

**Scheme of ICT Pilot Projects for Rural Areas**

Recognizing the importance of bridging the ICT development gap as well as ICT infrastructure development in the Asia-Pacific region as expressed in the “Singapore Statement of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministers on Co-creating a Connected Digital Future in the Asia-Pacific” that was adopted at the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting on “Co-creating a Connected Digital Future in the Asia-Pacific”, held in Singapore in June 2019 and the “Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020” adopted at the 14th Session of General Assembly held in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2017, APT will be implementing the “ICT Pilot Projects for Rural Areas”. This programme is funded by the Extra Budgetary Contribution from Japan. An outline of this programme is as follows:

**1. OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this programme is to narrow the digital divide in the Asia-Pacific region, through the promotion of pilot projects to support access to ICT in rural areas of developing members and associate members, and to facilitate development of ICT infrastructures/services in the region.

**2. OUTLINE**

- (1) This programme will provide financial support of up to USD200,000 for each pilot project for ICT development in rural areas of APT Members and Associate Members. However, the appropriate amount of the budget for the project will be determined based on careful examination of the proposal at the time of selection.
- (2) *Under the unprecedented situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, APT is taking a special measure by giving priority to the project designed to combat COVID-19. The amount of support for such project can be extended up to USD250,000.*
- (3) The results of the projects will be reported at the APT meeting related to ICT development and will be posted on the relevant APT websites.

**3. EXAMPLE OF PILOT PROJECTS**

Under the pilot projects supported by this programme, experiments on below topics can be conducted for verification of its effectiveness and validity.

- (1) Construction of multi-purpose telecenters in rural areas
- (2) Introduction of wireless technologies/systems in rural areas
- (3) ICT Infrastructure or application to combat COVID-19
- (4) Other topics for contributing to ICT development employing emerging technologies

**4. FUNDING RESOURCES**

Extra-Budgetary Contribution from the Government of Japan (EBC-J)

## **5. REQUIREMENTS**

- (1) Applications are to be submitted through APT Members or Associate Members.
- (2) Those wishing to participate in this programme should have sufficient ability to complete the project in time.
- (3) Organizations/institutions and researchers/engineers for the pilot project should be well coordinated with each other in advance by the respective organizations/institutions. All collaborative entities must be listed in the application form, which is requested to be sent to the APT Secretariat, with the signature of the supporting APT Member or Associate Member.
- (4) The organizations/institutions involved in the project are requested to ensure that experts nominated for the project will be available for the full period of the project.
- (5) The project shall be carried out within the territory of the APT Member and Associate Member.
- (6) The project shall be undertaken speedily, effectively and efficiently.
- (7) The project should be completed within eleven months from the date that the APT Secretariat receives the acceptance letter from the awarded organization in response to the announcement of selection by the APT Secretariat.
- (8) Should there be any part of the project that requires subcontracting work to any third party not listed in the proposal, kindly state the necessity and the portion of the project and/or the amount of budget to be subcontracted in the proposal. The process of the subcontract shall be clearly explained.

## **6. SELECTION**

- (1) Proposed projects will be selected by the APT Secretariat in consultation with the Government of Japan based on the aforementioned requirements and the criteria stated below.
- (2) APT Members or Associate Members who have submitted the applications will receive notification from the APT Secretariat on the result of the selection. The selected project will also be posted on the APT website.
- (3) During the selection process of the project proposals, the APT Secretariat may interview persons involved in the projects in order to examine the conformity with the aforementioned requirements and the criteria stated below.
- (4) During or after the implementation of the projects, the APT Secretariat may conduct investigation to monitor the progress or successful completion of the project.

## **7. SELECTION CRITERIA**

The following points will be considered in the selection procedure.

- (1) Contribution to the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020

The Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020 was adopted at the 14th Session of General Assembly held in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2017. (For more details, please see our website at <http://www.apt.int.>). In order to promote development in the Asia-Pacific region based on its needs for Broadband and ICT, APT is expected to implement and support actions contained in the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020.

- a. The output of the research shall be directly or indirectly related to the implementation of action items indicated in the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020.
- b. The output of the project shall be beneficial to APT Members and Associate Members.
- c. Priority will be given to the projects designed to overcome COVID-19.

(2) Financial support from the proposing Governments

The purpose of this programme is to narrow the digital divide in the Asia-Pacific region. In order to accomplish this purpose, it is essential that the proposing Governments participate actively and continuously in the operation of the project. Therefore, the proposed projects will be given a higher priority if the proposing government provides financial support and intends to continue the support after the APT's project is completed.

(3) Sustainability of the projects

In order to enhance development of ICT infrastructure, the sustainability of operation and maintenance of the established infrastructure is crucial. Therefore, the proposed projects will be given a higher priority depending on the extent that the project could be sustained.

(4) Involvement of APT membership

In selecting projects of this programme, priority will be given to proposed projects with the involvement and support of APT membership. A higher priority will be given to the proposed projects with the involvement of Japanese experts based in Japan in the project.

(5) New ICT technologies

A higher priority will be given to proposed projects which deploy new ICT technologies.

(6) Specific proposal content

The application form and accounting form should be written as descriptively as possible. If the proposal does not contain the detailed information required for proper implementation, it may not be recognized as a proposal to be evaluated for selection.

## 8. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The items to be supported financially are as follows:

Items	Provision
Equipment Procurement	Costs for procuring necessary equipment required by the project.
Shipping fee & Correspondence expenses	- Postal charges and shipping costs related to the transportation of materials for the projects. - Communication costs for telephone, fax, e-mail, Internet, etc.
Business Trip	Travel expenses, accommodation fees, etc. (The most economical airfare shall be applied.)
Miscellaneous	Unforeseen expenses not mentioned above. (Up to 10% of the total amount of the financial support)

## 9. FINANCIAL SUPPORT DETAIL

### A. Costs in the Country of Project Implementation\*<sup>1</sup>

- (1) It is expected that any local costs related to this project are to be borne by applicants' organization or other collaborative organizations in the country of project implementation as far as possible. APT may consider providing financial support on a case-by-case basis.
- (2) Above-mentioned local costs include daily allowance, accommodation, and transportation in the country of project implementation, costs related to the office space and equipment (such as table, chair and communication costs).
- (3) The proposing APT Member or Associate Member should make its best effort in exempting import taxes and custom clearance fees of all relevant equipment used in the project.
- (4) Salary for staff in the proposing organization shall not be borne by APT.

\*<sup>1</sup> "country of project implementation" is a developing member and associate member where the project is implemented and excludes the expert's country.

### B. Costs of Business Trips to a Foreign Country

- (1) For a staff traveling to expert's country\*<sup>2</sup>, the daily allowance of up to USD90 and the actual rate of the hotel accommodation up to 50% of the UN DSA rate as of May 2020 are to be used. Necessary local transportation costs in the expert's country\*<sup>2</sup>, attached to the overseas trip, can also be covered by the APT financial support.
- (2) For an expert from the APT Member countries traveling to developing countries of project implementation, the UN DSA rate as of May 2020 is to be used. This amount covers both the daily allowance and the hotel accommodation. In addition, the expert may receive an expert fee. The APT Secretariat will determine the exact

amount of expert fee taking into consideration the location and the situation of the project.

- (3) The number of days entitled for the financial support equals the number of nights stayed during the business trip. In addition, if the departure time on the last day of the business trip is after 20:00 hours, that day can be qualified for an additional day of financial support. This is according to Procedure for Arranging APT Fellowships and Secretariat Travel.
- (4) In case, there needs to be any transit during the trip, the transit allowances according to Procedure for Arranging APT Fellowships and Secretariat Travel will be applied. (Please contact the APT Secretariat for the supported transit allowances.)
- (5) The works related to the project are to be undertaken within the territory of the APT Member and Associate Member only. The APT does not provide support to any work undertaken outside the territory of the APT Member and Associate Member.

\*<sup>2</sup> “expert’s country” is a developed country where experts participating in the project reside.

#### C. Payment Method of APT Financial Support

- (1) In receiving the financial report, including documentary evidence such as receipts, the APT Secretariat will determine the total amount of the APT financial support for the project.
- (2) Upon request, up to 60% of the approved budget will be provided prior to the project implementation.
- (3) In principle, the balance will be paid after the completion of the project.  
However, upon APT consideration, additional amount up to the balance can be paid earlier if requested after the submission of the interim report which is at 5 months after the commencement of the project.
- (4) If the total cost of the project is less than the amount provided prior to the project completion, the balance shall be returned to APT.
- (5) Any project cost in excess of the approved budget shall be borne by the proposing administrations or the Institutions involved.

#### D. Other Costs

If an applicant awards a major part of the project to the third party, the consultation fee or any fee related to the outsourcing to any organization is not supported.

### 10. **OWNERSHIP OF THE PROJECT OUTCOMES**

- (1) After the completion of the project, the equipment will become the assets of the organizations/institutions involved in the project.
- (2) APT will share 50% of the copyrights of any outcome including software produced by the project.

## **11. REPORTING TO THE APT SECRETARIAT**

- (1) An interim project report and an interim accounting report, together with a short PowerPoint presentation of the project, should be submitted to the APT Secretariat at 5 months after the commencement of the project.
- (2) The following reports should be submitted to the APT Secretariat within one month after the project completion.
  - a. The project completion report, showing the detailed output and analysis of the project results.
  - b. The PowerPoint presentation of the project providing a brief overview of the project, its outcomes and suggestions for future work.
  - c. The accounting report, attached with the original certification or original receipts.
- (3) In case any changes are needed to the initial project plan or budget, such changes shall be immediately reported to the APT Secretariat for approval.
- (4) Further information may be requested by the APT Secretariat if deemed necessary.
- (5) The final project reports will be posted on the APT website.
- (6) The results of the projects shall be reported at the APT meeting related to ICT development in order to share the result with APT membership.
- (7) All the information submitted to the APT Secretariat may be disclosed to the Government of Japan for examination of Board of Audit of Japan and other purposes.

## **12. LIABILITY**

- (1) APT will not be responsible for any accidents, personal injury or any loss during the implementation of the projects under this programme.
- (2) APT is not liable for any legal implications arising from the implementation and operation of the projects.

## **13. CONTACT DETAIL**

- (1) If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the APT Secretariat at e-mail address to [aptict@apt.int](mailto:aptict@apt.int) or fax no. +662 573 7479 or 574 4226.
- (2) Additional information and forms can be downloaded from the APT website at <http://www.apt.int/APTICT>.