

Guidelines for RCE Applications

RCE candidates seeking acknowledgment are required to complete the Application Form template and submit it through the online application form (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LD88ZYY>). The Application Form provides the information required by UNU-IAS and the Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs to assess the proposed RCE against the criteria for acknowledgment.

An [RCE](#) is a regional/local multi-stakeholder network that advances Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) through collaboration, transformative education, research and innovation, and effective governance. Applicants should provide concise, evidence-based responses, and attach supporting documentation where requested. Before starting the application, applicants are strongly encouraged to read the [Guiding Principles for the RCE Community](#).

I. Eligibility

An organisation or institution that meets the following criteria is eligible to apply for RCE application.

- Having a legal corporation status, or a department of legal entities with a valid registration. (An individual person or a group of individuals is not eligible.)
- Planning to establish RCE in the area with no geographical overlaps with the existing RCEs.

II. Required Information

Applicants are required to submit the following documents:

1. Complete RCE Application Form (mandatory)
2. Letters of Commitment (mandatory)
3. Other supporting documents (optional)

III. Guidelines for Completing the Application Document

Applicants should complete Sections 2–8 using the RCE Application Form template and upload the completed document through the [online application form](#).

Section 1. Basic Information

The application should include designation, organizational affiliation, postal address, phone, and e-mail addresses for one main and one alternate contact.

Section 2. Geographical Scope:

Two maps, one indicating the location of the region in the country or continent, and the other delineating the geographical scope of the RCE, should be included in the application. The latter should include information on key cities, districts, and municipalities, as well as justification of RCE establishment in the area. The land area and size of population in the region should also be indicated. This helps the Global RCE Service Center compare the scope and scale of RCE activities worldwide. In order to provide a portrait of the region, other major characteristics – environmental, socio-cultural, demographic, economic, and educational – should be described in the application.

Regional Context:

Application should describe the major sustainability challenges facing the region. These challenges should provide the basis for outlining the RCE's vision, objectives and activities.

IMPORTANT: Before you submit the application, please verify, and confirm whether there are any existing RCEs in the same geographical area or the vicinity. You can find the list of the existing RCEs and their profiles on the [RCE website](#). If there are geographical overlaps, it is strongly recommended contacting the existing RCE(s), exploring collaboration opportunities and seeking to plan the collective activities. Normally, geographical overlaps are not permissible. However, if there is a strong need to establish a new RCE despite the geographical overlaps, the reasons and justification should be clearly stated in the application. In this case, the submission of a record of communication with the existing RCE(s) and an elaborated plan for cooperation is required.

Section 3. Vision, Mission and Strategic Direction:

The application should identify a site or region-specific vision in addition to the vision of UNU for RCEs as a global learning space. Application should define the strategic objectives specifically focusing on Resource Mobilisation, Collaboration and Networking, Communication and Visibility, Youth Empowerment and Educational Innovation — that are specific, measurable, and time-bounded (short-term, mid-term, and long-term). These objectives should be categorized in the provided table, with a brief explanation of the approach to achieving them.

Section 4. Governance and Management:

The application should include a description of the RCE's governance and management structure, demonstrating that the RCE will serve as a multi-stakeholder platform to facilitate dialogue among regional and local stakeholders in advancing ESD and the SDGs. The application should also identify the key institutions and organizations participating in the

proposed RCE, by indicating whether each organization has formally committed to the RCE initiative or is currently under consideration a potential stakeholder. Written evidence of commitment from key institutions (e.g., Commitment Letters) should be submitted through the online application form.

Mobilisation of RCE stakeholders

The application should describe the development process of the proposed RCE. This should include how consensus among stakeholders was established and details on consultation process undertaken, and the engagement of relevant organizations throughout the development of the RCE. If key promoters for the RCE have been identified, the rationale for their selection and their respective roles should also be described.

Key Institutions

The proposed RCE is encouraged to identify the core institutions that will collaborate to establish and develop the proposed RCE. A list of key institutions that have been committed to the RCE initiative, and background information on each of the promoting institutions, should be included. It is desirable that the RCE includes institutions from various sectors – government, education, civil society and private sector – in its network.

Governance Structure

The application should clearly explain the governance arrangements of the proposed RCE, including how principles such as accountability, transparency, and inclusive participation will be upheld. These principles should be reflected in the governance and management structure of the RCE. Moreover, the application should provide an organizational chart as appropriate.

Resources and Commitment

The application should describe the financial, human, and institutional resources that have been secured to support the proposed RCE. The details of secured funding and resources, specifying personnel, office, secretariat, in-kind support, and financial resources for the proposed RCE, should be clarified in the application.

Youth Engagement

The application should describe how young people will participate in the governance, management and implementation of the proposed RCE. Applicants are encouraged to explain how youth will contribute to decision-making processes and the planning and implementation of RCE activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The application should describe the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that will be used to assess progress towards the RCE's vision and objectives. Applicants are encouraged to identify expected milestones, performance indicators and reporting arrangements that will support continuous improvement.

Section 5. Collaboration:

A university or higher-education institution should necessarily be a part of the RCE network. It is also desirable that institutions at various levels of formal education are involved. Descriptions on how the RCE will strengthen and utilize collaboration among stakeholders should be included. Stakeholders should be a part of the network regardless of age, gender or social status.

Section 6. Activities:

Planned activities implemented by individual participating organizations, and collaborative activities implemented jointly by multiple partners should be described in the Application. The application should also describe planned flagship initiatives that demonstrate the added value of the proposed RCE. Proposed activities should be relevant and aligned with the regional challenges, vision, and objectives of the RCE. Planned activities should be described in terms of their objectives, target groups, and implementation arrangements. Sections 7 and 8 provide further guidance on the transformative education and research dimensions of these activities.

Section 7. Transformative Education:

Applicants are encouraged to describe how the proposed RCE will promote transformative learning that advances ESD and create meaningful learning opportunities that empower learners and communities to address regional sustainability challenges through multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Section 8. Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange:

Applicants are encouraged to highlight how the proposed RCE will support research, innovation and knowledge exchange related to ESD, and explain how the proposed RCE will promote innovative approaches to research and practice, and harness digital technologies, and facilitate knowledge sharing within and beyond the RCE network.

IV. Review Process

Applications will be reviewed in two stages; the Global RCE Service Centre conducts initial review and may request clarification or additional information. Applications that satisfy the

submission requirements will then be reviewed by the Ubuntu Committee of Peers, which will provide recommendations to UNU for RCE acknowledgment.

V. Criteria for Acknowledging New RCEs

The Ubuntu Committee of Peers assesses applications against the following criteria: multi-stakeholder partnerships, coherence of the RCE vision, mission, and strategic plan, governance and organisational effectiveness, evidence of the mobilisation process, expected impact in advancing ESD and addressing regional sustainability challenges, and added value to the Global RCE Network.

VI. Contact

Should you have any questions, please contact the Global RCE Service Center at rceservicecentre@unu.edu.