Mekong Thought Leadership and Think Tanks Network Program

Open: 6-Month Full-time Fellowship | Call for 4th Batch Applications

The Mekong Thought Leadership and Think Tanks Network Program (MTT) is seeking 1 entry- or mid-level professional who is a Mekong citizen (Lao or Thai) with experience in program/project coordination and management. The position is full-time and for a duration of 6 months. The host organization is SEI Asia in Bangkok, Thailand. One fellowship grant is for a maximum of AUD 12,500.

Lao and Thai citizens, women, individuals from diverse genders, Indigenous groups, people with diverse ethnicities, and persons with disabilities are especially encouraged to apply.

Launch of the Call: 17 January 2025.
Application deadline: 31 January 2025, 23:59 (Bangkok/Indochina time).
Submissions of applications will only be accepted online via Submittable:
https://sei.submittable.com/submit/318313/mtt-fellowship-program-call-for-fellows-batch-4

1 Background

The Mekong Thought Leadership and Think Tanks Network Program (MTT), supported by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), aims to work with national and regional Knowledge-based Policy Influence Organizations (KBPIOs)[1] in the Mekong Region to enhance their capacities to effectively engage stakeholders involved in policy processes. In particular, the program will work with KBPIOs to support strengthening policy and practice concerning equitable water security, energy security, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation. This will be combined with communications based on high-quality research, practical advice generated by the program, and cross-learning among relevant regional organizations.

The program views that investing in diverse entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders working in research and policy engagement is essential to enhance their capacity to produce and promote practical and sustainable solutions. The program will spearhead capacity building through fellowships and trainings.

For more information about the MTT Program, please visit
https://www.sumernet.org/featuredproject/mekong-thought-leadership-and-think-tanks-network

2 Objectives

There are three main objectives for the fellowship program.

[1] Wellstead, A.M. and Howlett, M. 2022. (Re)Thinking think tanks in the age of policy labs: The rise of knowledge-based policy influence organisations. Aust. J. Publ. Admin. 81: 224-232.

1. Strengthen knowledge, capacity, and skills of diverse Mekong entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders in policy research, engagement, and communication, as well as effectively integrate Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) within each of these.
2. Support the program's implementation in enhancing effectiveness and inclusiveness of policy engagement at the intersections of water security, energy security, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as in the crosscutting dimension of Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) across these domains.
3. Provide opportunities for diverse entry- or mid-level professionals of all genders to increase their networking with other professionals across sectors, especially water, energy, climate change, as well as Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), across the Mekong Region.

3 Fellow Criteria

This call seeks to award 1 entry- or mid-level professional.

- Citizens of Lao PDR and Thailand are strongly encouraged to apply.
- Individuals from diverse genders, Indigenous groups, people with diverse ethnicities, and persons with disabilities are especially encouraged to apply.

Note: The MTT Secretariat reserves the right to maintain a balanced portfolio for its fellowship grants, which may involve considering the countries of origin and gender diversity of grant beneficiaries.

4 Fellow Qualifications

4.1 Required

1. Entry- or mid-level professionals of all ages and genders.
2. Citizen of Lao PDR or Thailand.
3. Education qualification as appropriate for the role, but generally considered to be:
    a. Master’s degree with at least two years experience; or
    b. Bachelor’s degree with at least five years experience.
4. Available to commit to a 6-month full-time fellowship.

4.2 Preferable

1. Experience in project/program coordination and management:
    a. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL).
    b. Administration data collection and database management.
    c. Report writing and program documentation.
2. Experience in working in at least one of the thematic areas:
    a. Water security.
    b. Energy security.
    c. Climate change mitigation or adaptation.
    d. Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI).
    e. Water, energy, and climate nexus.

3. Consider being physically based with a host institution for at least half of the fellowship period, whereby stays/visits should add up to half of the fellowship period. For prospective fellows who are not able to physically relocate to the host institution, other arrangements can be negotiated upon request and subject to approval by the Program Secretariat (SEI Asia).
4. The fellow must be hosted by someone other than their existing employer.

5 Tasks

5.1 General Tasks

1. Attend meetings and relevant events organized by the program.
2. Engage with partners and other fellows in the program.
3. Report on the progress of the fellowship.
4. Actively engage with SUMERNET Young Professionals (SYP), a sub-network under the Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET), working to inform and engage young professionals who are passionate about a just and sustainable Mekong future.
5. Engage in outreach activities of the program.
6. Engage in activities depending on available time and common interest of the fellow, mentor, and host institution.

5.2 Specific Tasks

No.	Task/Output	Description	Target Due Date/Duration
1	Attend an induction session on the MTT Program's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system.	To familiarize the fellow with the MEL system of the MTT Program.	Within month 1 of the fellowship.
2	Ensure the appropriate managerial support to MEL and program administration data collection and organization.	Assist in gathering data from program components, grantees and from program activities, including meetings, fieldtrip and other events. Organize and clean datasets to ensure accuracy and readiness for analysis and reporting.	Throughout the fellowship period.
3	Provide technical expertise and support to MEL and program administration database management.	Provide technical expertise for the effective monitoring and management of MEL and program administration databases. Ensure accuracy, accessibility, and efficient processing of data. Assist in utilizing MEL and program administration database for effective	Throughout the fellowship period.

		and sufficient program implementation.	
4	Support report writing and program documentation.	Contribute to the preparation and maintenance of program documentation, including guidelines, manuals, and case studies. Assist in drafting, editing, and finalizing program reports to ensure clarity, accuracy, and alignment with organizational standards. Collaborate with program components to gather and organize information for reporting and documentation purposes.	Throughout the fellowship period.
5	Coordinate operational aspects of the MTT Program.	Operational activities including but not limited to, grant administration, financial management, contract management, recruitment and procurement of goods and services related to program/project implementation.	Throughout the fellowship period.
6	Support other MEL and program management-related outputs.	To be determined and agreed between the fellow, mentor, and host organization.	Throughout the fellowship period.

6 Key Activities and Delivery Timeline

No.	Outputs	Description	Delivery timeline
1	Participation in program activities	Program activities such as: • Mekong regional annual fora. • Foundational trainings and workshops for capacity development deemed necessary to the fellow. • Other activities.	Throughout the period of the fellowship.
2	Fellowship work plan	The work plan consists of list of specific activities that the fellow will work on or support and relevant deliverables along with the time plan. The work plan should be developed together with and finally endorsed by the assigned supervisor. Any final products from the fellowship (publication,	By the end of month 1 of the fellowship.

		communication pieces, event organization, etc.) should be identified in the work plan.	
3	3 Most Significant Change (MSC) stories	The MTT Program collects MSC stories from across boundary partners and activities at different levels to track and evaluate program impacts at early, mid, and final stages of implementation, from qualitative (behavioral changes) aspect. The MSC stories will be collected at early-, mid-, and final stages of the fellowship period.	By the end of months 1, 3, and 6 of the fellowship.
4	Mid-term report	The mid-term report includes assessment of progress according to the fellowship work plan.	By the end of month 3 of the fellowship.
5	Final report	The final report includes assessment of progress according to the fellowship work plan. The report should also include reflections about the experiences during the fellowship, such as key learnings from MTT, personal Story of Change, the plans to apply these learnings in their own study or home organization, as well as challenges and recommendations.	By the end of month 6 of the fellowship.

7 Duration

The duration of this fellowship is 6 months full-time. Changes to the fellowship duration will be based on evaluating the fellow's work and with the agreement of all parties concerned: fellow, mentor, and host organization.

8 Benefits and Allowance

8.1 Highlighted Benefits

1. Unique opportunity to be mentored by senior experts in various fields of research, policy, and practice relating to issues of water, energy, and climate with a Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) lens.
2. Be part of an interdisciplinary and international program that includes partners in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, and beyond.
3. Have access to capacity development activities within the program and those organized by partner organizations.
4. The opportunity to participate in program regional forums or other regional activities.

5. Receive an official certificate for successful completion of the fellowship.

8.2 Allowance Summary

A 6-month full-time fellowship grant is for a maximum of **AUD 12,500**. The grant covers the following expenditures.

1. One return flight, work permit, and visa for the fellow to be physically placed in the host institution.
2. Travel support for the fellow to join regional fora and other activities.
3. Health and travel insurance.
4. Monthly allowance for the fellow.
5. Accommodation support.
6. Overhead to the host organization.
7. Honorarium for the mentor of the fellow.

Detailed breakdown of the grant will be finalized between the fellow and host organization, according to the Fellowship Grant Guideline, before the start of the fellowship period. Arrangements are subject to approval by the MTT Secretariat (SEI Asia).

9 Mandatory Documents for Submission of Application

One recent CV/resumé. Within the CV/resumé, it is recommended to include a one paragraph bio/summary.

10 Important Dates

Step	Date
Application submission deadline	31 January 2025
Review of applications	3-7 February 2025
Interview of applicants	10-14 February 2025
Selection and endorsement by the program	17-21 February 2025
Announcement of results	24-28 February 2025

Note: Dates may be subject to change.

Subject to restrictions related to the application process for visa and work permit and other considerations, fellows will start their activities with the host organization as soon as possible, ideally by **March 2025**.

The fellow may initially undertake activities online or remotely if necessary. The fellowship starting date will be determined considering the conditions listed above and will last for a period of 6 months from the starting date.

11 Contact

Please contact MTT Program Coordinator, Mr. Boripat Lebel, for inquiries. Email: boripat@sea-user.org