a consortium or collaborative approach (if relevant)
 - c. Experience and track record in climate adaptation and action research
 - d. Capabilities in grantmaking, fundraising, MEL, communications, and network management.
4. Expressions of interest should be submitted in Word or PDF format, no more than 9 pages. Any pages beyond this limit will not be considered by the reviewers.
5. Submissions are to be made in the above format and submitted for the attention of the Co-Chairs via email at secretariat@adaptationresearchalliance.org no later than **EOI submission deadline of Thursday, 31 October 2024 at 23h59 GMT+2**.
6. The ARA Steering Board / Co-chairs will engage with short-listed organisations in a dialogue to explore suitability and assess the strengths of the proposals.
7. A final decision on the host(s) is expected before year-end to allow sufficient time for a smooth transition and fund-raising for next year.
8. Whilst this Statement of Need outlines a request by the Co-Chairs (on behalf of the Steering Board), the EOI process does not bind or compel the Board to make a decision based on the responses received.