

Cover Letter: 2021 Call For Research Grants



I. Background:

UNOSSC and UNDP are supporting the “[South-South Global Thinkers: The Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for South-South Cooperation](#)” which supports think tank networks from the South to produce and share relevant knowledge for sustainable development to scale up the impact of South-South Cooperation (SSC) and triangular cooperation (TrC) for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Global Coalition will help in the systematization, collection, analysis and dissemination of better data and knowledge about patterns, trends, flows, composition and impact of SSC and TrC in the implementation of the SDGs. The research, knowledge and policy advocacy generated from the project will inform global policy dialogues and agenda setting on SSC and inform national policies of Southern partners and SSC exchanges using high quality evidence and new thinking. Such research will inform national counterparts in making informed and strategic decisions on their SSC investments.

The [Outcome Document](#) of the BAPA+40 Conference, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly recognized the expansion in the scope of SSC and TrC contributing to regional, subregional and interregional integration. However, it was also been noted that to fulfill the enormous development potential, SSC needs to be further enhanced by improved financing mechanisms; evaluation and assessment frameworks; national research capacities; data and information; knowledge-sharing on technical know-hows; and multi-stakeholder engagement, among many other factors.

As such, it recognized the contribution of think tanks and research institutions to the improvement of SSC and TrC practices and encouraged the United Nations entities to continue its engagement and support to these organizations in efforts to better understand the role and impact of South-South and triangular cooperation to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

II. Objective:

The objective of the Global Coalition is to pool knowledge and expertise of multiple think tank networks to work together to tackle the knowledge gaps in SSC. Through such a platform of

exchanges among think tank networks on SSC, the diversified perspectives of SSC can become a strength that can be fully leveraged to enrich Member States understanding and inform their decision-making in SSC.

By producing evidence informed research and generating robust data on the types of SSC engagements, trends, concepts could assist members states in making informed policy decisions on SSC and inform policy which has been called upon by them.

In this context, UNOSSC and UNDP will provide grants to think tank networks through their secretariats or institutions that have **legally registered NGO status** to conduct research studies on one or more of following priority research areas that have been prioritized by the Executive Secretariat of the Global Thinkers. In line with the overall priority areas of South-South Global Thinkers Network, the 2021 Call for Research proposal are invited in the following focus areas:

1. Post-COVID-19 Socio-economic recovery policy options and SSC opportunities:

Starting from an unprecedented public health crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic led to unemployment, poverty, and loss of education for school children. At the macro level, it caused reduced trade, remittance and failing major economic activities such as tourism. As a result, the southern countries face high fiscal deficits and debt crisis. The research proposals are expected to explore what are policy quick-wins and the long-term structural considerations for more inclusive and sustainable growth, and how SSC can help countries to adopt relevant policy options to continue progress on the implementation of the SDGs. In addition, the proposals would explore what are the innovative tools and partnership engagement practices that SSC can leverage to support developing countries better recover economically and socially from the impact of the pandemic.

2. South-South and Triangular Cooperation for global and regional public goods:

COVID-19 has unmasked the systemic and structural inequities, including health inequities, that disproportionately and negatively impact poor and under-represented groups across and within communities, countries, regions, and continents. Hence, it amplified the need for global solidarity and multilateralism. There is need to analyze what role South-South cooperation can play in the construction of the future of multilateralism and bring forward policy options, including areas for government interventions and evidence on shifts to the new normal and achieving 2030 Agenda. Also, what is the role it can play to address the challenges and support in creating global and regional public good, and how this knowledge can be applied to global policy making but also to regional and country policy making processes? In addition, what are the role of regional, sub-regional organizations can be further leveraged to ensure the global coordination needed to recover from the crisis? These include working across borders to share best practices for mitigating the spread, coordinating fiscal measures, boosting trade, combating climate change, among others.

3. South-South Cooperation Technology and digital transformation:

COVID-19 has triggered the use of digital technologies and surge for digital skills. It has contributed to bridge the disruption caused by pandemic. Adoption of digital solutions, from raising awareness to e-education, e-health to digital economy, helped mitigating its social-economic impact. At the same time, it also revealed the digital divide. In order to move towards a more resilient and sustainable societies, technological and digital cooperation among the Global South can serve a catalyst to preserve gains across all SDGs, particularly, inequality and poverty. The research proposals could explore policy recommendations to strengthen South-South cooperation in addressing the digital divide, scaling-up technological transfer and innovations, and scaling-up digital transformation for the Global South.

4. Role of SSC in responding to crisis and disasters in fragile contexts:

One out of five people in the world live in conflicts and fragility. South-South Cooperation (SSC) can deliver important results in fragile and conflict affected contexts, as well as in stable situations. The research proposals could identify ways for countries in the global South to cooperate among each other in responding to the humanitarian and disaster risk reduction crisis, in particular in conflict-affected and fragile contexts, when exacerbated by COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Institutional and Policy frameworks, governance, and impact assessment for South-South and Triangular Cooperation

In recent years, developing countries are making strong efforts in establishing and strengthening their institutional mechanisms, policy frameworks, and practical approaches for better coordinate, manage, and assess impact of South-South Cooperation. There are various models and approaches across regions and each regional also face unique opportunities for enlarging impact of SSC on SDGs. The developed countries are also engaging more actively through triangular cooperation, which has brought not only resources and expertise, but also more opportunities for mutual learning. The research proposals could analyse the trend and approaches of South-South and triangular cooperation policy development, institutional capacity building, as well as impact assessment approaches, to inspire more learning and refresh the understanding of how South-South and Triangular cooperation can be managed to achieve its optimal impact on the achievement of the SDGs.

III. Budget:

UNDP/ UNOSSC will provide grant for up to USD 30,000 for every proposal. NGOs can submit up to two proposal (in one single grant application form) for a total value that will not exceed USD 60,000. All proposals must be submitted in English.

IV. Eligible and Criteria:

Only think tank networks through their secretariats or institutions that have legally registered NGO status can apply.

According to UNDP's [Low Value Grants for non-credit purposes](#) policy, submitted grant proposals must support the following types of activities:

- Strengthening the institutional capacity of entities critical for achieving development objectives;
- Promoting advocacy activities and networking between civil society organizations (CSOs), government and donors;
- Supporting community-based self-help initiatives, which may include income-generating activities designed to alleviate poverty;
- Supporting NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) involved with local environmental protection and poverty eradication activities; and/or
- Development challenges that still require some level of experimentation to identify possible solutions.

V. Procedures and Deadlines for Submitting Proposals:

All proposals (**use attached grant proposal template**) should be submitted via email by **24 March 2021 at 6:00pm New York Time** to **Naveeda Nazir** (naveeda.nazir@unoss.org) with copy to **Shams Banihani** (shams.banihani@unoss.org) and Tina Hao (jjianting.hao@undp.org). You are requested to submit a copy of NGO registration details.

Proposals that are received by UNOSSC and UNDP after the deadline indicated above, for whatever reason, shall not be considered for evaluation. Kindly ensure that submitted proposals are signed and in the .pdf format, and free from any virus or corrupted files. Proposals submitted should not exceed 8 MB in size. Applications larger than 8 MB should be split into several messages and each message subject should indicate "part x of y".

Services proposed shall be reviewed and evaluated based on completeness and compliance of the Grant Proposal and responsiveness with the requirements of the Grant Application Form and all other annexes providing details of UNDP requirements.

Proposals that comply with all of the requirements, meet all the evaluation criteria shall be selected and awarded a grant by signing a Grant Agreement with UNOSSC and UNDP. Any proposals that do not meet the requirements shall be rejected.

VI. Forms and Templates to be used NGO-applicants:

1. Research Grant Proposal Template (**include with submission**)

2. Vendor Form (**include with submission**)
3. Copy of NGO status registration (**include with submission**)

VII. Resources and references:

- UNDP Policy on [Low Value Grants for non credit purposes](#)
- Project Document "[South-South Global Thinkers- the Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for SSC](#)"
- [South-South Global Thinkers online platform](#)
- [South-South Ideas research studies](#)

