

Call for Proposals 2026 – Asi@Connect Phase 2

1 message

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Pranto Paul

Thu, Oct 1, 2026 at 11:01 AM

Dear Sir,

Greetings from Bangladesh Research and Education Network (BdREN).

We are pleased to inform you that TEIN*CC has announced the 1st Call for Proposals 2026 under Asi@Connect Phase 2, supported by the European Union (EU).

The Call invites NRENs, universities, higher education and research institutions, and other eligible organisations to propose projects aimed at strengthening research and education (R&E) collaboration and leveraging advanced digital infrastructures across the Asia-Pacific and Europe.

The Call focuses on the following Strategic Areas of Interest:

* WP2: Open-source Collaboration Platforms and Digital Services for Research and Education

Projects supporting the development, deployment, integration, and sustainable operation of open-source collaboration platforms and digital services.

* WP4: Asia-Europe Research and Digital Connectivity Collaboration

Projects promoting institutional partnerships, joint research, and engagement with European and international research infrastructures and digital ecosystems.

* WP4: Earth Observation and Data-driven Research Collaboration between Asia and Europe

Projects leveraging Earth observation data, cloud computing, HPC, and advanced digital infrastructures to support collaborative research and address regional and global challenges.

Eligible applicants may apply for up to EUR 60,000 per proposal.

The Call will follow a two-stage application process:

1. Concept Note
2. Full Application

Key Dates (KST, GMT+9):

- * Open Call Day: 1 October 2026, 15:00
- * Concept Note Deadline: 31 October 2026, 23:59
- * Full Application Deadline: 4 January 2027, 23:59
- * Notification of Award: 5 February 2027
- * Contract Signature: 26 February 2027

The online Open Call Day will provide prospective applicants with further information regarding the Call, eligibility requirements, and application process.

For detailed information, eligibility criteria, application guidelines, templates, and other supporting documents, please visit the Asi@Connect website:

<https://lnkd.in/gEyYdNuD>

We encourage interested institutions to review the Call details and consider submitting suitable project proposals.

Best Regards,

Pranto Paul

Network Engineer

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Guidelines for Applicants

Asi@Connect Phase 2

Call for Proposals 2026 (EU Co-funded)

NOTICE

When processing your application, any personal data (e.g. names, addresses and CVs) will be processed¹ solely for the purposes of managing and monitoring the Call for proposals and resulting contract.

Disclaimer

This document's contents are the sole responsibility of TEIN*CC and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

¹ In order to avoid asking for the same information more than once, information already available to TEIN*CC may be used where possible.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Asi@Connect Phase 2 project & TEIN*CC

Asi@Connect Phase 2 marks the 5th phase of the European Union (EU) funding to the Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN) initiative, which was launched as an Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) initiative in 2001. Since its establishment, the TEIN initiative has successfully developed a regional research and education (R&E) network and expanded its geographical coverage, providing high-capacity connectivity and digital collaboration opportunities for the research and education communities across the Asia-Pacific region.

Following the successful implementation of Asi@Connect Phase 1, which finished in March 2026, Asi@Connect Phase 2 continues to provide dedicated high-capacity connectivity for research and education communities across Asia-Pacific and facilitates interconnection with global research and education networks, including the GÉANT network in Europe. Through advanced network infrastructure, Asi@Connect supports international research collaboration, digital innovation, and knowledge exchange.

TEIN*CC was established in 2011 as a not-for-profit organisation in Seoul, Republic of Korea. It has been expressly set up to run the TEIN programme (TEIN4 at that time) under the endorsement from the ASEM leaders (ASEM8 Chair's Statement, 2010). It is supported by the Korean Government – the Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT), which has committed to funding the operational costs of TEIN4 and its successor, Asi@Connect Phase 1 & 2, in part. TEIN*CC is fully responsible for the successful management and operation of Asi@Connect Phase 2. For more information on Asi@Connect Phase 2, visit <https://www.tein.asia/>.

1.2 Objective of the Call

Asi@Connect Phase 2 is implemented through a set of Work Packages (WP0–WP6) designed to achieve its overarching objectives, with a particular emphasis on developing R&E digital services, strengthening Asia-Europe cooperation, and maximising the utilisation of network infrastructure.

To support these priorities and contribute to an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable regional R&E ecosystem, this Call for Proposals focuses specifically on selected strategic priorities under WP2 and WP4.

The Areas of Interest covered by this Call are aligned with the following Work Packages:

- **WP2- Deployment of Specialised Products and Services**

1. Area of Interest: Supporting the development, deployment, interoperability, and sustainable operation of open-source collaboration platforms and digital services for the regional research and education community.

- **WP4 - Promoting R&E Collaboration between Asia-Pacific and Europe**

1. Area of Interest: Strengthening institutional partnerships and research collaboration between the Asia-Pacific region and Europe by improving access to international research infrastructures, digital ecosystems, and collaborative environments through research and education network connectivity.

2. Area of Interest: Supporting Earth observation and data-driven research collaboration between Asia and Europe through the utilisation, sharing, processing, and application of Earth observation data, cloud computing, high-performance computing (HPC), and advanced digital infrastructures to address regional and global challenges.

Cross-cutting issues

In addition to the specific objectives and priorities of each Strategic Area of Interest, proposals are encouraged to give additional attention to gender equality and women's participation. Applicants should, where relevant, demonstrate how these are reflected in the design and implementation of the proposed activities.

In line with the objectives of Asi@Connect Phase 2, at least 30% of the Call for Proposals is targeted at projects with a gender focus, promoting gender equality and women's participation. Projects involving participant-based activities are encouraged to promote women's participation and, where applicable and feasible, aim for at least 30% female participation.

Proposals are also encouraged to contribute, where relevant, to the development or strengthening of gender equality and/or human-rights-based policies and practices within participating NRENs and their member institutions.

1.3 Areas of Interest and Financial Allocation

This Call focuses on three Strategic Areas of Interest aligned with the objectives of Asi@Connect Phase 2. The selected Areas of Interest aim to develop digital services, strengthen regional and Asia-Europe R&E cooperation, support collaborative research and innovation, and maximise the utilisation of research and education network infrastructure.

Applicants should clearly demonstrate how their proposed activities contribute to one of the areas described below. The examples of activities provided below are indicative and not exhaustive.

WP 2: Deployment of Specialised Products and Services	
Area of Interest: Open-source Collaboration Platforms and Digital Services for Research and Education	
Background	Asi@Connect Phase 2 aims to strengthen collaboration across the Asia-Pacific research and education community by supporting reliable, scalable, interoperable, and sustainable digital services. In line with the objectives of Work Package 2 (Deployment of Specialised Products and Services), this Area of Interest promotes the development, enhancement, deployment, and wider adoption of open-source collaboration platforms that support secure, interoperable, and collaborative research and education activities across the region.
Scope	Projects should contribute to the development, enhancement, deployment, integration, or sustainable operation of open-source collaboration platforms supporting cross-border research, education, training, and regional cooperation. Projects are encouraged to demonstrate how digital collaboration services can strengthen cooperation among National Research and Education Networks (NRENs), universities, and research institutions while improving interoperability, accessibility, regional adoption, and long-term sustainability.

Illustrative Activities (including but not limited to)	• Development, enhancement, or regional deployment of open-source video collaboration platforms to support cross-border research and education activities. • Integration of open-source collaboration platforms with federated identity and access management systems (e.g., eduGAIN) and other research and education digital services. • Development of innovative features to improve user experience, accessibility, multilingual support, recording, or automated transcription for research and education collaboration. • Development and deployment of open-source security tools, framework templates, and data protection solutions, alongside the active sharing and dissemination of cybersecurity best practices across the R&E network. • Development, validation, and practical deployment of open-source Artificial Intelligence (AI) services and responsible AI toolkits tailored for the research and education community. • Pilot implementation and validation of open-source collaboration platforms across multiple National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) to demonstrate scalability, interoperability, and sustainability.
Expected Outcomes	• Strengthened collaboration among National Research and Education Networks (NRENs), universities, and research institutions through the adoption of open-source collaboration platforms. • Enhanced interoperability, accessibility, and regional adoption of digital collaboration services supporting research and education activities. • Improved sustainability of open-source collaboration platforms through community engagement, governance, and capacity-building activities.
Budget per a proposal	Applicants may apply for up to EUR 60,000 per proposal.
Indicative WP Budget	EUR 120,000 in total.
Implementation Period	March 2027 – February 2028

WP 4: Promoting R&E Collaboration between Asia-Pacific and Europe	
Area of Interest 1: Asia-Europe Research and Digital Connectivity Collaboration	
Background	Strengthening research and education collaboration between the Asia-Pacific and Europe is one of the priorities of Asi@Connect Phase 2. Building upon the objectives of WP 4 (Promoting R&E Collaboration between Asia-Pacific and Europe), this Area of Interest aims to foster institutional partnerships, enhance engagement with European research and innovation ecosystems, and improve access to international research infrastructures, digital platforms, and collaborative frameworks through research and education network connectivity. Specifically, this Area of Interest seeks to promote long-term cooperation between Asia-Pacific and European research and education communities by supporting joint initiatives, knowledge exchange, and engagement with European research programmes, digital ecosystems, and collaborative frameworks enabled by research and education networks and digital infrastructures.
Scope	Projects should strengthen collaboration between Asia-Pacific and European research and education communities through joint research activities, institutional partnerships, and access to European and international research infrastructures and digital ecosystems enabled through research and education network connectivity.

	Projects are encouraged to demonstrate how they contribute to sustainable partnerships, increased engagement with European research ecosystems, and improved opportunities for future collaborative research activities. Projects may address cooperation with European research programmes, digital infrastructures, scientific platforms, and international collaboration frameworks.
Illustrative Activities (including but not limited to)	• Development of collaborative initiatives that enable Asia-Pacific research communities to engage with European research and innovation ecosystems, including relevant European research programmes (e.g., Horizon Europe) and international collaboration frameworks • Establishment of joint research activities, pilot projects, or partnership frameworks between Asia-Pacific and European universities, research institutions, NRENs, and related organisations. • Activities supporting engagement with European research and digital ecosystems, including GEANT, European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), CERN (European Organisation for Nuclear Research), ECMWF (European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts), EUMETSAT (European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites), Digital Europe-related initiatives, and other European collaboration frameworks. • Development of collaborative services, platforms, or digital environments supporting cross-border research and education activities between Asia-Pacific and European partners. • Activities facilitating access to and utilisation of European research infrastructures, scientific resources, digital platforms, and collaborative environments. • Development of Open Science, FAIR data, and research data sharing practices supporting international collaboration.
Expected Outcomes	• Strengthened institutional collaboration and networking between Asia-Pacific and Europe. • Increased engagement with European and international research and digital initiatives. • Enhanced access to European research infrastructures, scientific platforms, and collaboration opportunities. • Established sustainable partnerships supporting future joint research and innovation activities.
Budget per a proposal	Applicants may apply for up to EUR 60,000 per proposal.
Indicative WP Budget	EUR 180,000 in total.
Implementation Period	March 2027 – February 2028
Area of Interest 2: Earth Observation and Data-driven Research Collaboration between Asia and Europe	
Background	Earth observation technologies and data are increasingly important for addressing global and regional challenges, including climate change, disaster resilience, environmental sustainability, food security, and sustainable development. Asi@Connect Phase 2 supports the utilisation of advanced digital infrastructures to enable international research collaboration, data-driven innovation, and knowledge exchange across the Asia-Pacific region. In alignment with Earth observation initiatives, including the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and its strategic priorities, this Area of Interest aims to promote collaborative projects that leverage Earth observation data, digital technologies, and research infrastructures to generate scientific, educational, and societal benefits.
Scope	Projects should contribute to the utilisation, integration, sharing, processing, and application of Earth observation data through advanced research and education

	network infrastructures, cloud environments, high-performance computing resources, and collaborative digital platforms. Projects are encouraged to demonstrate collaboration among research institutions, National Research and Education Networks (NRENs), and international partners, and highlight how advanced networking, cloud computing, high-performance computing (HPC), and digital research infrastructures can enhance accessibility and utilisation of Earth observation resources. Projects may address Earth observation applications aligned with international priorities, including climate change monitoring, disaster risk reduction, environmental management, sustainable development, and other global challenges identified through GEO priorities and strategic objectives.
Illustrative Activities (including but not limited to)	• Development of network-enabled collaborative research applications that utilise Earth observation data and technologies to address regional and global challenges, including climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience, environmental monitoring, agriculture, marine sciences, biodiversity, food security, and sustainable development, while contributing to relevant GEO priorities and activities. • Development of value-added services, platforms, or digital environments integrating Earth observation data sources, including Copernicus and other open Earth observation data resources, for research and education communities. • Pilot projects demonstrating innovative applications of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and advanced data analytics for Earth observation data processing and scientific discovery. • Integration of Earth observation data and services with advanced digital infrastructures, including cloud computing, high-performance computing (HPC), and high-capacity research networks.
Expected Outcomes	• Enhanced utilisation of Earth observation data and digital research infrastructures for research, education, and societal applications. • Improved accessibility, sharing, and collaborative use of Earth observation data through digital research infrastructures and research and education networks. • Increased capacity for developing data-driven applications addressing regional and global challenges, including climate change, disaster resilience, environmental sustainability, and sustainable development.
Budget per a proposal	Applicants may apply for up to EUR 60,000 per proposal.
Indicative WP Budget	EUR 120,000 in total.
Implementation Period	March 2027 – February 2028

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.1 Eligibility Criteria

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants

Applicants applying under this Call for Proposals should fulfil the following criteria to be eligible for financial support:

1. They must be either NRENs, universities, or other higher education or research institutions that are members of an NREN, or entities whose proposed Asi@Connect activity is expressly supported by the relevant NREN (or, where required, from the Asi@Connect Steering Committee). In addition, when submitting the Concept Note, applicants are required to obtain an endorsement from the relevant national NREN confirming either that the applicant is a member of the NREN or that the proposed activity is supported by the relevant NREN. No specific format is required for the endorsement. The list of NRENs is available at: <https://tein.asia/sub/?mc=3010>.
2. They should be established in one of the countries listed in Section 2.1.2 or in the European Union. For the non-beneficiary countries of India, Japan and Singapore, entities are permitted to participate in the Call for Proposals; however, they must cover their own costs and are not eligible to receive EU funding.
3. After the submission of the Concept Note, the applicant's eligibility will be checked by NREN Partners: <https://tein.asia/sub/?mc=3010> to verify whether the applicant is a member of the respective NREN.
4. Applicants who have questions regarding their eligibility under this Call for Proposals may contact TEIN*CC at pmt@teincc.org.

2.1.2 Location of activities

The location of proposed activities under this Call for Proposals shall be within the Asi@Connect Phase 2 beneficiary countries. Activities may also involve collaboration with other non-beneficiary countries, including European partners, where relevant to the objectives and implementation of the proposed activities.

The Asi@Connect Phase 2 beneficiary countries under this Call include:

1. Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Other non-beneficiary countries of the action:

1. India, Japan, and Singapore.
2. Duly authorised activities for the benefit of the beneficiary countries may also take place in the European Union (EU).

2.2 General guidelines

2.2.1 Application and Submission

- Applications shall be submitted in English and in electronic format.
- Applicants should observe the maximum page limit specified in the Concept Note template (up to 5 pages). For the Full Application, applicants are highly recommended not to exceed 25 pages, in accordance with the proposal template.
- Proposers may submit multiple proposals (e.g., two (2) proposals that align with WPs respectively). It is requested that, where a proposer submits multiple proposals, they will need to fully explain the relationships and interdependencies regarding costs and outcomes between the proposals.
- A proposal can be carried out by one group, institution/organisation, or collaboratively with others, such as a consortium. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with experts from developed countries or other European organisations or institutions. However, strong evidence such as a letter of endorsement or intent (no specific template required) from those co-applicants or affiliates is required to be submitted at the second stage - Full Application.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully review the applicable guidelines below prior to preparing their applications to comply with relevant regulations.
 1. General Checklist and Budget Planning Guidelines
 2. Communication and Visibility Guidelines

2.2.2 Project Timeline, Visibility, and Outcomes

- Considering the timeline of this Call, the proposed activities are expected to commence in March 2027 and should be completed by February 2028. The outcomes for a proposal should be achievable within the proposed implementation period.
- A proposal should include a visibility and communication plan covering social media, websites, and case studies, clearly acknowledging support from Asi@Connect Phase 2 in line with Communication and Visibility Guidelines. It is also expected to submit photos, event summaries, and publicity materials to TEIN*CC upon request.
- Any outputs and outcomes will be made publicly available and, where applicable, released under open-source licences for the wider research and education community

2.2.3 Financial Framework and Budgeting

- All budgets must be prepared and submitted in EUR. TEIN*CC will not be responsible for any losses incurred due to exchange rate fluctuations during the project period.
- Funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis. Accordingly, awardees should have sufficient financial capacity to cover the initial costs of project implementation. Approved grants will be disbursed in one or two instalments upon the submission and approval of the relevant progress and final reports. All budget allocations are subject to TEIN*CC's internal regulations and will be finalised during the contracting process.

- Throughout Phase 2 of the Asi@Connect project, the maximum amount of financial support that may be awarded to each applicant with legal personality and the capacity to enter into contracts is limited to EUR 60,000. In other words, the cumulative amount of funds transferred to an awarded legal entity over the entire Asi@Connect Phase 2 period may not exceed EUR 60,000. Applicants must therefore ensure that the total amount of financial support requested, together with any financial support previously awarded to the same legal entity under Asi@Connect Phase 2, does not exceed this maximum amount.
- Availability of co-funding by other agencies, organisations, or participating partners is not a requirement but is strongly encouraged. Applicants are encouraged to mobilise complementary financial or in-kind contributions, where feasible, to enhance ownership, sustainability, and the scale of the proposed activities. Such contributions, including cost-sharing arrangements by participating partners, will be positively considered during the evaluation. Any complementary funding or in-kind contribution must be clearly declared in the budget section of the proposal.
- In case of proposals engaging private sector organisations under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) approach, the following conditions should be met:
 - Private sector participation is encouraged where it contributes technical expertise, innovation, or specialised services relevant to the proposed activities.
 - Private sector organisations should ensure reasonable cost recovery only and should not aim to generate profit through the grant. Cash or in-kind contributions are encouraged.
 - Private sector organisations must work in partnership with an eligible NREN or one of its member institutions and cannot serve as the sole lead applicant.
 - Private sector organisations should demonstrate relevant experience and a proven track record of working with the research and education community.
- Applicants must ensure that proposed budgets exclude all ineligible costs, including recoverable taxes/VAT, foreign exchange losses, interest on debt, indirect costs (overheads), and contingency reserves.
- TEIN*CC and its authorised external auditors reserve the right to inspect original financial records, supporting documentation, receipts, and project deliverables during the project implementation and for the specified document retention period following completion of the project.

2.2.4 Procurement and Security

- Where a proposal includes the purchase of equipment or the procurement of services, the total costs of such equipment and services shall not exceed 25% of the total Asi@Connect contribution requested. Any such purchase or procurement shall be subject to prior discussion and approval with TEIN*CC during the contracting process.
- Any subcontractors procured or external experts invited for project implementation must be legally registered or hold nationality within the eligible countries listed in [Section 2.1.2](#) or the European Union. Additionally, whenever EU funds are used for procurement, applicants must ensure that the Trusted Vendors Principle, the EU 5G Toolbox, and the Action Plan on Cable Security are duly taken into account and complied with.

2.2.5 Contracting Rights

- TEIN*CC reserves the right to request applicants to provide more details or modify any part of the proposal (including the requested budget) at any time during the selection process. The final funding amount and implementation period are subject to evaluation results and budget availability. TEIN*CC also reserves the right to reject any or all proposals without obligation to award a contract.
- In case a contract is not signed between TEIN*CC and the awardee within the presumed timeline, TEIN*CC reserves the right to withdraw the award.

2.3 How to apply and the procedures to follow

This Call for Proposals follows a two-stage application procedure as follows:

A. Concept Note

B. Full Application

Applicants whose Concept Notes are shortlisted will be invited to submit a Full Application. The details of each stage of the application process are set out below.

2.3.1 First stage - Concept Note

Applications must be submitted using the Concept Note Template provided in Annex A.1 to these Guidelines for applicants.

Please note that:

1. At the Concept Note stage, lead applicants shall provide an estimated amount of the requested Asi@Connect contribution and the applicant's contribution. A detailed budget shall only be required from applicants invited to submit a Full Application.
2. The key elements described in the Concept Note shall not be substantially modified in the Full Application. The requested Asi@Connect contribution shall not be modified by more than 20% from the amount indicated in the Concept Note.
3. The lead applicant may replace a co-Applicant or affiliated Entity only in duly justified cases. In such cases, the replacement entity must have a role and capacity equivalent to those of the entity being replaced. This provision shall apply throughout the Full Application stage.
4. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the proposed activities only where unforeseen circumstances outside the applicant's control require such adjustment. Any adjustment shall remain within the implementation period specified in these Guidelines and shall be appropriately justified.
5. The Concept Note will constitute the primary basis for evaluation at the first stage. Applicants should ensure that all relevant information required for assessment is included in the Concept Note. No additional annexes beyond the required documents specified in these Guidelines should be submitted unless specifically requested.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the Concept Note requirements may result in rejection of the application. Clarifications may be requested where the information provided is insufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

2.3.2 Where and how to send Concept Notes

The Concept Note by the lead applicant (Annex A.1), where applicable, the letter of endorsement or intent from co-applicants or affiliated entities (Annex A.2), and the NREN Endorsement (Annex A.3, no specific format required), must be submitted by the following link: [Concept Note Submission](#) (You may need to log in to Google for the submission.) If

you are not able to access Google forms, you may submit it to pmt@teincc.org and should consult with TEIN*CC in advance before its submission. Applications submitted by any other means (e.g. by fax or post) or to any other address will not be considered under this Call for Proposals.

After submitting the Concept Note, the lead applicant will receive an acknowledgement of receipt by email.

2.3.3 Deadline for submission of Concept Notes

The deadline for the submission of Concept Notes is **31 October 2026 at 23:59 (Korean date and time GMT+9)**. The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit its Concept Note, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. TEIN*CC cannot be held responsible for any delay due to the afore-mentioned difficulties.

2.3.4 Second stage - Full Applications

Only lead applicants whose Concept Notes have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a Full Application. They must use the application package provided in Annex B, including the Proposal Template (Annex B.1) and the Budget Template (Annex B.2). Lead applicants must strictly adhere to the format and structure of the Templates and complete all sections, paragraphs, and pages in the order presented.

The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity).

The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the proposal if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the Concept Note and require such adaptation (risk of the activities in the proposal not being carried out). In such cases, the duration must remain within limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in an accompanying letter or e-mail.

Please complete the Full Application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly. Any major inconsistency in the Full Application (e.g., if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information is unclear and prevents TEIN*CC from conducting an objective assessment.

If necessary, additional annexes may be attached.

2.3.5 Where and how to send Full Applications

The Full Application package (Annex B), including the Proposal Template (Annex B.1) and Budget Template (Annex B.2), must be submitted through the designated online submission link. The submission link will be provided exclusively to lead applicants whose Concept Notes have passed the pre-selection stage.

After submitting the Full Application, the lead applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt by e-mail.

2.3.6 Deadline for submission of Full Applications

The deadline for the submission of Full Applications is **4 January 2027 at 23:59 (Korean Standard Time, GMT+9)**. In case of changes to the deadline, a separate email will be sent to the lead applicants whose Concept Note has been pre-selected.

Lead applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their full Applications, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. TEIN*CC cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

3. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

TEIN*CC, representatives of the Steering Committee, and, where necessary, external evaluators will form an Evaluation Committee to examine and evaluate all applications against the criteria published in this Call for Proposals. The final decision regarding i) activities to be carried out and ii) selection of proposal partners to implement the activities will be taken by TEIN*CC in consultation with the Asi@Connect project's Steering Committee and Governors Meeting.

All eligible proposals will be scored based on the specific evaluation criteria outlined in this Call. For consistent and objective assessment, evaluators will apply a standardised 5-tier grading grid. The scoring intervals for each maximum point allocation are defined as follows:

- 15-Point Scale: 13-15 (Excellent), 10-12 (Good), 7-9 (Adequate), 4-6 (Poor), 1-3 (Very Poor)
- 10-Point Scale: 9-10 (Excellent), 7-8 (Good), 5-6 (Adequate), 3-4 (Poor), 1-2 (Very Poor)
- 5-Point Scale: 5 (Excellent), 4 (Good), 3 (Adequate), 2 (Poor), 1 (Very Poor)

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed activities do not meet the eligibility criteria stated in [Section 2.1](#), the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

3.1 Evaluation of Concept Note

Concept Notes will be evaluated on a 100-point scale based on the criteria set out in the evaluation criteria below. The evaluation will also assess compliance with the instructions for completing the Concept Note, as provided in the Concept Note template (Annex A.1).

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
1. Relevance of the proposal	50

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives, priorities, and Strategic Areas of Interest of this Call for Proposals? Are the expected results of the proposal aligned with the priorities defined in Section 1.2 (Objective of the Call) and Section 1.3 (Areas of Interest)?	15
1.2. How well does the proposal address the needs and constraints of the target countries, regions, sectors, target groups and final beneficiaries, and complement existing initiatives without duplication?	15
1.3. How clear and appropriate are the proposed activities and methodology, and how well do they contribute to the expected results?	10
1.4. Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. promotion or consolidation of public-private partnerships, innovation, sustainability, and best practices)?	<u>10</u>
2. Design of the proposal	50
2.1. Technical feasibility and effective utilisation of TEIN network (e.g. 100G link between Singapore and Europe)	<u>10</u>
2.2. Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and align with the capacities of the lead applicant, the co-applicant(s) and the affiliated entity(ies)?	<u>10</u>
2.3. What risks and assumptions have been identified that impact on the success of the design? Have risk mitigation approaches been identified?	<u>10</u>
2.4. Are the activities feasible (including time frame and costs) and consistent in relation to the expected results? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	<u>10</u>
2.5. To what extent does the proposal address and integrate cross-cutting issues and social values, opportunities and rights such as promotion of gender equality and women's participation.	<u>10</u>
Maximum total score	100

Once all Concept Notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed projects ranked according to their total score. Firstly, only the Concept Notes with a score of at least 60 points will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of Concept Notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of Concept Notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to 300% of the available budget for this Call for Proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each Concept Note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each Work Package and Strategic Area of Interest.

3.2 Evaluation of the Full Application

Full Applications will be evaluated based on their overall quality, including the proposed budget and the capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies), against the 11 evaluation criteria set out in the evaluation grid below:

Evaluation Criteria	Score
Alignment with the objectives and scope of the relevant Work Package and Strategic Area of Interest The proposal should clearly demonstrate its relevance and contribution to the objectives and scope of the relevant Work Package and Strategic Area of Interest described in the Guidelines.	15
Well-structured methodology The methodology should explain how the proposed activities address the identified needs, deliver expected outcomes, and contribute to regional research and education collaboration, digital services, and sustainable impact.	15
Effective Utilisation of TEIN Network Proposals should present a clear and actionable plan demonstrating how the proposed activities will contribute to the active utilisation, activation, and further development and deployment of the TEIN network.	15
Regional diversity and balance Proposed activities under this Call are encouraged to have a regional dimension and to benefit several Asi@Connect partner countries. The evaluation will give particular consideration to the extent to which DCI-eligible countries actively participate in and benefit from the project.	10
Cost factors, realistic budget and timeframe Proposals should demonstrate that the proposed costs have been carefully considered and are realistic, reasonable, and necessary for the implementation of the proposed activities. Information on any additional funding provided or secured by the proposer should also be included.	10

Evaluation Criteria	Score
Sustainability and potential for growth/further development Proposals should explain how the proposed activities could be sustained, expanded, or further developed after successful completion of the project, including any plans or opportunities for follow-up activities.	10
Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment of Regional Results/Outcomes/Impacts based on the objectives of the Asi@Connect project Proposals should provide clear qualitative and, where possible, quantitative information demonstrating the scale, scope and significance of the proposed activities and their expected results, outcomes and impacts in relation to the objectives of the Asi@Connect project. Proposals should describe qualitative benefits, such as strengthened regional collaboration, knowledge exchange, capacity building, institutional development, and improved access to digital services or research infrastructures. Where applicable, proposals should also provide quantitative indicators, such as the number of participating institutions, users or beneficiaries, geographic coverage, and regional reach.	5
Capacity of proposers Proposals should provide supporting information demonstrating the team's experience and capacity to manage and implement the proposed project, including relevant experience from previous projects.	5
Risk Assessment and Mitigation Proposals should clearly identify the main risks and assumptions that may affect the implementation of the proposed activities and the achievement of their objectives, and also provide appropriate risk-mitigation measures.	5
Visibility & Communication Proposals should set out clear plans for how the proposed project and its outcomes will contribute to enhancing the visibility and recognition of the Asi@Connect project.	5

Evaluation Criteria	Score
Cross-cutting Issues Proposals should demonstrate how relevant cross-cutting issues, including gender equality and women's participation, are appropriately integrated into the design and implementation of the proposed activities.	5

Following the evaluation, a ranking list of applications will be established in descending order of their scores. The highest-scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the budget available under this Call for Proposals has been exhausted.

However, to ensure a balanced portfolio, promote regional inclusion, and prevent redundant investments, the Evaluation Committee reserves the right to review and adjust the final selection of proposals. During this portfolio balancing process, the Committees will actively consider key factors such as regional/country distribution (to avoid geographic concentration), technical diversity (to prevent duplication of highly similar technologies or methodologies within the same Work Package), and the potential for synergistic reclassification between related Work Packages.

Applications that are deferred due to these balancing considerations, along with other high-scoring eligible proposals, will be placed on a reserve list. This reserve list will remain valid until the end of the evaluation process and may be used to award projects if additional funds become available.

3.3 Indicative timetable

	DATE(Korean Standard Time)	TIME(Korean Standard Time)
1. Start of invitation of Concept Notes	23 September 2026	-
2. Open Call Day (Online Information Session)	1 October 2026 *Zoom link: Join the Open Call	15:00
3. Deadline for submission of Concept Notes	~ 31 October 2026 Link: Concept Note Submission	23:59
4. Evaluation of Concept Notes	~ 20 November 2026	
5. Acceptance notice on Concept Notes and Invitations to submit Full Applications	~ 30 November 2026	
6. Deadline for submission of Full Applications	~ 4 January 2027	23:59
7. Evaluation of the Full Applications	~ 1 February 2027	

8. Notification of award	~ 5 February 2027	
9. Contract signature	~ 26 February 2027	

* The timeline may be subject to change depending on the progress. Such changes will be posted on the Asi@Connect website.

All questions and answers, as well as other important notices to applicants during the evaluation procedure, will be published on the Asi@Connect website. Applicants are advised to visit the Asi@Connect website regularly to stay informed of newly published questions and answers. (1st Call section under the Open Call menu: [1st Call \(Announcement\)](#))

E-mail address: pmt@teincc.org

4. LIST OF ANNEXES

4.1 Documents to be submitted

The following documents must be submitted as part of the proposal application.

- **Annex A – Concept Note**
 - A.1 Concept Note template (including instructions for drafting the Concept Note)
 - A.2 Letter of endorsement or intent from co-applicants or affiliates (if applicable)
 - A.3 NREN Endorsement (no specific format required)
- **Annex B – Full Application** (applicants only pre-selected through Concept Note step)
 - B.1 Full Application proposal template
 - B.2 Full Application budget template

4.2 General Checklist and Budget Planning Guidelines

4.3 Communication and Visibility Guidelines

Further documentation may be required, and these may be communicated to provisionally selected applicants in due course.