

Terms of Reference

CONSULTANCY TO WORK ON THE IAI-UNEP/GAN-EPIC-N PROJECT TO ESTABLISH THE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR INNOVATION IN COMMUNITIES (EPIC) NETWORK IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: PHASE I

BACKGROUND

To guide efforts of mitigation and adaptation to global change and support policy decisions, scientific knowledge now needs to be generated in broad transdisciplinary ways that address the needs of knowledge users and also provide profound understanding of complex socio-environmental systems. The Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) is a regional intergovernmental organization, with 19 member countries of the Americas (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela). The IAI aims to provide nations with the tools and institutional and human capacities to better face the challenges posed by global change. Global change is defined by the IAI as the interactions of biological, chemical, physical and social processes that regulate changes in the functioning of the Earth's system, including the particular ways in which these changes are influenced by and impact human activities. This collaborative, multinational effort is guided by the understanding that global change is urgent, complex, dynamic, and with considerable uncertainties. The expertise of the IAI lies in comprehensively organizing and providing trainings, creating science-policy networks, and building long-term collaborations across the Americas.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has a long mandate and history of working in the area of climate change adaptation, including through its platform for knowledge-sharing on climate adaptation, the Global Adaptation Network (GAN), which has been working since 2010 to help the world build resilience towards climate change by spreading adaptation knowledge and best practices. GAN, led by UNEP as its Secretariat, was established to meet key climate change adaptation needs, including the mobilization of existing information and knowledge, provision of targeted and packaged support and advisory services, building capacity for the uptake of knowledge as well as linking supply of expertise and knowledge to demand from practitioners and policymakers. The GAN structure was conceptualized as a global secretariat linking regional networks that were coordinated from the UNEP regional offices and other adaptation initiatives and partners on a global scale.

Recently GAN has been revitalized by new staff in its secretariat and a new global strategy, whereby it is seeking to build on and strengthen existing partnerships and initiatives. One promising partnership is with the Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities Network (EPIC-N), a nonprofit association with members all over the world working to unite the human capital of universities with local governments, and communities, to improve the quality of life and social wealth for all involved through the application of [The EPIC Model](#). Since 2010

member programs of EPIC-N provided more than 1700 collaborative projects between cities and their local universities using the EPIC Model with its emphasis on harnessing the potential of local universities and local governments to collaboratively address sustainability challenges.

EPIC-N has been a GAN partner for several years and in 2017 it successfully expanded from its native North America to Africa and most recently to Asia to create a sustainable, locally anchored method of using existing capacities in a city to meet a demand or need – directly related to increasing resilience of vulnerable local communities, including, most recently, to the impacts of Covid-19. GAN would now like to continue this successful collaboration, supporting its partner EPIC-N to expand this model to the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, connecting to the [REGATTA](#) (LAC regional node of GAN), with IAI as the executing agency.

Key partners of the project and EPIC-N will form the Project Steering Committee. In addition to EPIC-N, UNEP-GAN, and the IAI, the Project Steering Committee also includes ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. ICLEI is a global network of more than 2500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, including Latin America and the Caribbean, ICLEI works to influence sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. ICLEI Members and experts work together through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building to create systemic change for urban sustainability.

SCOPE OF WORK

Phase I of this project describes a collaborative effort (“the Project”) among [EPIC-N](#), [IAI](#), [UNEP-GAN](#) to expand application of the [EPIC Model](#) of university-community engagement throughout LAC. The EPIC Model organizes faculty-directed and credit-bearing student work to address community problems, using the goals and evaluation framework of the United Nations [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (UN SDGs) in their treatment. Respecting the distinct organizational cultures of universities and community organizations, the Model enables universities to more efficiently meet community demands for assistance in ways respectful to them both.

The Project seeks 1-2 consultants to support institutional, programmatic and training processes for implementing EPIC in LAC and support the establishment of platforms for an EPIC LAC network. The main tasks and responsibilities of the consultant(s) will be to work on the Phase I objectives and deliverables and report to the Project Steering Committee.

Objective of the assignment

To develop the scoping launch of the EPIC Model in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Tasks:

1. **Stakeholder and institutional mapping** to identify an initial group of key actors, networks, cities (related to community extension programs, for example) across regional focal areas to

conduct targeted outreach, establish an EPIC-LAC advisory group, and build partnerships crucial to EPIC-LAC launch in Phase II.

Host EPIC-LAC Advisory group meetings every three weeks with key regional partners and stakeholders to help identify champion universities, local governments and relevant organizations to work with, and potential city-university pairs for the launch of the EPIC-LAC network and workshop that will be held in Phase II. Also, there can be discussions to identify the regional priorities in urban sustainability and outreach strategies.

Meetings with the Project Steering Committee will be every two weeks.

2. Conduct 2-3 virtual EPIC-LAC pre-training workshops, open to any potential stakeholder who can contribute to the success of the EPIC LAC phase II. Each participant will be introduced to the EPIC Model, learn about the EPIC-N's history and lessons learned and success stories from other regions where EPIC-N model was applied, and discuss potential applicability of the Model to LAC and resources available from EPIC-N and other sources. An important part of each workshop would be discussion of region-specific substantive challenges (e.g., pollution, biodiversity loss, natural disasters, inadequate mobility and housing and institutional or other barriers to adoption). EPIC-LAC advisory group members will be invited to speak about their work and give an overview of local sustainability efforts in LAC cities.

3. Develop strategy document with recommendations for the establishment of the EPIC outreach model for cultures and contexts of Latin America and the Caribbean. The strategy should identify champion universities, cities and organizations to work with and potential city-university pairs in the LAC region for the launch of the EPIC LAC network and workshop that will be held in Phase II.

4. Develop a draft of call for proposals for participating university-city pairs (not for the public). The consultants will work closely with IAI, EPIC-N and UNEP in developing the call but it will not be formally disseminated until Phase II starts.

5. Make culturally appropriate recommendations for EPIC Model implementation, given cross-regional variation in all of the above.

6. Support the Project Steering Committee (including all partners, per above) in the design of training workshops and modules for EPIC-LAC for Phase II.

7. Support the Project Steering Committee in developing new resources, including but not limited to funds, to support the Project.

Deliverables and timeline

- I. Preliminary map of initial group of relevant stakeholders, institutions, programs, etc., relevant to the uptake of The EPIC Model in the LAC region. Delivery Date: April 6, 2022

2. Two to three virtual EPIC LAC network pre-training workshops (Phase I) to present EPIC models to the wider audience in the LAC region. These sessions would involve discussion of The EPIC Model application in the LAC region and its potential barriers. The Project will provide simultaneous interpreters for the pre-training workshops (English to Spanish and Portuguese), Delivery Date: April 25, 2022

This product will be delivered along with:

- Pre-training workshop material (agenda, PowerPoint presentation, survey, and summary of The EPIC Model description) available in English and Spanish/Portuguese.
 - Pre-homework material to be distributed by the EPIC-LAC Secretariat to participants before the training to gather information on general interests and existing partnerships/projects from universities and cities in the LAC region.
 - A presentation of the results of the survey sent after each session designed and conducted by the EPIC-LAC Secretariat to explore participants' interest in the model and potential engagement with the EPIC-LAC network.
3. Strategy document with recommendations for establishment of the EPIC outreach model for cultures and contexts of Latin America and the Caribbean, including adaptation and urban sustainability of core EPIC-LAC outreach strategy and training materials for Phase II. Delivery Date: May 6, 2022
 4. Report on the work with the advisory group on (1) the review, re-purposing and adoption of the existing EPIC Model and materials, (2) the identification of champion universities, cities and organizations to work with and (3) potential city-university pairs in the LAC region for the launch of the EPIC LAC network and workshop that will be held in Phase II. Delivery Date: May 15, 2022
 5. A draft call for proposals for participating university-city pairs. The consultants will work closely with Project Steering Committee in developing the call but it will not be formally disseminated until Phase II starts. Delivery Date: May 15, 2022
 6. At least one proposal submitted to grant source for funding to assist EPIC's expansion in the region. The proposal will be led by the EPIC-LAC Secretariat, with the support of the IAI and UNEP. Delivery Date: May 25, 2022

COSTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The maximum value of the consultancy is approximately USD \$30,000, including any applicable local taxes. The intended start date is 9 March 2022 and the period of implementation of the contract is until 1 June 2022.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Required qualifications include:

- Written and verbal fluency in English and Spanish/Portuguese is required. Fluency in the 3 languages will be considered a plus.
- Masters degree or higher qualification.
- Excellent writing and speaking skills. (Consultants should be prepared to translate materials from English into Spanish and/or Portuguese. Professional simultaneous interpreters will be hired by the Project for pre-training workshops)
- At least 5 years of working experience related to knowledge management, inter-institutional collaboration, alliance creation or similar responsibilities.
- Experience with training/capacity-building using a participatory or joint-learning pedagogy in person and in a virtual learning environment.
- Experience working with local governments, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Experience working with universities, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Familiarity with and commitment to the following:
 - The EPIC Model
 - The UN SDGs
 - Transdisciplinary, applied and/or basic research
- Proficiency with key programs in Microsoft Office and Google Suite.
- International experience (i.e. working on international projects, living, working and/or studying abroad).
- International aid experience (with UN or other intergovernmental or public-interest organization), ideally focused on adaptation and/or sustainable development.
- Fundraising experience (prospecting, grant writing, etc.).

Eligible applicants must be a citizens or permanent residents from an IAI member country (<https://www.iai.int/en/structure/focal-points>).

Individuals from underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.

IAI POLICIES

The proposal should align with IAI's policies as applicable.

Gender Policy:

<https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/Gender%20Policy%20on%20IAI%20Projects%20and%20Activities.pdf>

Open data/open science: <https://www.iai.int/index.php/en/post/detail/Open-Data>