Instructions for participants

- Type your questions into the chat once the meeting starts

- Keep questions short and simple for clarity

- Raise your hand if you prefer to ask your question verbally during the Q&A session.

- All question and responses and discussions will be summarised and shared on official FutureWORKS Asia platform.

Agenda

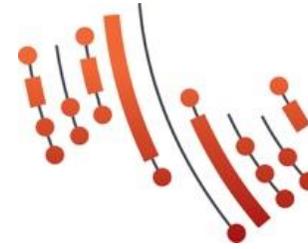|	
Introduction **Helani Galpaya (CEO, LIRNEasia)**	**12.00 pm – 12.05 pm**
Presentation of CFP **Ayesha Zainudeen (Senior Research Manager, LIRNEasia)**	**12.05 m – 12.35 pm**
Q & A	**12.35 pm – 12.55 pm**
Final Comments	**12.55 pm – 1.00 pm**

LIRNEasia: a regional pro-poor, pro-market think tank

LIRNEasia
Pro-poor. Pro-market.

Our mission:
Catalysing policy change and solutions through research to improve the lives of people in the Asia and Pacific using knowledge, information and technology

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VISION

Promote inclusive economic development

MISSION

Catalysing policy change and solutions through research to improve the lives of people in the Asia and Pacific, using knowledge, information and technology
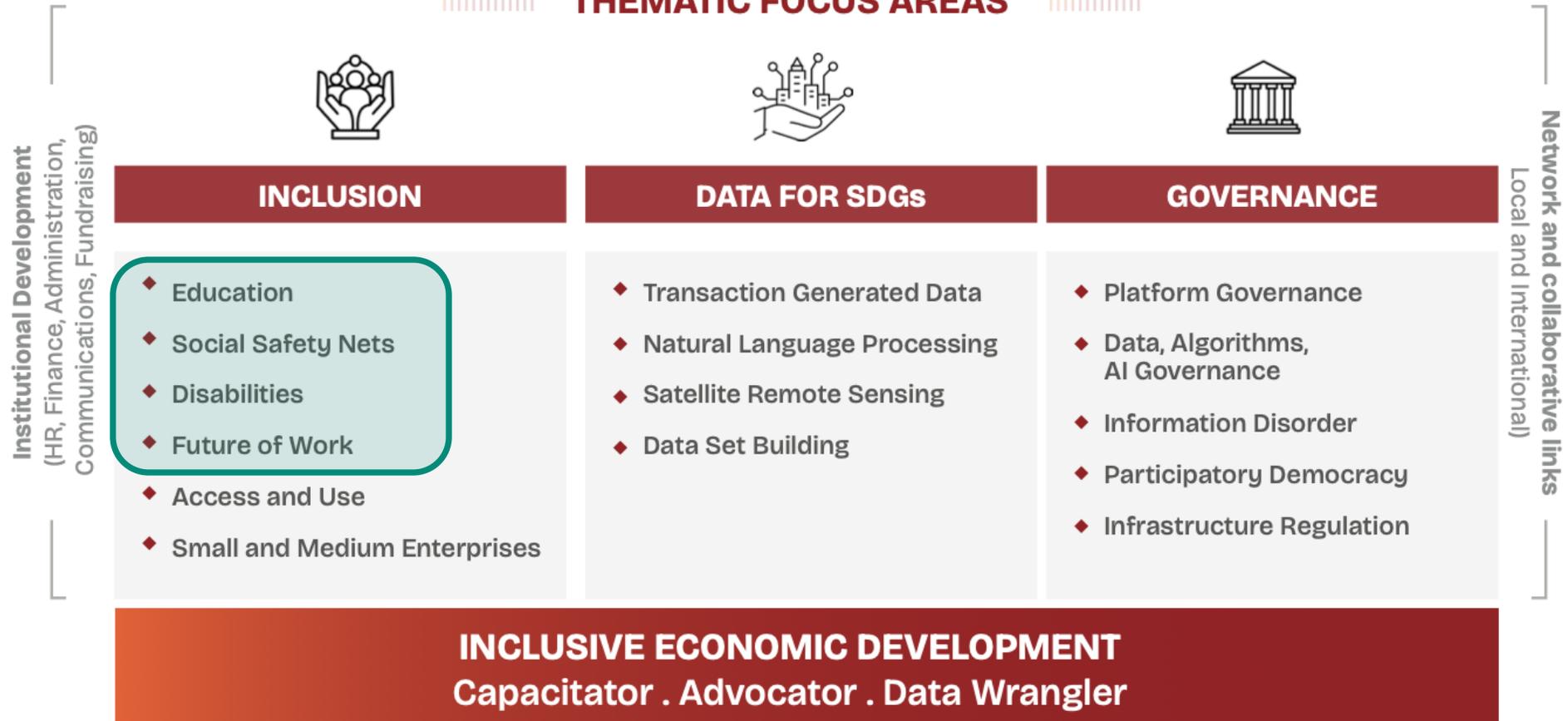
THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

Institutional Development (HR, Finance, Administration, Communications, Fundraising)

Network and collaborative links Local and International)

INCLUSION

- Education
- Social Safety Nets
- Disabilities
- Future of Work
- Access and Use
- Small and Medium Enterprises

DATA FOR SDGs

- Transaction Generated Data
- Natural Language Processing
- Satellite Remote Sensing
- Data Set Building

GOVERNANCE

- Platform Governance
- Data, Algorithms, AI Governance
- Information Disorder
- Participatory Democracy
- Infrastructure Regulation

INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Capacitator . Advocator . Data Wrangler

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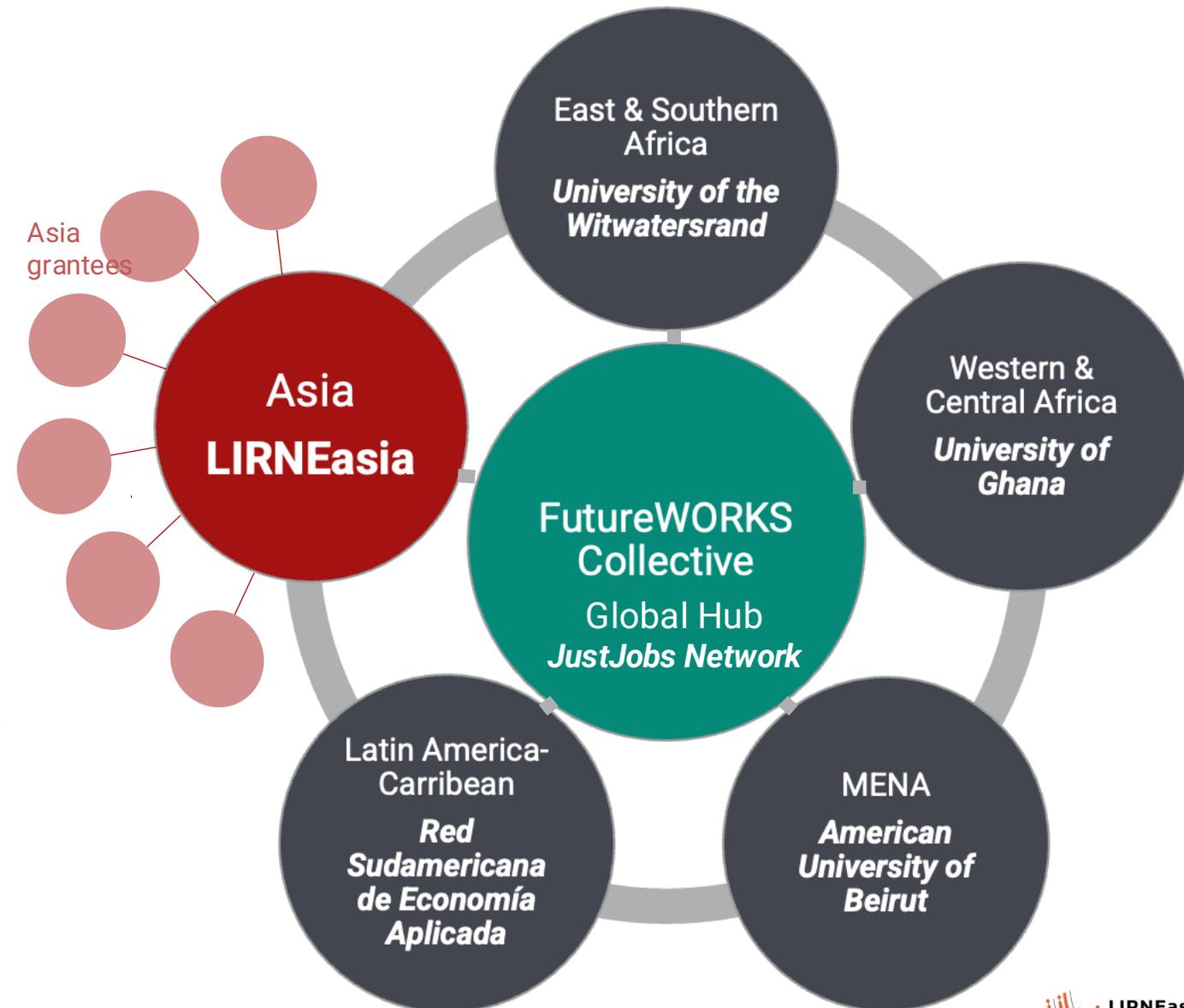Pro-poor. Pro-market.

LIRNEasia's research on future of work from 2016

- **Online Freelancing in the Emerging Asia Pacific** (2016-17)
  - Nationally representative survey in Sri Lanka to asses awareness of online freelancing as a form of work
  - Qualitative study of 400+ online freelancers in Sri Lanka, India, and Myanmar to understand experiences and challenges
- **Impact of Automation on the Workforce in Indian Economy** (2019)
  - Exploration of the possibility of replicating the Frey and Osborn type analysis in an Asian market, namely India
- **The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the World of Work** (2020-21)
  - Nationally representative surveys capturing pandemic impacts on work
- **Women and work in the platform economy** (2021-23)
  - Qualitative study of women engaged in digitally mediated earning in Sri Lanka (and India with CPR India, IIHD, WRI India) to understand empowerment impacts, challenges, flexibility of work
- **Matching Skills and Jobs** (2022-23)
  - Scoping study + case study to understand the practicalities of using online job portal data to near-cast labour market trends, skills demands
- **FutureWORKS Asia** (2023-28)
  - Building Asia component of a global south policy research network on future of work

See: https://lirneasia.net/futureofwork

FutureWORKS | ASIA
COLLECTIVE

Asian hub of FutureWORKS Collective

- Southern-led Multidisciplinary Network initiated by International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada
- Designed to address challenges in the changing landscape of work across the Global South through:

  - **Research and Innovation**
    - Fostering innovation that advances skills for the FOW and promotes decent work globally.
  - **Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing**
    - Shared research, network consolidation, and active collaboration in public policy processes to drive impactful solutions.

Asia grantees

Asia
LIRNEasia

East & Southern Africa
University of the Witwatersrand

Western & Central Africa
University of Ghana

FutureWORKS Collective
Global Hub
JustJobs Network

MENA
American University of Beirut

Latin America-Carribean
Red Sudamericana de Economía Aplicada

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Initial network members

Global network

Regional network

International Development Research Centre

International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada is a Canadian Crown Corporation dedicated to supporting and strengthening the capacity of people and institutions in developing countries.

Collaborates with researchers and research users to address contemporary challenges and contribute to global advancements in various fields.
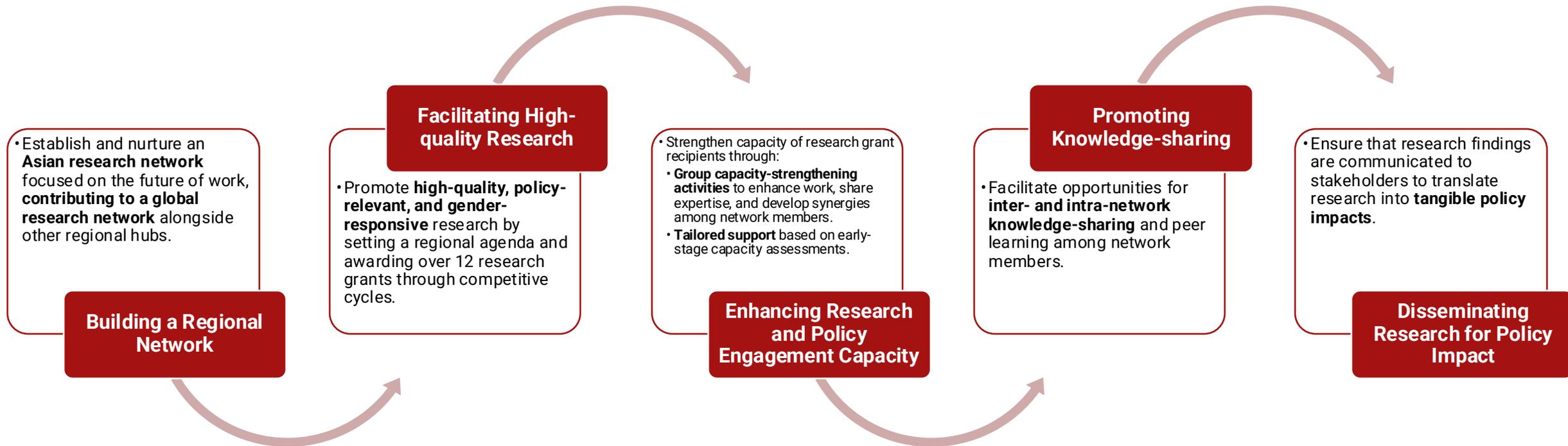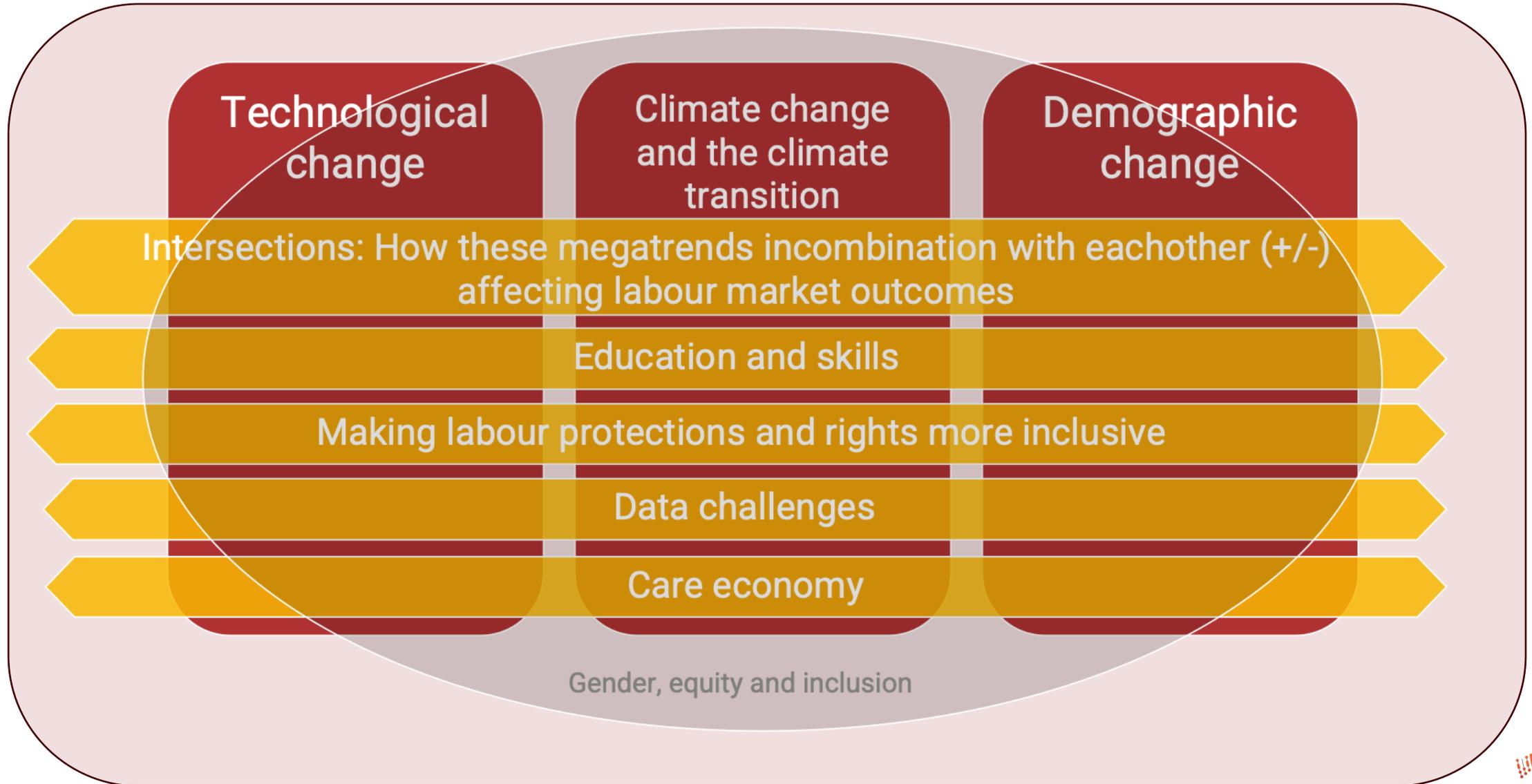
FutureWORKS Asia: Hub Objectives

Create actionable knowledge to influence policies and practices in skills development for equitable work in L-LMIC Asian countries, addressing digitization, climate change, and demographic changes through gender, equity, and inclusion.

Facilitating High-quality Research

Promoting Knowledge-sharing

- Establish and nurture an **Asian research network** focused on the future of work, **contributing to a global research network** alongside other regional hubs.

Building a Regional Network

- Promote **high-quality, policy-relevant, and gender-responsive** research by setting a regional agenda and awarding over 12 research grants through competitive cycles.

- Strengthen capacity of research grant recipients through:
  - **Group capacity-strengthening activities** to enhance work, share expertise, and develop synergies among network members.
  - **Tailored support** based on early-stage capacity assessments.

Enhancing Research and Policy Engagement Capacity

- Facilitate opportunities for **inter- and intra-network knowledge-sharing** and peer learning among network members.

- Ensure that research findings are communicated to stakeholders to translate research into **tangible policy impacts**.

Disseminating Research for Policy Impact

Research Priorities (Cycle 1)

Cycle2: Same universe, but a stronger emphasis will be placed on projects that are clearly solution-driven

Technological change	Climate change and the climate transition	Demographic change

Intersections: How these megatrends incombination with eachother (+/-) affecting labour market outcomes

Education and skills

Making labour protections and rights more inclusive

Data challenges

Care economy

Gender, equity and inclusion

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Ongoing projects in Asia

- Opportunity and Resilience in the Philippine Platform Labor Economy: Policy Imperatives for Skills Development and Social Protection Amid Climate and Technological Change

- Digital Disruption and Climate Stress: Assessing Impacts on Nursing Work and Charting a Resilient, Equitable, and Gender-Responsive Work Landscape

- The Care Economy Roadmap for Sri Lanka – Charting the Way Forward

- Gender Implications of Future of Work in South Asia: Insights from Garment Manufacturing in Bangladesh and India

- Life after Life: Future of Work in Bangladesh

Cycle 2 – Call Priorities

- **Cycle 2 will prioritise solution-oriented research**

- **Proposals that go beyond diagnosing problems are encouraged:**
  - What has worked (or not)
  - What has been tried and tested
  - What are the lessons that can be transplanted elsewhere
  - How it can be adapted and scaled

- **Projects must be policy-relevant, with justification and the potential to influence real-world decisions.**

- **Successful grants will address**
  - research questions that are relevant to making changes in policy and practice, and support decision-making across government, industry, and other sectors.

- **They may focus on:**
  - Identifying and analyzing best or promising practices
  - Synthesizing evidence on what has or hasn't worked
  - Conducting impact assessments of past or ongoing initiatives
  - Understanding how to scale successful solutions
  - Or comparing strategies and approaches across contexts

Successful grants may include… (Cont.)

Case studies and comparative analyses of emerging best-fit practices and policy solutions

- Including both successes and instances where policies, programs, or corporate initiatives have not achieved desired outcomes
- Aimed at generating actionable learnings to inform future efforts across the region and beyond
- Examine under what conditions certain policies or programs work (or do not)
- Understanding the conditions for scale-up of pilot interventions

Exploration of emerging trends and uncertainties related to the future of work

- Focus on new patterns, risks, concerns, or opportunities
- Particularly those that are underexplored or poorly understood
- While exploratory in nature, proposals must remain solution-oriented

Quantification of impacts

- Assessing the effects of:
  - New or evolving policies
  - Business practices, technological disruptions, or socio-economic shifts
- Focused on impacts on workers, firms, and economies
- Applicable especially where sufficient time has elapsed for impacts to be meaningfully observed
- May include follow-up studies to recently completed rigorous baseline research

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Successful grants may include... (Cont.)

Contextualizing and replicating studies from the Global North (or other Global South contexts)

- Testing whether trends and outcomes observed in the Global North (via previous studies) are mirrored in the Global South

Where differences arise, proposals should:
- Identify contextual factors driving divergence
- Articulate implications for policy and practice adaptation

Comparisons could also be made with pre-existing studies from other parts of the Global South also

Solution-oriented, evidence-based approaches

- emphasizing practical insights with clear strategies for dissemination, uptake, and engagement with relevant stakeholders.

Potential for influence and convening across key actors

- Research that can help shape discourse, guide strategic direction, and foster collaboration among actors such as Policymakers, Industry leaders, Worker organizations, Civil society actors
- Innovative methods to answer these questions are encouraged , such as use of novel data sources and methods

Implementation-focused research and documentation

- Projects that support and study the process of implementing a solution
- May include activities such as:
  - Capacity building
  - Stakeholder convening
  - Process research and documentation
- Should incorporate a strong Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) component to facilitate learnings of what worked versus not, for other countries/domains.

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Research priorities

- Same overall context/ background as previous round, however, significant focus and priority on **solutions and policies**
    - Identification, design, co-creation of solutions, comparison across contexts, evaluating implementations
    - Multi-stakeholder, participatory approaches
    - Policy realms can be social protection, skills and education policy, care economy, inter alia
    - Some elements of resrach may still be included
- Under-researched areas will also be considered (e.g., climate/transition-related labor market shifts), but still with policy focus
    - Combined impacts, inequalities,

Expectations of projects

Gender, Equity, and Inclusion

High-Quality Research · Ethical Conduct · Commitment to Policy-Relevant Research · Engagement with Other Grant Recipients · Open Access and Data Management · Knowledge Sharing

Expectations of projects (cont.)

High-Quality Research

- Research must be rigorous, evidence-based, and meet high standards of quality
- Multi-method and multi-disciplinary approaches are strongly encouraged
- Accepted methods include:
  - Surveys, qualitative research, case studies
  - Data analytics, policy and literature reviews, systematic reviews
- Projects should aim to advance knowledge through:
  - Use of novel methods or innovative approaches
  - Adapting and testing existing frameworks in new contexts
- Priority will be given to research that is policy-relevant and **solution-oriented, not merely descriptive**

Ethical Conduct

- Projects must uphold the highest ethical standards, going beyond regulatory requirements
- Must align with IDRC's Principles of Institutional Research Ethics
- Ethical standards are further detailed in the IDRC standard grant agreement
- Ideally, proposals should include approval from an Institutional Ethics Review Board before data collection begins
- Timeline and planning should account for ethics review and clearance

Commitment to Policy-Relevant Research

- *Beyond Research Outputs*
  Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to translating research into policy, with a plan for engaging national, sub-regional, and regional decision-makers and stakeholders.
- *Effective Policy Engagement*
  Use opportunities in other capacities (e.g., advisory boards) to disseminate work, with the Hub facilitating regional and international policy engagement.

Gender, Equity, and Inclusion

- *Central Priority*
  - Incorporate gender, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of research, ensuring positive outcomes for marginalized groups.
- *Intersectional Approach*
  - Address inequalities across multiple categories of identity, such as gender, sexuality, age, class, race, caste, ethnicity, citizenship status, religion, and ability.
- *Expert Involvement*
  - Include a gender/equity/inclusion expert as an integral part of the research team.
    - Further information at IDRC's Equality Statement

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Expectations of projects (cont.)

Engagement with Other Grant Recipients

- ***Network Collaboration***
  - Participate in a research network that emphasizes peer learning, sharing of expertise, and collaboration on further funding and policy engagement.
- ***Regular Convenings***
  - Attend regular online and in-person meetings, including monthly convenings, a hub launch event, capacity-building workshops, and dissemination events.

Open Access and Data Management

- ***Compliance with IDRC Policies***
  - Adhere to IDRC's Open Access Policy and Open Data Statement of Principles, including submitting a Data Management Plan (DMP). DMP template: : http://www.idrc.ca/en/developing-data-management-plan-guidance-applicants-and-grantees.
- ***Public Domain Publishing***
  - Publish research findings in the public domain, ensuring open access and making software developed with grant funds available under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

Knowledge Sharing

- ***Intentional Knowledge Sharing***
  - Develop a knowledge-sharing strategy that engages key stakeholders throughout the research process to support research uptake and impact.
- ***Policy Uptake Plans***
  - Create plans for moving research evidence into action, with support from the Hub, to influence policy and drive social and behavioral change.
- ***Integrated Knowledge Sharing***
  - Include knowledge sharing plans in project proposals, with appropriate resources and budget allocation for these activities.

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Grant types and sizes (cycle 2)

1. Single or multi-country policy research grants (USD 50,000 to 100,000):
- Grant period: 12-18 months.
- > USD 40,000: Projects should have a multi-country or multi-sectoral focus.
- < USD 40,000: Projects with a smaller scope (e.g., single country, single sector, etc.)

2. Dataset acquisition/wrangling + research grants (up to USD 50,000):
- Two-part grants:
  - Part 1: USD 10,000 for dataset negotiation and verification.
  - Part 2: Up to USD 40,000 for research using the obtained data.
- Total grant period: 12 months (Part 1) + 6 months (Part 2).
- Datasets must not be *already* publicly available and must require machine learning techniques for analysis.

3. Solution co-development grants (USD 30,000 to 40,000)
- To support consultative, multi-stakeholder projects focused on research, convenings, policy uptake, and capacity building.

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Grant eligibility criteria

Proposals must meet these criteria to be considered. Refer to full details in the Call for Proposals.

Legal Identity:

- Must have independent legal identity and the ability to enter contracts.
- Should have a bank account to receive and administer funds.
- Must demonstrate legal status through documentation if selected.
- In the case of consortia, the organization leading the application must meet the above legal requirements, and all consortium members must also have legal personality in any of the eligible countries of focus

Eligible Organizations: Eligible: **research institutions, universities, think tanks, associations, civil society organizations, and non-profits**.

- Must undertake **public interest research** aligned with FutureWORKS Asia's objectives and ensure outputs are made freely available as per IDRC Open Access Policy
- Must show a **demonstrated commitment to policy impact**, reflected in both the proposed project and past work

Not eligible:

- Individuals; Private firms offering products/services targeted at workers (e.g., job portals, recruitment agencies); government organisations (except public research and educational institutions); UN agencies.
- Eligible applicants may bring in *partners* that fit the entities mentioned above, however, funds from successful projects may **not** flow to the following:
  - Individuals who are part- or full-time employees of the public sector/government, with the exception of state-owned universities or public research institutions.
  - Government organizations and institutions (with the exception of public research and educational institutions)
  - UN agencies
  - Organizations based in India or Myanmar

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Grant eligibility criteria

Proposals must meet these criteria to be considered. Refer to full details in the Call for Proposals.

Country Presence in Asian Lower/Lower-middle Income Country (L-LMIC):

- Applicant must be **headquartered in an eligible Asian L-LMIC** and proposed work must be conducted in one or more of the following countries: **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam.**
  - Refer to CFP for guidelines for India and Myanmar; Iran covered by SWANA (MENA) regional hub; Afghanistan may apply to SWANA/ MENA CFP depending on thematic fit.

- The applicant may have partners and/or experts based in countries outside of the eligible country list, however, **majority of the funding must be spent in the eligible country/countries.**

- Research must be conducted in eligible countries: **Partners/experts** may be based outside the eligible countries, but funds must primarily be used in eligible countries
  - Recently transitioned **upper middle-income countries** may be included for comparison, with **strong justification**

Grant eligibility criteria (2)

Proposals must meet these criteria to be considered. Refer to full details in the Call for Proposals.

- **Demonstrated expertise/experience of lead organisation of research in** at least two areas: labour force skills, technology adoption in labour, climate change, just transition, gender responsive climate polices, technology policy, skills development, and innovation systems.

- **Demonstrated ability to translate research into policy effectively**

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Proposal Guidelines

All proposals must be in English and submitted submitted via the online application form, adhering to the character limits specified below. Application form link is provided in the CFP. Categories identified below are compulsory unless it states, "if applicable".

Main Proposal

- Section A: Project details
- Section B: Abstract (max 1200 characters)
- Section C: Problem identification and rationale (max 3000 characters)
- Section D: Objectives and research questions (max 1500 characters)
- Section E: Methodology (max 12,000 characters)
- Section F: Research dissemination/knowledge sharing plan (max 2400 characters)
- Section G: Risks and mitigation strategies (submitted in a matric form, see Annex 3 for template)
- Section H: Gender, equity and inclusion (GEI)(max 1500 characters)
- Section I: Theory of change (submitted in a tabular form)
- Section J: Organization Capabilities (max 4500 characters)
- Section K: Team structure (max 1500 characters)

Annexures to the Proposal

Annex 1: CVs of key personnel

- *Add CVs of the key project personnel (including PI), highlighting relevant expertise and experience*
    - CVs to be provided in World Bank format
    - Up to five (5) CVs may be included, each no more than five (5) pages
    - CVs to include declaration that the individual is not employed (on any basis, part- or full-time) by government (with the exception of state-owned universities or public research institutions), and is legally and contractually allowed to receive payments for work on research or other work outside of their current employment.

Annex 2: Budget

- *Include completed budget as a PDF, include notes and assumptions in IDRC's budget format available at: https://idrc-crdi.ca/en/proposal-budget*
- *See Section 9 for detailed instructions on preparing the budget.*

Annex 3: Workplan

- *Include completed workplan along with Gantt Chart*

Annex 4: Data Management Plan

- *Include Stage 1 Data Management Plan, as per IDRC's guidelines available at: http://www.idrc.ca/en/developing-data-management-plan-guidance-applicants-and-grantees.*

Annex 5: Current/valid business registration certificate

Annex 6: Tax registration certificate from government authority

Annex 7: Institutional profile questionnaire (available here)

Annex 8: Audited financial statements for the last 3 years

Budget Guidelines

- Complete and submit an estimated budget in USD using the budget template provided in the CFP.

- Complete all tabs in the budget template **except the summary tab** which will be generated automatically in MS Excel template.

- Applicants must allocate funds for airfare to attend in-person Hub convenings (2 meetings over 2 years) conducted by LIRNEasia *tentatively* in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

- Accommodation, meals and airport transfers *in Sri Lanka* will be provided by LIRNEasia.

- Add any in-kind contributions or matching funds to be provided in the appropriate tabs.

- Submit two versions:
    1. Signed PDF – this will be considered the final version
    2. Editable MS Excel version – this is for the purpose of LA providing feedback

- As principal funding for this Call for Proposals comes from IDRC, Canada, please refer to the following documents attached to the CFP
    - IDRC **Guidelines for Acceptable Project Expenditures**
    - **Guidelines for specific to FutureWORKS Asia** (Annex 2)
    - **General IDRC Funding Guidelines**.

Selection and grant issue timeline

- Submission of proposals (9July)

- Screening by internal review committee based on evaluation criteria

- 20-30 minutes presentation of proposal by the pre-selected applications (11 – 18 August)

- Feedback on pre-selected proposals (incl. budgets) and revision

- Resubmission of revised proposals (1 week following presentations)

- Submission of institutional documents for pre-selected applicants (1September)

- Institutional review of pre-selected applicants

- Grant agreement and announcement of successful proposals (October)

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Proposal evaluation criteria

- Based on the Hub's assessment of the submitted proposal and budget.

- LIRNEasia will also consider
    - regional (geographical) as well as thematic balance of the proposals
    - focus on gender in the selection of proposals.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria	% allocated
Alignment with objectives and likelihood of/potential for policy impact Proposal demonstrates strong alignment with the call's objectives, clear relevance to current policy debates, and a well-articulated strategy for engaging stakeholders and translating research into policy impact.	30 %
Project design and research methodology The proposal presents a sound project design and appropriate methodology aligned with the research questions, includes risk mitigation and adaptive strategies, and demonstrates awareness of relevant ethical considerations.	40 %
Gender, Equity, and Inclusion (GEI) and MEL The proposal integrates GEI and Inclusion across all stages of the project and includes a clear theory of change with defined MEL mechanisms to monitor progress, evaluate outcomes, and support learning and adaptation.	15%
Organizational experience and key personnel The applicant demonstrates a strong track record in similar work, and the proposed team possesses the necessary expertise to effectively deliver on project objectives, including a gender expert	15%
Budget Clear and coherent plans for the use of available funding, appropriate for the proposed activities	5%

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Selection process: Post selection requirements

- LIRNEasia may request revisions to the proposal and budget. Timely submission of revised documents is necessary.

- Additional country clearance may be required by IDRC for certain countries. LIRNEasia will inform applicants of any specific requirements.

- Pre-selected applicants undergo an institutional assessment. Required documents may include financial statements, organizational charts, HR and finance manuals, procurement policies, donor lists, annual reports, and reference letters.
    - If institutional assessment reveals weaknesses, LIRNEasia may require the applicant to partner with another institution as a condition for the grant

- Final selection is based on the review committee's recommendations, evaluation criteria, and institutional assessment results.

- Negotiations are conducted only with the lead applicant's organization.

- Selected proponents must sign LIRNEasia's Grant Agreement, which includes schedules for submitting interim and final technical and financial reports.

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Questions

All correspondence to be through futureworks@lirneasia.net

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