



PONLOK CHOMNES: DATA AND DIALOGUE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN CAMBODIA

Call for Expression of Interest (EOI)

Core funding to strengthen the capacity and networking of Policy Research Institutes (PRIs) in Cambodia

This call is open to all organizations that meet the criteria laid out in this document.

1. ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

Ponlok Chomnes: Data and Dialogue for Development in Cambodia (Ponlok Chomnes) is a three-year (2019-2022) initiative that aims to strengthen the capacity of knowledge sector institutions to undertake quality research that informs public policy analysis and dialogue in Cambodia. This will be achieved by strengthening organizational and technical capacity of policy research institutions, facilitating networking and collaboration among policy research institutions in Cambodia and regionally, and supporting an enabling environment for policy dialogue to promote the use of evidence-based research for policymaking. This goal will be realized through a set of mutually-reinforcing activities conducted under four program objectives:

Objective 1: Increase understanding of Cambodia’s knowledge sector;

Objective 2: Strengthen the capacity and networking of policy research institutes;

Objective 3: Support research by emerging knowledge sector actors through an Emerging Research Fund; and

Objective 4: Promote thoughtful and inclusive policy dialogue and analysis.

2. WHY YOU SHOULD BE PART OF THIS INITIATIVE

Ponlok Chomnes aims to support Cambodia’s knowledge sector by providing not only financial but also capacity development assistance. Under Ponlok Chomnes, partners will have an opportunity to receive “core funding” which will support them to determine and implement their own research and capacity development agenda. In addition, partners will have access to a wider network of knowledge ecosystem both in Cambodia and regionally. Partners will be able to strengthen existing and build new network through Ponlok Chomnes’ convening efforts, including National Policy Forums and Policy Dialogues. Through these mechanisms, partners will have more opportunity to interact with policy makers at both the national and subnational level.

3. The CALL: CORE FUNDING¹ FOR POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTES TO STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY AND NETWORKING

To achieve **objective 2** of the initiative, three policy research institutes will be selected to receive organizational and capacity development assistance for up to two years.

The selection process is now open for Cambodia’s policy research institutes to apply. Successful organizations will receive core funding, as well as support for organizational, technical and research capacity for up to two (02) years, with annual performance reviews. It is expected that by the end of the project, the quality of the research produced by the supported Policy Research Institutes (PRIs) will be improved and at a standard that means it could be used to inform policymaking in Cambodia.

***Note:** It should be noted that Ponlok Chomnes will also support policy research by smaller organizations who focus on traditionally under-represented research topics under a separate mechanism called “the Emerging Research Fund”. For more detail, please refer to the Expression of Interest (EoI) here: (Link to the EoI for Emerging Research Fund).

4. DECIDING WHETHER TO APPLY

A. “Are we a policy research institute?”

Please read –[FAQ](#) for a more detailed definition of the characteristics of a policy research institute. This should help you decide whether this program is a good fit for your organization.

B. “Do we meet the program’s eligibility criteria?”

To apply, organizations must meet all of the following basic eligibility criteria. Applications by organizations that do not meet ALL of these criteria WILL NOT be considered.

No	Basic Eligibility Criteria
1	Your organization must be a Cambodian think tank, NGO, private sector or university-based research center whose <u>core business</u> is conducting research aiming to influence Cambodian national or local policy, and/or the use of research to create evidence-informed policy change (or have the clear potential to add such function);
2	Your organization should cut across a number of disciplines focused on social science approaches (rather than physical or biological science) to address policy needs and development priorities in Cambodia.
3	Your organization must be a legal entity registered with the Cambodian government
4	Your organization must have a defined and operational governance structure that is publicly available, with individuals clearly defined as being accountable for the organisation’s operations and governance (e.g., a chief executive and board or similar structure).

¹ See ‘what is core funding?’ in [FAQ](#)

5	Your organization should have previous experience managing grants from donors and demonstrated financial transparency.
6	Your organization should have diversified leadership and staffing, including women research and/or senior-level positions.
7	Most your organization's research staff are Cambodian.

No	Additional Areas of Consideration – applicants should strive to meet three of the following	Y/N
1	Has your organization published or co-published policy research or policy commentary based on research in the public domain (including on a website) over the last 2 years?	
2	Does your organization have in place systems to review your research through internal review by your organization's senior staff; through presentations at conferences and / or through publication in international and national peer review journals?	
3	Does your organization regularly engage with policy makers and other decision makers and stakeholders at national and local levels? This would include consultation about your research agenda, communicating research results in easy-to-use formats, ongoing dialogue with government and civil society representatives relevant to your work.	
4	Is your organization actively involved in any established research or policy networks to share knowledge and best practices?	
5	Do you have ongoing partnerships with other Cambodian and also perhaps international policy research institutes to jointly conduct research and/or undertake policy advocacy?	
6	Does your organization employ at least five full-time professional staff, where at least two of these have a research role?	
7	Does your organization have a strategic plan for organizational (including staff) development including career pathways and capacity building for research?	

5. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for the program, interested organizations will need to first assess their eligibility. Following this, organizations need to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). The EOI will be assessed and the top five (05) short-listed applicants will then be invited to submit a concept note. Concept notes will be assessed, and TAF will carry out site visits to shortlisted applicants.

Only three successful PRIs will be selected to receive support. Please see indicative timeline below.

Stages	Description	Timeframe
Stage 1: <i>Expression of Interest (EoI)</i>	Expression of Interest publicized	August 29, 2019
	Expression of interest due	September 20, 2019
	Shortlisted applicants informed	October 4, 2019
Stage 2: <i>Concept Note Submission</i>	Concept Note due	October 20, 2019
Stage 3: <i>Participatory Assessment and Site Visit</i>	Site visits to shortlisted applicants	October 20- November 10, 2019
Stage 4: <i>Notification of selected partners and grant agreement</i>	Selected partners are notified	November 30, 2019
Stage 5: <i>Co-creation of workplan with partners</i>	TAF to co-create workplan with successful partners	December 2019

Stage 1: Expression of Interest

Applicant organizations will submit a short Expression of Interest by September 20, 2019 which provides an overview of their organization's goals, structure, and links to the policy community.

The Expression of Interest will be a **maximum of seven pages** and includes:

- Description of the mission and goals of the organization;
- Diagram of organizational structure, including description of positions and roles;
- Definition of key audiences and purpose for your organization's policy research / communication pieces, and how they communicate and engage with these;
- Your organization's overall plans for the next three years and how Ponlok Chomnes can help you achieve these plans;
- Two examples of your organization's best research within the past five years, with a description of how the research has been used to inform policy.

Please refer to and use the more detailed guidance provided in the [Application Form](#).

Stage 2: Concept Note Submission

Organizations which submit Expressions of Interest will be short-listed and notified by September 30, 2019. Up to five organizations of the strongest applicants will be invited to participate in Stage 2 of the selection process, in which a concept note will be submitted. The due date for the concept note will be October 20, 2019.

The concept note will require your organization to provide additional evidence that you are a strong candidate for the Ponlok Chomnes program. It will be around five pages and will require submission of additional supporting documents (e.g., published research, strategic plans, etc.) Applicants will also need to provide at least two external references from a previous/current donor, partner and a client (policymaker) to further substantiate the organization's capacity and role.

The following criteria will be used to rate concept notes and short-list organizations:

Selection Criteria	Weighting
Demonstrated history of producing quality policy research and / or evidence-based advocacy outputs (evidence of quality of policy research)	25%
Evidence of the organizations planning, including consideration of future policy needs in Cambodia, and clear strategic planning	20%
Evidence of organizational consideration of sustainability including strength of organization's governance structures, staff retention, financial planning and management processes	15%
Existing networks with key stakeholders in the organizations' area of focus and evidence of productive policy engagement and contribution of research to policy	15%
Demonstrated commitment to promote Gender and Social Inclusion by having up to 30% of research and senior staff as women and/or minority groups, including person with disabilities or from diverse ethnic backgrounds.	15%
Ability to engage and work in coalition with civil society	10%

Other criteria used to assess potential partner organizations suitability for the program includes thematic focus, demonstrated capacity for gender analysis, geographic location, types of organization (NGO, university research institute, think tank), and ability to significantly increase the research outputs of their organization, along with ability to absorb core funding for organizational change and transformation. These factors and the organization's capacity to undertake gender analysis may also be considered during the selection process, although they are not part of the core selection criteria.

Stage 3: Participatory Assessment and Site Visit

TAF will conduct a one-day participatory assessment with the short-listed organizations. This site visit will likely take place in October and November 2019. Facilitators from TAF will engage the organization's management and staff in an exercise to discuss the concept note which was submitted, and further identify the challenges and opportunities for organizational growth and reform. The organization will have the opportunity to present their vision for how they will contribute to the development policy challenges in Cambodia.

Based on the results of the site visits and their concept notes, partners will be re-assessed using the same selection criteria used for short-listing.

Stage 4: Notification of selected partners and grant agreement

It is anticipated that organizations will be notified of their status as a potential Ponlok Chomnes partner in December 2019. It is anticipated that three organizations will be selected to receive assistance under the objective 2 of the program.

Stage 5: Co-creation of workplan with partners

Once selected, partners will work closely with TAF in a co-creation process to conduct a needs assessment and develop a detailed workplan after signing a letter of agreement. This will take place in December 2019. Funding will be released upon submission of the workplan and budget details

APPLICATION FORM
PONLOK CHOMNES: DATA AND DIALOGUE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN
CAMBODIA
Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)
Core Funding to strengthen the capacity and networking of Policy Research Institutes in
Cambodia

DUE September 20, 2019

Name of Institution	
Name of Director/Officer in Charge	
Address, phone, email for your organization	

a. Please answer a few questions about your organization.

1. What is your organizational mission statement? What are your organization's goals?
2. What areas/topics does your organization's research focus on?
3. What year was your organization founded? _____
4. Is your organization a legal entity registered with the Ministry of Interior? YES / NO
5. Please attach a copy of your organizational structure, which shows your organization's operations and governance (board, etc.).
6. Please provide a numeric overview of your organization's staffing composition:

Type of staff	Status	Number
Management	Full-time	
	Part-time	
Researchers	Full-time	
	Part-time	
Other / support staff	Full-time	
	Part-time	

What is the gender composition of your staff?

All staff	Status	Number
	Female	

	Male	
Researchers	Female	
	Male	
	Persons identified with disabilities.	
All staff	Cambodian citizens	
	Non-Cambodian citizens	

7. Please provide us with a brief description of the role of researchers appearing on your organizational chart, such as senior researcher, researcher, research assistant, etc. (You do not need to provide position descriptions for staff who are not employed as researchers).
8. Please list the donors and project names your organization has received funding from in the past three years:

Year	Donor	Project name

9. Please list other sources of funding/income that your organization currently has: _____
10. Has your organization published policy research or policy commentary based on research in the public domain (including on a website) over the last 2 years? Please give three examples, citing the author, title and place of publication. If published online, please provide the URL.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
11. Does your organization have in place systems to review your research through internal review by your organization's senior staff; through presentations at conferences and / or through publication in international and national peer review journals?

YES / NO

12. Does your organization regularly engage with policy makers and other decision makers and stakeholders at national and local levels? Please list up to 10 key government and civil society stakeholders your organization regularly consults with about your research.
 13. Is your organization actively involved in any established research or policy networks to share knowledge and best practices? Please list up to five.
 14. Do you have current partnerships with other Cambodian or international policy research institutes to jointly conduct research and/or undertake policy advocacy? Please list up to five.
 15. Does your organization have a strategic plan for organizational and staff development? Please give one example of the capacity building your organization offers researchers or other staff.
- b. Please answer a few questions about your organizations' overall plans for the next three years.**
1. What is your organization's research agenda or area(s) of focus in the next three years?
 2. What capacity development needs do you foresee your organization will need in the next three years?
 3. How do you envision Ponlok Chomnes will benefit your organization's overall goals in the next three years?

SUBMISSION

Please submit this completed form and attach your organizational chart by September 20, 2019 to ponlokchomnes@asiafoundation.org with the subject line: Ponlok Chomnes Core Partner EoI.

*Only shortlisted organizations will be informed.
