

Science, Technology & Innovation Funding Authority
www.stdf.eg

Guide for Applicants

Supporting the integration of the SDGs to pave the way for the COP27 Climate Summit invitation

Deadline for Submission: 22 June 2022 at 2:00 pm

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I. Promoting the integration of the sustainable development goals to pave the road to COP27 call (Objective)

Egypt was chosen as the African continent's representative to host the activities of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties COP-27. This coincides with the state's efforts in the climate change file, which was materialized by the launch of the National Climate Change Strategy 2050 in support for achieving the goals of sustainable development and the goals of Egypt's Vision 2030. That led to the consequent formation of a Supreme Council for Climate Change headed by the Prime Minister as well as establishing institutional entities within each ministry concerned with the climate crisis, that seek solutions such as the development of clean and renewable based power generation projects. In support of the efforts of the Egyptian scientific community in universities and research centers and to maximizing their role in this field, the Science, Technology and Innovation Funding Authority (STDF) announces a research call aimed at funding researchers with expertise in topics that address the climate-related sustainable development goals (SDGs) in all disciplines. Submissions need to identify direct links to climate change areas of risk, vulnerability, mitigation and most importantly adaptation. This can be achieved by forming alliances that are able to support and provide reliable, accurate and timely information/solutions to the Egyptian authorities from available international and regional sources, to address climate change crisis in coherence with the SDGs.

The main goals of the call are:

1. Establishing multidisciplinary networks and alliances between different Egyptian institutions to coordinate efforts and integrate in research activities that offer climate change mitigation and adaptation solutions in support of the SDGs.
2. Systematically developing implementable roadmaps for the Egyptian population, economic regions and the Egyptian institutions involved in this activity.
3. Encouraging research that deals with identifying negative impacts on SDGs.
4. Establishing an integrative relationship between the various players participating in the COP27 climate summit and continuing cooperation to contribute to the next COP28 summit.
5. Producing a frame of reference that will enhance the development of services provided in the downstream stages to support the implementation of the climate-related SDGs.
6. Developing a well-defined goal-based approach to follow, that aligns with the needs and requirements expressed by the ultimate beneficiary.
7. Supporting a robust platform that clearly provides a well-documented and accurate multidimensional information to the Egyptian authorities to utilize advanced data science techniques.
8. Participation of Egyptian expert scientists residing abroad in national research groups.

II. Research Activities

Below are the research activities that will be funded by this call. Suggestions that address more than one research activity are strongly encouraged. Proposals are not expected to cover all five areas to qualify for funding.

1. Integrating current activities of national, regional and international cooperation operating inside Egypt addressing applied research.
2. Producing a prototype that paves the way for supporting a product based on research and development and presenting it to high markets.
3. Clearly demonstrating well-established ecosystems between service providers and end beneficiaries from industry, public and government sectors with a clear plan for the role of scientific research and clear application mechanisms.
4. Enhancing existing capacities nationally and regionally through cooperation between various sectors within Egypt to identify challenges and promote a clear approach to support the various climate-related SDGs in Egypt.
5. Presenting technological solutions addressing regional challenges related to climate change adaptation, efficient water management, improving food security and access to clean energy.

III. Eligibility Criteria

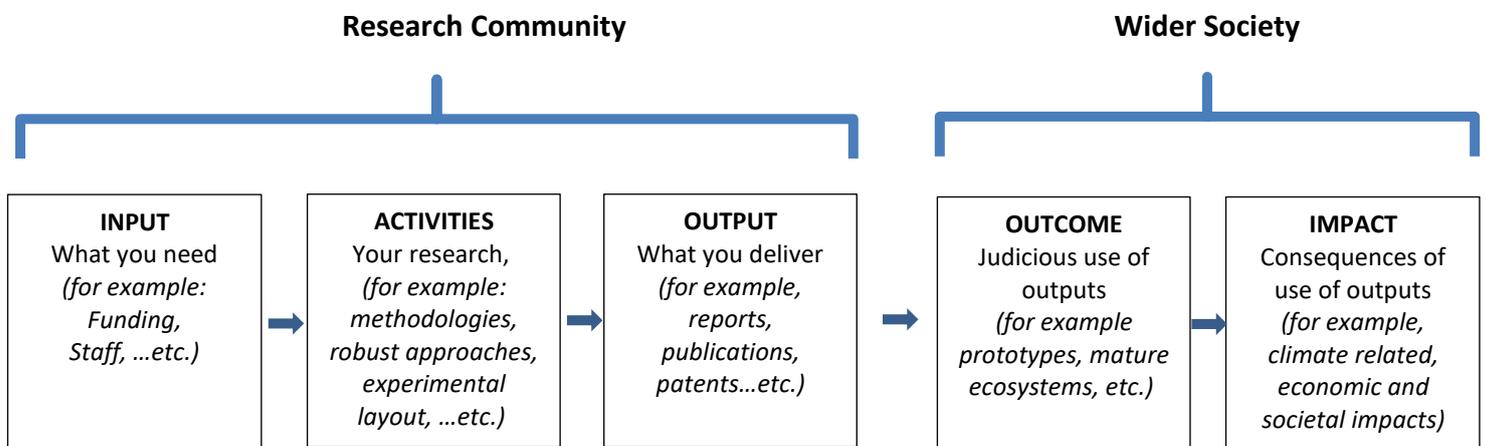
An applying research team must be led by a distinguished researcher who is an Egyptian citizen and is affiliated with an Egyptian research entity (universities, research centers/ institutes. etc.). He/she should also hold a PhD degree and have to show good research experience. Private sector, industries are allowed to join applicants from universities and research institutions on a basis of a co-funding mechanism managed by STDF. Applicant institutions already involved in SDGs and climate change related research are encouraged to lead and building consortia is preferred. Collaborative research involving multiple institutions is also encouraged. Building partnerships or capitalizing on already, existing ones in the MENA region and Africa and with Egyptian scientist living abroad are highly encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity of having two Arab states that are hosting COP27 & COP28 back to back. The project duration should not exceed 2 years from the start date to maximize benefit of both COP meetings.

IV. Submission Process

All applications must be uploaded to the STDF website (www.stdf.eg) following required registration. Applicants are invited to submit proposals in all research areas related to climate change issues. A plagiarism check will be applied to all proposals submitted to this grant. Accordingly, the proposal must be submitted in a readable PDF format (i.e., not scanned), to facilitate plagiarism checks. The detailed proposal should be drafted according to the template and guidelines for preparing STDF proposals. Generally, the proposal should include the following sections:

- Cover Page

- Research team(s) (Annex 1: Research team Information Table - Annex 2: CV of the principal investigator (PI) and all other members of the research team)
- Abstract written in English and Arabic
- Discipline to be tackled and how related to climate change and SDGs
- Introduction and background
- Objectives of the proposed work
- Description of the proposed research work including the methodology to achieve its objectives
- A clear delineation of the expected outputs and outcomes and their impact on the road map to COP27 & COP28



- Evidence of former contributions of the research team members to the proposal's topic. This may include a list of relevant publications of team members in the last five years
- Budget table (Annex 3: Budget format)
- Budget justification
 - Software and equipment needed to finalizing a prototype or fill a gap in already ongoing and well-established research.
 - Travels if needed that are in support of the proposed research ideas and activities. Short visits by Egyptian scientists/experts living abroad who are part of the team are eligible expenses.
 - Organization of training schools, workshops, hackathons and other related activities
- References
- A list of keywords (minimum 5)
- Abstracts of 5 most recent and most relevant abstracts to the proposal (even if still in preprint form)
- Appendices (any additional documents)
- Acknowledgement form
- Institutional endorsement letters together with the submitted proposal (signed by the university/ research center president)

V. Budget Estimation

Grants of up to 800,000 Egyptian Pounds (EGP) are awarded to accepted projects in order to cover all costs required to accomplish the project during its entire period.

Grants of up to 1,500,000 EGP are awarded only to projects with two or more Egyptian partners.

Furthermore, larger projects with funding up to 2,000,000 EGP can be applied only for projects with three or more Egyptian Partners with a robust regional network and a well-defined and established output that lacks minor steps towards full implementation.

V. 1 Eligible costs (Allowable)

The eligible direct costs for the research are the costs identified as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the research.

V. 2 The Incentives of Team Members

Monthly incentives are granted to members of the research team, based on their role/assigned tasks and time dedicated to the project up to 25% of the project budget.

V. 3 Travel Cost

The cost of stay in other countries is calculated according to STDF rules and regulations. Justification for travel should be provided in the proposal. Involvement of Egyptian Scientists living abroad is encouraged and can be included in project budget.

V. 4 The Cost of Equipment and Software

The allocated amount for the purchase of equipment and software should be utilized for the purchase of new equipment, software licenses and facilities that are directly related and essential to finalize an ongoing research project. The budget format in the proposal should be signed and stamped by the PI host institution.

V. 5 The cost of Organization of Training Schools and Workshops

The allocated amount will be based on a favorable description of this activity that should be directed towards the promotion of the area of research specified in the proposal. The details of the activities and their cost should be listed in the proposal.

V. 6 Indirect Costs

A total of 5% of the total budget of the project excluding the cost of equipment might be allocated as indirect cost that are payable to the researcher(s) host institution (where the researcher(s) is/are conducting the research work). Such indirect costs are payable for the usage of facility and infrastructure of the host institution and could cover the cost and salaries of administrative work.

VI. Evaluation Criteria

The funds are awarded based on the following criteria:

- Potential impact on climate change related issues falling in the areas of assessment, mitigation and adaptation.
- Proposal scientific/technological/innovative/networking quality (shall involve, but not limited to the following: comprehensible writing, added value and novelty, relative scientific expertise of researchers, adequate methodology, budgeting and proper costing, project management);

Upon the eligibility check phase, eligible proposals are technically evaluated for final decision. Evaluation of proposals is carried out by STDF with the assistance of national / international independent experts. STDF staff ensures that the evaluation process is transparent, robust and fair, and in alignment with its rules and regulations.

VII. Payment Procedures

When a project is approved by STDF, a contract agreement will be signed between STDF, the principal investigator (PI), and the host institute. The budget will be disbursed as installments. The number of installments depends on the duration of the project. The first installment will be disbursed at the beginning of the project. The other installments will be paid after the receipt and approval of the progress reports. The disbursement of the final installment of the project (10% of the budget) is conditioned upon the delivery of the outputs specified in the proposal in the scheduled time and will cover only the rest of the incentives and the indirect costs.

VIII. Follow Up

A- Technical Reports

Biannually technical progress reports should be submitted according to STDF progress reports formats. The final report of the project should be submitted no later than one month after the official end date of the project, and should follow STDF final report format together with an Achievements Report.

All submitted reports are evaluated by STDF and a feedback is sent to the project's PI and host institute.

For rejected follow-up reports, STDF has the authority to impose additional follow-up and monitoring progress reports totally independent from the regular way.

If the submitted progress/final reports show that the team did not achieve the set objectives as specified in the original proposal and/or the team is performing poorly, STDF will take all measures in order to stop the project and recover the budget allocated.

B- Financial Reports

Biannually technical progress reports should be submitted according to STDF progress reports formats, signed and stamped from the institution as well as all the expenditure vouchers.

IX. General Remarks and Conditions

- All proposals must be uploaded to the STDF website, proposals submitted by e-mail or send as hard copies will not be considered.
- All proposals must use the exact formatting requirements for the current call given in the attached Application Form. Failure to adhere to the exact format required will result in rejecting the proposal.
- All proposals MUST be in English Language.
- The application must include a signed and stamped Endorsement letter from the institution's legal representative -President- as shown in the Application Form.
- Same proposal should not be submitted in more than one grant. (Duplicate submission of the same proposal is not allowed).
- Each PI can only submit a maximum of two proposals until notified with the evaluation results of his/her submitted proposals.
- At any time, a contracted STDF project team member should only be participating in a maximum of 3 projects (or a maximum of 2 projects as a PI/Co-PI).
- DO NOT submit proposals previously funded either by STDF or any other funding agency. Proposals deemed to be funded by other grants will be disqualified & applicants will be banned from submitting proposals to STDF.
- Any publications delivered as a result of STDF funded proposals, should acknowledge STDF funding in the publication.
- STDF's intellectual property rules (IPR) rules and regulations in addition to STDF code of ethics are applied to all submitted proposals.
- Foreign partners are allowed in this grant only as consultants given that the relevant approval has been obtained, and only consultants' fees are allowed for those partners.
- Equipment purchased using STDF funds must be made available to all Egyptian researchers, provided that the project work is not disrupted.
- If more than one institution is involved it has to be clearly stated which institution is in charge and the role of each partner institution has to be specified.
- Extending a project's duration is not allowed. Only under very strict justified conditions shall STDF allow project extension, and any request for project extension will affect negatively STDF future decisions regarding the performance of the research team members.
- Having members from different departments or research institutes in the same research team is allowed and encouraged.
- Conflict of interest should be avoided in any proposal application.
- All proposals will be evaluated on a competitive basis.