

Infrastructure for Resilient Island States

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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1. Context

1.1 CDRI

The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) is a partnership of national governments, UN agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and knowledge institutions that aims to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development.

CDRI promotes rapid development of resilient infrastructure to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals imperatives of expanding universal access to basic services, enabling prosperity and decent work.

1.2 IRIS

The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) comprise a heterogeneous mix of 58 countries located across three geographic regions: the Caribbean, the Pacific, and the Atlantic and Indian Ocean.

Most SIDS are characterized by small population sizes and territories that are most exposed and vulnerable to both geophysical and hydro-meteorological hazards. The effects of climate change including but not limited to extreme weather events and sea-level rise are likely to affect current and future infrastructure investments. SIDS also encounter unprecedented challenges that are unique to their geographies, such as small and dispersed populations leading to increase in per capita investment to provide infrastructure services and high population density in some areas leading to intense pressure for land use planning, small pool of skilled labour. Also due to remoteness from the international community, in the events of disasters, the access time and cost of aid delivery is high.

Under the aegis of CDRI, Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) was launched at the World Leaders Summit at COP26 to provide technical support on multifaceted issues posed by infrastructure systems and promote disaster and climate resilience of infrastructure assets in SIDS. Co-created by SIDS and CDRI in line with the spirit of the SAMOA Pathway (SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action), IRIS has been envisioned on the following five guiding principles:

- 1) Co-creation** – Work with SIDS to identify opportunities for partnership and technical collaboration for strengthening systems for promoting resilient infrastructure and ensure it is demand driven.
- 2) Complementarity** – Proactively build synergies with past and ongoing initiatives that support climate and disaster resilient infrastructure in SIDS.
- 3) Absorptive capacity and ownership** – Consider the absorptive capacity of SIDS in designing specific initiatives, while simultaneously seeking to enhance their capacity. Working alongside SIDS, IRIS will strive to foster SIDS ownership and leadership.
- 4) Flexibility** – Have flexibility in choosing projects, geographical areas, countries, etc. through funding or in-kind support such as the deployment of experts, technical services and knowledge products.
- 5) Inclusion, equity, and respect for diversity** – Extend support to all SIDS, irrespective of their membership with CDRI. IRIS will be based on principles of equity so that the most vulnerable countries have priority access to technical and financial support.

IRIS is committed to helping SIDS deepen knowledge, strengthen institutions, develop innovative policy and broaden partnerships for the long-term sustainability of infrastructure assets and services. The goal of IRIS is to directly contribute to the SAMOA Pathway and deliver on the following three closely interrelated outcomes that can contribute to building resilient, sustainable and inclusive infrastructure in SIDS:

Outcome 1: Improved resilience of SIDS Infrastructure to climate change and disaster risks

Outcome 2: Strengthened knowledge and partnerships of integrating resilience in SIDS infrastructure

Outcome 3: Gender equality and disability inclusion promoted through resilient SIDS infrastructure

2. IRIS First Funding Cycle

2.1 Purpose

In 2022, IRIS organized a series of regional consultations with SIDS representatives to understand their infrastructure priorities, the climate and disaster risks they are exposed to and challenges and opportunities they face to build resilient infrastructure. Based on the outcomes of these consultations, this call for proposal has been designed to cater to the needs of SIDS towards building resilient infrastructure systems.

The first funding cycle of IRIS, formally announced at COP27, aims to equip relevant government agencies in SIDS with needed technical support and knowledge products related to infrastructure resilience. Funded activities will enhance informed decision-making, locally relevant technical knowledge and fit-for-purpose processes and tools for resilient infrastructure in SIDS.

During and after the implementation of the proposed institutional and technical strengthening initiatives of this first funding cycle, the IRIS Programme Management Unit (IRIS-PMU) team will document, evaluate and disseminate results to promote good practices, identify replicable interventions and advocate for the programme scale-up.

2.2 Eligibility

The call for proposal is open to all 58 SIDS irrespective of their membership status. The detailed list of SIDS is provided in annexure for reference.

Expressions of interest (EoI) (stage 1) should be submitted by national government ministries or agencies with a mandate in disaster/climate resilience and/or infrastructure planning, financing or implementation (one or more sectors). Sub-national institutions, academia, civil society organisations and regional/international organisations may be presented as implementing partners for one or more components of the proposed action.

Countries can also submit a joint EoI for multi-country/regional proposals (see funding thresholds in section 3.3.1.)

2.3 Exclusions

This call for proposals will not support the construction, refurbishment, operation and maintenance of physical infrastructure assets in SIDS. It is focused on institutional strengthening, technical assistance and studies only.

The funds from this call for proposal cannot be used for the procurement of goods as a primary purpose. Any goods procured must have a direct link to the project outcomes. The justification of any proposed procurement will be evaluated as part of the selection process.

3. Call for Proposals

3.1 Expected Outcomes

In line with IRIS outcomes, the proposed actions for this call for proposals are expected to contribute to one or more of the following:

- 1) Improve resilience of SIDS infrastructure to climate change and disaster risks
- 2) Strengthen knowledge and partnerships for integrating resilience in SIDS infrastructure
- 3) Promote gender equality and disability inclusion through resilient SIDS infrastructure

3.2 Criteria for Proposals

3.2.1 General Criteria

The projects proposed under this call for proposal should cater to the following general criteria:

- Projects under this call should help country governments in SIDS to achieve their long-term vision on disaster and climate resilience.
- Projects should provide support to the respective governments in piloting initiatives that could showcase models of infrastructure resilience building that could be replicated or scaled up across geographies.
- Projects should also help to reinforce adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability, in line with the SAMOA pathway including but not limited to the commitments made at United Nations conferences and summits on sustainable development.
- Projects should ensure that infrastructure assets are built, managed, and maintained to be resilient to a level that appropriately reflects the climate and disaster risks, design life and importance, and wherever possible, promote further community resilience.
- Proposed projects by respective country governments can also be towards building resilience within an ongoing infrastructure initiative and the proposed intervention through this project can be at the stage of ideation, design, implementation, learning or evaluation.
- Proposals can be aligned to infrastructure resilience projects that have a potential for strengthening partnerships or increasing co-financing options.

The current call for proposals is expected to be part of a periodic initiative by IRIS to SIDS in enhancing their infrastructure resilience. Therefore, the piloting and learning that emerges from this support can also be used to inform the subsequent calls for proposals by IRIS.

3.2.2 Specific Criteria for Proposals

3.2.2.1 Sectors

Project proposals which are submitted for funding should identify one or more of the following sectors for resilience building.:

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS): ICT is a core component for the social well-being and economic performance of SIDS, given that many sectors such as health, transport, tourism, and education rely heavily on information and communication technologies. ICT is also an integral aspect of MHEWS to manage data and deliver information at the local, national and regional level, for anticipatory and early action to mitigate the impacts of hazards.

Power systems: The delivery of electricity has proved to improve the quality of life through continued water supply and waste management systems, building operations, street lighting, as well as support to a wide variety of businesses including tourism.

Transport sector: Mobility is a critical component of public infrastructure, enabling the movement of goods, services and individuals within a territory. It facilitates communities' access to core services such as health, education, security and justice.

Housing: Residential buildings stock in SIDS are at an increasing risk from climate change and disasters. The repetitive cycle of cyclonic events and massive financial losses incurred by the homeowners can be minimized through resilient housing initiatives.

Water, Waste and Wastewater Management: The limited availability of potable water is usually threatened by the improper management of waste and wastewater. Given the state of climate change and sea-water intrusion, management of water, waste and wastewater will be critical to the sustainable development of island nations.

Coastal Infrastructure: Traditionally and culturally, people living in islands have strong ties with their coastal marine areas. Sea-level rise and heavy storms can result in erosion and flooding of coastal areas as well as loss of natural habitat. The impacts of climate change are likely to continue to erode shorelines and damage property and infrastructure. Higher water levels threaten coastal structures and property, groundwater reservoirs, wastewater systems, and other resources of social and economic concern. Therefore, building resilience in coastal infrastructure will be critical for the economic development and livelihood of people in SIDS.

Social Infrastructure: It is the foundation for the successful delivery of education during pre-disaster scenario and health services during and post a disaster. Strengthening of schools and health infrastructure will play a key role in safeguarding vulnerable people, minimizing the loss of life and leading to safe recovery.

Tourism: This sector significantly contributes to the gross domestic product (GDP) of several island nations. Also, much of the country governments and private sectors are in the process of investing to promote tourism. Therefore, building resilience of tourist infrastructure will be essential for socio-economic development.

3.2.2.2 Themes

The call for proposal will support disaster and climate resilience projects that focus on developing mechanisms (for example: institutional, policy, decision support systems) that will ensure infrastructure assets in SIDS are planned, designed, built and managed effectively. The actions supported by this call are broadly classified into four themes, namely:

- Risk-informed policy and planning
- Implementation readiness
- Access to finance
- Inclusion mainstreaming

Risk-informed policy and planning

Although not intended to be exhaustive, proposals in the below categories may qualify for support:

- Data creation and analysis: Existing data mapping and data gap assessment, data collection and management strategy including for multi-hazard early warning systems, hazard data collection, mapping and modelling, elaboration of climate scenarios, asset inventory and vulnerability assessment (for one or multiple infrastructure sectors), risk mapping, development and adoption of decision support systems for risk-informed planning, preparation of guidelines for and implementation of post-disaster needs assessments for infrastructure sectors.
- Policy: Revision of existing climate risk management, disaster response, land use, infrastructure construction and management policies to integrate an infrastructure resilience lens, development of specific climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies related to infrastructure.
- Regulatory frameworks: Revision of zoning and land use planning standards through an infrastructure resilience lens, update of infrastructure planning regulations, bylaws, infrastructure standards and building codes to include good practices for built and nature-based infrastructure resilience, introduction of infrastructure/buildings retrofitting guidelines and standards in regulatory frameworks.
- Strategy and plans: Elaboration and dissemination of guidelines and tools for infrastructure resilience planning, development of country-level infrastructure risk resilience strategies and work plans (for one or multiple infrastructure sectors), business continuity planning for one or more infrastructure sectors.

Implementation readiness

Implementation readiness activities proposed may include:

- Project implementation capacity development: Capacity assessments for infrastructure resilience implementation agencies, organisational design, capacity strengthening plans, technical training and coaching, design and roll-out of systems and tools to enhance resilience considerations throughout the entire life cycle of infrastructure (planning, design, procurement, construction, commissioning, management, refurbishment, decommissioning).
- Academic and professional training: Development of locally relevant courses on infrastructure resilience for universities, colleges, staff colleges, continuous vocational training centres, introduction of infrastructure resilience in existing curricula, training of teachers and trainers.
- Knowledge creation and exchange: Documentation of national or regional good practices and technological and nature-based solutions for infrastructure resilience, academic research on infrastructure resilience (one or multiple sectors), national or regional knowledge exchange (conferences, databases, networks, peer learning, twinning, exposure visits).

Access to finance actions

Possible actions related to this theme include:

- Investment readiness: Establishment of project preparation facilities (teams of consultants conducting pre-feasibility studies for a number of projects to allow prioritization of investment-ready initiatives), feasibility studies to de-risk infrastructure resilience investments, especially innovative and nature-based solutions.
- Expansion of the funding landscape: Promotion of financial instruments, innovative solutions and public-private collaboration to leverage new sources of funding (for example, the insurance sector, diaspora etc), design of incentive schemes, technical assistance to access climate finance instruments.
- Access to investors: Development of linkages with multilateral and bilateral financing institutions, participation in infrastructure investment forums.

Inclusion mainstreaming

Specific activities for mainstreaming gender equality, disability and social inclusion in infrastructure resilience include, but are not limited to:

- Inclusive policies and plans: Advocacy initiatives (campaigns, observatories and other accountability mechanisms), review and adaptation of existing policies, strategies, plans and/or frameworks to ensure they promote gender equality, disability and social inclusion. Development of stand-alone inclusion strategies and plans for one or more infrastructure sectors.
- Practical solutions for equitable access: Documentation and dissemination of local/regional good practices in inclusive infrastructure, disaggregated data collection, development of innovative inclusive infrastructure project concepts and designs, piloting and documentation of inclusive infrastructure initiatives.
- Inclusion mainstreaming capacity development: Guideline/curriculum development, peer learning and coaching, professional or academic training, national/regional knowledge exchange on resilient and inclusive infrastructure.

3.3 Funding Details

3.3.1 Funding value and modality

Depending on the scale of implementation and extent of the impact, a single country project can range from \$150,000 to \$500,000 and a regional multi-country project (at least 3 SIDS) can range up to \$750,000.

In line with IRIS guiding principles presented in section 1.2, applicants are invited to consider the absorption capacity of their institutions while designing proposals.

3.3.2 Timeline

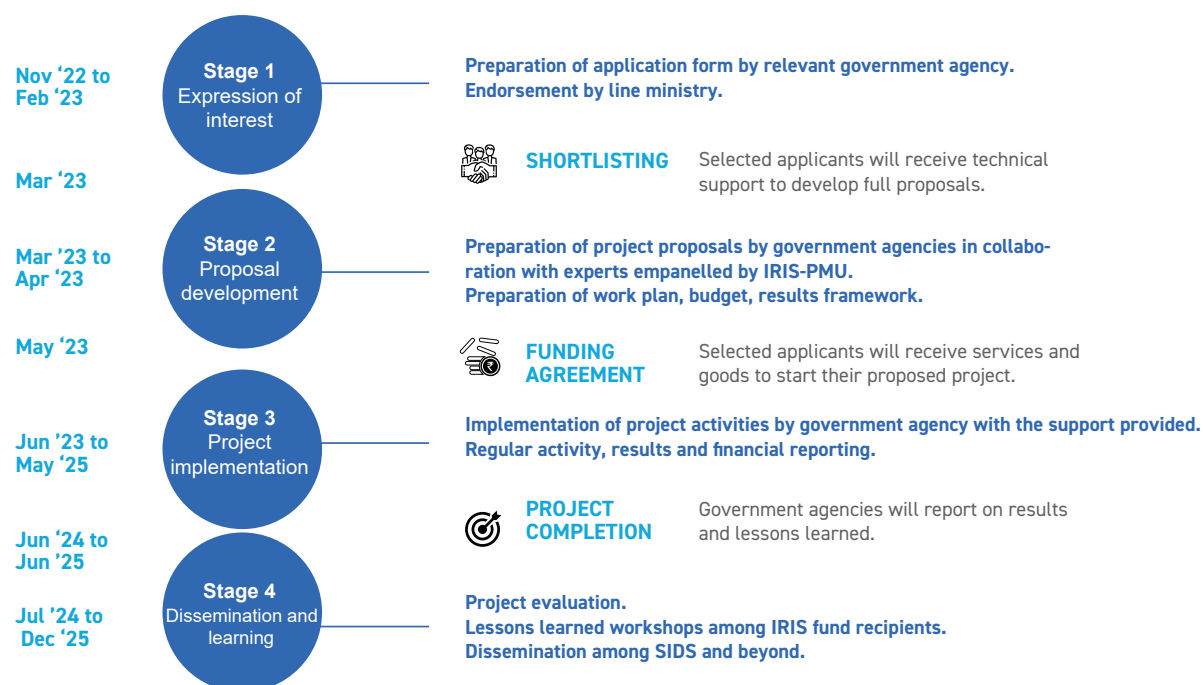
The maximum duration of the proposed project implementation is 24 months.

The call for proposals is divided into stages as per the Process Outline diagram below.

- The **Expression of Interest stage** will require relevant SIDS government agencies to prepare brief project concepts, mentioning the target sector, expected deliverables and justification in the EoI form provided. IRIS-PMU will offer online information sessions open to all applicants to provide support in the EoI stage. Selected applicants will move to the next stage.

- The **Proposal Development stage** will allow the selected applicants to receive technical assistance to develop their proposals. IRIS-PMU will propose a roster of empanelled technical experts to applicants to refine their proposal's scope, work plan, results framework and budget. Each applicant will be entitled to a fixed number of days of technical assistance. Selected applicants will move to the next stage.
- The **Project Implementation stage** will allow relevant regional bodies or international organisations to receive funds and technical assistance for project implementation. During this stage, beneficiary countries will work closely with regional bodies or international agencies on mobilising relevant resources, implementing activities and documenting results. The IRIS-PMU will organise regular knowledge exchange among government implementation agencies, including technical experts as relevant.
- The **Dissemination and Learning stage** will start after project completion so participants can present their results, share lessons learned and inform IRIS, SIDS and the wider infrastructure resilience community for future programming.

IRIS First Call for Proposals – PROCESS OUTLINE



3.4 Institutional Arrangement

Roles and responsibilities are envisaged as follows:

Applicant government agency: The applicant government agency is responsible for preparing the expression of interest form and, if invited, a full project proposal and submitting it to the IRIS-SC after obtaining all relevant government approvals. If selected, the implementing agency will be responsible for implementing the project in line with the proposal, coordinating any state and non-state implementing partners and suppliers. The applicant government agency is also in charge of preparing progress reports as specified in section 3.5 below.

Regional bodies or international organisations: These international organisations will receive funds on behalf of beneficiary countries and conduct relevant procurement processes to mobilise the support needed to implement proposed projects. They will be in charge of budget monitoring and financial reporting.

IRIS-PMU: It will host information workshops on IRIS and the call for proposals for all applicants. A roster of empanelled technical experts will support proposal development. The IRIS-PMU will lead the formalisation of agreements with selected applicants. It will review reports, authorize the release of funds according to progress, provide technical advice and guidance to implementing agencies as needed and escalate relevant risks and issues to the IRIS-SC. The IRIS-PMU will also lead on information exchange among beneficiary countries during project implementation and coordinate results sharing upon completion.

IRIS-SC: It will shortlist EoI applicants eligible to technical support to develop full proposals. In stage 2, the SC will select proposals for implementation. It will provide orientation and guidance on risks and issues at critical stages of implementation, including mid-project and upon completion.

CDRI Executive Committee: The CDRI Executive Committee approves the selection of beneficiary countries based on the IRIS-SC's recommendation.

3.5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

The objective of this call is to put in place replicable and scalable solutions to enhance infrastructure resilience in SIDS. Consequently, applicants are expected to report with transparency on project activities and commit to IRIS' learning culture.

Specific monitoring, evaluation and learning expectations are as follows:

Outcome reporting: Implementing government agencies are expected to define specific indicators to monitor the impact of the IRIS support in their proposal and provide baseline data, mid-line and end-line results to demonstrate positive outcomes. Mid-line and end-line results will be examined by the IRIS Steering Committee.

Progress reporting: Implementing agencies will provide succinct monthly progress reports against the proposed work plan to IRIS-PMU, including key project developments (activities, results, risks and issues). Implementing government agencies will submit the periodic progress reports and regional/international organisations will submit the interim financial reports to the IRIS-PMU and IRIS-SC.

Knowledge sharing: During project implementation, the IRIS-PMU will organise regular knowledge sharing sessions among selected implementation agencies and with other CDRI and IRIS partners (academia, international organisations, experts) as relevant. The IRIS-PMU will support beneficiary countries to present their final results under various formats to the IRIS network and beyond.

3.6 Selection Criteria

3.6.1 Expression of Interest Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for the Eol stage includes:

Criteria	Comments	Weight
Government endorsement	Government agencies must provide a letter of endorsement from the government authority in charge of infrastructure investment and from the concerned sector ministry (for example, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Water Resources etc.)	Eligibility* *Applicants not fulfilling this criterion will not be considered.
Needs assessment	Applicants should demonstrate the need for an intervention, highlighting the vulnerability of the selected infrastructure sector and the limited capacity to tackle issues without IRIS' involvement.	30%
Proposed action	Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed action will address the needs identified.	30%
Alignment and complementarity	Applicants should highlight how the proposed intervention will align with their country's relevant international commitments (Paris Agreement/NDCs, SAMOA Pathway etc), IRIS objectives and how it may complement ongoing disaster resilience or climate change adaptation programmes in the country.	20%
Applicant profile	The applicant and its implementing partners should have mandate and qualified personnel to undertake the proposed action.	20%

3.6.2 Full Proposal Selection Criteria

Detailed proposal selection criteria and weights will be shared with applicants selected for stage 2 (Proposal development).

They will include Eol criteria along with an evaluation of the work plan, budget, and results framework. The evaluation will ensure realistic proposals and favour propositions that can demonstrate leveraging additional resources and/or promoting inclusive infrastructure in addition to the resilience agenda.

Annexure

List of SIDS

American Samoa	New Caledonia
Anguilla	Niue
Antigua and Barbuda	Palau
Aruba	Papua New Guinea
Bahamas	Puerto Rico
Bahrain	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Barbados	Saint Lucia
Belize	Saint Vincent and Grenadines
Bermuda	Samoa
British Virgin Islands	Sao Tome and Principles
Cabo Verde	Seychelles
Cayman Islands	Singapore
Commonwealth of Northern Marianas	Sint Maarten
Comoros	Solomon Islands
Cook Islands	Suriname
Cuba	Timor-Leste
Curacao	Tonga
Diminica	Trinidad and Tobago
Dominican Republic	Turks and Caicos Islands
Federated States of Micronesia	Tuvalu
Fiji	US Virgin Islands
French Polynesia	Vanuatu
Grenada	
Guadeloupe	
Guam	
Guinea-Bissau	
Guyana	
Haiti	
Jamaica	
Kiribati	
Maldives	
Marshall Islands	
Martinique	
Mauritius	
Montserrat	
Nauru	

 Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



 Foreign, Commonwealth
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