



MEKONG
INSTITUTE

MEKONG - ROK COOPERATION FUND(MKCF) ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 9TH MKCF CALL FOR REGIONAL PROJECT PROPOSALS



INTRODUCTION

The Mekong–Republic of Korea (ROK) partnership was launched in 2011, leading to the establishment of the Mekong–ROK Cooperation Fund (MKCF) in 2013. The MKCF supports cooperative projects led by the Mekong countries and the ROK under the Mekong–ROK cooperation framework.

The Fund promotes collaboration in seven priority sectors, as outlined in the Mekong–Han River Declaration for Establishing a Partnership for People, Prosperity, and Peace, adopted during the 1st Mekong–ROK Summit in 2019.

The fund provides grants for projects with a regional focus—benefiting multiple Mekong countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam, and Thailand)—while aligning with national priorities to foster regional integration. Projects may be implemented in a single country, but their outcomes should benefit the broader Mekong region as well as the ROK.

FUNDING CRITERIA

The MKCF supports catalytic and innovative projects along the objectives of the Plan of Action (POA) 2021-2025 on the Mekong–Republic of Korea Cooperation for the implementation of Mekong–Han River Declaration.

Therefore, MKCF supports catalytic and innovative projects in the following seven priority sectors as follows:



- Preservation and restoration of cultural heritage sites.
- Expansion of youth education in culture, arts, sports, and creative industries.
- Development of cultural tourism, including creative industries such as art, music, cultural exchanges, and entrepreneurship.
- Promotion of cultural and creative industries.
- Strengthening networks, knowledge-sharing, and exchanges among cultural professionals in the Mekong region and the ROK.
- Smart tourism initiatives leveraging digital tools for sustainable and innovative tourism development.



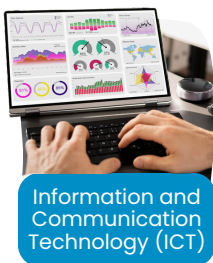
- Enhancing education and skill development for the digital age.
- Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) through regional cooperation.
- Building capacity for MSMEs and entrepreneurs to improve job opportunities and business success.
- Promoting green TVET initiatives, including upskilling and reskilling for emerging industries.



- Developing regional agricultural value chains and strengthening supply chains.
- Improving agricultural productivity and market access in the Mekong region.
- Advancing digital rural transformation to support agricultural development.
- Promoting food security and food safety.



- Capacity building in regional infrastructure project management (e.g., roads, power, communications).
- Development of critical rural infrastructure to support agricultural growth.



- ICT applications for regional disaster risk management and climate adaptation (e.g., early warning systems).
- ICT solutions for agricultural production and market information systems.
- MSME digitization, fintech, and e-commerce development.
- Enhancing ICT infrastructure and broadband connectivity in rural and remote areas.
- Promoting digital transformation, including IoT, AI, big data, and blockchain applications.



- Promotion of electric vehicles (EVs) and green transportation solutions.
- Sustainable natural resource management and climate resilience initiatives.
- Advancing ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) practices in production sectors.



- Facilitating safe labor migration within the Mekong region.
- Enhancing disaster management strategies for natural hazards.
- Addressing transnational crime, including illegal drug trafficking and human trafficking.
- Strengthening cybersecurity and ensuring a secure cyberspace.
- Promoting cross-border collaboration to combat illicit trafficking and other security threats.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Entities eligible to apply for the MKCF include:

- Government agencies and autonomous organizations from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand (CLMVT), as well as the ROK.
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and training institutes from CLMVT and the ROK.
- International organizations, including UN agencies and international NGOs with offices in the Mekong countries and the ROK.
- Organizations with at least five years of experience in implementing development projects.

Note: The MKCF does not provide funding or assistance to individuals.

BUDGET AND PROJECT DURATION

- The MKCF provides grants ranging from \$300,000 to \$1,000,000 per project.
- The Fund encourages triangular (three-way) or quadripartite (four-way) collaborations with other donors, such as the Mekong River Commission (MRC), Japan, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and Canada. Additional funding sources should be leveraged when necessary.
- Grants are available for joint activities with regional or international entities, formalized through cooperation agreements.
- Ineligible activities: Construction of buildings, rent payments, and utilities.
- Project duration is 2–3 years.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) SUBMISSION

- Applicants must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) when applying for the MKCF. The proponent should submit the EOI in a Word file and the budget in an Excel file only.
- The EOI must include all required components and follow the prescribed format.
- Submission deadlines:
 - For government agencies, NGOs, and academic institutions from CLMVT: Submit EOIs to the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) by March 31, 2025.
 - For international organizations (including UN agencies and international NGOs): Submit EOIs to the ROK MOFA by March 31, 2024.
- Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted for the next phase of the application process.

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