

RCA Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

Revision of Procedure for RCA Projects Supported by the Technical Cooperation Programme of the IAEA

Background:

The RCA PAC Meeting held on 6-10 May also reviewed the sections of the GOR related to the process and procedure for the development of the RCA projects (Annex 8 of the GOR) and made changes to the existing text to improve clarity as well as reflect the proposed changes in processes and procedures recommended in by this Meeting.

The following is a summary of the revisions recommended by PAC. The Original Procedure and the Revised Procedure are given in Annexes A and B, respectively.

Summary of the revisions recommended:

1. Division of steps in the procedure into three stages; namely, the Pre-Concept State, the Concept Stage and the Design Stage in order to improve clarity.
2. Removal of the limit of two Pre-Concepts per GP, retaining the condition there should be only one Pre-Concept in a given technological area.
3. Inclusion of a limit of two Project Concepts per GP. This limit will not apply to fully EB funded projects.
4. Provision of the details of suitably qualified and experienced contact persons by the NRs, who could provide or assist in the provision of the requested information to facilitate preparation of Project Design Documents by the LCC. This should be done within one month after the NRM at which projects are selected for the design stage.

The PAC also recommended that the updated 1st Round and 2nd Round Project Concept Templates be used for the preparation of the concept proposals for the 2022/2023 TC Cycle.

Proposed action:

Approval of the revised procedure for development of RCA Projects with amendments if any, and for revising Annex 8 of the RCAGOR accordingly.

**PROCEDURE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE RCA PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE
TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME OF THE AGENCY**

- (a) Between May and August in the year N-3, in the lead-up to the GCM of that year, NRs, in consultation with national topic experts, will prepare and upload pre-concept project proposals onto the RCARO website for sharing with all GPs. NRs are specifically requested to ensure pre-concept proposals have a regional focus featuring the application of nuclear technique/s, that they meet the other basic RCA criteria, and that no more than two pre-concept proposals be submitted from each GP. Furthermore, any two concepts from the GP should not address an essentially similar focus in any technological area. Fully EB funded pre-concepts will not be counted in the limit, going through the same evaluation process as the TC-funded pre-concepts. Once all pre-concepts are uploaded, NRs will examine the possibility of merging projects.
- (b) Prior to the GCM held in the year N-3, and after all pre-concepts have been submitted, the RCA PAC will review the pre-concepts to ensure they meet the basic, essential criteria of an RCA project. Chair RCA PAC will report the Committee's findings to the GCM, with a view to reaching consensus of the NRs as to which proposals go forward to be developed into Project Concept Papers. The RCA FP will provide a background information sheet on anticipated budget and implementation options for a RCA project to the GPs at the start of Project Concept process.
- (c) The GCM held in year N-3 requests the NRs to make the necessary consultation in their respective countries towards the development of Project Concept Papers, to be submitted to the RCA Chair by the respective NR according to the schedule decided by the GCM.
- (d) The RCA Chair will provide the Project Concept Papers to the RCA PAC, which will evaluate them on the basis of criteria and timeline agreed by the NRs.
- (e) The NRM in year N-2 will decide the list of Projects to proceed to the design stage and their prioritisation, referring to the prior evaluation from the RCA PAC. The NRM will also decide on the LC for each Project.
- (f) The NR of the LC will appoint a LCC who will finalise the Concept Papers for the relevant Projects, in the format specified. The NRs will submit the final Concept Papers to by the specified deadline. The RCA Chair will, in turn, submit them to the Agency.
- (g) The Agency shall provide feedback on the Concept Papers to the RCA Chair. This will include a verification of conformity to TC criteria.
- (h) The RCA Chair shall request LCCs, through the NRs, to subsequently design the projects in consultation with the relevant counterparts in other participating RCA GPs and submit to the Agency via the TC Report platform (<https://tcreports.iaea.org>). The Regional Project Documents are drafted according to the specified format, before the specified deadline. The Agency shall assist the LCCs in this task, which may include arranging a meeting of the LCCs at the Agency's Headquarters for consultations with the Agency, its relevant Technical Officers and Project Management Officers, and RCA PAC.
- (i) The Agency shall provide all the relevant details of the RCA projects to be implemented in year N to the NRs after the Technical Cooperation Programme is finalized by the Department of Technical Cooperation and approved by the Agency's Board of Governors.

**PROCEDURE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE RCA PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE
TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME OF THE AGENCY**

The project will be developed in three stages as follows.

Pre-Concept Stage (for consolidation of project concepts in similar areas)

- (a) Between May and August in the year N-3 (N is the first year of the relevant TC cycle), in the lead-up to the GCM of that year, NRs, in consultation with national topic experts, will prepare and upload pre-concept project proposals onto the RCARO website for sharing with all GPs.

NRs are specifically requested to ensure pre-concept proposals have a regional focus featuring the application of nuclear technique/s, that they meet the other basic RCA criteria. There is no limit on the number of pre-concepts submitted by each GP. However, any two pre-concepts from a GP should not address an essentially similar focus in any technological area.

As pre-concepts are uploaded, NRs will examine the possibility of merging projects using the same or similar technological applications

- (b) Prior to the GCM held in the year N-3, and after all pre-concepts have been submitted, the RCA PAC will review the pre-concepts to ensure they meet the basic, essential criteria of an RCA project. Chair RCA PAC will report the Committee's findings to the GCM, with a view to reaching consensus of the NRs as to which proposals go forward to be developed into Project Concept Papers.

The RCA FP will provide a background information sheet on anticipated budget and implementation options for a RCA project to the GPs at the start of Project Concept process.

Concept Stage (for identifying projects that can be carried forward)

- (c) The GCM held in year N-3 requests the NRs to make the necessary consultation in their respective countries towards the development of Project Concept Papers, based on the consensus reached in (b) above. They should be submitted to the RCA Chair by the respective NR according to the schedule decided by the GCM. No more than two Concept Proposals shall be submitted by any GP. Fully EB funded projects will not be counted in this limit. All Concept Proposals will go through the same evaluation process.
- (d) The RCA Chair will provide the Project Concept Papers to the RCA PAC, which will review them on the basis of criteria and provide a feedback. The NRs may consider revising the Concept Papers based on the feedback of the RCA PAC.
- (e) The NRM in year N-2 will decide the list of Projects to proceed to the design stage and their prioritisation, referring to the prior evaluation from the RCA PAC. The NRM will also decide on the LC for each Project.

Design Stage (for designing selected projects)

- (f) The LC NR will appoint a LCC who will prepare the project design documents.

- (g) With respect to the facilitation of the preparation of Project Design Documents for projects approved by the NRM, NRs shall arrange for the provision of the details of suitably qualified and experienced contact persons, who could provide or assist in the provision of the requested information. This will be undertaken within one month after the NRM.
- (h) The RCA Chair shall request LCCs, through the NRs, to subsequently design the projects in consultation with the relevant counterparts in other participating RCA GPs and submit to the Agency via the TC Report platform (<https://tcreports.iaea.org>). The Regional Project Documents are drafted according to the specified format, before the specified deadline. The Agency shall assist the LCCs in this task, which may include arranging a meeting of the LCCs at the Agency's Headquarters for consultations with the Agency, its relevant Technical Officers and Project Management Officers, and RCA PAC.
- (i) The Agency shall provide all the relevant details of the RCA projects to be implemented in year N to the NRs after the Technical Cooperation Programme is finalized by the Department of Technical Cooperation and approved by the Agency's Board of Governors.