



Questions and Answers Statement of Need for ARA Host Organisation

Summary

The ARA Co-Chairs, on behalf of the Steering Board, have launched an expression of interest process to respond to a Statement of Need published for a New Host Organisation for the ARA. Further details are available [here](#) including important details regarding the **submission of all EOIs no later than 31 October 2024 at 23hh59 (GMT +2)**.

A non-compulsory webinar briefing was held on 17th October to offer clarification questions on the Statement of Need and a written record of those are offered in this document below. No further questions for clarity will be answered 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.

Kindly see overleaf for a written summary of the non-compulsory Q&A with the Co-Chairs held on 17th October 2024.

Q&A

1	Would it be possible for SSN to let us know the staffing structure and FTE they have had to deliver as ARA host organisation?	<p>The SSN staffing structure for delivering as the ARA host organisation typically includes a combination of full-time equivalents (FTEs) across various roles. This usually involves a core team within the Secretariat, which may consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program Managers: Overseeing specific projects and ensuring they align with ARA's goals.• Fundraising Specialists: Focused on securing funding and managing donor relationships.• Administrative Support: Handling logistical and operational tasks to facilitate smooth functioning.• Monitoring and Evaluation Experts: Assessing program effectiveness and reporting on outcomes. <p>The exact number of FTEs can vary based on project needs and funding availability, but SSN was expected to maintain a robust team capable of supporting the Alliance's activities effectively. This is crucial for the staffing to align with the strategic goals of the ARA while ensuring adequate resources for effective implementation.</p> <p>Further information: The structure involved a combination of Secretariat functions and program delivery. SSN collaborated with funders such as FCDO, the Gates Foundation, CECG and others. This included monthly, quarterly, and annual progress narrative reporting, alongside financial reporting and monitoring through log frame update meetings. We also managed sub-granting and contracting for various area activities, as well as their financial reconciliation in relation to compliance and audits.</p>
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2	<p>What have been some of the limitations or contractual provisions that FCDO have put on SSN in its current context?</p>	<p>Some of the limitations or contractual provisions that the FCDO has imposed on SSN in its current context include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Restrictions: Grants may require that funds are allocated specifically for purposes outlined in the contract, limiting flexibility in how resources are used within the parameters of what the funders' prescripts are. • Accountability Requirements: The FCDO requires rigorous reporting and accountability measures, which can impose additional administrative requirements on SSN. • Eligibility Criteria: Funding may be restricted to specific types of organisations, generally excluding for-profit entities from receiving direct funding but this is very dependent on the nature of the funders prescripts.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance Regulations: There may be detailed compliance processes that SSN must adhere to, impacting operational procedures and decision-making. • Performance Metrics: The FCDO set specific performance targets and metrics in a logical framework that the ARA should aim to meet, influencing project design and implementation strategies. Often SSN would need to 'nudge' and direct resources towards activities that would, ultimately, meet the outputs, outcomes and impact outlined in the performance frameworks (logframe). <p>These provisions aim to ensure responsible use of funds and project alignment with overarching goals, but they can also limit operational flexibility for SSN.</p>
3	<p>Are you looking for an organisation who is in the implementation space on adaptation plus action to research capabilities? Or mainly research organisation?</p>	<p>The focus should ideally be on an organisation that balances both implementation and research capabilities. An organisation engaged in the adaptation space, particularly one that integrates action with research, would be ideal. This ensures that practical solutions are informed by robust research and that data gathered from implementation can feed back into the research process, creating a cycle of continuous improvement and knowledge sharing. Such a dual approach can enhance effectiveness and drive impactful outcomes in adaptation efforts.</p>
4	<p>Would the host be eligible for the sub-awards/grants issued by ARA or excluded (assume the latter)?</p>	<p>The host organisation would typically be excluded from receiving sub-awards or grants issued by ARA. This is often done to avoid conflicts of interest and ensure transparency in the funding process. By excluding the host from such financial opportunities, ARA can maintain a fair and equitable distribution of resources to other eligible entities engaged in adaptation and research efforts.</p> <p>This matter is anticipated to be addressed by the Board in terms of specific criteria for eligibility. Historically, SSN has successfully managed various initiatives arising from broader scoping engagements within the</p>

		<p>ARA, such as the collaboration on smallholder agriculture with the Gates Foundation.</p> <p>As for potential limitations in the future, those will also be discussed with the Board. If this query pertains to contractual obligations, I do not foresee any issues arising.</p> <p>When it comes to the requirements for funding in our area, each funder has different due diligence processes, compliance measures, and leniencies. This variability means that organisations might face limitations based on which funders are involved, especially regarding match funding and additional components tied to the core secretariat and ongoing activities.</p> <p>For instance, the FCDO has specific requirements that necessitate funding to go to a nonprofit through an accountable grant. This can exclude certain organisations from being contracted by FCDO, but other incoming funders can influence these limitations and requirements.</p> <p>As for SSN, it is are a nonprofit registered in South Africa and holds an accountable grant with FCDO. To secure and maintain this contract, we underwent a due diligence process that includes adhering to various safeguarding provisions. Each organisation experiences a unique due diligence process tailored to their specific contracting circumstances with FCDO. The relevant documents detailing these processes are publicly available for reference.</p>
5	Who are the grants issued by ARA usually focused on? (what type of organisations, is it small global south research bodies?)	Adaptation Research Alliances website provides a good oversight of the thematic areas that have been tackled to date.

		<p>The grants issued by ARA are usually focused on a diverse range of organisations, particularly small and medium-sized research bodies based in the Global South. These organisations often have a strong understanding of local contexts and challenges related to adaptation. Additionally, ARA may target non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations, and academic institutions that are actively engaged in research and implementation related to adaptation actions. The aim is to support entities that can effectively contribute to knowledge generation and practical solutions in their specific regions.</p> <p>The primary focus of the grants is on capacity building, particularly for organisations based in the Global South. Depending on the nature of the work, we seek different types of organisations at varying levels of operation. For example, in the case of microgrants, we specifically target grassroots organisations, with the stipulation that they must collaborate with a research institution. Conversely, for tasks that are predominantly research-oriented, we generally engage research institutions, while also encouraging partnerships with grassroots organisations. Ultimately, the overarching aim is to enhance the capacity of diverse organisations within the Global South, enabling them to effectively undertake this critical work.</p>
6	How many staff are currently at the ARA secretariat that are expected to remain?	The current staff at SSN will not move with the Secretariat unless they choose to do so on their own. Therefore, it largely depends on individual decisions rather than a set number of staff expected to stay. However, SSN is committed to a handover which leads to a transition that allows the new organisation to be fully empowered for the new secretary to take over effectively and to continue the work.
7	How often is an organisation's role in the secretariat renewed? Is there a minimum or maximum duration?	Although there isn't a strict minimum or maximum duration specified, a three-year term is generally considered a sensible timeframe for evaluation and renewal. This period allows for a systematic assessment of the organisation's contributions and effectiveness, ensuring that roles

		<p>remain relevant and aligned with the evolving goals of the organisation and its initiatives.</p> <p>SSN has successfully served in its capacity since the alliance's inception approximately three years ago. Given the changing nature of this partnership, it is recommended that a comprehensive review be conducted at the end of this three-year term. This review would facilitate an assessment of the current structure and performance, allowing for the exploration of options for a permanent host for the alliance. Establishing an initial three-year term with a subsequent review provides a clear framework for ongoing discussions and planning.</p>
8	<p>How do you see the fundraising situation, considering that 5 million GBP were used since dec 2021 and, at the moment, 500,000 GBP are secured?</p>	<p>The fundraising situation presents a significant challenge, especially given that £5 million has been utilized since December 2021 and £500,000 is currently secured. This underscores the urgent need for proactive fundraising strategies moving forward.</p> <p>It is crucial for the host organisation and the ARA Steering Board to actively engage in fundraising efforts, leveraging existing relationships with members who are also funders. Diversifying funding sources and exploring new partnerships will be key to securing additional resources.</p> <p>Additionally, the potential for match funding, as discussed, could incentivize further contributions. Overall, the focus should be on creating a sustainable funding model to ensure the organisation's activities can continue effectively.</p>
9	<p>Can a university with a department running climate change research apply?</p>	<p>Yes, a university with a department dedicated to climate change research can apply. Such institutions are often well-positioned to contribute valuable insights and innovations in adaptation strategies. Their expertise in research, combined with practical applications, makes them suitable candidates for funding and collaboration within initiatives related to climate change adaptation. It's essential for them to demonstrate how their work</p>

		<p>aligns with the goals of the ARA and the specific requirements of the funding opportunity.</p> <p>However, while universities may excel in certain areas, tasks like fund management and sub-granting might be better suited for organisations specializing in implementation. The ARA is certainly open to various types of hosts, including those in the implementation space and research organisations, as both can contribute valuable strengths to meet the necessary functions.</p> <p><i>*See answer related to question number 3: Are you looking for a Host organisation who is in the implementation space on adaptation plus action research capabilities? Or mainly research organisation?</i></p>
10	<p>If a group/consortium apply, do they all need to be not for profit organisations? (linked to the accountable grant comment). Or would that only need to be the "lead"?</p>	<p>If a group or consortium applies, not all members need to be not-for-profit organisations; however, the lead organisation typically must be not-for-profit. This requirement is often linked to the accountable grant stipulations, ensuring that the funds are managed in a way that meets the necessary compliance and accountability standards. Other consortium members can include for-profit entities, as long as their roles and contributions align with the project's goals and the lead organisation fulfills the non-profit criteria. It's important to check the specific guidelines of the funding opportunity for any additional requirements.</p> <p>For Accountable Grant funding from FCDO, the lead organisation must be a not-for-profit. It can sub-contract to any type of partner (including for profit organisations). There can only be one lead organisation (Tier 1). Any other partner organisations would be sub-contracted by that lead.</p> <p>When it comes to our accountable grants funded by the FCDO, even if one partner provides 51% of the funding and the other 49%, we designate one organisation as the lead. This lead organisation receives the funding</p>

		<p>and then allocates it to the other partner. This structure ensures clarity in financial responsibility, but it doesn't prevent us from collaborating with two or more organisations that can fulfill our requirements.</p> <p>We are open to proposals from both individual organisations and groups of organisations. We encourage those that have complementary strengths and can collaborate effectively, as they will play a key role in establishing a strong foundation for the alliance moving forward.</p>
11	<p>Would for-profit organisations also be precluded from being a consortium partner (sub-grantee) to a non profit as the lead grantee?</p>	<p>For-profit organisations are generally not precluded from being consortium partners or sub-grantees to a non-profit lead grantee. They can play a valuable role by bringing unique expertise, resources, or technologies to the project. However, the specific eligibility requirements can vary depending on the funding guidelines of the grant. It's essential to review the terms and conditions of the grant to ensure compliance and understand any limitations regarding for-profit involvement.</p> <p>For Accountable Grant funding from FCDO, the lead organisation must be a not-for-profit. It can sub-contract to any type of partner (including for profit organisations). Also worth noting that there can only be one lead organisation (Tier 1). Any other partner organisations would be sub-contracted by that lead.</p>
12	<p>As the Head of Secretariat being embedded within the new Host organisation, has that previously been 100% FTE or less?</p>	<p>As the Head of Secretariat would likely need to be embedded within the new host organisation, the position has typically been structured at 100% FTE (full-time equivalent) in the past. This arrangement ensures that the Head has the capacity to fully engage in all responsibilities, including strategic oversight, coordination of activities, and effective communication with stakeholders. However, there may be considerations for flexibility depending on the specific needs and context of the host organisation moving forward.</p>

Reference documents noted in the Q&A with Co-Chairs:

- [PowerPoint slides shared in Q&A session](#)
- [ARA Statement of Need](#)
- [FCDO Due Diligence Guidance for External Partners](#)
- [FCDO Safeguarding against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment \(SEAH\)](#)