

Guidelines for RCE applications

RCEs seeking acknowledgement should submit a detailed application and a short summary to UNU-IAS, the Secretariat of the Ubuntu Committee. The application should be developed keeping in view the four core elements of an RCE – collaboration, RCE vision, governance and R&D as well as transformative education activities.

Required information

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

- Background information / regional challenges,
- Consideration on the four core elements and
- Basic information (listed below).
- * Contact information
- * 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
- * Geographical scope and major characteristics of the region
- * Major sustainable development (SD) challenges of the region
- * Process of RCE development, including identification of key institutions
- * RCE vision, long-term, short-term objectives
- * Strategies/scenarios to achieve visions and objectives
- * Criteria and milestones for monitoring and evaluation
- * Governance/management structure of the RCE
- * Short-term, long-term resource arrangements including financial ones
- * Collaboration among regional/local stakeholders
- * On-going and planned activities
 - Transformative education
 - Research and development
 - Other activities

Guidelines for detailed applications

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. 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.
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, 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 – environmental, socio-cultural and economic.

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 and on transformative education. R&D activities should be aimed at improving ESD, and should incorporate science and technology. 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.

Guidelines for application summaries

In addition to the detailed application, RCEs are required to submit application summaries that are 4-6 pages in length. These summaries should synthesize the detailed application and should include only the most important and relevant information.

Summaries should include short descriptions on

- geographical scope and major characteristics
- 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 challenges of the region
- process of RCE development and key institutions involved
- RCE vision and objectives
- governance / management structure of the RCE
- collaboration among stakeholders
- short and long term resource arrangements
- on-going and planned activities
- contact information.

Review process

Interested RCEs should submit both a detailed application and a summary to:

The Global RCE Service Centre

United Nations University - Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS)

6F, International Organizations Center, Pacifico-Yokohama

1-1-1 Minato Mirai, Nishi-ku, Yokohama 220-8502, Japan

Tel: +81-45-221-2300

Fax: +81-45-221-2303

E-mail: rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu

Each application and summary will first be reviewed by the Global RCE Service Centre. The Service Centre will then correspond with individual RCEs for clarifications or further elaborations of specific sections as needed. 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 at www.ias.unu.edu/efsd.

Criteria for acknowledging new RCEs

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

1. Collaboration

- Involvement of higher education institutions
- Involvement of schools/school systems
- Involvement of other stakeholders including non-formal, informal stakeholders

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
- Transformative education component

Sample applications

UNU-IAS encourages diversity in RCEs and acknowledges that the mode of RCE operations will vary depending on regional challenges. However, sample applications are available online for reference.