REDAA Grant Call 1: Project Grants - Stage 1 Concept Notes

Guidance for Applicants

June 2023

REVERSING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

REDAA

IN AFRICA AND ASIA

About the REDAA programme

Reversing Environmental Degradation in Africa and Asia (REDAA) is a programme that catalyses research, innovation and action across sub-Saharan Africa and South and Southeast Asia, by offering grants and technical support.

For more information about the programme, contact: enquiries@redaa.org

www.redaa.org

@REDAAprogramme

@REDAA-programme

REDAA is funded by UK International Development from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and managed by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

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Contents

Call for Concept Note proposals for REDAA Project Grants 4
Timetable 5
Eligibility criteria 6
Lead Organisation 6
Lead Applicant 7
Partner Organisations 7
Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), International Climate Finance (ICF) and REDAA locations 8
Landscapes and ecosystems 10
Project requirements 11
Locally led research-to-action 11
Positive and integrated action for nature and climate 11
Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) 12
Thematic priorities 14
Ethics 14
Open access 15
Budgeting 15
Organisational requirements 17
Safeguarding 17
Risk management 17
Due diligence 18
Application process for Concept Notes 19
Submission deadline 21
Online application form – 'question by question' guidance 22
General 22
Applicant details 26
Eligibility screening 27
Project Summary Details 28
Project Details 29
Supporting documents 31
Lead Applicant declaration 31
Offline resources 33
Review and Selection process 34
General process 34
Evaluation criteria 34
Information session, enquiries, FAQs and further support 38
Contact 38

Call for Concept Note proposals for REDAA Project Grants

In addition to this Guidance for Applicants document, **applicants should also read the REDAA Strategy** for information about the programme's rationale, aims, approach, main actions and development. We also **strongly encourage** applicants to read the scoping studies which have shaped the Strategy. These documents are available on the REDAA website via the links below:

- REDAA Strategy
- Scoping studies

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) are pleased to announce the first call for proposals under the REDAA programme – Reversing Environmental Degradation in Africa and Asia.

REDAA will fund projects in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia that are interdisciplinary, locally led, and focused on solutions for ecosystem restoration, enabling people and nature to thrive together in times of climate, resource and fiscal insecurity.

This first call focuses on 'medium-sized' Project Grants of **between £200,000 and £500,000** (GBP - British Pound Sterling) over **two to four years**, with projects expected to start from **1 January 2024**.

It is expected that up to 21 Project Grants will be awarded via a two-stage proposal process: Stage 1 for Concept Notes; followed by Stage 2 for Full Proposals.

All proposals should positively address integrated action for nature and climate, and gender equality and social inclusion, and each of them should focus on one or more of the thematic priorities (further explained in the **Thematic priorities** section):

1. Local research and capability for research
2. Resource and land use assessments
3. Business models
4. Financing mechanisms
5. Inclusive governance systems.

This document aims to provide applicants with information on:

- What kinds of projects can be funded
- Eligibility and other project requirements
- How to submit a Concept Note application
- What the subsequent steps will be in the proposal development, selection and award process.

Timetable

Please note that the dates in this timetable may be subject to change. Applicants will be notified of any changes that affect them.

Applicant submission deadlines are highlighted in bold.

Step #	Activity/Stage	Dates
1	Stage 1 Concept Note applications open	14 June 2023
2	**Stage 1 Concept Note applications close**	**31 July 2023, 23:59 BST (UTC+1)**
3	Eligibility screening, review and selection process	1-31 August 2023
4	Successful applicants invited to Stage 2 (Full Proposal)	Early September 2023
5	Stage 2 (Full Proposal) applications open	September-October 2023
6	**Stage 2 (Full Proposal) applications close**	**30 October 2023, 23:59 GMT (UTC)**
7	Eligibility screening, review and selection process	1-30 November 2023
8	Final award notifications	Early December 2023
9	Award acceptance and contracting (subject to due diligence checks)	December 2023
10	Projects start	1 January 2024

Eligibility criteria

Definitions*

"Lead Organisation"	This is the organisation that will make an agreement with the REDAA programme and receive a grant, if the proposal is successful, and will be ultimately responsible for delivery and management of the project, including management of any partners and sub-grantees.
"Lead Applicant"	This person, on behalf of the Lead Organisation, takes responsibility for the management and accountability of the project and will be the main contact point for all aspects of project management.
"Partner"	An umbrella term to refer to any organisation that the Lead Organisation intends to work with on the project, whether they are receiving REDAA funds or not, on the basis of an equitable partnership.
"Sub-grantee"	A partner organisation that is receiving REDAA funds through a formal sub-grant (with Grant terms and conditions) between them and the Lead Organisation. Sub-grantees normally contribute to the intellectual leadership and strategic direction of the project.
"Consultant"	An individual or an organisation providing a specific service to the project, with well-defined outputs and other deliverables, in return for a pre-agreed fee. Consultants would not normally own the resulting intellectual property from the work they deliver; rather, this would be owned by the Lead Organisation and typically shared with sub-grantees in the consortium.
"Locally led"	This refers to initiatives that engage residents in their design and implementation, and their leadership has strong local involvement. They are likely to employ and empower women and youth, and show concrete benefits for local communities.

*Please refer to Annex 4 of the REDAA Strategy for a full list of definitions

Lead Organisation

Concept Notes must name **one** Lead Organisation. This will be the organisation that will make an agreement with the REDAA programme and receive a grant, if the proposal is successful, and will be ultimately responsible for delivery and management of the project, including management of any partners.

Lead Organisations based within one of the three focal regions (sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia or Southeast Asia) will be prioritised for funding. A minority of projects with a Lead

Organisation based outside the region or country of focus may be considered for funding if the proposals demonstrate strong partnerships with locally led organisations.

Lead Organisations must be able to demonstrate that they are:

- **A non-profit organisation**, which may be a non-governmental organisation, research institution or community-based organisation that is legally registered in the country in which it operates
- **Experienced** in the kind of work they propose to undertake
- **Financially sound**
- **Staffed with the appropriate technical and financial capacity** and expertise to manage and implement projects successfully and deliver technical and financial reporting.

At Stage 2 (Full Proposal), the Lead Organisation will be required to provide the last three years of audited accounts. If possible, we ask that the applicant provide these at Concept Note stage – but it is not a mandatory requirement until Stage 2. At Concept Note stage, information is required about the average turnover (income) in GBP over the last three years. **The expected annual expenditure of the proposed project must be no more than 25% of this average annual turnover/income figure**.

An organisation may lead on more than one proposal, but an individual person may only be named as Lead Applicant (see below) on one proposal in any one call.

Lead Applicant

Concept Notes must name an individual Lead Applicant, who should also be the person submitting the Concept Note application form. This person, on behalf of the Lead Organisation, takes responsibility for the management and accountability of the project and will be the main contact point for all aspects of project management. This individual should therefore have appropriate level of experience, qualifications, authority, capability and capacity to manage the project, and should have a full understanding of their role and obligations to take responsibility for delivering value for money, managing risk and financial controls, and fulfilling the terms and conditions of the grant.

CVs (résumés) are not required for Concept Notes, but will be required for Stage 2 (Full Proposal).

An individual may only be named as Lead Applicant on one proposal in any given call, but an organisation may be Lead Organisation on multiple proposals.

Partner Organisations

The Lead Organisation may partner with one or more other organisations, including formation of a research consortium where applicable. In projects where Partner Organisations are involved, the project should be co-designed with those partners. Government agencies and inter-governmental and UN agencies may be vital project partners, and we strongly encourage such partnership, but they will not be eligible to receive funding from the REDAA programme.

Partner Organisations which may also be eligible sub-grantees (see Definitions box above) include:

- **Other non-profit organisations**, which may be non-governmental organisations, research institutions or community-based organisations
- **Private sector organisations,** businesses or business associations, which may be sub-granted (or contracted via a Consultancy agreement) to undertake specific planned actions for the project, provided this partnership can demonstrate value for money in its costs and benefits to the project.

The Lead Organisation will be responsible for conducting appropriate due diligence on sub-grantees, and managing agreements with them, managing and delivering the grant including the finance, reporting and governance. Further details on these expectations will be available during Stage 2 (Full Proposal).

Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), International Climate Finance (ICF) and REDAA locations

REDAA utilises UK government Overseas Development Assistance funds, therefore projects must promote the economic development and welfare of eligible countries as a primary objective. REDAA funding is also categorised as International Climate Finance, therefore it must additionally deliver climate adaptation and/or mitigation objectives.

Projects will in practice be expected to be mostly focused on **Low Income and Lower Middle-Income countries** (based on OECD DAC eligibility). Upper Middle-Income Countries (UMICs) are eligible; however, projects applying to work in a UMIC must clearly demonstrate a stronger case for support. This includes operating in areas of high importance for nature and climate and a clear gender equality and social inclusion need. Such applications must also clearly demonstrate that they will also:

- Advance knowledge, evidence and impact in **Least Developed or Low-Income Countries**, or
- Contribute to a **global public good**, for example by advancing understanding and/or strengthening the knowledge base related to ecosystem restoration, or
- Contribute to **serious and unique advancements** on a critical issue as a result of specific circumstances of the UMIC that could not be made elsewhere.

Eligible countries for this call are listed in the table below for each region per the ODA classification. For this call, REDAA is unable to fund initiatives in Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan due to the uncertain operating environment in those countries at this time.

Projects might operate in more than one country, including initiatives that seek to tackle transboundary drivers of environmental degradation. However, this is not a mandatory requirement.

REDAA Eligible Countries

ODA classification	REDAA – Eligible focal countries		
	Sub-Saharan Africa	**South Asia**	**Southeast Asia**
Low Income Countries			
	Angola	Bangladesh	Cambodia
	Benin	Bhutan	Lao People's Democratic Republic
	Burkina Faso	Nepal	Myanmar
	Burundi		Timor-Leste
	Central African Republic		
	Chad		
	Comoros		
	Democratic Republic of the Congo		
	Djibouti		
	Eritrea		
	Ethiopia		
	Gambia		
	Guinea		
	Guinea-Bissau		
	Lesotho		
	Liberia		
	Madagascar		
	Malawi		
	Mali		
	Mauritania		
	Mozambique		
	Niger		
	Rwanda		
	São Tomé and Príncipe		
	Senegal		
	Sierra Leone		
	South Sudan		
	Tanzania		
	Togo		

	Uganda		
	Zambia		
Lower-Middle Income Countries			
	Cabo Verde	India	Indonesia
	Cameroon	Pakistan	Philippines
	Congo	Sri Lanka	Viet Nam
	Côte d'Ivoire		
	Eswatini		
	Ghana		
	Kenya		
	Nigeria		
	Zimbabwe		
Upper-Middle Income Countries			
	Botswana	Maldives	Malaysia
	Equatorial Guinea		Thailand
	Gabon		
	Mauritius		
	Namibia		
	South Africa		

Landscapes and ecosystems

REDAA encourages action to protect, conserve, restore and/or manage sustainably terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems, but does not prescribe a list of specific ecologies or landscapes in which it aims to support initiatives. Rather it encourages potential grantees to demonstrate in their proposals the rationale for their choice of location and scale of their operation. In making their choices, potential grantees may wish to consider, but should not be limited to, the ecologies and landscapes identified in work undertaken to prepare the REDAA Strategy (see Annex 3 of the REDAA Strategy).

Project requirements

Locally led research-to-action

REDAA will fund **locally led research-to-action**, where the main partner is a non-profit organisation with effective systems for supporting Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' efforts to improve their evidence, tools, civic space and governance powers**.**

Locally led initiatives engage residents in their design and implementation, and their leadership has strong local involvement. They are likely to employ and empower women and youth, and show concrete benefits for local communities.

Research-to-action aims to generate or supply rigorous scientific research; improve the demand for the resulting knowledge (for example by improving incentives, capacity, processes and approaches for using the new evidence); and better connect the demand for, and supply of, evidence used to influence key decisions (for example by fostering better interactions and collaborations between research providers and users).

Research in this context will improve the evidence base on key ecosystems and livelihoods, and on how to move from degraded to restored ecosystems. It will pay attention not only to ecological concerns, but also to social, political and economic issues. Research approaches should be scientific, involving clear research questions and/or hypotheses and systematic observation. They should also be rigorous, involving design, methods and conclusions that are explicit, public, replicable, open to critique, and free of bias. Methods may be quantitative, qualitative or participatory. They often need to be diverse to explore different stakeholders' perspectives and issues of gender equality and social inclusion, and potentially to uncover challenging structural features of power and politics.

Impact of locally led research-to-action initiatives is likely to be optimised when the right mix of approaches appropriate to the context is chosen. Initiatives should be designed to achieve a clearly expressed context-specific impact that equally clearly contributes to the overall anticipated REDAA programme impact, which is 'Improved understanding and decisions about natural landscapes in Africa and Asia enabling people and nature to thrive together in a changing climate'. With such a clear focus on 'intended' impact, initiatives will also be in a strong position to identify and manage possible unintended impacts, whether positive or negative.

Positive and integrated action for nature and climate

All REDAA-supported **initiatives should demonstrate how they will take positive and integrated action for nature and for climate** adaptation and resilience.

Climate change and nature loss are having many negative impacts on people: food and water insecurity, pandemics, conflict and instability, supply chain vulnerability, economic shocks, reversals in development gains, and displacement of people spatially, economically and socially. Most of these impacts on people are disproportionately affecting marginalised groups.

An integrated approach is needed. As well as impacts on people, climate change and nature loss damage the functioning and resilience of natural and climate systems themselves.

Climate change accelerates nature loss, which in turn worsens the effects of climate change. They also share many common causes. In many cases, taking action in one area can benefit the others. REDAA is guided by the need to be aligned with *both* the Glasgow Climate Pact agreed at the UN Climate COP26 and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework agreed at the UN Biodiversity COP15.

Proposals are invited to act positively to tackle the *linked* challenges. REDAA seeks to ensure:

- **Sustainability** – where nature benefits and does not limit people's wellbeing, while people protect and don't degrade nature.
- **Moderation** – where natural and climate system feedbacks are positive, nature moderating the weather and storing carbon, while the climate is conducive to nature thriving.
- **Resilience** – where a stable climate enables resilient livelihoods and economies, reducing vulnerability and associated conflict, while people's activities mainstream climate.

Proposals should therefore:

- Specify the main *climate change and nature loss challenges* that will be tackled.
- Identify the main *"nature-positive" outcomes* the proposal seeks – in terms of protection, restoration, regeneration and/or improved management – where relevant in specified ecosystems or landscapes.
- Identify the main *"climate-positive" outcomes* the proposal seeks – in terms of mitigation or adaptation – where relevant for specified economies, sectors, infrastructure, or livelihoods.
- Indicate any major *trade-offs* expected between people, nature, and climate outcomes, and how they will be handled in scientifically valid, ethical (see **Ethics** section) and policy-relevant ways.
- Indicate the path that the proposal will take, including how the proposal will support *relevant national, sector and/or local policies and plans* in context (notably National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans for nature, Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, and zero-carbon plans for climate).

Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)

Gender equality is about addressing inequalities and transforming the distribution of opportunities, choices and resources available to girls, women and non-binary individuals so that they have equal power to shape their lives and participate in the process thereby increasing equality between people of all genders.

Social inclusion refers to the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society, and the process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people disadvantaged and historically excluded from decision making and spheres of influence on the basis of their identity to take part in society. It should be noted that stakeholders are not homogenous groups, and have additional layers of diversity and social identity including gender, ethnicity, caste, age, religion, sexuality, disability status, refugee and migrant status and income that need to be considered within the design and delivery of projects.

All REDAA-supported initiatives must consider how they will contribute to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics, with activities expected to deliver equitable net benefits for all.

Regard for and a prioritisation of gender equality and social inclusion is clearly set out in, amongst others: the International Development Strategy (Gender Equality) Act 2014, UK's International Development Strategy (2022) and UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The approach taken to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social backgrounds and ensuring individuals achieve equitable outcomes will be assessed further at Stage 2 (Full Proposal).

As no action is neutral, by not giving due consideration to GESI, projects could unintentionally exacerbate inequalities, reinforce barriers or cause harm to already disadvantaged groups.

Projects that have successfully considered or even mainstreamed GESI appropriately into their design at an early stage, including assessing the implications for everyone, are considered to result in more equitable outcomes because they understand and reflect their community needs. Projects that are able to demonstrate the **integration of GESI considerations in their design and delivery plans**, are likely to **score more highly** than those that cannot. All projects are expected to report indicators disaggregated by gender where applicable.

Some questions to consider early on:

- What are the prevailing gender and social norms in the host country in relation to division of labour, access and control of resources, and ability to participate in decision making?
- How do these prevailing norms affect the project, in terms of what it can achieve, how will it engage with stakeholders and how it needs to be designed?
- How will the project impact (positively and negatively) different groups of people, regardless of sex or gender identity, age and other signifiers of difference, in their
- domestic, economic and community roles and responsibilities and in term of access to and control over assets?
- How will the project ensure equitable opportunities for different groups of people, regardless of sex or gender identity, age and other signifiers of difference, to influence and participate in decision making?
- Does the intervention address underlying barriers that exclude certain groups from accessing opportunities created?

- How will risks and unintended negative consequences be identified, avoided or mitigated against, and monitored?

Thematic priorities

Projects must address one or more of the following thematic priorities. Please read the REDAA Strategy for further details.

1. **Local research and capability for research:** locally led evidence generation, including on local and traditional knowledge, and developing local research capability, local research networks and appropriate data systems, and installing local research into national or regional information systems.
2. **Resource and land use assessments:** integrated multi-objective participatory natural resource and land use assessments, and decision support tools such as scenarios and spatial analyses that incorporate biophysical, social, political and economic data and information.
3. **Business models:** development by non-profit and community organisations, and co-development with enterprise partners, of productive business models based on ecosystem goods and services that are sustainable, equitable and climate-resilient.
4. **Financing mechanisms:** establishment of finance mechanisms and finance flows for locally led initiatives that are direct, patient and long-term.
5. **Inclusive governance systems:** improvements by locally led initiatives of the security of tenure and resource rights of Indigenous people and local communities, and of inter-disciplinary, cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder decision-making and governance of landscapes, ecosystems and restoration initiatives.

Ethics

In addition to issues of safeguarding and inclusion highlighted elsewhere in this document, projects will be expected to meet key principles of good ethical practice and to demonstrate this in the Stage 2 (Full Proposal) application. This includes:

- **Ensure compliance**: projects should ensure they meet all legal and ethical obligations of all countries and organisations involved in the project including, where relevant, access and benefit-sharing legislation pertaining to the utilisation of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.
- **Maximise benefits in the Global South:** projects should maximise benefits for local organisations and local people in the Global South, including through their involvement as project leaders and researchers, through fair remuneration and through empowerment, and capacity strengthening.
- **Respect rights:** projects should ensure that the rights and dignity of individuals, communities and groups are fully respected and that their participation in the project is voluntary, fully informed and agreed in advance, adhering to the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).
- **Act with integrity:** projects should be conducted with integrity and transparency; lines of responsibility and accountability should be clearly defined and shared with partners; research independence should be maintained and where conflicts of interest cannot be avoided, they should be made explicit.

- **Recognise different knowledge systems**: projects should recognise – and seek to incorporate - the value and importance of traditional knowledge, alongside international scientific approaches, and methods.

Open access

The UK Government is committed to push for greater transparency in the availability and use of data to improve accountability, decision making, and to help deliver sustainable development outcomes for nature and people. Projects are likely to generate significant outputs including datasets (with anonymised data), best practices, peer-reviewed journal articles and technical reports which will be of value to other countries and stakeholders.

All evidence and data produced must be made available as Open Access (i.e. freely available and accessible to all), unless there are particular sensitivities involved (protection of sensitive data, protection of intellectual property or cultural values of Indigenous Peoples or other traditional knowledge holders). Data collection, analysis, management and storage protocols should be established to ensure the integrity of evidence and its subsequent use within the project, REDAA and beyond.

At Stage 2 (Full Proposal), the application should demonstrate that the publication of results and secure data storage has been thought through, a plan exists, and appropriate resources are included.

Costs associated with making research and data open access can be included in the requested budget under Other Direct Costs (for example Article Processing Charges that may be charged by some journals for making articles available as open access) but be realistic about when articles will be published. It is likely that dates will fall outside the formal project, so it is worth considering matched funding for these costs.

Further information on open and enhanced access can be found on GOV.UK.

Budgeting

For this call, REDAA will fund projects between £200,000 and £500,000 (GBP - British Pound Sterling). Matched funding is not required but is strongly encouraged.

At Concept Note stage, applicants only need to provide the total amount being requested from the REDAA grant for the proposed project (excluding any planned matched funding).

Below are some guidance notes to help cost your budget for the Concept Note. More detailed guidance will be provided for Stage 2 (Full Proposal). Value for Money of proposed projects will be assessed in detail at Stage 2.

You should include all direct costs (directly attributable to the project) required to carry out your project, including:

- Staff salaries (salary ‘on-costs’ which include any contracted benefits and pension contributions – but exclude any overheads/indirect cost element) to carry out the work, which should include appropriate level of time for research staff as well as project management/support staff (unless these staff are covered by institutional overheads).
- Consultants.

- Travel and subsistence to fulfil necessary project activities (whilst being mindful of the need to minimise the project's carbon footprint).
- Capital items/Equipment [noting that no more than 10% of the total budget should be allocated to these costs, except in exceptional circumstances where a robust justification for exceeding the 10% cap will be required during Stage 2 (Full Proposal).
- Other Direct Costs, including consumables, materials, meeting and workshop costs (non-travel items) necessary for fulfilling the project activities and directly attributable to the project. This may include Open Access journal fees. You will need to include within this cost category funds to cover an end-of-project audit on the Lead Organisation. If audit costs are unknown, please ring-fence £3000 in the budget for this purpose. Further details on audit requirements will be available for Stage 2 (Full Proposal).
- Costs to be sub-granted or contracted to Partner Organisations, following the same cost categories as above.

Indirect costs (or 'overheads') for the Lead Organisation and sub-grantee organisations may also be included in the budget. These costs (which include institutional overheads and costs which cannot be directly attributed to the project) must be reasonable and justifiable overheads related to the project; the grant cannot subsidise other activities of the organisations involved.

To be considered reasonable and justifiable, the costs claimed must be less than or equal to the organisation's actual overheads for the project and appropriately apportioned between all the organisation's activities/projects. The amount claimed for indirect costs will need to be supported by evidence, audited financial statements and/or internal cost recovery policies. Such evidence will be requested at Stage 2 (Full Proposal). The maximum proportion of indirect costs permitted is **no more than 20%** of the total project costs.

Further details on eligible and ineligible costs can be found in the FCDO's Eligible Cost Guidance document. You may wish to familiarise yourself with this document ahead of Stage 2 (Full Proposal). Ineligible costs include, among others: Costs incurred outside of the project start and end dates; gifts; contingency line for inflation or foreign exchange; any class of travel other than 'standard economy'; alcohol and tobacco (these must be removed from any subsistence payments). Government agencies and inter-governmental and UN agencies cannot receive REDAA funds.

Organisational requirements

Safeguarding

Lead Organisations must be able to demonstrate, during the Stage 2 (Full Proposal) application process, that they have the following in place:

- A **safeguarding policy**, which includes a statement of commitment to safeguarding and a zero-tolerance statement on inaction to tackling bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- A detailed and up to date **register of safeguarding issues** raised and how they were dealt with.
- **Clear investigation and disciplinary procedures** for allegations and complaints, as well as a clear processes for disclosure.
- **Proactively shared** safeguarding policies with all **partners**, ensuring that they understand and meet the required standards, offering support where required.
- An **accessible and clearly communicated whistle-blowing mechanism** which protects whistleblowers from reprisals and includes clear processes for dealing with concerns raised.
- **Clearly identified, and assessed safeguarding risks** in the project risk framework as well as a process for monitoring of those risks.
- A **Code of Conduct** signed by all staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours – inside and outside the workplace – and what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards.

In addition, we strongly encourage:

- A **recruitment approach** that includes appropriate background checks of new recruits and consultants.
- **All staff trained** in safeguarding.

If the Lead Organisation does not have some of the above requirements in place, please contact us as early as possible to discuss eligibility further.

Risk management

While not required at Concept Note stage, risk management is a key component of successful projects and will need to be detailed at Stage 2 (Full Proposal).

Successful projects will be required to provide:

- A risk register used for identifying, estimating and evaluating the risks and planning and implementing risk responses
- A delivery chain risk map used for understanding, capturing and managing risks to the successful delivery of the project in relation to sub-grantees.

Project leaders (Lead Applicants) will be responsible for ensuring that project risk management is embedded in the appraisal of options, evaluating alternatives and making informed decisions throughout the project.

The following risk types should be monitored:

Risk type	Description
Context	Institutional; political; conflict; economic; climate change / environment; natural disaster; public health; social / cultural; other in-country socio-political events or unrest, or natural disasters.
Operational	Duty of care; personnel security and safety; human resources; other internal capacity and capability to manage the project (professional competence, experience and appropriate level of resource in managing programmes and funds).
Delivery	Procurement; technical; capacity to deliver; delivery chain / downstream partners; financial instability / funding insecurity; do no harm; assets; other associated with achieving the aims and objectives of the project (likely to be higher for innovative or high impact programmes).
Safeguarding	Beneficiary safeguarding; staff safeguarding; other 'doing harm' including sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, safety and welfare, or unintended harm to beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff.
Reputational	Communications; relationships; public engagement; other interventions or delivery partners' actions risk any partner's, including FCDO's and IIED's, reputation.
Fiduciary	Fraud - conflict of interest; fraud - corruption; fraud - contract fraud (bid rigging, facilitation payments, price fixing, non-competitive tendering); fraud - ghost or illegible beneficiaries; fraud - inappropriate recruitment; fraud - misuse of assets; fraud - payment fraud; fraud - salary and allowance fraud (including expenses); fraud - theft of assets (non-cash), fraud - theft of cash; fraud - unsupported expenditure; other funds not used for intended purposes or not accounted for.

Due diligence

The Lead Organisation of successful Concept Notes will need to complete a detailed due diligence questionnaire as part of Stage 2 (Full Proposal). IIED will conduct due diligence checks on the Lead Organisation using the information provided in this questionnaire as well as publicly available information, to assess its capacity and capability to run successful projects and to comply with donor requirements. Grant agreements will be awarded to successful Stage 2 proposals subject to the outcome of the due diligence checks.

The Lead Organisation will be responsible for conducting their own due diligence checks on project partners, and for documenting the process and outcomes of these checks.

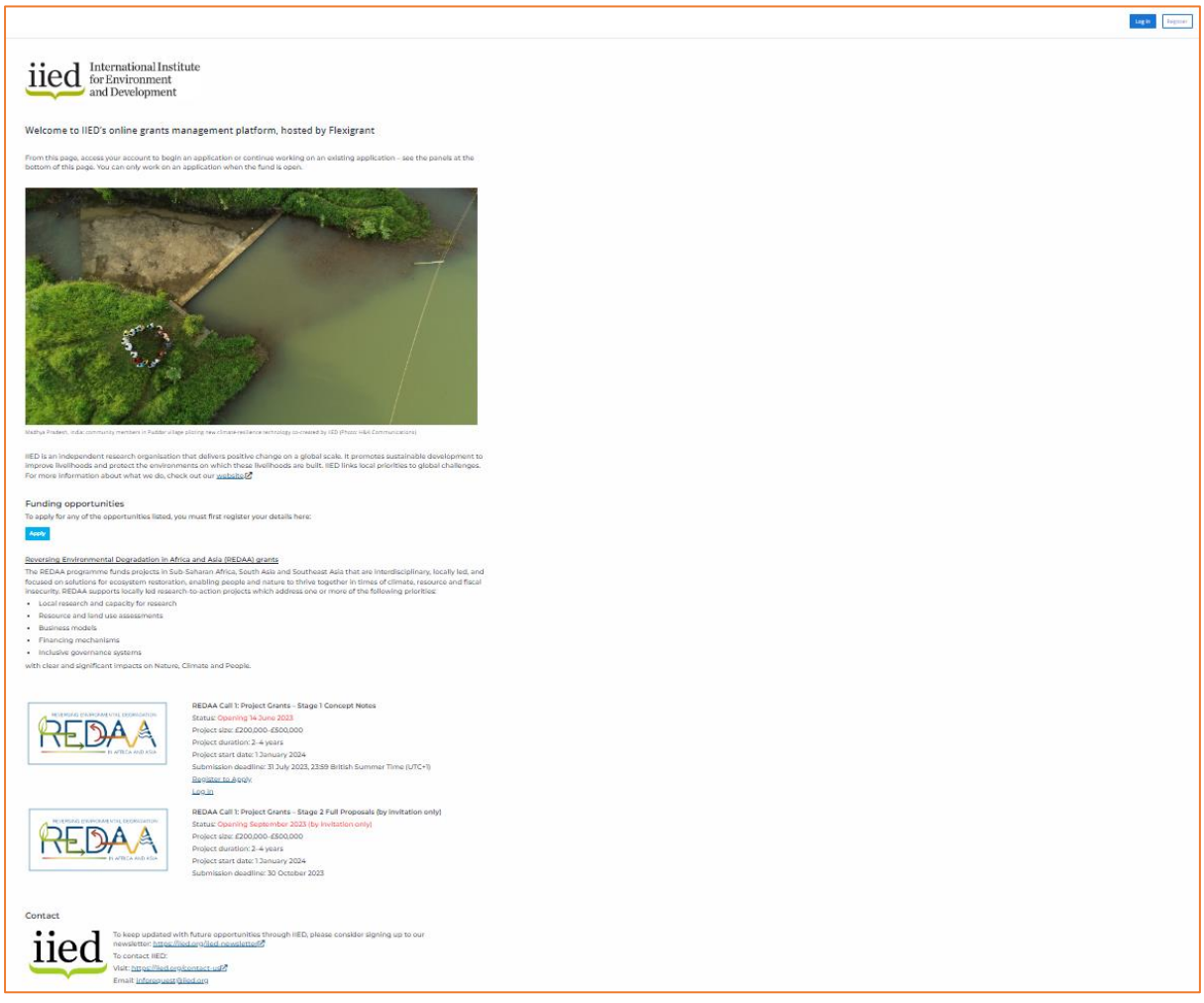
Application process for Concept Notes

The REDAA application process uses an online grants management platform (https://grants.iied.org/) through which all Concept Note applications must be submitted. We hope you will find it easy enough to use and we promise that there are some human beings behind it all who will receive your application and who can be contacted for support! Please let us know if you have problems using the online system by emailing enquiries@redaa.org.

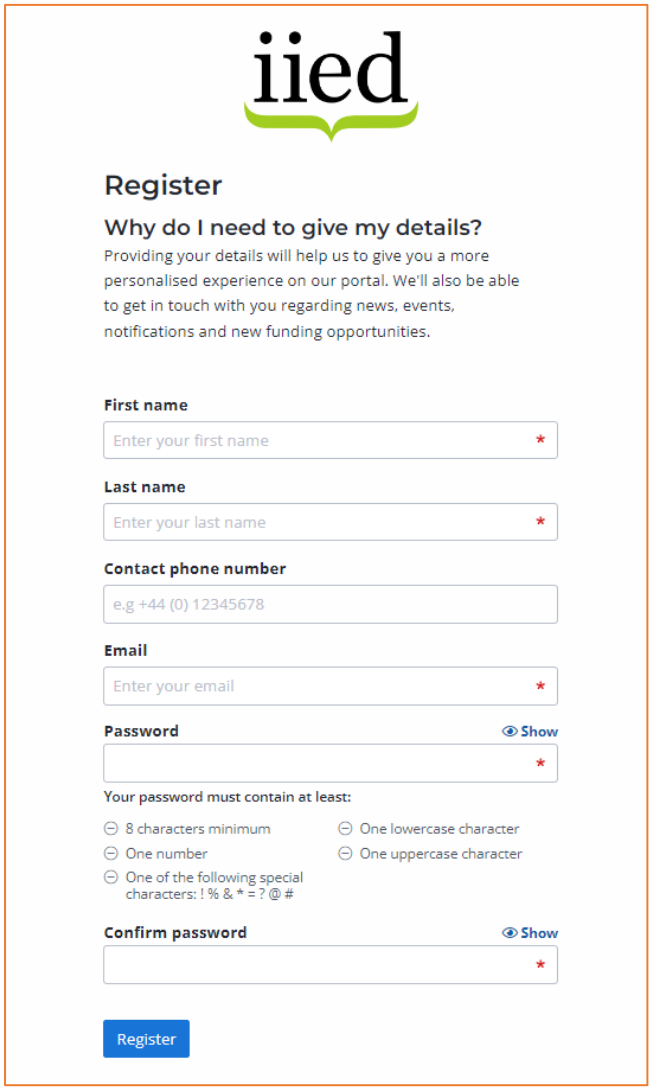
The REDAA programme has the longer-term ambition to be able to accept proposals in multiple languages, but for this first grant call we are only accepting proposals in **English**. However, panel reviewers will be briefed and asked not to penalise applicants for less-than-perfect use of the English language, and to take into account that English may not be the applicant's first language.

Concept Notes must be submitted by the Lead Applicant. The Lead Applicant will need to **register** their details on the website before they can start an application. Please follow the steps below.

Snapshot of the IIED Grants homepage:

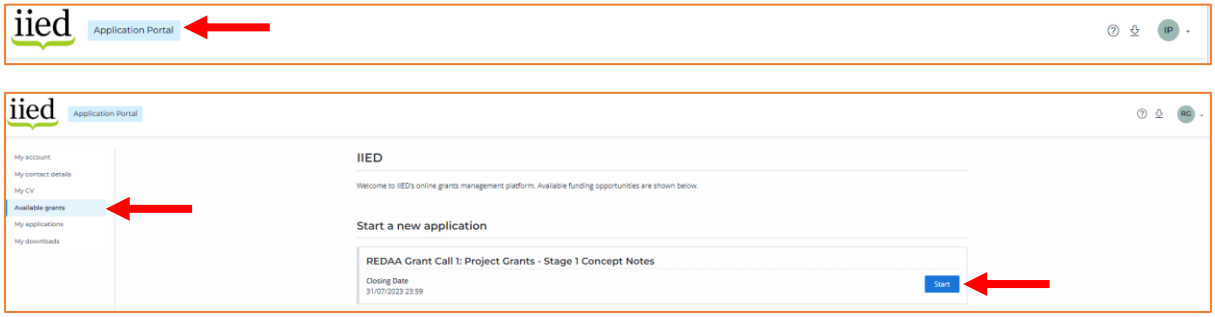


Registration page:



You will be sent an email to confirm your email address is correct, which you will need to click on to complete the registration process.

Once registered, you should be able to **log in** to your account, locate the relevant REDAA call through the **Available grants** button, and click **Start** an application.



Submission deadline

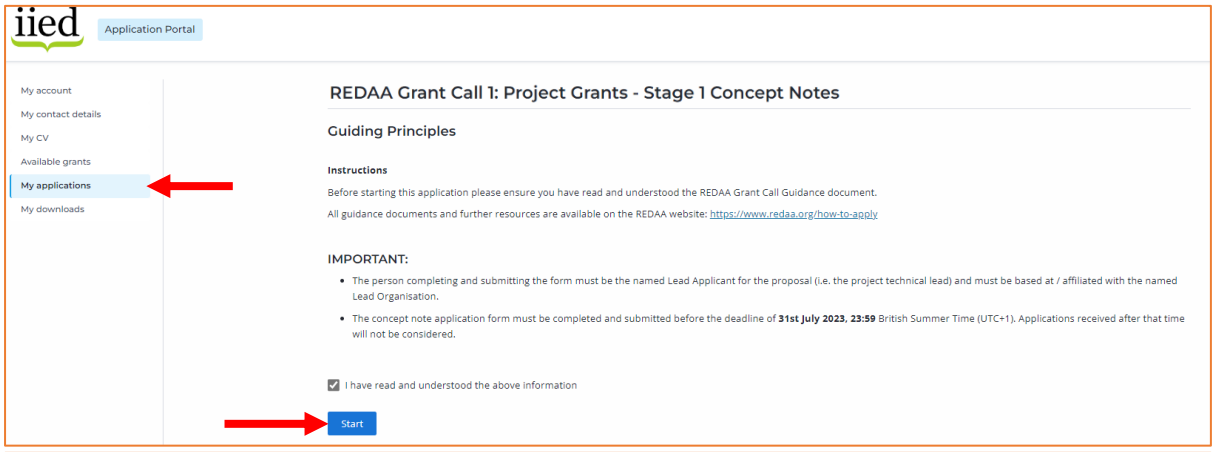
Concept Note applications must be submitted via an online form on Flexi-Grant before the deadline of **31 July 2023, 23:59 British Summer Time (UTC+1).** Applications received after this date will not be considered.

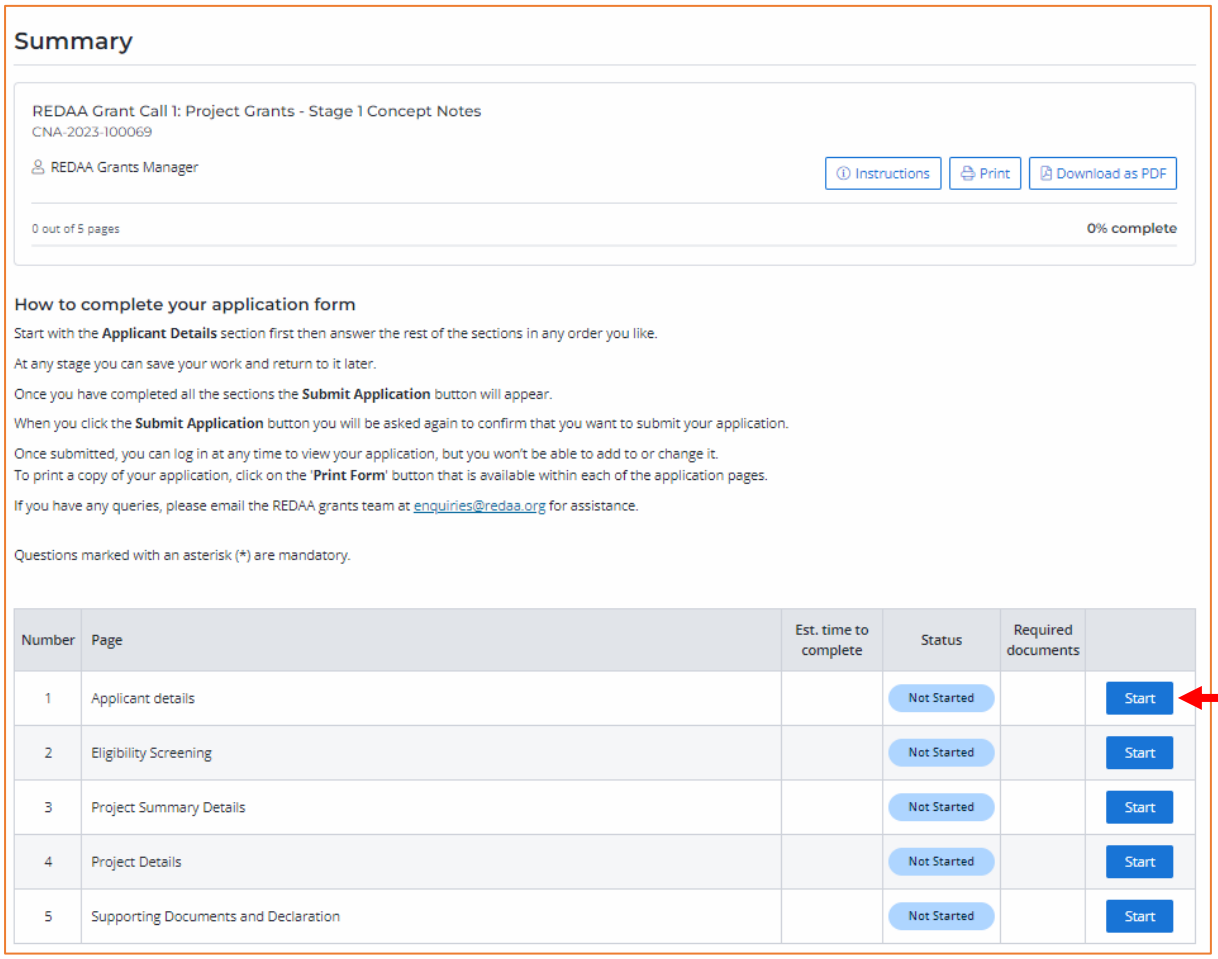
Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit well in advance of the deadline in case of technical difficulties. **The REDAA support desk will only be available in normal UK business hours (09:00-17:00 BST/UTC+1)** so if you encounter technical difficulties on deadline day after these hours there might not be support available.

Online application form – 'question by question' guidance

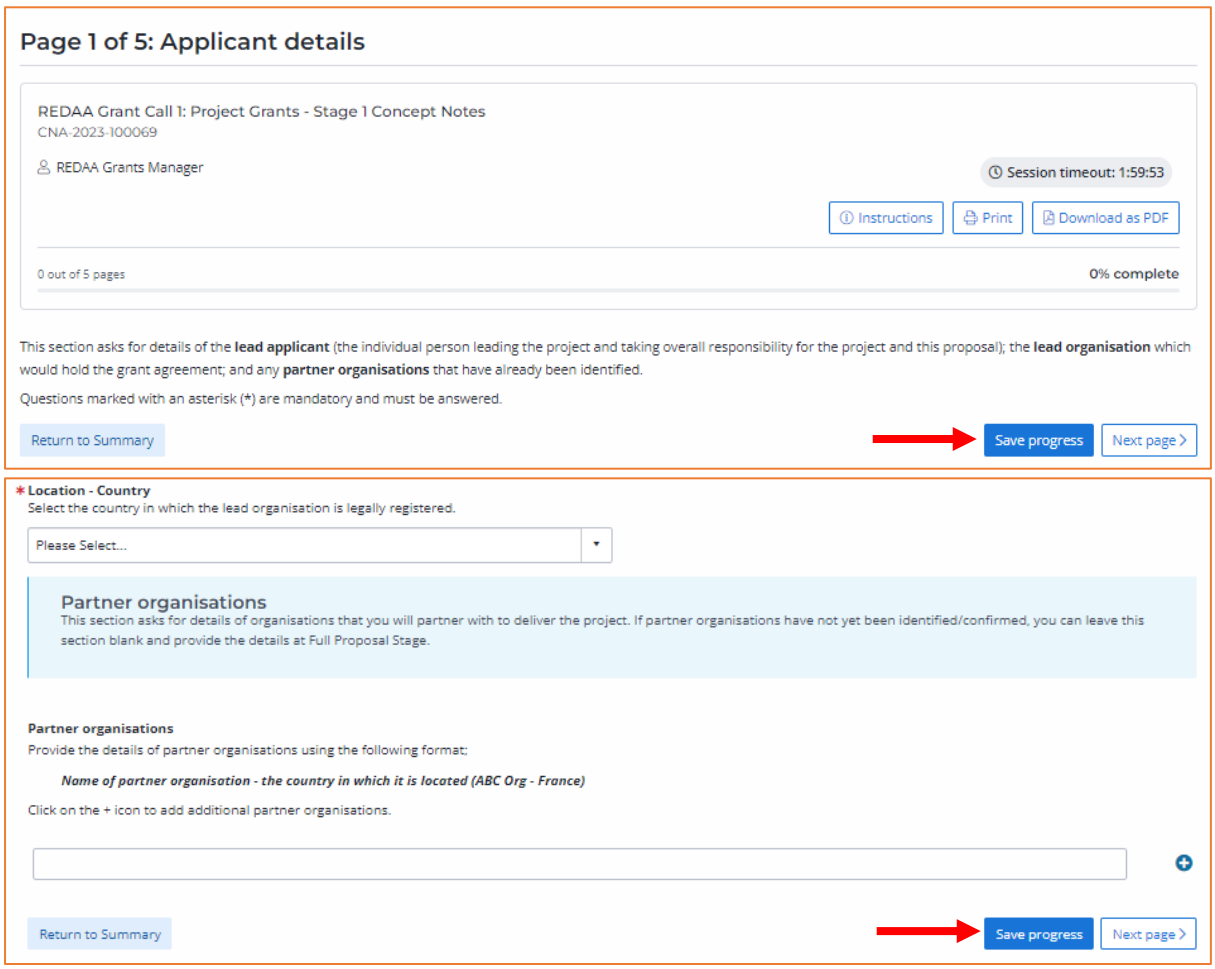
General

- Start with the **Applicant Details** section first then answer the rest of the sections in any order you like.

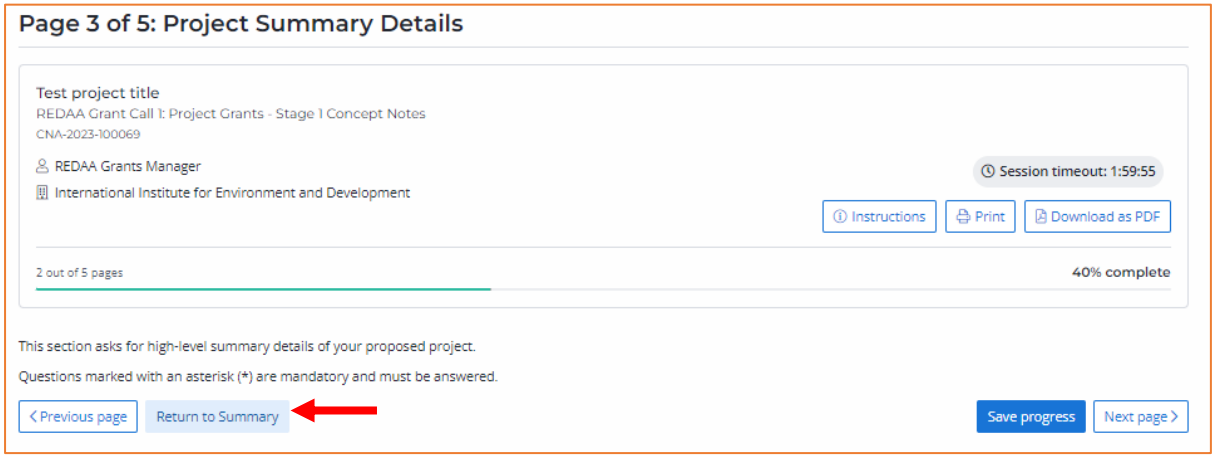


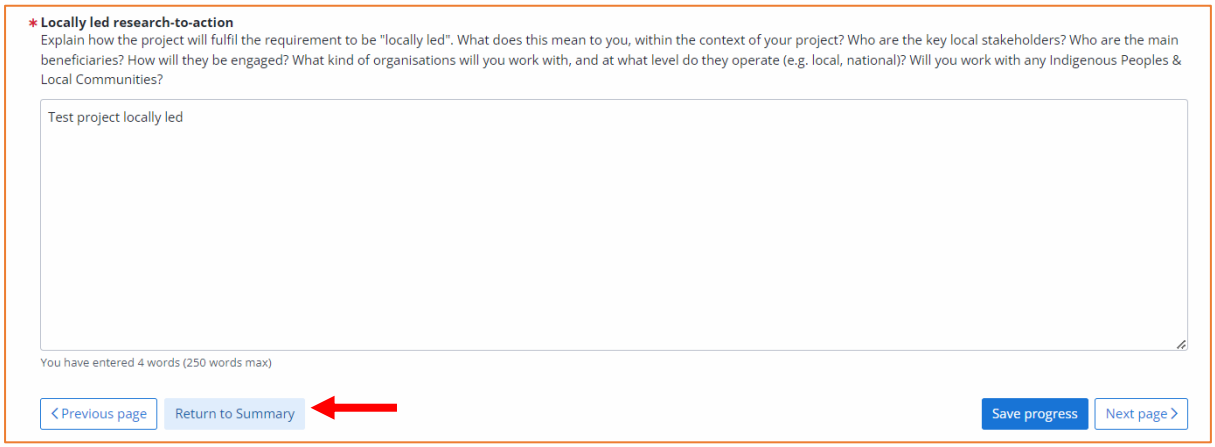


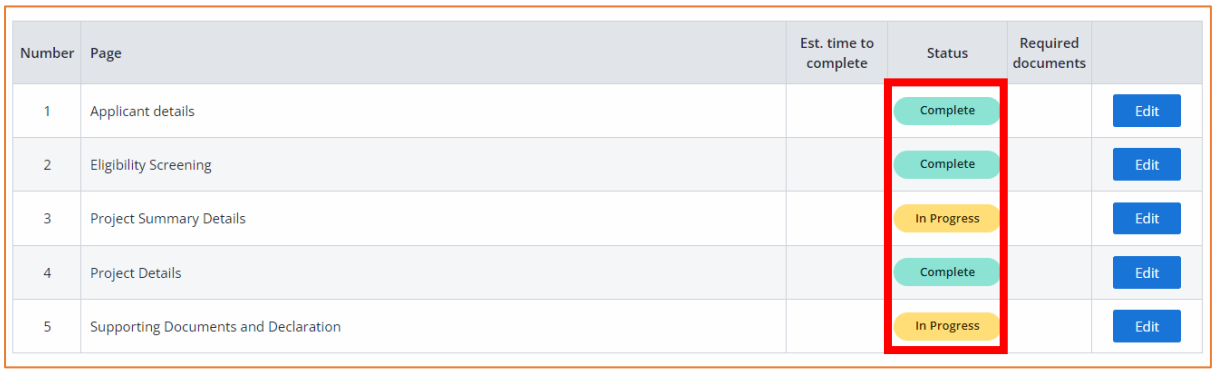
- At any stage you can save your work at the top or the bottom of the page and return to it later.

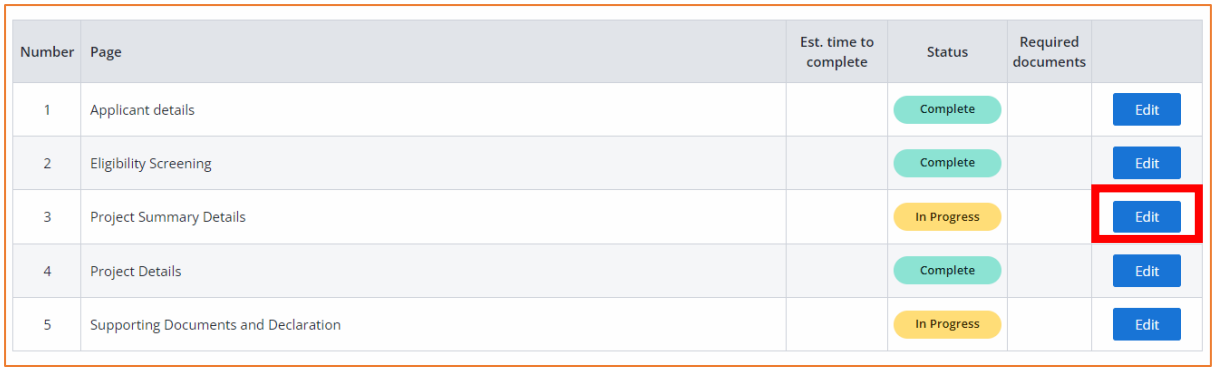


- You can go back to the summary page of your application at any time by clicking the button at the top or bottom of the page. You can check your progress per page and navigate directly to the chosen page by clicking the **edit** button.

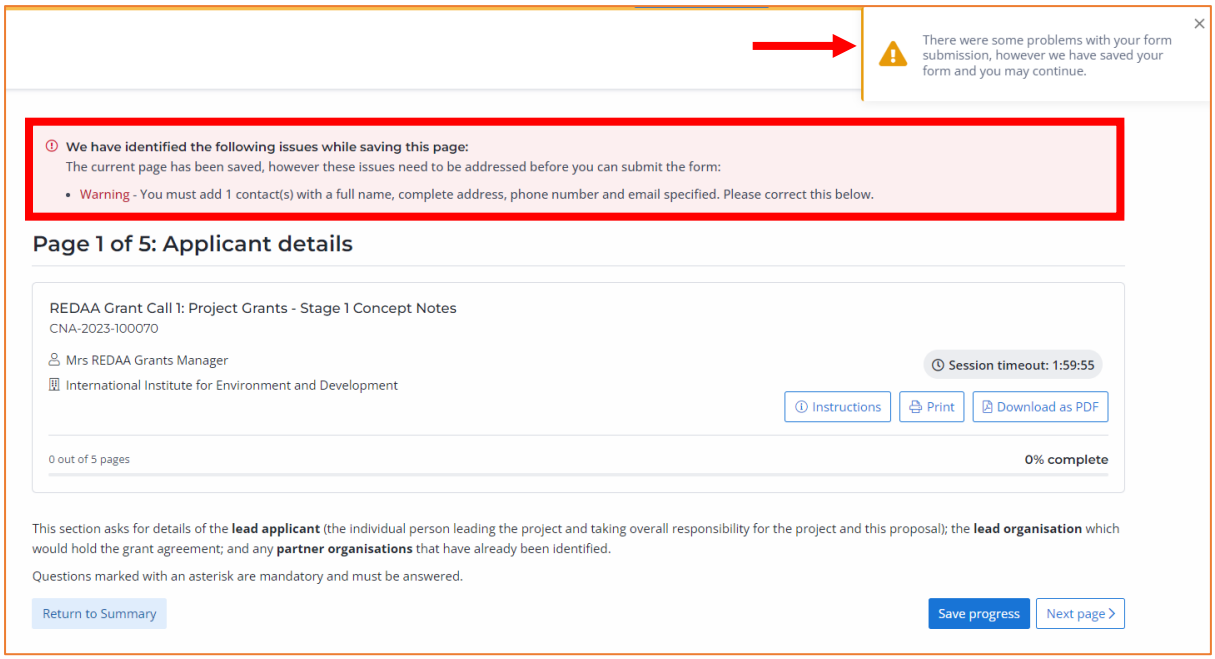




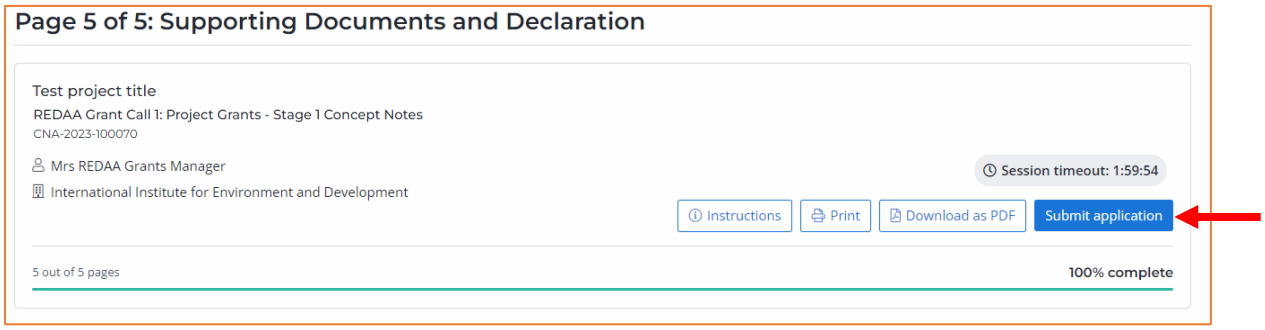




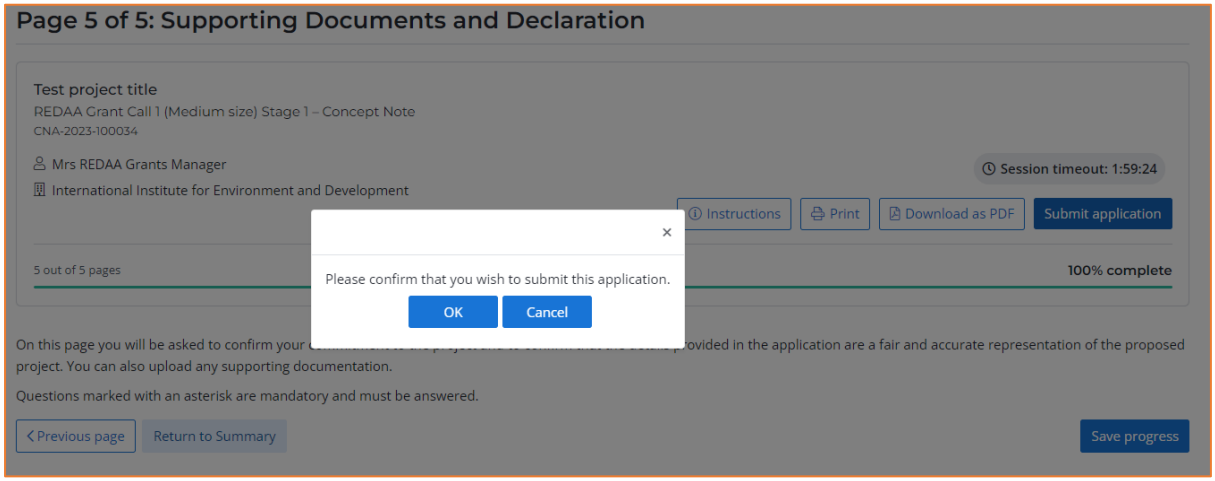
- If you save one page without completing all the mandatory sections, warning messages will pop up. Progress will still be saved but you will not have the ability to submit your application.



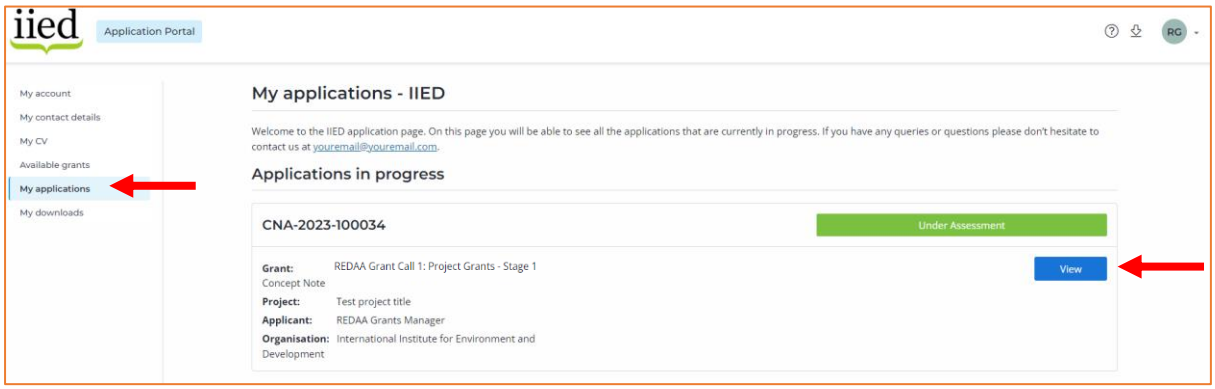
- Once you have completed all the sections the **Submit Application** button will appear.



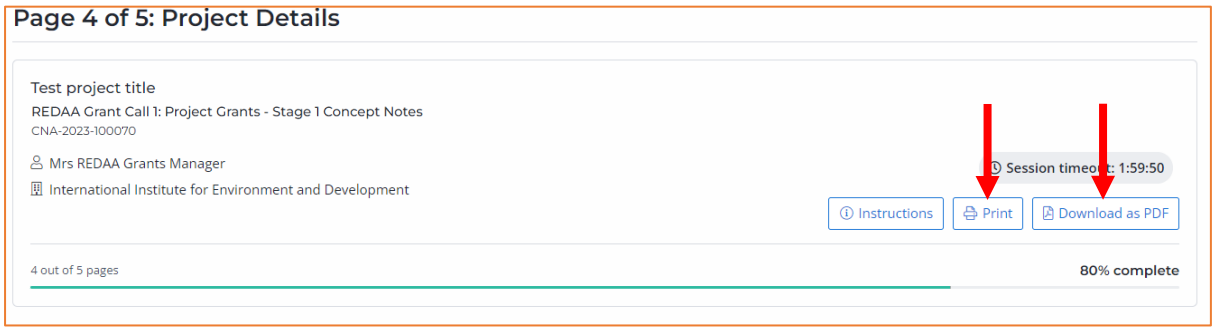
- When you click the **Submit Application** button you will be asked again to confirm that you want to submit your application.



- Once submitted, you can log in at any time to view your application, but you will not be able to add to or change it.



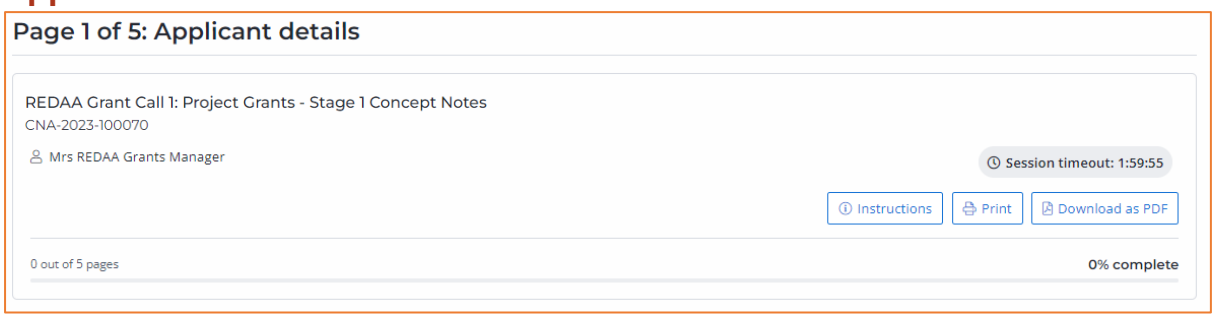
- To print/save a copy of your application, click on the **Print Form** or **Download as PDF** buttons that are available within each of the application pages.



- If you have any queries, please email the REDAA grants team at enquiries@redaa.org for assistance. Please include in the email subject line what your query relates to.

- Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are **mandatory**, and the Concept Note cannot be submitted until these are completed.

Applicant details



- This section asks for details of the **Lead Applicant** (the individual person leading the project and taking overall responsibility for the project and this proposal); the **Lead Organisation** which would hold the grant agreement; and any **Partner Organisations**

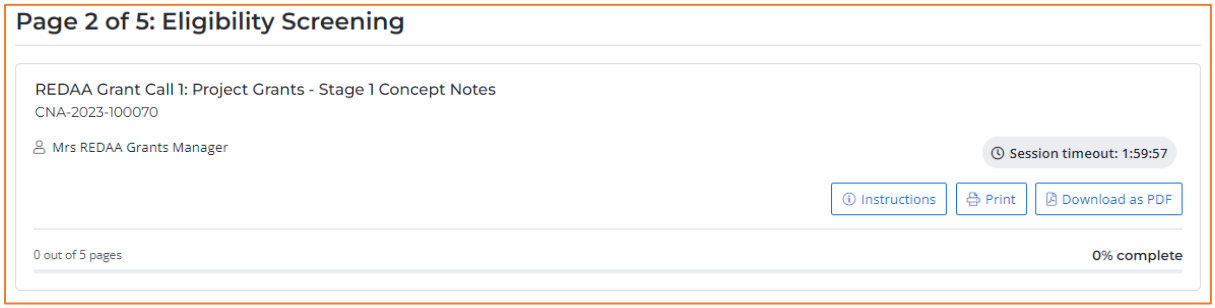
that have already been identified.

- When entering telephone numbers, please ensure you include a valid country code prefix.

- In this section, the **Location–Region** and **Location–Country** refer to where the Lead Organisation is legally registered. This might be outside of where the project will be implemented.

- Partner Organisations: this section asks for details of organisations that you will partner with to deliver the project. If Partner Organisations have not yet been identified/confirmed, you can leave this section blank and provide the details at Stage 2 (Full Proposal); however, any details you can provide at Concept Note stage regarding your plans for partnerships will be advantageous for the review and selection process.
    - Provide the details of partner Organisations using the following format: "Name of Partner Organisation - the country in which it is located" (for example "ABC Org – France")
    - Click on the **+** icon to add additional Partner Organisations.

Eligibility screening



- The questions in this section will be used to screen for your organisation's eligibility to receive a REDAA grant for the proposed project. Please make sure you have read this Guidance for Applicants document and the REDAA Strategy to check your eligibility before applying.

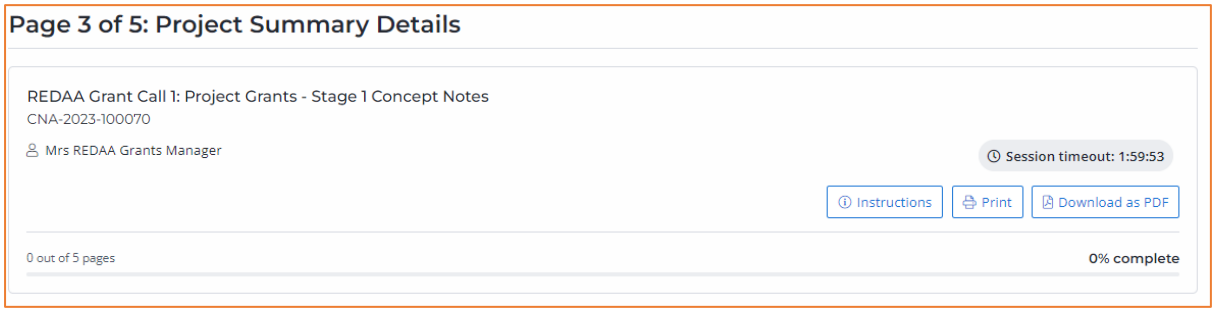
- Other UK government funding: we ask for details of any other UK government funding that you have been awarded, or that you have applied for, for your proposed project, to get a sense of how much overlap there is with other funding programmes and to check that funding is not being duplicated.
    - Provide the details of other funding/applications using the following format:

"Funder name - Funder scheme - Funder grant reference (if applicable) - application status" (for example "Defra – Darwin Initiative – ABC123 – Proposal for similar project submitted in October 2022 but unsuccessful")
- To add additional funder details, click on the **+** icon.

- Turnover: this question asks for the Lead Organisation's average annual turnover (income) in GBP over the last three financial years. The figure should be converted to GBP using today's exchange rate on OANDA.com. The figure quoted should be supported by the figures in the annual audit reports.
  - The expected annual expenditure on the proposed project should not exceed 25% of the Lead Organisation's average annual turnover/income.

- Annual audit reports upload: please upload the last three available audited accounts for the Lead Organisation. These can be provided as PDF or Word documents. If possible, we ask that the applicant provide these at Concept Note stage – but it is not a mandatory requirement until Stage 2. If you are unable to provide the reports at this time, please provide an explanation. In that case, the REDAA team may need to follow up with the Lead Applicant to obtain further details.

Project Summary Details



- This section asks for high-level summary details of your proposed project.

- Project title: provide a short but descriptive title for your project which conveys what the project is about. [Maximum 20 words]

- Project summary: provide a brief summary of your project, describing: the problem it is trying to address, its aims, and the key activities you plan to undertake. Write this section for a non-technical audience, using simple, jargon-free language. [Max. 100 words]

- REDAA Outputs: select which of the three REDAA Outputs your project will contribute to. You can select more than one if applicable. Please refer to the REDAA Strategy for further details on each output.
  - Output 1: Evidence and actionable information
  - Output 2: Technical approaches and tools
  - Output 3: Capacity and institutional arrangements

  Following the selection of relevant outputs, the form requires you to explain briefly how your project will contribute to the ones selected [Max. 100 words per

output]. These fields are mandatory, so please enter "N/A" if the output is not applicable to your project; but you must provide a full answer for the output(s) that have been selected.

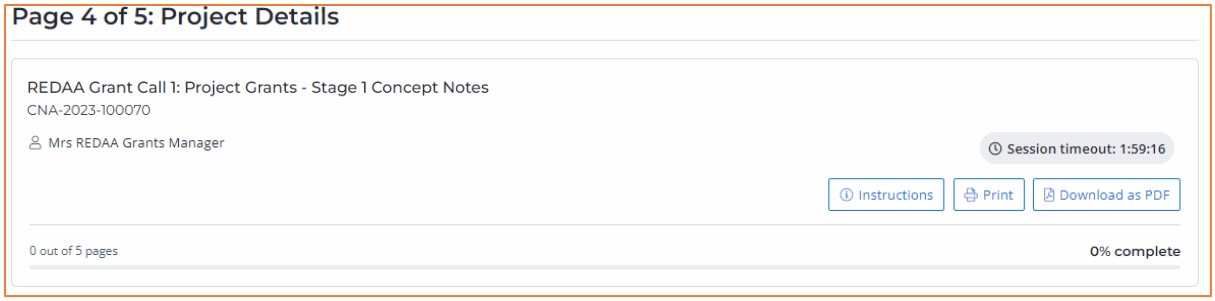
- Project location: please select which of the three REDAA focal regions your project will work in (South Asia, Southeast Asia or sub-Saharan Africa). You can only select one region.

- Project countries: please select the countries your project will be working in within your focal region. You may select more than one country. Only eligible countries are shown, so if a country is not listed it means it is not eligible for funding from REDAA.

- Project end date: the start date is fixed as 1 January 2024. Please enter the proposed end date of your project. The project duration must be between 2 and 4 years, so the end date should be between 31 December 2025 and 31 December 2027.

- Project budget: at Concept Note stage, you only need to provide the total amount being requested from the REDAA grant for your proposed project, in GBP (British Pound Sterling). This figure should be between £200,000 and £500,000 and presented as a whole number (no decimal places). Please **do not** include any planned co-funding/matched funding in this figure.

Project Details



- This section asks for more detail about your proposed project - what it seeks to achieve, and how it will go about it.

- Problem / Opportunity: please describe the problem that your project seeks to address (and/or the opportunity it seeks to seize). Specifically: What is the environmental degradation issue, and does it relate to specific ecosystem(s) and/or landscape(s)? What is the policy, market or community opportunity that the project seeks to grasp [Max. 100 words]

- Background/context: please provide some background/context to this problem. For example: Why is the problem important or particularly relevant now? What previous research has been conducted on the problem, and how will your proposed project build upon that? Please use this section to demonstrate your understanding of the wider context and literature and how your proposed project relates to it. [Max. 250 words]
  If you cite other work in this section, please ensure you upload a reference list as an

attachment [Max. 1 page] at the end of the application form.

- REDAA Research-to-action priorities: please select which of the five REDAA research-to-action thematic priorities your project aims to address/contribute to. Please refer to the REDAA Strategy for further details on the thematic priorities before making your selection. You may select more than one priority, but please only select those that are relevant to your project – your project will not score more highly by selecting multiple priorities, and the reviewers will be checking that your project design does truly align with the priority/ies selected.

- Objectives and outcomes: please describe the main objectives of your proposed project and expected outcomes. [Max. 250 words]

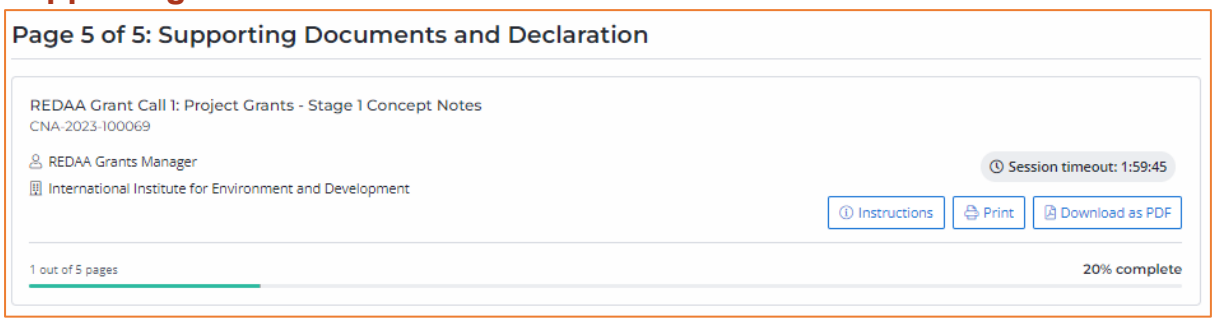
- Impact: there are three questions on impact, which are all mandatory:
    - Impact on Nature: describe the planned impacts/longer-term changes expected from your project on nature (for example biodiversity, ecosystems, environmental/ecological issues) [Max. 100 words]
    - Impact on Climate: describe the planned impacts/longer-term changes expected from your project on climate (for example climate mitigation, adaptation) [Max. 100 words]
    - Impact on People: describe the planned impacts/longer-term changes expected from your project on people (for example social equality and inclusion, livelihoods). [Max. 100 words]
      There is the opportunity to go into further detail on gender equality and social inclusion in a later question.

- Methods and Activities: describe the methods, approaches and activities your project will use to fulfil the objectives and achieve the intended outcomes and impacts. How will you undertake the work (materials and methods)? Are the methods tried and tested / best practice in the field, or are they new, innovative or experimental? [Max. 500 words]

- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion: please explain how the project will address gender and other social equality issues. Please situate your response in the local/national/regional context as applicable so that it is clear what the relevant issues are and how your project will address these. [Max. 250 words]

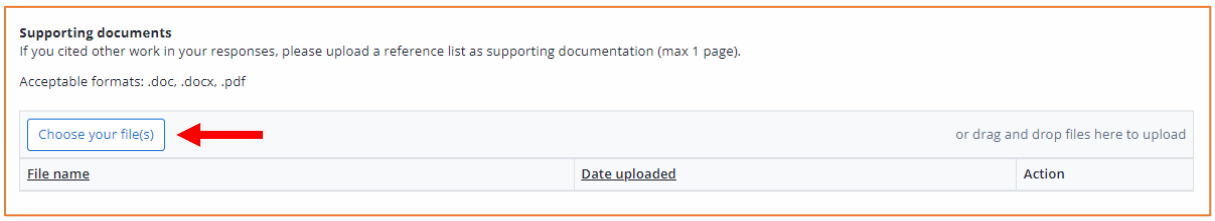
- Locally led research-to-action: explain how the project will fulfil the requirement to be "locally led". What does this mean to you, within the context of your project? Who are the key local stakeholders? Who are the main beneficiaries? How will they be engaged? What kind of organisations will you work with, and at what level do they operate (for example local, national)? Will you work with any Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities? [Max. 250 words]

Supporting documents

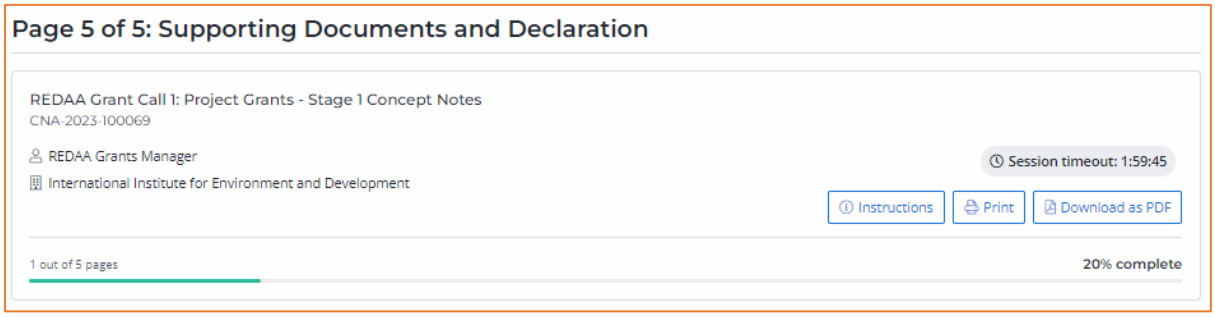


- There are no mandatory attachments for the Concept Note stage. However, if you cited other work in your Background/Context response, please upload a reference list [Max. 1 page] as a PDF or Word document. If your reference list attachment exceeds 1 page, it will be removed from the application prior to review. Please use a standard font, font size and margins (for example Arial or Calibri, minimum font size 10, minimum margins 2cm).

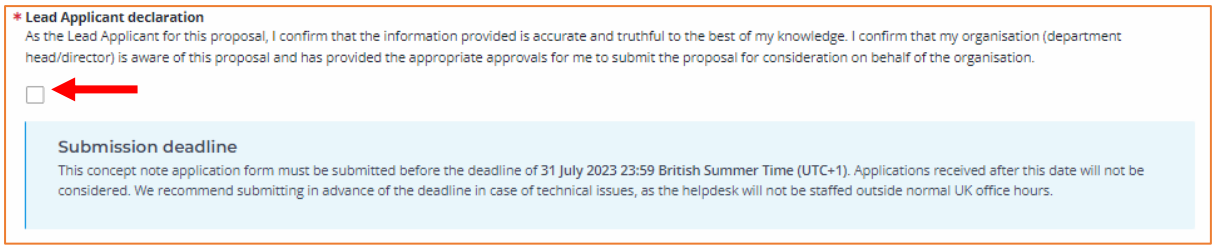
- Other than the reference list (see above point) and Lead Organisation's audited accounts (attached earlier on in the online form), please **do not** include any other attachments in your Concept Note applications. Any other attachments will be removed from the application and will not be seen by the reviewers.



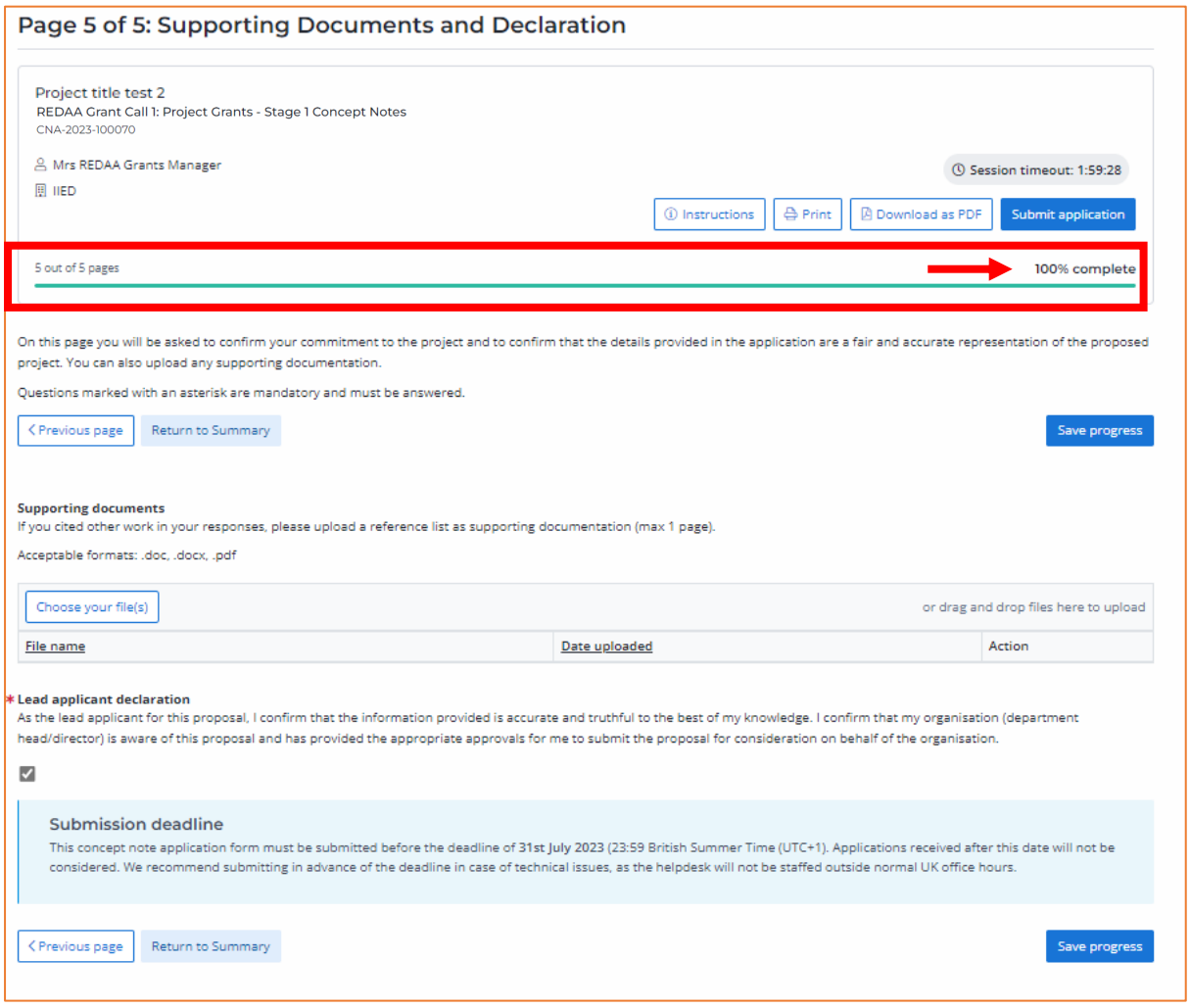
Lead Applicant declaration



- This section is where the Lead Applicant must declare that the information provided is accurate, and that the relevant authority at the Lead Organisation has approved the Concept Note for submission. It is the responsibility of the Lead Applicant to ensure their Head of Department or Director or equivalent is aware of the project proposal and that they have given the Lead Applicant permission to submit the Concept Note on behalf of the Organisation. At Stage 2 (Full Proposal) signed letters of support from the Lead and Partner Organisations will be required.

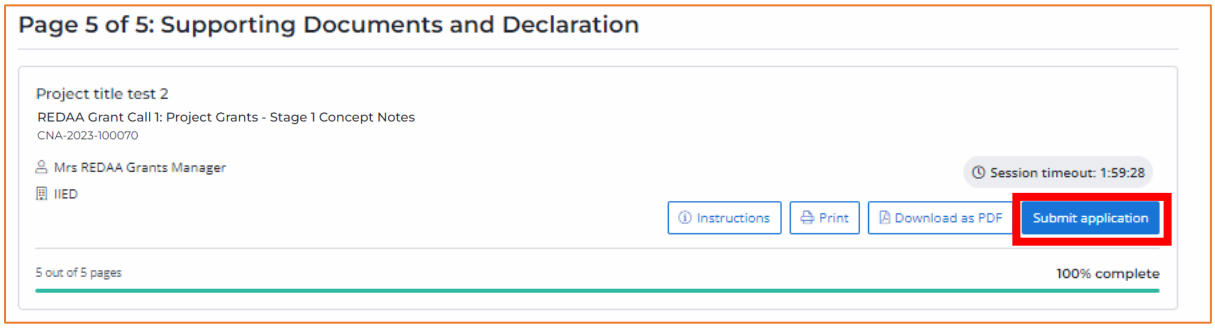


- You will only be able to submit the Concept Note once all the mandatory fields have been completed. It is the responsibility of the Lead Applicant to check/proof-read the forms prior to submission.



- The Concept Note must be submitted before the deadline of **31 July 2023, 23:59 British Summer Time (UTC+1).** Applications received after this date will not be considered. We recommend submitting in advance of the deadline in case of technical issues, as the helpdesk will not be staffed outside normal UK office hours.

- Once the form is complete, the **Submit Application** button should appear. Once you have checked the forms and you are happy to submit, please click the **Submit Application** button. When you click the **Submit Application** button you will be asked again to confirm that you want to submit your application.



Offline resources

The Concept Note must be completed and submitted using the online platform. However, a Word version of the form is also available to download from the Grant Call 1 Resources webpage. This can be a useful tool for drafting the Concept Note collaboratively with colleagues and Partner Organisations. Once drafted in the Word version, the Lead Applicant will then need to copy and paste the data into the online form. We strongly encourage careful proof-reading/checking the text in the online form before submission in case the data pastes incorrectly or word limits have been exceeded (in which case the online form will automatically truncate the text).

Review and Selection process

General process

- Eligibility screening: once submitted, Concept Note applications will first undergo Eligibility Screening by REDAA programme staff to check that the application meets the eligibility criteria and that the form has been completed properly. After checking for reviewer conflict of interests, eligible and complete applications will each then be allocated to three reviewers. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be rejected at this stage.
- Panel review: reviewers will be asked to evaluate the Concept Notes against 7 key criteria (see below), giving each a score between 0 (Not demonstrated) to 6 (Strong demonstration) and providing supporting comments to justify their scores. Applications that receive consistently low scores from all three reviewers may be rejected at this stage.
- Steering Committee review: panel review scores and comments will be passed to the REDAA Steering Committee to review the higher-scoring applications as well as any receiving inconsistent scores from the panel members. The Steering Committee will consider the scores and comments received by the panel reviewers, as well as the portfolio of potential projects (across geographies, landscapes/ecosystems, REDAA outputs and thematic priorities) and make final decisions on this basis as to which applicants will be invited to submit an application for Stage 2 (Full Proposal).
- Feedback: the REDAA team will aim to inform applicants of the outcome of their Concept Note in early September. However, we may not be able to provide detailed feedback to every applicant due to the volume of applications received.

Evaluation criteria

Concept Notes will be evaluated against the following criteria. The seven criteria will be weighted equally at Concept Note stage.

Criteria	Description
1. Research-to-action rigour	To what extent does the Concept Note demonstrate that the proposed initiative would pursue **rigorous, coherent and feasible** research-to-action approaches including research and knowledge mobilisation, engagement, evidence communication, capacity building, tool development and/or policy and practice influencing?
2. Alignment with REDAA thematic priorities	To what extent does the Concept Note demonstrate that the proposed initiative would **address one or more of the 5 REDAA thematic priorities** [Local research and capability for research; Resource and land use assessments; Business models; Financing mechanisms; and/or Inclusive governance systems]?

3. Positive impacts on nature	To what extent does the Concept Note demonstrate that the proposed initiative would result in **positive action for nature**?
4. Positive impact on Climate	To what extent does the Concept Note demonstrate that the proposed initiative would **directly address climate change impacts or increase climate resilience**?
5. Locally led	To what extent does the Concept Note demonstrate that the proposed initiative would be led by organisations with effective systems supporting Indigenous Peoples and local communities' work, engaging residents in a relevant area in its design and implementation, and with local staff strongly involved in the initiative's leadership?
6. Positive impacts on gender equality and social inclusion	To what extent does the Concept Note demonstrate that the proposed initiative would **positively address gender equality and social inclusion?**
7. Appropriate location and scale	To what extent does the Concept Note demonstrate that the proposed initiative would be carried out in **appropriate locations** and at an **appropriate and feasible scale of operation**?

In assessing each Concept Note, the reviewers will refer to the following indicators of extent to which the Concept Note meets each criterion:

Criteria	Indicators
1. Research-to-action rigour	• Clearly describes the problem and/or opportunity to be investigated and the questions that will guide the research process, situating these within the scientific literature and existing knowledge • Identifies specific gaps in knowledge and/or implementation, how these will be tackled along with clear entry points into policy and practice • Presents a convincing design with clear objectives, activities that clearly contribute to meeting these objectives, clear expected outcomes that are feasible within the timeframe and resources of the project, and impacts anticipated from these outcomes • Describes coherently how the project will contribute to one or more of the three REDAA outputs (knowledge, tools, governance) • Explains a context-specific and appropriate approach to address the problem and/or opportunity identified, including outline of conceptual framework, data collection and analysis, tool development (where relevant), capacity building (where relevant) and clear approaches for communication, engagement and policy/practice influence. This includes explanation of choice of methods, scale, disciplines and interaction of disciplines.

2. Alignment with REDAA thematic priorities	• Addresses at least one of the five REDAA thematic priorities. • Project details and methodology clearly align with the selected thematic priority/ies.
3. Positive impacts on nature	• Will make a clear contribution to an identified environmental/ecological/restoration need in the country/ies • Clearly demonstrates how it aims to deliver lasting benefits for nature with a clear impact pathway • The work is new and additional, building on, not repeating past or duplicating current activities.
4. Positive impacts on climate	• Will make a clear contribution to an identified climate-related need in the country/ies • Clearly demonstrates how it aims to deliver lasting benefits in tackling climate change impacts or improving climate resilience with a clear impact pathway • The work is new and additional, building on, not repeating past or duplicating current activities.
5. Locally led	• Led by an organisation based within the region or country of interest, or led by an organisation that clearly demonstrates strong partnerships/links to organisations within the region or country of interest • Led by an organisation with effective systems supporting Indigenous Peoples and local communities' work • Engages residents in a relevant area in its design and implementation • Local staff strongly involved in the initiative's leadership.
6. Positive impacts on gender equality and social inclusion	• Provides a clear rationale for the proposed approach to addressing GESI dimensions in an integrated or specific way, grounded in the local context which is clearly described • Considers GESI dimensions in a manner that goes beyond references to women, to considers other dimensions of social identity and difference • Ensures the project design is coherent with the stated approach to GESI • Clear on how the research is likely to reduce inequalities (or is likely to have a minimal impact on GESI).
7. Appropriate location and scale	• Country/ies, ecosystem(s) and/or landscape(s) identified are highly relevant to the problem or opportunity being addressed • Rationale behind the selection of this location is clearly articulated • Location is within eligible REDAA country/ies • Scale of the project seems appropriate to meeting the proposed objectives • Scale of the project seems feasible within the time and resources available.

For each of the 7 criteria, the panel reviewers will assign a score of the extent to which the Concept Note demonstrates it is met, using the following scale:

Score	Description
6	**Strong Demonstration**: substantial evidence presented that it meets all the of indicators, with no concerns raised; the majority of which are met to a high standard. There may be a few minor issues which if addressed may improve the project, but they are unlikely to be detrimental to the delivery of the project and should not prevent it from being funded without changes being made.
5	**Good Demonstration**: good evidence presented that it meets most of the indicators, with no major concerns identified, and to a high standard. There are minor issues that could improve the project but should not prevent it from being funded. It is likely to significantly contribute to the objectives of the fund.
4	**Acceptable Demonstration**: the proposed project meets most of the indicators, no major concerns identified. The indicators it does meet are often met to a good standard. There are a few minor issues that would improve this project which they would be advised to consider if funded. It is likely to contribute to the objectives of the fund.
3	**Emerging Demonstration:** the proposed project meets many of the indicators but with some concerns raised. The indicators met are largely to an acceptable standard, and the concerns can be addressed. It has the potential to contribute to the objectives of the fund, if the issues are addressed to strengthen it.
2	**Weak Demonstration:** the project meets some of the indicators or has raised concerns. Those indicators it does meet are to a modest standard, but the application requires important changes to address the concerns and indicators in order to make it competitive.
1	**Minimal demonstration**: the proposed project is unsatisfactory and meets only a few indicators, or raises important concerns. The proposal is likely to require significant revision.
0	**Not demonstrated**: the project fails to meet any of the indicators outlined and raises serious concerns for example flawed approach, subject to serious technical difficulties or risks, unclearly written that it cannot be properly assessed, or is duplicative.

Information session, enquiries, FAQs and further support

The REDAA team will host an online webinar on **20 June 2023 at 09:30-10:30 British Summer Time (UTC+1)** to present key points about this first REDAA Project Grants call, and to answer applicants' questions. Register to attend the webinar here.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be posted on the REDAA website: https://www.redaa.org/frequently-asked-questions. We will add to the list of FAQs as we receive more questions from potential applicants.

If you have a question or need further support, please contact the REDAA team at enquiries@redaa.org. Please include in the email subject line what your query relates to.

Please ensure you read the REDAA Strategy, this Guidance for Applicants document, and the online FAQs before contacting the helpdesk with a question.

Contact

If you have any queries about this grant call, please contact us:

Email: Enquiries@redaa.org

Visit: https://www.redaa.org/contact

Please also consider signing up to the REDAA newsletter: https://www.redaa.org/#sign-up to keep up to date with future grant calls and other updates from the programme.