

Guidelines for RCE Applications

RCE candidates seeking acknowledgement should submit two required documents: the main application document and application summary to UNU-IAS, the Secretariat of the Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs.

An RCE is a regional/local multi-stakeholder network with clearly defined action plans, which need the prior development of a vision, governance, financial plan, measurable short and long-term objectives, and strategies to achieve these. It is therefore essential that the application includes this information. Moreover, the action plans should include activities which clearly demonstrate potential added values to the RCE network by identifying partners working together on joint initiatives.

The application should also be developed keeping in view of the four core elements of an RCE –governance, collaboration, research and development (R&D) and transformative education activities (<https://www.rcenetwork.org/portal/rce>).

Applicant Eligibility

An organisation or institution that is met the following criteria is eligible for RCE application.

- Having a legal corporation status, or a department of legal entities with valid registration. (Individual person or a group of individuals are not eligible.);
- Planning to establish RCE in the area with no geographical overlaps with the existing RCEs (See 2-2 below).

1. Required Information

RCE candidates should send main application documents and application summaries that provide sufficient information on the following issues (Please refer to 2. *Guidelines for Main Application* before you start developing the application):

Background information

- Contact information of main and alternate contact persons
- Geographical scope (justification on why the geographical scope was selected) (300 words maximum)
- Major characteristics of the region – environmental, socio-cultural, demographical, economic, educational characteristics, etc. (1000 words maximum)
- Maps – two maps, one indicating the location of the region in the country or continent, and the other delineating the geographical scope of the RCE
- Major sustainable development (SD) challenges of the region (1000 words maximum)

RCE Vision

- Clear and specific RCE vision (200 words maximum)
- Both long-term & short-term objectives (500 words maximum)
- Strategies/scenarios to achieve vision and objectives (1000 words maximum)

Governance and management

- Evidence of mobilization process to develop RCE (300 words maximum)
- Identification of key institutions/organizations in a table
- Governance/management structure of the RCE (500 words maximum)
- Short-term, long-term resource arrangements including financial ones (500 words maximum)

- Criteria and milestones for monitoring and evaluation (500 words maximum)
- Documents proving commitment from key institutions

Collaboration

- Collaboration among regional/local stakeholders (200 words maximum)
- Involvement of higher education institution, local schools as well as non-formal and informal education stakeholders (300 words maximum)
- Involvement of stakeholders from different sectors apart from educational institutes (300 words maximum)

On-going and planned activities

- Clear description of on-going as well as planned projects relevant to education for sustainable development (ESD)
 - Activities specific to individual organization(s) (300 words maximum)
 - Collaborative and coordinated activities of the RCE (300 words maximum)
- Transformative education component (500 words maximum)
- Research and development (500 words maximum)

2. Guidelines for Main Application Document

UNU does not require RCE candidates to follow a specific format for the application. RCE candidates can send applications in any format as long as sufficient information on the above-mentioned issues is included.

1. **Contacts:** The application should include designation, organizational affiliation, postal address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses for one main and one alternate contact.

2. **Geographical scope:** Two maps, one indicating the location of the region in the country or continent, and the other delineating the geographical scope of the RCE should be included. The latter should include information on key cities / districts / municipalities as well as justification of RCE establishment in the area. The land area and size of population in the region should also be indicated. This helps the Global RCE Service Centre compare the scope and scale of RCE activities worldwide. In order to provide a portrait of the region, other major characteristics – environmental, socio-cultural and economic – should be described.

**IMPORTANT: Before you submit the application, please verify, and confirm whether there are any existing RCEs in the same geographical area or the vicinity. You can find the list of the existing RCEs and their profiles on the RCE portal site (<https://www.rcenetwork.org/portal/rces-worldwide>). If there would be geographical overlaps, it is strongly recommended contacting the existing RCE(s), exploring collaboration opportunities and seeking to plan the collective activities. Normally, geographical overlaps are not permissible. However, if there is a strong need to establish a new RCE despite the geographical overlaps, the reasons and justification should be clearly stated in the application. In this case, the submission of a record of communication with the existing RCE(s) and an elaborated plan for cooperation is strongly encouraged.*

3. **Regional challenges:** The threats that the region faces and challenges to sustainable development should be detailed. These should form the basis for outlining the RCE's objectives and activities.

4. **Process of RCE development:** A history of the RCE development process should be part of the application. This should include information on how consensus for the RCE

was developed and details on consultations with stakeholders. If key promoters for the RCE have been identified, the rationale and process behind the identification should be noted. RCE candidates are encouraged to identify several core institutions in the region which will work in collaboration to spearhead the process towards establishing an RCE. A list of key institutions that have committed to the RCE initiative, and background information on each of the promoting institutions should be included. It is desirable that the RCE includes institutions from various sectors – government, education, civil society and business – in its network.

5. **RCE vision and objectives:** The creation of a global learning space is the vision of UNU for RCEs. However, each RCE may identify a site or region-specific vision in addition to the above. Long and short term objectives should be clearly identified and these should be in response to the regional challenges stated in the application.

6. **Strategies and scenarios:** Means and strategies to achieve the listed goals and objectives should be detailed.

7. **M&E indicators:** Milestones and indicators for achieving the RCE vision and objectives should be indicated against a timeline.

8. **Governance / Management structure:** The application should include a description of the RCE's governance or management structure, keeping in mind that an RCE should serve as a platform for dialogue among regional/local ESD stakeholders. Care should be taken that the structure is not dominated by any single institution, but that a variety of stakeholders are involved. The institutions that are part of the structure should be listed and operational and decision-making methods of the RCE described. *Documents proving commitment from key institutions are essential to this process, and this commitment should be attached in written form.*

A clear explanation of how the RCE will follow governance principles, including that of accountability and transparency, should be part of the application. These principles should be reflected in the management structure of the RCE.

9. **Resources and commitment:** It is desirable, but not essential, that key institutions commit resources (financial and personnel) to promote RCE activities over a number of years. *It is recommended that letters confirming institutional commitment be provided.*

10. **Collaboration among stakeholders:** A university or higher-education institution should necessarily be a part of the RCE network. It is also desirable that institutions at various levels of formal education are involved. Descriptions on how the RCE will strengthen and utilize collaboration among stakeholders should be included. Stakeholders should be a part of the network regardless of age, gender or social status.

11. **On-going and planned activities:** Proposed activities should be relevant and in line with the regional challenges and objectives of the RCE, as well as the three pillars of sustainable development – environment, society and economy.

Existing activities of participating organizations and those activities developed specifically for the RCE should be differentiated. Pre-existing activities that are modified in scope or scale or in any other way to fit the RCE context should be explained. Partner organizations and their responsibilities in implementing activities should be detailed.

Planned activities should include those on research and development (R&D) and on transformative education. R&D activities should be aimed at improving ESD. .

Collaborative activities should also be listed. Transformative education activities should be aimed at moving education systems towards sustainable living and livelihood. The RCE should address issues of curricula, pedagogy, corporate training and media as part of its activities.

3. Guidelines for Application Summary

In addition to the main application documents, RCE candidates are required to submit application summaries. The form for application summary can be downloaded from the RCE Portal (<http://rce-network.org/portal/call-rce-applications>).

The application summary should synthesize the main application document and should include only the most important and relevant information. It should be not more than 5- 7 pages in length.

4. Review Process

Interested RCEs should submit both a detailed application and a summary to the Global RCE Service Centre at UNU-IAS (E-mail: rceservicecentre@unu.edu).

Each application and summary will first be reviewed by the Global RCE Service Centre. The Global RCE Service Centre will then correspond with individual RCEs for clarifications or further elaborations of specific sections as needed. If the RCE application meets the defined criteria for submission, then the applications will then be reviewed by the Ubuntu Committee of Peers, who will provide recommendations to UNU for RCE acknowledgement.

Background information on the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) programme of UNU-IAS, and on RCEs is available (<http://ias.unu.edu/>) and (<http://rce-network.org/portal/>) respectively.

5. Criteria for Acknowledging New RCEs

When reviewing RCE applications, the Ubuntu Committee of Peers will focus on the following essential elements.

IMPORTANT: Please note that a new application from the region that is already served by an existing RCE(s) is not permissible unless the additional documents specified in 2.2 are duly submitted.

1. Collaboration

- Involvement of higher education institutions
- Involvement of schools/school systems
- Involvement of other stakeholders including non-formal, informal organisations, such as local governments and businesses and NGOs.

2. RCE Vision

- Clear and specific vision for the RCE
- Consideration of all aspects of SD – economic, social and environment
- Regional challenges and relevance of proposed activities

3. Governance

- Commitment of key institutions/financial sustainability
- Governance and management structure
- Monitoring/evaluation mechanisms

4. Evidence of mobilisation processes to develop the RCE

5. On-going and planned activities

- Description of previous and on-going activities specific to individual organizations
- Description of planned collaborative, coordinated activities
- Research and development component, if any
- Transformative education component

Should you have any question, please contact the Global RCE Service Centre (rceservicecentre@unu.edu).