

Proposal

Setting up RCA Scholarship Programme in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (RCA SPS)

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Table of Contents

I. Why the RCA SPS is needed?

II. What is the objective of the RCA SPS?

III. How the RCA SPS works?



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I. Why the RCA SPS is needed?

1. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education is critical to sustainable development in the 21st century because through STEM education, students develop the key skills: critical analysis, independent thinking, initiative, creativity, problem solving, teamwork, communication, and digital literacy.



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2. STEM education is a prerequisite for developing a workforce skilled in nuclear science and technology, which brings nuclear technology into full play in support of sustainable social and economic development.



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3. The building of nuclear workforce under the RCA has been carried out for many years (over the last 10 years, more than 130 RTCs were organized and attended by more than 2570 participants). These RTCs were short (only one or two weeks).



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Such training courses are very useful to serve specific purposes of each individual project. However, unless complemented with a education towards a higher degree and specialization, the contribution of such efforts is limited in deepening and expanding the development of the required human resources for safe, secure and peaceful utilization of nuclear technology for sustainable development in the RCA State Parties.



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4. The RCA 2018-2023 Medium Term Strategy (MTS), **Strategic Direction 5** states that the RCA will “continue building human capacity, including education and training and nuclear knowledge management.



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5. Considering these, there is an urgent need for the RCA to establish a long-term STEM education program which acts as a solid platform and the backbone for the sustainable applications of nuclear and isotopic technologies in RCA State Parties, especially for LDCs and SIDSs.



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II. What is the objective of the RCA SPS?

1. Objective:

To support sustainable socio-economic development in RCA State Parties through the RCA SPS for the advancement of highly qualified human resources at the level of Master's degree.



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2. Expected Target:

The programme targets about 1000 RCA Scholarships awarded by 2032 (when the RCA turns 60). This means 100 scholars per year (or about 6 per developing state) will be supported each year for the next 10 years. Scholarship award is dependent on academic qualifications and acceptance by the partner universities in the RCA State Parties.



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III. How the RCA SPS works?

1. NRs establish a Committee (or a Working Group) on RCA SPS in Oct. 2021 (called RCA SPS Committee).



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2. The RCA SPS Committee is composed of the following:

- *A senior academician nominated by RCA GPs, (Chairperson),*
- *Four RCA Nominated Members from RCA GPs, (Members),*
- *IAEA Director TCAP (Member),*
- *RCA Focal Person, (Member), and*
- *Relevant IAEA Technical Officers may be invited as reviewers.*



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3. The main duties of the RCA SPS Committee:

- *Develop the TOR (functions, duties, powers, requirements for membership, membership term, etc.) of the Committee and submits to NRs for approval.*



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- *On behalf of the RCA, the Committee will discuss and explore opportunities to partner with academic institutions and scholarship funding bodies, facilitate practical arrangements with these institutions.*



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- *Develop qualification requirements and eligibility criteria for candidates,*
- *Identify and recommend academic institutions and solicit scholarship facilities and pledges,*
- *Assist in establishing the network of a consortium of universities and academic institutions,*



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- *Assist in developing practical arrangements between the RCA, the IAEA, and academic institutions,*
- *Develop a scheme for joint Master programme (e.g., student attending two universities in two different countries. And degrees awarded jointly).*
- *Recommend and advise on the scholarship agreements (Graduates committing at least three years of service at their national institution or another development country in the region), etc.*



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4. Funding the RCA SPS for the first three years:

- In order to ensure smooth start and sustainability of the RCA SPS, it is suggested the RCA consider to establish a dedicated human resources development project (for example: Supporting Nuclear Human Resource Development (RCA)) to fund scholarships with TCF and GCS from RCA GPs. This will gradually be apportioned in time with greater allocation from the RCA GPs.*



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5. To secure funding and resources to sustain the RCA SPS, the following options will be explored:

- Partnering with existing major scholarships programmes (for example: MEXT, AusAID, national scholarships etc.) that will be proposed by the Committee,*
- Establishing RCA Scholarship Fund and mobilizing financial contribution from RCA State Parties,*
- In-kind contribution from partner universities/ institutions/ countries,*



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- *Cost sharing between national institutions, host universities and the IAEA,*
- *Private sector donors (Industry sponsorship),*
- *Peaceful Uses Initiative funds (PUI), etc.*



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6. The RCA SPS will be launched at the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA foundation (Sep. 2022),

- The first set of scholars shall be selected and awarded starting the academic year 2023.*
- Award is granted through an application and merit selection process to academically deserving candidates who are accepted in an academic programme in partner universities listed by the RCA.*



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- *The RCA SPS is to be piloted for an initial period of three (3) academic years with its continuity subject to the results of a review on delivery of its objectives after the pilot period.*



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7. It is also necessary to promote the RCA SPS via:

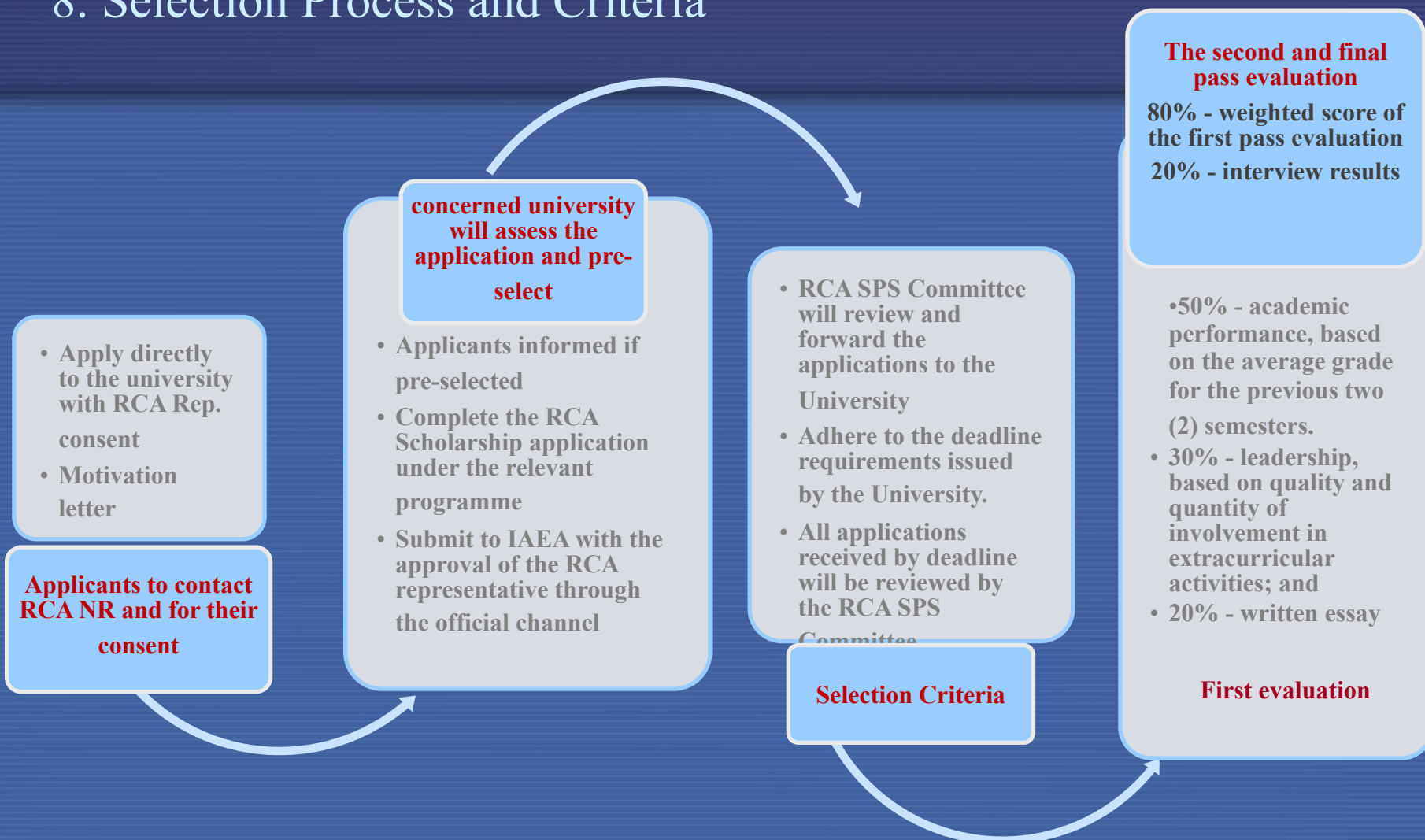
- *Dedicated Website*
- *Social Media*
- *Global Forums (IAEA GC, Educational fairs, RCA events)*
- *RCA Newsletter*



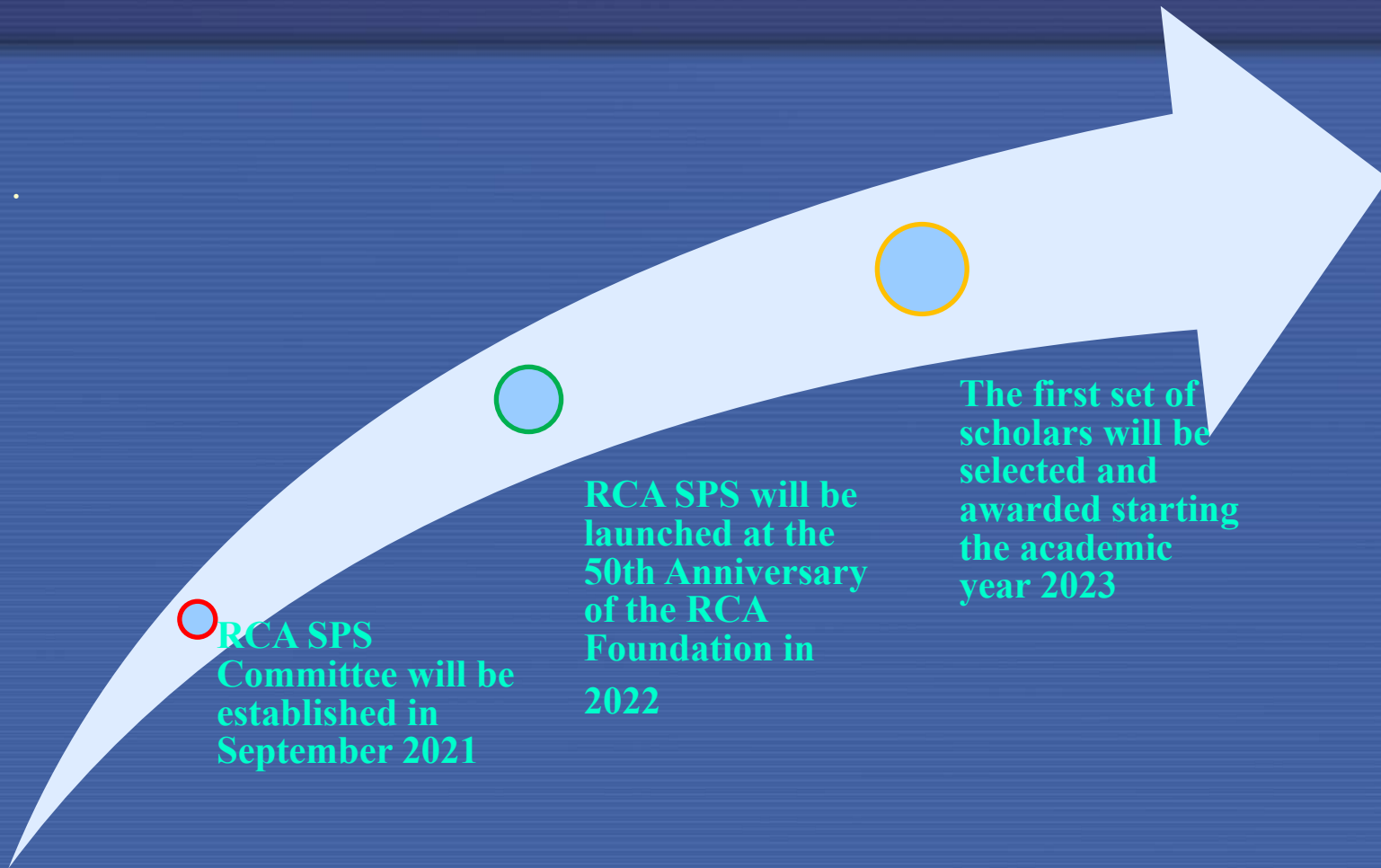
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8. Selection Process and Criteria



9. Timeline




10. Applicants Eligibility and Benefits

Eligibility for Applicants

- ☐ Must be a citizen of an eligible country
- ☐ Meet relevant post-graduate work experience requirements.
- ☐ Demonstrate a clear vision of how the knowledge gained through the scholarship will be used to improve policy practice or reform in your home country.
- ☐ Satisfactory English proficiency
- ☐ When applying for the scholarship, there are fields that are given priority in each country;
- ☐ It is advisable to choose a course from the listed fields.

Benefit for Scholars

- ☐ A monthly living and transportation allowance of xxx per month.
- ☐ A one-off payment per semester of xxx to cover the cost of prescribed books, school supplies, internet subscription, and if opportunity arises, attendance at seminars.
- ☐ Tuition fees to be waived by the university under the RCA SPS agreement with university or covered under the RCA SPS.
- ☐ Monthly living and other allowances



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