



# Developing Research Excellence and Mentorship in Southeast Asia (SEA DREAM) Programme

## DREAM 4 Health Call for Proposals 2026 Scheme Sheet

*Version 1.4*

*Date: 19 January 2026*

1. Scheme at a Glance.....	2
2. SEA DREAM Objectives .....	4
3. SEA DREAM Thematic Areas .....	5
4. Eligibility .....	9
5. Eligible Costs .....	19
6. Application Process.....	24
7. Selection & Evaluation Criteria .....	27
8. Deadlines and Timelines .....	29
9. Definitions of key terms .....	29
10. Grant Conditions and Policies .....	35

## 1. Scheme at a Glance

<b>About</b>	DREAM 4 Health is calling for proposals for Southeast Asian-led Multi-Country research consortia that address regional and global health challenges.
<b>Funders:</b>	<a href="#">SEAMEO Secretariat</a>
<b>Partners:</b>	<a href="#">Wellcome Trust</a> , <a href="#">UK Foreign, Commonwealth &amp; Development Office</a>
<b>Funding Type:</b>	Grant
<b>Funding Duration:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 60 Months.</li> <li>• Recommended duration ranges between 48 to 60 months.</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum award per Research Consortium:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.500.000 USD.</li> <li>• Recommended application range between 5.500.000 and 6.500.000 USD.</li> </ul>
<b>What thematic areas will be funded?</b>	<p>Research that responds to the <a href="#">ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda (APHDA)</a> Health Priorities, across four thematic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infectious Diseases</li> <li>• Impact of Climate Change on Health</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Strengthening Health Systems and Access to Care</li> </ul> <p>DREAM 4 Health aims to fund research that leads to discovery and innovation that advances science, builds the foundation for the development of new solutions and products, and fosters evidence generation for policymaking, tackling some of the most urgent and emerging health challenges in Southeast Asia.</p> <p>Applications can focus on a single thematic area or address multiple themes. Exploring connections across multiple themes and priorities is encouraged only when beneficial to the proposed research.</p>
<b>Who can lead a SEA DREAM research consortium?</b>	A not-for-profit organisation, or public or private university registered as a legal entity in <a href="#">Brunei Darussalam</a> ; <a href="#">Cambodia</a> ; <a href="#">Indonesia</a> ; <a href="#">Lao PDR</a> ; <a href="#">Malaysia</a> ; <a href="#">Myanmar</a> ; <a href="#">Philippines</a> ; <a href="#">Singapore</a> ;

	<p><u>Thailand; Timor-Leste; or Vietnam</u> may apply as Administering (Lead) Organisation of a research consortium.</p>	
<p><b>What are research consortium requirements?</b></p>	<p>A Consortium shall be structured as a hub-and-spoke model and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• must include a minimum of three organisations, including the Lead, each from a different Southeast Asian country.</li> <li>• must include at least one organisation from a Southeast Asian Lower Middle-Income Country (per World Bank 2025 classification): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cambodia,</li> <li>○ Lao PDR,</li> <li>○ Myanmar,</li> <li>○ Philippines,</li> <li>○ Timor-Leste,</li> <li>○ Vietnam.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• is recommended to consist of between three to five organisations.</li> </ul> <p>All Consortium Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ not-for-profit organisations,</li> <li>○ public or private universities, or</li> <li>○ commercial organisations, involved within not-for-profit divisions or clearly marked as not-for-profit generating activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• must be able to sign up to SEA DREAM grant conditions.</li> <li>• may be organisations with their legal entity registered in countries outside of Southeast Asia, if all other eligibility criteria are met.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Where to apply?</b></p>	<p>Applications can only be submitted in <i>English</i> through the <a href="#">SEA DREAM Application Portal</a>.</p>	
<p><b>Preliminary Application Opening Date:</b></p>	<p>30 January 2026</p>	
<p><b>Preliminary Application Closing Date:</b></p>	<p>24 March 2026</p>	
<p><b>Full Application Opening Date:</b></p>	<p>14 May 2026</p>	
<p><b>Full Application Closing Date:</b></p>	<p>10 July 2026</p>	
<p><b>Funding Decision:</b></p>	<p>End of November 2026</p>	

## SEA DREAM's unique regional focus

Southeast Asia's health landscape is shaped by complex environmental, social, and systemic pressures that affect the well-being of millions. The impact of climate change on health, the persistence of infectious and non-communicable diseases, mental health analysis and support, and uneven access to quality care all intersect to challenge public health across the region. In light of this, the SEA DREAM programme will fund high-impact regional consortia to deliver discovery and translational research on current and emerging health priorities that are critical at the national, regional, and global level.

SEA DREAM is designed to strengthen the research ecosystem across Southeast Asia, creating lasting and equitable multi-country and cross-disciplinary collaborations and networks. It will develop the next generation of Southeast Asian research leaders that will identify, shape, and address questions and solutions to health challenges most relevant to Southeast Asia and the communities most affected.

Specific focus will be placed on incorporating organisations from [Lower Middle-Income Countries in Southeast Asia](#) (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam) in Consortium constellations and connecting high-resourced settings with emerging research organisations to support inclusive and equitable development, and uplift the Southeast Asian research ecosystem as a whole.

The SEA DREAM programme is implemented by the SEAMEO Secretariat, in strategic partnership with the Wellcome Trust and the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (UK FCDO).

Additional strategic partnerships with funders from across the region are anticipated for the SEA DREAM programme to amplify the impact towards transformative change in the regional research ecosystem.

## 2. SEA DREAM Objectives

The SEA DREAM Programme will fund regional consortia to produce excellent and outcome-focused discovery and translational research that addresses existing and emerging national and regional health priorities.

SEA DREAM will enable the development of research excellence through:

- **Generating impactful research:** SEA DREAM will fund ‘excellent’ science and research which is responsive to regional health priorities and that translates into real-world solutions, policies, and interventions. SEA DREAM will support discovery and translational research that addresses national and regional health research priorities and emerging issues, including under-served areas of research, across horizontal and vertical topics, and encourage innovation and multi-disciplinary research.
- **Nurturing leadership and talent:** SEA DREAM research consortia will provide research career pathways to develop research talent and promote research leadership within Southeast Asia. SEA DREAM seeks to expand opportunities for early- and mid-career researchers and associated research staff, build mentorship relations, provide career transition opportunities and foster the next generation of competitive research leaders.
- **Fostering regional collaboration:** SEA DREAM aims to support and build equitable partnerships that leverage regional expertise and enable the sharing of resources to achieve common goals. The programme will support cross-border collaboration - both through its overall design and through targeted consortia funding - to strengthen research linkages and generate impact at scale. By connecting leading and emerging research institutions, SEA DREAM aims to facilitate joint agenda-setting, resource-sharing, and learning. Through these efforts, SEA DREAM aims to foster a collaborative and innovative regional research environment.
- **Strengthening research ecosystems:** SEA DREAM will fund research consortia that promote inclusive research culture and foster a supportive research environment conducive to innovation and excellence, thereby accelerating discovery, supporting inclusive growth and long-term sustainability of the research ecosystem, and delivering solutions of regional and global relevance.

*Research Consortia proposals are strongly encouraged to address all SEA DREAM objectives (see [Evaluation Criteria](#)).*

### 3. SEA DREAM Thematic Areas

SEA DREAM aims to fund discovery and translational research that responds to the [ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda \(APHDA\)](#) Health Priorities, within one or multiple of these four thematic areas: (1) Infectious Diseases; (2) Impact of Climate Change on Health; (3) Mental Health; and (4) Strengthening Health Systems and Access to Care.

By supporting the research careers of regional talent and funding research that aims to address these priorities, SEA DREAM aims to accelerate discovery and innovation that advances science, builds the foundation for the development of new solutions and products, and foster evidence generation for policymaking, tackling some of the most urgent and emerging health challenges in Southeast Asia.

Applications submitted to SEA DREAM can embrace a diversity of disciplines (e.g., from physical sciences to fundamental biology, population and public health, clinical sciences to the humanities and social sciences) and may focus on a single thematic area or address multiple themes. Exploring connections across multiple themes and priorities is encouraged only when beneficial to the proposed research and demonstrably covering major cross-cutting topics.

## **1. Infectious Diseases**

Infectious diseases remain a major health challenge in Southeast Asia, disproportionately affecting low- and middle-income countries and vulnerable populations. The region faces ongoing threats from emerging and re-emerging pathogens, vector-borne diseases, neglected tropical diseases, and antimicrobial resistance, compounded by climate change, natural disasters, and inequities in care and treatment.

SEA DREAM supports innovative discovery and translational research that aims to increase our understanding of and insights relating to infectious disease threats in the region, the outcomes of which could lead to or inform future prevention, detection and public health strategies. This includes, but not limited to:

- investigating the burden, drivers, and transmission dynamics of communicable, emerging, and re-emerging infectious diseases, including neglected tropical and zoonotic diseases.
- building, developing, and evaluating strategies for outbreak preparedness, early detection, and regional response to public health emergencies.
- addressing antimicrobial resistance, including patterns, drivers, and mitigation strategies.
- examining environmental determinants of infectious diseases, including climate impacts, pollution, and ecosystem changes.

- studying the effects of natural disasters and climate-related shocks on infectious disease risk and explores strategies to improve related regional disaster preparedness.
- exploring factors contributing to inequities in vaccine coverage and access to preventive interventions.

## **2. Impact of Climate Change on Health**

Southeast Asia is one of the regions most affected by climate change, with rising temperatures, extreme weather events, food insecurity, and air pollution already threatening health and livelihoods. These pressures are contributing to more heat stress, outbreaks of vector-borne diseases, malnutrition, and respiratory problems, especially among vulnerable populations.

To address these challenges, SEA DREAM supports innovative discovery and translational research that aims to increase our understanding of and insights relating to mitigating the health impacts of climate change, including topics such as, but not limited to:

- examining the links between climate variability, heat, environmental change, and health outcomes.
- strengthening the resilience of health systems to climate-related shocks
- developing and evaluating solutions for climate adaptation e.g., early-warning and surveillance systems for climate-sensitive diseases, heat-health, and vector-control.
- advancing climate and health data systems and cross-sectoral data integration to improve prediction, preparedness, and response.
- addressing the health impacts of air pollution and other environmental exposures
- applying Planetary and One Health approaches connecting human, animal, and environmental health
- generating economic evidence on the costs, benefits, and macro-economic impacts of climate-related health risks and adaptation measures to inform policy and investment decisions.

## **3. Mental Health**

Mental health conditions are a major contributor to disability in Southeast Asia, undermining well-being, daily functioning, and social participation. Vulnerable populations, including

children, adolescents, migrants, and those affected by disasters, bear disproportionate impacts. Stigma, limited access, and social and structural barriers further intensify these challenges across the region.

SEA DREAM supports research that guides future interventions, fosters innovation, and strengthens mental health outcomes and inclusion across Southeast Asia. Research must ensure meaningful involvement of people with lived experience at multiple stages of research design, governance, implementation, and dissemination. This may include topics such as, but not limited to:

- investigating the burden, drivers, and risk factors, and understanding of the aetiology and underlying biological, psychological, social and environmental mechanisms of mental health conditions.
- examining the impact of disasters, pandemics, and climate-related events on mental health.
- evaluating early detection, intervention, and community-based approaches to improve mental health outcomes.
- exploring strategies to reduce stigma, promote inclusion, and address social determinants of mental health.
- fostering innovation to develop scalable solutions for equitable mental health care and psychosocial support.
- understanding why mental health interventions work, for whom, and in which contexts, and identifying how they can be tailored to individual, cultural, and community-specific factors.

#### **4. Strengthening Health Systems and Access to Care**

Health inequities in Southeast Asia, rooted in social, economic, and environmental factors, limit access to quality and affordable care. Rural populations, migrants, and marginalized groups face disproportionate barriers and risks, while fragmented financing, workforce shortages, climate change impacts, and uneven technology adoption challenge health system performance.

SEA DREAM supports innovative discovery and translational research that aims to increase our understanding of health inequities that could guide or inform future policy, strengthens health system performance, and enhances equitable access to quality health services in the region, including topics such as, but not limited to:

- improving maternal, neonatal, and child health and promoting life-saving solutions and interventions.
- strengthening health system capacity and expanding access to universal health coverage.
- improving inclusion of migrants and mobile populations in health services.
- supporting the development of coordinated, integrated and accessible multi sourced data platforms along with novel analytical tools that transform fragmented and missing health information, into layered, interconnected understandings of health phenomena and inequalities.
- exploring and evaluating digital and innovative approaches for health and public health interventions.

### **Cross-Cutting Theme: Health Equity**

Health equity is a foundational lens that informs all SEA DREAM-funded research. By centering equity, SEA DREAM seeks to ensure that innovations, interventions, and evidence generated from research benefit all populations, especially the marginalized and underserved. Health equity considerations are relevant across the four thematic areas, guiding research questions, methods, and implementation strategies to reduce disparities and promote inclusive health outcomes across Southeast Asia.

## **4. Eligibility**

### **What are the requirements for a Consortium?**

- A Consortium must consist of a Lead Organisation (Consortium Lead) and Co-Applying Organisations (Consortium Members), working in a [hub-and-spoke](#) model.
  - A Consortium must include a minimum of three organisations, each from a different Southeast Asian country.
  - Recommended total size of one Consortium is between three to five organisations\*, including the Consortium Lead.

*\*In exceptional cases a Consortium may have more than five members where it is beneficial to the overall proposed activities. This must be justified within the application form.*

- A Consortium must include at least one organisation from a Southeast Asian Lower Middle-Income Country (per [World Bank](#) 2025 definition) either as Consortium Lead or Consortium Member:
  - Cambodia,
  - Lao PDR,
  - Myanmar,
  - Philippines,
  - Timor-Leste,
  - Vietnam.
- Organisations from countries outside of Southeast Asia can be Consortium Members and are eligible to receive funds but are not eligible to be the Lead Organisation.
- A Consortium must establish a Consortium-level agreement between the respective Lead Organisation and Consortium Members. Organisations may use their own agreement formats or use the agreement template provided by SEA DREAM ahead of the invitation for full application.

### **Who can be the Lead (Administering) Organisation of a Consortium?**

The Lead Organisation, also referred to as the Administering Organisation, is responsible for managing the grant and ensuring that the proposed activities are delivered in accordance with the SEA DREAM's grants conditions. Therefore, the Lead Organisation holds overall legal and financial accountability, and is required to ensure compliance with SEA DREAM grants conditions across all Consortium Members.

The Lead Organisation is responsible for establishing Consortium-level agreement between the respective Consortium Members. Organisations may use their own agreement formats or use the agreement template provided by SEA DREAM ahead of the invitation for full application.

The Lead Organisation supports the Principal and Deputy Principal Investigator to act as the primary point of contact with SEA DREAM, overseeing:

- Consortium coordination and partnership management
- Operational oversight and risk management of Consortium activities

- Financial management of overall Consortium budget and disbursement to Consortium Members
- Reporting & Communication, including Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

The Lead Organisation is the organisation responsible for submitting the application to SEA DREAM.

**Key eligibility requirements:**

- The Lead Organisation must be:
  - A public university,
  - A not-for-profit organisation, or
  - A private university, involved within a not-for-profit division or clearly marked as not-for-profit generating activities.
  - Eligible types of organisations include:
    - **Academic and Research Institutions**
      - Public or private universities
      - Public research institutes
      - University-affiliated research centres
      - Independent not-for-profit research organisations
      - Research centres embedded in hospitals or medical schools
      - National academies of science or medicine
    - **Government and Public Sector Entities**
      - Public health institutions
      - National public laboratories
      - Regional and local government agencies involved in research
    - **Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organisations**
      - International and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
      - Community-based organisations (CBOs)
      - Health and development networks or alliances

- The **Lead Organisation must be a legal entity registered in one of these 11 Southeast Asian countries:**
  - Brunei Darussalam
  - Cambodia
  - Indonesia
  - Lao PDR
  - Malaysia
  - Myanmar
  - Philippines
  - Singapore
  - Thailand
  - Timor-Leste
  - Vietnam

- The Lead Organisation must be able to **enter into legal agreements** in its own name and on its own account.
- The Lead Organisation must be able to **sign up to SEA DREAM's Grant Conditions** and ensure that its Co-Applying Organisations (Consortium Members) sign up to the same conditions. This includes all checks, policies, and procedures that a Grantee needs to abide by as outlined in the SEAMEO Secretariat Award letter and Grant Agreement\*.

*\*SEA DREAM Grant Conditions and SEAMEO Secretariat Grant Agreement will be available on the SEA DREAM Website by March 2026.*

- Organisations may submit up to two applications per thematic area as the Lead Organisation.
- An organisation may be awarded up to two DREAM 4 Health grants as a Lead Organisation, provided the awards are held in different faculties or schools and address different thematic areas. For non-academic/non-university organisations these conditions can be met by demonstrating that the two proposed projects will be managed and implemented by distinct research units while addressing different thematic areas.
- Organisations can participate as Consortium Members in multiple Consortia within the same funding round, including serving as the Lead Organisation for one Consortium while also being a Consortium Member in others.

- The Lead Organisation must appoint a **Principal Investigator and a Deputy-Principal Investigator**, who should both be named in the application. (*Refer to “Eligibility Criteria for Investigators” section of this document for more information on these roles.*)
- **All awards will be issued in USD.** Any Lead Organisation which is not able to receive funds in this currency should contact the SEA DREAM at [grants@sea-dream.org](mailto:grants@sea-dream.org) before submitting a preliminary application.

## Who can be a Co-Applying Organisation (Consortium Member)?

**Co-applying Organisations (Consortium Members)** will receive funds through the Lead Organisation in a hub-and-spoke model and play a substantial role in delivering the proposed activities alongside the Lead Organisation.

Consortium Members are responsible for supporting the Co-Principal Investigators in completing agreed project activities, meeting technical and reporting requirements related to their contributions, and complying with the terms set out in their respective individual Consortium agreement.

Consortium Members will host individuals and teams that contribute specific expertise, resources, or capabilities to complement the overall objectives of the Consortium. This could include, but is not limited to, leading a strand of research, or meaningfully engaging in training and development or research ecosystem strengthening activities. We expect all Consortium Members to be involved in designing the proposed activities and preparing the application.

Whilst they do not manage the grant directly, Consortium Members work closely with the Lead Organisation to ensure the successful execution of the proposed activities.

The commitment of each Consortium Members to delivering on the aims of the Consortium must be demonstrated within a Letter of Support in the application, which includes a commitment to signing up to a consortium agreement if the application is successful.

### Key eligibility requirements:

- A Consortium must include at least one organisation whose legal entity is registered in a Southeast Asian Lower Middle-Income Country (per [World Bank 2025](#) definition) either as a Consortium Lead or Consortium Member:
  - Cambodia,

- Lao PDR,
  - Myanmar,
  - Philippines,
  - Timor-Leste,
  - Vietnam.
- Organisations whose legal entity is registered in a country outside of the specified Southeast Asian countries can be Consortium Members and receive funds.
  - All Consortium Members must be:
    - Public or private universities,
    - not-for-profit organisations, or
    - commercial organisations, involved within not-for-profit divisions or clearly marked as not-for-profit generating activities.
    - Eligible types of organisations include:
      - **Academic and Research Institutions**
        - Public or private universities
        - Public research institutes
        - University-affiliated research centres
        - Independent not-for-profit research organisations
        - Research centres embedded in hospitals or medical schools
        - National academies of science or medicine
      - **Government and Public Sector Entities**
        - Public health institutions
        - National public laboratories
        - Regional and local government agencies involved in research
      - **Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organisations**

- International and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Community-based organisations (CBOs)
- Health and development networks or alliances
- **Hospitals and Health Service Providers**
  - Private or public hospitals and medical centres conducting research
- **Private Sector (conducting research activities that are non-commercial in intent)**
  - Commercial organisations (e.g. pharmaceutical, biotech, or health tech firms working under grant-funded models)
  - Social enterprises
- All Consortium Members must be able to sign up to *SEA DREAM Grant Conditions*. This includes all checks, policies, and procedures that a Grantee needs to abide by as outlined in the SEAMEO Secretariat Award letter and Grant Agreement\*.

*\*SEA DREAM Grant Conditions and SEAMEO Secretariat Grant Agreement will be available on the SEA DREAM Website by March 2026.*

## **What are the Eligibility Criteria for Investigators?**

### **Principal Investigator**

#### **Definition:**

The Principal Investigator (PI) is the individual that leads the Consortium, employed by and based at the Lead Organisation. They are responsible for the management and integrity of the design, conduct, and reporting of the proposed activities, and for managing, monitoring, and ensuring the integrity of any collaborative relationships. Additionally, the Principal Investigator is responsible for the direction and oversight of compliance, financial, personnel, and other related aspects of the proposed activities.

The Principal Investigator should be an established researcher with experience in leading and managing multi-country research projects and partnerships, and should actively

promote a diverse, inclusive and supportive environment within the team and across their organisation.

### **Application requirements:**

Within the application PIs will be asked to provide details about their:

- international standing as a research leader in their field,
- experience of leading innovative and creative multi-country research,
- track record of leadership, management and training of others.

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

A Principal Investigator must:

- Be employed by and based at an eligible Lead Organisation that can sign up to SEA DREAM's grant conditions.
- Hold a permanent, open-ended or long-term rolling contract, or the guarantee of one, for the grant period; including contracts that require to source salary from external grant funding.
- Have the support from their department and organisation to take on the responsibility of delivering the commitments made and be able to dedicate a significant percentage of their time to the project.
- Be the Principal Investigator in only one application within this funding round.  
*Principal Investigators can apply to lead only one application but may be Co-Principal Investigators in several applications.*

### **Deputy Principal Investigator**

#### **Definition:**

The Deputy Principal Investigator (D-PI) is an individual who is also based at the Lead Organisation. The D-PI will support the Principal Investigator with the overall leadership of the Consortium and management of the grant. They should have the necessary skills and experience to manage the Consortium if required.

They should be an established researcher with experience of leading and managing large research grants, partnerships and/or training and development programmes.

#### **Application Requirements:**

Within the application, D-PIs will be asked to provide details about their:

- international standing as a research leader in their field,
- experience of leading innovative and creative research,
- track record of leadership, management and training of others.

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

A Deputy Principal Investigator must:

- Be employed by and based at the Lead Organisation
- Have a permanent, open-ended or long-term rolling contract, or the guarantee of one, for the grant period; including contracts that require to source salary from external grant funding.
- Have the support from their department and organisation to take on the responsibility of delivering the commitments made and be able to dedicate a significant percentage of their time to the project.

### **Co-Principal Investigators**

#### **Definition:**

A Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) is a named individual representing the Consortium Member(s), or the Lead Organisation in addition to the PI and D-PI. **Each Consortium Member must be represented by at least one Co-PI.**

The Co-PIs will work in partnership with the Principal Investigator and D-PI, contributing specific expertise, resources, or capabilities that complement the overall objectives of the Consortium. A Co-PI must make a significant and essential contribution to the proposed activities. This could include, but is not limited to, leading a strand of research, or meaningfully engaging in training and development or research ecosystem strengthening activities. We also expect all Co-Principal Investigators to be involved in designing the proposed activities and preparing the application.

Co-Principal Investigators will be responsible for the administrative, financial, and scientific management of their Co-Applying Organisations' contribution to the proposed activities.

## **Application Requirements:**

Within the application, Co-PIs will be asked to provide details about their:

- technical and methodological experience within their field,
- strong track record of leading on, managing, or supporting high quality research,
- track record of working collaboratively, with contributions to training and development of others.

## **Eligibility Criteria:**

A Co-Principal Investigator must:

- Be an experienced researcher, demonstrated through a strong track record of leading on or supporting high quality research. Co-PIs who are Early- or Mid-career are encouraged and should be embedded in a formal mentorship arrangement with a named, experienced researcher at their organisation.
- Be employed by and based at an eligible Co-Applying Organisation that can sign up to SEA DREAM's grant conditions.
- Hold a permanent, open-ended or long-term rolling contract, or the guarantee of one, for the grant period; including contracts that require to source salary from external grant funding.
- Have the support from their department and organisation to take on the responsibility of delivering the commitments made and be able to dedicate a percentage of their time to the project.

## **Collaborators**

You can involve collaborators in your application and grant.

Collaborators support the delivery of the project but do not lead on a specific component of the research. For example, collaborators could support by:

- sharing facilities
- providing access to resources
- providing expertise, sharing subject-specific knowledge and guidance.

Collaborators are not paid for their input, but you can request costs for their expenses. In your application, you will need to confirm that you have contacted your proposed collaborators and they are willing to participate. Collaborators do not need to confirm their participation themselves.

## 5. Eligible Costs

*Note: Listed below is a brief overview of the eligible costs that SEA DREAM will consider within your application. Please refer to the [full Cost Eligibility Guide](#) for complete information.*

### Staff Costs

Staff costs including basic salary, employer's contributions, statutory obligations, pension scheme costs and locally recognized allowances for both full and part-time staff working on a SEA DREAM funded project can be claimed proportionate to the time individual staff contributes to the project. Associated expenses such as visa, work permit and mandatory medical check-up for employment are also eligible. Additionally, cost for disability-related adjustment support as well as removal and relocation expenses can also be covered under this category if specific conditions are met.

### Travel and Subsistence

Essential and justifiable travel costs can be claimed for staff employed on the grant or others (e.g., collaborators) contributing to the research to attend research meetings and conferences, policy dialogue, workshops, trainings, short-term study visits and other research-related travel.

Childcare and any other caring responsibility costs for staff fully or partially employed on grant to attend a conference, policy dialogue, workshops, trainings, short-term study visits, or similar, that is directly related to the grant.

Subsistence/per diem costs can be claimed for staff fully or partially employed under the grant or others contributing to the research to work away from employing organisation.

If the employing organisation has a subsistence policy, those rates may apply as per the policy. All travel and subsistence costs must be auditable, and the employing organisation

must be able to justify proposed travel and subsistence budget and rates. If the employing organisation does not have a subsistence/per diem policy, it is required to develop an appropriate policy upon instalment of the grant.

Furthermore, we also cover the cost of providing special needs education for long-term assignments.

## Materials and Consumables

SEA DREAM will cover the cost of essential materials and consumables required to carry out the proposed research. These include but are not limited to:

- Laboratory chemicals and supplies (e.g., reagents, enzymes, isotopes, antibodies, gases, cultures, plasticware, glassware)
- Project-specific personal protective equipment (PPE) that is above the standard expected for the setting
- Research-related computing expenses (e.g., software licenses, computer consumables)
- Shipping, delivery, and freight charges related to materials
- Printing associated with fieldwork and empirical research

## Equipment

SEA DREAM will fund the purchase, delivery, installation, maintenance and training for basic items of equipment that are essential to the success of the research project.

*Maintenance costs:* for equipment purchased on grants for the length of the award and existing equipment that is essential for the research activities and is environmentally sustainable and cost effective to maintain.

*Procurement of computing equipment:* can be requested for staff whose salary is fully or partially funded by the grant. This includes computing hardware, for example, laptops, up to a maximum of 2,000.00 USD for each item, unless more expensive items have been included in your award letter as well as software, software licenses and other recurring computing costs linked to the project. Items exceeding these limits require justification within the application.

## Training and Development

### Continuing professional development costs

Cost for Individuals can be claimed for:

- Project-specific skills training as required by your research
- Career-based continual professional development
- Professional training and capacity development for research support staff

Organisations can claim costs for conducting Training and Development Workshops and Meetings related to funded activities such as:

- Research specific skills
- Leadership and mentorship skills
- Knowledge transfer
- Cross-organizational and cross-sector learning

### Research Master's and PhD fees, and Fellowship related costs

#### Master's and PhD

Studentship/scholarship costs for Research Master's and PhDs directly related to the funded research activities such as:

- Tuition fees
- Stipend/living allowance
- Research expenses or additional expenses related to dual/joint Master's or PhD (e.g. travel, equipment, data access) if not already covered within other cost categories of the funded activities.

#### Fellowships

Post-Doctoral Fellows and Other research fellowships related to funded research activities including:

- Stipends/living allowance, if no salary is provided
- Research expenses (e.g. travel, equipment, data access) if not already covered within other cost categories of the funded activities.
- Expenses for conference travel, or mentorship activities if not already covered within other cost categories of the funded activities.

## Direct Research

SEA DREAM will cover the following costs to successfully contribute to research related activities:

- Animal research costs
- Clinical, epidemiological and qualitative research studies costs
- Fieldwork costs
- Subject and volunteer expenses
- Communication and data collection devices
- Data management and sharing plan costs
- Ethical approval
- Equipment access charges
- Facility access charges

## Outreach and Dissemination

### Research articles

SEA DREAM will fund reasonable article processing charges (APCs) for research articles published in fully Open Access (OA) journals or platforms that:

- are indexed by [Directory of Open Access Journals \(DOAJ\)](#)
- have an [agreement \(Participation Agreements and Options or PMC\)](#) with the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to deposit the [Version of Record \[PDF\]](#) in PMC and allow that content to be shared with Europe PMC.

SEA DREAM will **not** cover the costs of open access publishing in subscription journals. Grant applicants cannot ask for these costs in their grant application, and grant holders will not be allowed to use their grant funds to pay for these costs. You cannot use this funding to cover any non-open access publication costs, including page and/or colour charges.

If your organisation receives open access block funding from other sources, you can ask them to cover eligible open access article processing charges.

### Monographs and book chapters

SEA DREAM will also provide funds to support reasonable open access fees for monographs and book chapters.

Additionally, project costs associated with producing posters, public engagement, patient involvement and research dissemination, can be included.

The costs of hosting or contributing to the following outreach and dissemination focused activities can also be included:

- a conference
- a session within a conference
- a townhall
- a policy dialogue
- a symposium
- a seminar series/webinar
- advisory board meetings
- community outreach activities

### **Other Costs**

SEA DREAM will cover other costs related to funded research activities such as:

- Convening and catering costs
- Furniture
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Patent and registered design filing costs
- Service charges and consultancy fees
- Health and safety
- Publication procurement costs (specialist publications)
- Recruitment costs

### **Overheads**

Up to a maximum of 20% of the total project costs that directly support the funded activities can be claimed as overheads. Eligible overhead costs may include but are not limited to:

- estates, for example building and premises.
- utilities such as electricity, gas and water costs, and landline phone charges, based on an estimate proportionate to activities funded under the grant.

- standard IT charges, based on an estimate proportionate to activities funded under the grant.
- technical, administrative and institutional support services to the research activities, such as grant management costs, personnel, IT, procurement, finance, library, and room hire; not covered within staff costs.

## 6. Application Process

The DREAM 4 Health Call for Proposals will be conducted in **three stages**:

1. Preliminary Application (Open Call)
2. Full Application (On invitation basis)
3. Panel Interviews (For Full Applications)

### Full Application and Evaluation process:

Steps	Key activities	Timeline
<b>Call for Proposal: Preliminary Application Opening</b>		<b>30 Jan 2026</b>
<b>1. Preliminary application submission</b>	<p>Applicants submit a <b>preliminary application for review and shortlisting</b>, including Proposed Activities, Team Composition, Indicative Budget and Milestones, and Eligibility Information.</p> <p>Applicants are also required to opt in or opt out of having their names and research areas published to enable matchmaking during the Full Application stage.</p>	<b>Deadline:</b> 24 March 2026
<b>2. Preliminary application review and shortlisting</b>	<p>A high-level due diligence check and eligibility assessment will be conducted.</p> <p>An internal committee consisting of SEA DREAM, Wellcome, and UK FCDO experts <b>will review eligible preliminary applications</b>, checking for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Quality and Appropriateness.</li> <li>• Contribution to SEA DREAM Objectives.</li> <li>• Appropriateness of indicative budget and milestones.</li> </ul>	

Steps	Key activities	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal Investigators and team’s high-level skill set and capabilities.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Invitation to submit full application</b>	Rejected applicants will be informed, and <b>successful applicants will be invited to submit a full application.</b> Feedback on preliminary applications may be provided.	<b>Mid-May 2026</b>
<b>4. Full application submission</b>	<p>Applicants will submit a <b>comprehensive application</b> covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal, Deputy-, and Co- Principal Investigators details</li> <li>The Lead and Co-Applying Organisations details</li> <li>Proposed activities, including any Training and Development plans</li> <li>Ethical considerations, Human participants, Animal studies, and Data management plans, if applicable</li> <li>Research culture and Ecosystem</li> <li>Collaborations and Partnerships</li> <li>Milestones and Outputs</li> <li>Budget and justification for costs requested</li> <li>Eligibility information and indication of any changes, including indication if applicant will require advanced funding</li> </ul> <p><i>Details on full application requirements will be updated prior to invitation.</i></p>	<b>Deadline:</b> 10 Jul 2026
<b>5. Full application screening</b>	Screening will involve a review of the applications’ <b>completeness, eligibility, and high-level due diligence, if significant changes have been made</b> since the preliminary application submission.	<b>July 2026</b>
<b>6a. Peer Review</b>	Applications will be sent to experts in the relevant field, to provide comments on the <b>scientific quality and merit</b> of the proposed activities.	<b>Jul - Sep 2026</b>

Steps	Key activities	Timeline
<b>6b. Cost Challenge</b>	<b>A detailed assessment of the costs requested, and their justification</b> , will be undertaken to ensure they meet our agreed policies and limits. Further information from applicants may be requested.	<b>Jul - Sep 2026</b>
<b>7. Panel Interview and Evaluation</b>	<b>Interviews with applicants</b> will be conducted by an independent external Selection and Evaluation Interview Panel, who will score and rank applications according to criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Generating Impactful Research (25%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Nurturing Leadership (20%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Fostering Regional Collaboration and Programme Governance (25%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Strengthening Research Ecosystems (20%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Qualifications and Operational Feasibility (10%)</b></li> </ul>	<b>Mid-October 2026</b>
<b>8. Detailed Due Diligence</b>	SEA DREAM internal staff will conduct <b>detailed due diligence checks</b> on the Consortia recommended by the Selection and Evaluation Interview Panel. This will include checking the relevant organisational, operational, and financial policies and practices related to grant management and conduct of research of the Lead Organisations.	<b>Until Mid-November 2026</b>
<b>9. Award Decision</b>	<b>Final award decisions</b> will be made by SEA DREAM's Steering Committee based on the recommendations by the Selection and Evaluation Interview Panel, and any relevant strategic priorities.	<b>End of November 2026</b>

## 7. Selection & Evaluation Criteria

Applicants to the SEA DREAM programme will be assessed over 5 domains and their respective components as follows:

### 1. Generating Impactful Research (25%)

- **Relevance:** The proposed activities are informed by and address national and regional health challenges fulfilling a significant gap in the existing science and literature.
- **Scientific Merit:** The proposed activities develop and test concepts, methods and technologies that hold potential to contribute to scientific advancement by leveraging transformative, innovative, ethical, novel, and/or inter-disciplinary approaches informed by the relevant communities and the current evidence base, including consideration of their applicability, replicability and adaptability in LMIC settings.
- **Impact:** The proposed activities include a clear and implementable impact strategy that demonstrates the potential for the research to inform further research, improve practices, inform policy and achieve real-world impact, with attention to sustainability and equitable uptake in diverse settings and resource-constrained contexts.

### 2. Nurturing Research Leadership and Talent (20%)

- **Leadership:** The proposed activities focus on leveraging the consortia in developing leaders through expansion of networks, engagement with reputable scientific communities, and attractive and long-term research career opportunities and progression.
- **Skills Development:** The proposed activities demonstrate a comprehensive approach across the consortia to training and mentorship to strengthen holistic research skills and capacity at individual, institutional and ecosystem level that includes research management, grantsmanship, organisational leadership, and engagement with policy making.

### 3. Fostering Regional Collaboration and Programme Governance (25%)

- **Equitability:** Exemplary plan for equitable and meaningful partnership within consortia, especially Lower Middle-Income countries - in decision making, participation, governance and outputs. Partnerships should be transparent,

grounded in mutual respect, and considerate of cultural norms and values. There should be clear evidence of resource sharing, especially for the Lower-Middle Income countries.

- **Practicality:** The applicant has a clear, comprehensive strategy for regional collaboration, with well-defined roles and equitable distribution of resources among partners. There is also evidence of a sustainable partnership plan for continued collaboration post-SEA DREAM Grant period.
- **Good Governance:** The application demonstrates high-level institutional commitment with strong letters of support from partner organisations. It includes a detailed multi-country stakeholder engagement plan and a tech transfer plan with institutional support.

#### 4. Strengthening Research Ecosystems (20%)

- **Sustainability and Contribution to Systemic Change:** The application demonstrates how the proposed consortium will strengthen the research ecosystem within the partnership itself, including institutional capabilities, research culture, infrastructure and environment, and enhances researchers' ownership, agency and capability to define and address their development priorities. The application shows credible pathways for sustaining these gains beyond the grant period and outlines potential to contribute positively to national and regional research ecosystems beyond the consortium.
- **Ethical Practices:** The application promotes ethical research practices and upholds integrity, transparency and credibility.
- **Inclusivity and Equity:** The application incorporates a practical and robust approach to Gender, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (GEDI).
- **Output management:** The application includes a fair output management plan that demonstrates and ensures quality, transferability, openness, and sovereignty for research data access for all outputs.

#### 5. Qualifications and Operational feasibility (10%)

- **Qualifications and Expertise:** The qualifications, skills, and previous research contributions of the applicants will be reviewed to evaluate the experience and expertise of the grantees in: (1.1) Relevant research areas and; (1.2) Specifically within the Southeast Asian (SEA) and national context. And (1.3) The team members are suitably chosen in terms of both number and diversity of expertise, and they have experience with mentorship arrangements. The overall team configuration is

designed to support the successful delivery of the project, and (1.4) Responsibilities are allocated reasonably.

- **Management Experience:** The applicant has successfully managed large-scale collaborative projects and grants at a national and/or regional level.
- **Budget and Resource Allocation:** The project’s achievability with the given budget is assessed through a detailed plan for resource allocation and management, including fair distribution between partners. There is a clear and feasible connection between the budget and the proposed activities, outputs, and objectives.
- **Risk Management:** A comprehensive risk management strategy is in place, addressing potential challenges with proactive and innovative solutions. The plan demonstrates an ability to adapt to emerging priorities, including built-in steps to revise the approach throughout the project duration.

## 8. Deadlines and Timelines

### Key dates

Applicants are to take note of the following key dates:

30 January 2026	Preliminary application window opens
24 March 2026	Preliminary application window closes
14 May 2026	Full application window opens (if prelim. successful)
10 July 2026	Full application window closes
Mid-October 2026	Interviews held
End of November 2026	Final award results announced

## 9. Definitions of key terms

- **SEAMEO:** The Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) is an intergovernmental organisation, governed by the Ministers of Education of the eleven Southeast Asian countries, which was formed on 30 November 1965. SEAMEO is mandated to improve the quality of life of people in Southeast Asia through advancing education, science, and culture. SEAMEO operates through the SEAMEO Secretariat, 25 Regional Centres, and one Regional Network on Tropical Medicine.

- **Wellcome:** Wellcome is a global charitable foundation established in 1936, working towards a healthier future for everyone. Wellcome aims to enable transformative shifts in understanding life, health and wellbeing, by bringing together expertise from across science, innovation and society to find equitable solutions in climate and health, infectious disease, and mental health.
- **UK FCDO:** The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) is the ministry of foreign affairs and a ministerial department of the government of the United Kingdom, responsible for leading the country's diplomatic, development, and consular work worldwide.
- **Consortium:** A formal collaborative structure comprised of at least three organisations, including the Lead Organisation and Co-applying (Consortium Member) Organisations who will jointly undertake the research and activities proposed in their application, using their resources, networks, and expertise to uplift all members (e.g. through mentorship, sharing of knowledge, facilities and equipment, and strengthening of research culture).
- **Not-for-profit:** Not-for-profit organisations in the context of the SEA DREAM Programme refer to entities that operate for purposes other than generating profit for owners or shareholders, instead pursuing public-interest or social missions. Eligible organisations include, but are not limited to, academic and research institutions, government and public sector entities, and non-governmental and civil society organisations.
- **Lead Organisation:** The organisation responsible for administering the grant, including managing funds, disbursing funding to Consortium Members, and ensuring that all proposed activities are implemented in accordance with SEA DREAM grant conditions. It holds overall legal and financial accountability for the project and must ensure compliance with SEA DREAM grant requirements across all Consortium Members. The Lead Organisation is required to appoint a Principal Investigator (PI) and a Deputy Principal Investigator (D-PI), and may also appoint additional Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs).

- **Co-applying Organisations (Consortium Members):** Co-applying Organisations will receive funds through a hub-and-spoke model administered by the Lead Organisation and play a substantial role in delivering the proposed activities alongside the Lead Organisation. Each Co-applying Organisation is required to appoint at least one Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI). Co-applying Organisations are responsible for supporting their appointed Co-PIs in delivering agreed project activities, fulfilling technical and reporting requirements related to their contributions, and complying with the terms set out in their respective individual Consortium Agreements.
- **Established researcher:** An established researcher is an individual with a sustained record of high-quality research and the experience required to lead and drive a research programme. They have demonstrated expertise in securing and managing research activities, as well as a proven track record of supervising, mentoring, and training other researchers.
- **Early-career researcher:** An early-career researcher will have recently completed a PhD or equivalent higher research degree, or have equivalent research training. An early-career researcher may be managing their own research project under the direction of a PI and are typically in the early stages of developing independent research ideas and directions.
- **Principal Investigator:** The Principal Investigator (PI) is the individual who leads the Consortium and is based at the Lead Organisation. The PI should be an established researcher with demonstrated experience in leading and managing research projects and partnerships, and should actively promote a diverse, inclusive and supportive environment within the project team and across their organisation.
- **Deputy Principal Investigator:** The Deputy Principal Investigator (D-PI) is an individual based at the Lead Organisation who supports the Principal Investigator in the overall leadership of the Consortium and management of the grant. The D-PI should have the skills and experience to assume management of the Consortium and be an established researcher with experience of leading and managing large research grants, partnerships and/or training and development programmes.

- **Co-Principal Investigator:** A Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) is a named individual representing a Consortium Member or the Lead Organisation, in addition to the PI and D-PI. Each Co-Applying Organisation must appoint at least one Co-PI. Co-PIs work in partnership with the PI and D-PI, contributing significant and essential expertise, resources, or capabilities that support and complement the overall objectives of the Consortium.
- **Collaborators:** Collaborators are individuals or organisations that support the delivery of the project but do not lead a specific component of the research or proposed activities. They may contribute by sharing facilities, providing access to resources, or offering expertise, subject-specific knowledge, or guidance. Collaborators are not paid for their contributions, although reasonable expenses related to their involvement may be requested.
- **Award Letter:** An award letter is a formal written notification issued by SEA DREAM to a selected consortium confirming that its grant funding application has been approved. The Award Letter may include additional conditions that the Lead Organisation must fulfil before receiving the full grant.
- **Eligible Costs:** Eligible Costs are expenses that SEA DREAM will fund to support approved grant activities, provided they are reasonable, necessary, auditable, and directly related to the delivery of the proposed activities, in accordance with SEA DREAM's grant conditions and Cost Eligibility Guide.
- **Five Selection and Evaluation Domains:** The five thematic domains used by SEA DREAM to assess and score funding applications, each with assigned weightings and criteria, covering research impact, leadership and talent development, regional collaboration and governance, research ecosystem strengthening, and qualifications and operational feasibility.
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):** A collection of common questions and official answers provided by SEA DREAM to help prospective applicants and grantees understand the programme's eligibility, application process, funding scope, evaluation, and post-award requirements. This resource offers clear guidance on

topics such as consortium composition, budget and costs, application procedures, and programme policies.

- **GEDI (Gender Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity):** GEDI refers to fostering a workplace and society that ensure fair treatment, full participation, and equitable representation of all individuals, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or other characteristics.
- **Grant Agreement:** The Grant Agreement is a legally binding contract between the SEAMEO Secretariat and the Lead Organisation, comprising the Award Letter, grant details, and grant conditions that the Lead Organisation must comply with. This also requires the Lead Organisation to ensure that all Consortium members comply with the grant conditions.
- **Grant Conditions:** Grant Conditions are the requirements that Consortium members must comply with throughout the grant duration.
- **Research culture and environment:** Strengthening the research culture and environment should focus on upholding inclusive, ethical, and equitable values in the conduct of research, and on achieving long-term systemic change beyond the grant period, such as enhancing researcher ownership, fostering inclusive and ethical research environment, and building agency and capability of researchers in Southeast Asia to address regional health and development priorities.
- **SEA DREAM Policies:** Mandatory policies that set the legal, ethical, and professional standards for all SEA DREAM-funded activities, covering areas such as research integrity, equity and inclusion, participant protection, and financial accountability, with which all grantees must comply throughout the funding period.
- **Training and development:** As part of the proposed activities, training and development should aim to strengthen holistic research skills and capacity at the individual, institutional, and ecosystem levels, including technical and scientific knowledge, research management, grantsmanship, and engagement with policymaking. Mentorship relationships between research leaders and emerging talent should be formed, emphasising active learning and guidance.

- **ASEAN countries:** ASEAN stands for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. ASEAN member countries are Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam. As of September 2025, Timor-Leste is of ASEAN Observer status.
- **Southeast Asian (SEA) Countries:** For the purposes of this programme, Southeast Asian Countries refer to the following countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste (East Timor), and Vietnam.
- **World Bank Country Classification:** A system used by the World Bank to classify countries into income groups based on Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, updated annually. For the purposes of this programme<sup>1</sup>, the 2025 World Bank Country Classification applies<sup>2</sup>.
- **Lower-Middle Income Countries (LMICs):** For the purposes of this programme, LMICs refer to countries classified by the World Bank as lower-middle-income. In Southeast Asia, these include Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines, Timor-Leste (East Timor), and Vietnam.
- **Upper-Middle Income Countries:** For the purposes of this programme, upper-middle-income countries refer to those classified by the World Bank as upper-middle-income. In Southeast Asia, these include Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.
- **High-Income Countries:** For the purposes of this programme, high-income countries refer to those classified by the World Bank as high-income. In Southeast Asia, these include Brunei Darussalam and Singapore.

---

<sup>1</sup> SEA DREAM will apply the 2025 World Bank Country Classification throughout the SEA DREAM 2026 Funding Call.

<sup>2</sup> Income group thresholds are based on the World Bank's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita classifications for 2025: low-income (USD 1,145 or less), lower-middle-income (USD 1,146–4,515), upper-middle-income (USD 4,516–14,005), and high-income (USD 14,006 or more). Classifications are updated annually using data from the previous calendar year.

## 10. Grant Conditions and Policies

The Lead Organisation will enter into a contractual agreement (Grant Agreement) with SEAMEO Secretariat if they are successfully awarded the SEA DREAM grant. The Lead Organisation must abide by the SEA DREAM Grants Conditions outlined in the Grant Agreement and make sure its downstream Co-Applying Organisations (Consortium Members) also abide to all conditions and requirements. Successful Lead Organisations should have agreements in place between Consortia Members and may consider using the provided optional sub-award agreement template (template will be provided ahead of the full application).

### Policy Overview

#### **Purpose**

SEA DREAM develops the following funding policies to ensure the use of SEA DREAM funding in compliance with legal and ethical standards, to promote transparency and accountability in conducting research, to enhance research integrity and accessibility, and to safeguard participants' rights with the ultimate goal of maximising health benefits in Southeast Asia.

Awarded grantees are expected to comply with the following SEA DREAM policies:

#### **Scope of Policies**

No	SEA DREAM Policy	Description	Own Organisational Policy Required (Internal)
1	Bullying, harassment, abuse and harm policy	What SEA DREAM expects from the people and organisations which we fund, how allegations are handled, why reporting is required, and possible sanctions.	Yes
2	Clinical trials policy	What researchers and organisations must comply with before, during and after a clinical trial.	
3	Conflicts of interest policy	How researchers and organisations must identify and manage potential conflicts, requirements for compliance, and consequences of breaches.	Yes
4	Consent and revenue and	What researchers and organisations must do if they want to commercialise SEA DREAM-funded	

	equity sharing policy	intellectual property, including seeking consent and reporting IP-related activities.	
5	Continuing professional development policy	How researchers and organisations should undertake and promote continuing professional development.	
6	Data, software and materials management and sharing policy	How researchers and organisations should manage and share data, software and materials that arise from SEA DREAM-funded research, and outputs management plans.	
7	Environmental sustainability funding policy	What SEA DREAM expects from organisations and researchers that it funds in adopting sustainable research practices.	Yes (for high-income countries)
8	Equity, diversity and inclusion policy	Definitions of key terms, expectations for funded organisations, and requirements for notifying SEA DREAM of allegations of discrimination.	Yes
9	Intellectual property policy	What the policy covers, what it applies to, and expectations from funded researchers and organisations with regard to managing intellectual property.	
10	Managing risks of research misuse	How researchers and organisations should identify and manage dual-use concerns in life sciences research, balancing benefits with public safety and trust.	
11	Open access policy	What the policy applies to, how to comply, guidance on Version of Record (VoR), Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) and Preprints, publishing under a Creative Commons No-Derivatives licence (CC BY-ND), and eligible costs.	
12	Overheads policy	When researchers and organisations can ask for overheads, and what costs are included.	
13	Research involving human participants policy	What SEA DREAM expects from the researchers and organisations that it funds to protect participants' rights, interests and safety, including requirements for ethical approval, legislation, consent and best practice.	Yes
14	Research misconduct	What research misconduct means in SEA DREAM, responsibilities of organisations to prevent it and handle allegations, and sanctions	Yes
15	Researchers funded by the tobacco industry	Why SEA DREAM does not support researchers and organisations funded by the tobacco industry, and expectations from the grant recipients throughout the funding period.	

16	Responsible conduct of research	Expectations for research design, sharing research outputs, research records, research culture and maximising the impact of research.	
17	Use of animals in research policy	What SEA DREAM expects from the researchers and organisations that it funds, types of animals covered by the policy, 3Rs standards, peer review process, and when researchers and organisations must contact SEA DREAM.	
18	Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)	What the researchers and organisations must ensure when using generative AI in preparing funding applications, and when applying AI in proposed research activities	

The detailed policies will be made public ahead of the Full Application window.

In addition, awarded grantees are expected to have the following **internal organisational policies** — or, at a minimum, a clear plan to develop them during the grant period — to ensure that their research is conducted ethically, minimizes the risk of research misconduct, and safeguards research participants.

- Policy on handling research misconduct
- Policy on protecting human participants from harm and exploitation
- Policy on preventing and addressing bullying, harassment, abuse and harm (safeguarding)
- Policy on equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) or equivalent policy
- Policy on managing conflict of interest
- Organisation-wide climate sustainability policy with science-based targets to reduce scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions to net zero (only for organisations based in high-income countries)

SEA DREAM encourages and supports awarded grantees to incorporate key elements of SEA DREAM policies into their internal policies to the extent possible.

### Responsibilities of Applicants

At the time of **pre-liminary application**, the applicants should have read, understood and be aware of the requirements to be able to comply with these policies throughout their research project.

At the time of **full application**, the applicants are formally required to ensure that they are able to comply with these policies by filling in a policy compliance checklist that SEA DREAM will provide.

SEA DREAM will conduct an **operational review of applying organisations whose applications have passed the panel interview stage**, as part of SEA DREAM’s Due Diligence process. During this process, applicants are required to provide SEA DREAM with documentation and evidence that their organisation is able to comply with SEA DREAM policies, either by having own internal policies in place or providing a concrete plan that outlines the establishment of appropriate policies within a reasonable timeframe.

### Responsibilities of Awarded Grantees

As an outcome of SEA DREAM Due Diligence Processes and Operational Review of applying organisations, applying organisations might be required to develop additional organisational policies as part of their award conditions.

*For example*, should your research include use of animals, but your applying organisation does not have adequate policies in alignment with SEA DREAM policies in place, we will likely include a condition for you to develop a *Use of Animals in Research* policy within a reasonable timeframe at the start of your award.

As required by the aforementioned policies, the consortium lead will need to submit the following documents to SEA DREAM according to the specific timeline below:

Document Name	Timeline for Submission	Required by
<b>Mandatory (1-3)</b>		
<b>1. Outputs Management Plan</b>	At the full application stage and revised later as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data, software and materials management and sharing policy</li> <li>• Intellectual property policy</li> <li>• Clinical Trials policy</li> </ul>
<b>2. Ethical approvals from Institutional Review Board (IRBs)</b>	Before starting the research activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All relevant policies</li> </ul>

<b>3. Consolidated Intellectual Property (IP) and Commercialisation Report [including NULL report]</b>	As part of the annual progress report in February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual property policy</li> <li>• Consent and revenue and equity sharing policy</li> </ul>
<b>Where relevant (4-8)</b>		
<b>4. National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) or equivalent body's peer review</b>	Before starting the research activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of animals in research policy</li> </ul>
<b>5. Approvals of local regulatory bodies</b>	Before starting the research activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of animals in research policy</li> </ul>
<b>6. Trial steering committee (TSC) report</b>	Frequency defined by TSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical trials policy</li> </ul>
<b>7. Creative Commons Attribution–No Derivatives (CC BY-ND) License exception application form [if CC BY-ND is opted]</b>	Before publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open access policy</li> </ul>
<b>8. Incident and investigation report</b>	When the incident happens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying, harassment, abuse and harm policy</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion policy</li> </ul>