

CORDAP Coral Local Innovation Program (CLIP) - Call for Proposals

Call Timeline	
Call Opens	26 th January 2026
CLIP Proposal Webinar (Registration link)	12 th February 2026 12:00 UTC
Proposal Submission Deadline	10th March 18:00 UTC
Anticipated Notification Date	Aug/Sept 2026
Call Documentation	CORDAP website
Proposal Submission Portal Link	myCORDAP

Note: Dates of activities are subject to change; please check the CORDAP website for the most up-to-date timeline and information

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1. Overview and Objectives

The Small Grants Program aims to support innovative-multidisciplinary research and development (R&D- see Appendix A) projects focused on providing local affordable solutions to coral conservation and restoration challenges in developing countries. Solutions proposed should be scalable and replicable in other settings, and/or lead to significant R&D capacity building advances. The program is open to a wide range projects from novel, early-phase ideas through to proof-of-concept development and testing.

This program offers grants of up to USD \$100,000 for up to two (2) years to eligible applicants from Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) as classified by the OECD.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the Small Grants Program are to develop coral innovation research and capacity for conservation and restoration in Low and middle Income Countries are:

1. To encourage local technology development and innovative approaches to coral conservation and restoration in developing countries.
2. To enhance the capacity of local scientists, researchers, and organizations to conduct coral and reef research and development activities across multiple scientific fields.
3. To address critical knowledge gaps in local coral conservation and restoration efforts.

2. Eligibility and Application Limits

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the Small Grants Program:

- Applicants must be based in an LMIC. The [OECD List](#) of low and middle-income countries must be used to determine eligibility (includes both lower-middle and upper-middle income countries, overseas territories and regions of non-LMIC countries are not eligible).
- Applicants must hold a full-time position with the organization from which they are applying and must demonstrate, with supporting evidence, that the majority of the funds will be allocated to local individuals.
- Co-applicants (unfunded collaborators) from non LMIC countries are eligible but cannot receive any funding.
- Eligible organizations include not-for-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, higher education institutions, research institutes, industry and government organizations. CORDAP is unable to make grants directly to individuals.
- Applicant organizations must have been in existence for at least 2 full years by the time of application submission deadline. Along with the application, the applicant is required to submit the last 2 years financial statements from the lead Institute/Organisation at the time of application submission. The lead Institute/Organisation registration must be in a LMIC as defined by [OECD List](#).
- An individual may only serve as the Lead Applicant on one proposal and participate in on no more than one additional proposal as a Co-Applicant.
- An organization can be Lead Organization on a maximum of 2 proposals. However, it can participate as a partner (co-applicant) in any number of proposals
- CAP_awardees/ Co-Investigators/grantees may apply but will require very strong justification to receive additional funding through this program. .
- Lead Applicants in CAP 2025 applications can apply – noting they cannot hold both a CAP 2025 and CLIP 2026 Award.

Partnerships are encouraged but not mandatory, single organization proposals are also eligible.

Projects can be based in more than one country, as long as all countries are LMIC eligible.

Please note that organizations subject to international sanctions are not eligible to receive funding.

Applications may be made by a group of organizations; however, they must name one Lead Organization. The Lead Organization will make an agreement with CORDAP and receive an award if the proposal is successful. The Lead Organization must agree to the Terms and Conditions and will be ultimately responsible for the delivery and management of the project, including the management of any partners and co-applicants, and all use of funds by co-applicants and partners.

3. Projects Supported in this Call

Types of Projects considered in this call

Eligible projects will span across the full range of novel early-phase projects through final proof-of-concept development and testing, along with R&D capacity development.

- Projects can be high risk, high reward and have the potential to be transformational and deliver a step-change in their field.
- Must clearly identify the potential risks and assess whether the project can be realistically completed (i.e., what else is needed to be true for the idea to ultimately be impactful and is this feasible), in addition to the risks of implementing the outcomes (e.g., ecological risk).
- Full end-to-end conservation and restoration solutions require that many different challenges be solved; proposals can focus on solving a specific challenge within such a larger system, stating how their project fits into the overall system, and delivering impact through its successful contribution.

4. Funding Terms and Conditions

CORDAP policies and Terms and Conditions govern all award personnel and activities and can be found in the CORDAP Award Terms and Conditions Manual, available on our website [Funding Awards](#) page.

4.1 Intellectual property

- CORDAP does not seek to own any of the IP resulting from its funded activities. Ownership vests need to be agreed upon by the organizations collaborating on the research.
- Owners of IP resulting from CORDAP-funded activities must provide a free license for all commercial and non-commercial coral conservation use, including free license to any background IP the project relies on.
- CORDAP-funded developments and technologies should be made available and accessible at an affordable price to all coral conservation projects.
- Publications and underlying data generated by CORDAP-funded activities must be made openly accessible, allowing others to build upon and re-use this knowledge and information.

At application submission, Applicants are asked to briefly outline the IP situation with their proposal, indicating that the Project IP and Background IP can adhere to the [CORDAP IP Policy](#).

Participating applicants and their organizations are required to submit a 'Statement of Intent'. This is a document signed by the participating organizations' authorized representatives confirming that they understand the commitments, project requirements, and CORDAP's Terms and Conditions.

4.2 Open Access Policy

CORDAP expects that publications, knowledge and data, arising from CORDAP funded projects will be made freely available as soon as possible and licensed in ways which allow others to build upon and re-use this content.

- **Publications, and underlying data, will be immediately, freely and openly accessible to all**

Publications must be made freely available from the final publication date, without any embargo period. It should be available to anyone, anywhere for free. This includes access to any underlying data sets. Preprints of submitted manuscripts are encouraged to facilitate prompt dissemination of research findings.

- **There should be no barriers to the re-use and dissemination of CORDAP funded publications**

Publications must be published under the Creative Commons attribution license (CC BY) or an equivalent license. This will permit all users to copy, redistribute, transform, and build on the material in any medium or format for any purpose (including commercial) without further permission or fees being required.

- **CORDAP will pay necessary reasonable fees.**

Reasonable fees required by a publisher or repository to enable immediate, open access to the accepted articles is considered an eligible cost in an Award. This includes article processing charges and other publisher fees.

- **Research data and software should be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR).**

All publications must be long-term archived and freely discoverable through commonly available free digital open access repositories to those that may wish to read, share and reuse the outputs of CORDAP funded research.

Authors should submit datasets to an appropriate public data repository. Data should be submitted to discipline-specific, community-recognized repositories where possible. Where a suitable discipline-specific resource does not exist, data should be submitted to a generalist repository (such as Zenodo, Dryad, Science Data Bank, Open Science Framework, Figshare etc.).

4.3 Consortium Agreement

If there is more than one organization taking part in the project, successful Applicant Organizations will be required to sign a legally binding research collaboration agreement (Consortium Agreement) among themselves before project funds are disbursed. This is not required at the proposal submission stage.

The Consortium Agreement sets the framework for a successful project implementation and is a private agreement between the participants to set out the rights and obligations amongst themselves. (It does NOT involve CORDAP itself.) It should complement the award agreement and must NOT contain any provision contrary to it, or to CORDAP's terms and conditions.

The Consortium Agreement details project implementation and division of tasks, internal organization and management of the consortium, project budget and distribution of funding, additional rules on rights and obligations related to background and results, and liability. In addition, indemnification and confidentiality arrangements between the participants, intellectual property management, future exploitation and dissemination of results, boilerplate provisions such as duration, termination, communication, applicable law and settlement of internal disputes, must be addressed in the agreement.

A CORDAP model Consortium Agreement for applicants to adapt to their project is available for on our webpages [here](#).

Applicants can contract commercial/non-commercial organizations as required by the project, which do not need to be parties to the Consortium Agreement.

4.4 Ethics

The Applicant and Applicant's Organization must ensure that, before the research commences and for the full award duration, all the necessary ethical, legal and regulatory requirements in order to conduct the research are met, and all the necessary licenses and approvals have been obtained.

It is expected that most, if not all, activities will be carried out locally, however if any research is to be carried out in a third country, the Organization must ensure that all activities are carried out in the spirit of their own Organization and national regulations and complies at all times with the relevant laws and regulations in the host country. In addition, any projects must be carried out with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of any communities affected by the project activities.

4.5 Data Privacy

All responses to this Call for Proposals will be treated in confidence and no information contained therein will be communicated to any third party without the permission of the Applicant except insofar as what is specifically required for the consideration and evaluation of the proposal. Applicants will be asked during the submission stage if they assent to their proposal being shared with other potential funding partners should it not be funded in this call.

The [CORDAP Privacy Policy](#) explains how, and on what legal basis, we collect, store, and use personal information about you as an Applicant or Awardee for CORDAP funding programs or as any other person that interacts with our Organization.

5. Proposal Review Process and Evaluation Criteria

This is a one-stage submission and review process. All proposals received will be assessed for compliance with the Funding Call criteria, policies, terms and conditions.

Each application will undergo an international peer review process, followed by a scientific panel assessment.

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria below, applicants should ensure their proposal addresses all relevant review points:

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Potential of the project to make significant changes, be transformational in its field.
- The capability of the applicant(s) to deliver the goals of the proposed project.
- Innovation and novelty of the proposed idea
- Scalability and replicability in wider regions
- Targeted impact and pathway and timing to impact
- Management, coordination, and cost effectiveness of the project
- Analysis of project risks, and site selection process outlined
- Contribution to enhancing R&D capabilities for local communities
- Broader impact and socio-economic benefits of the project.
- Adhering to CORDAP submission guidelines (e.g. using provided templates).

6. Proposal Budget

The total available funding for this call is expected to be approximately USD \$1.5M. The maximum allowable budget per project is \$100,000. Budgets must be prepared using the supplied budget template.

6.1 Eligible Costs

1. Requested costs must be related to research, development and integrated educational activities directly related to the project.
2. **Equipment:** Purchase of equipment essential for the project that is proposed is eligible. The maximum allowable cost for any single unit of equipment is US\$ 10,000.
3. **Materials and supplies:** Costs of general consumables, computer software necessary for the project.
4. **Services:** Consulting services and printing, access charges, computer services specific to the project, including rental fees and other miscellaneous expenses. Open access publication fees.
Personnel: Personnel costs, including project Staff salaries, are eligible. All salary requests must be adequately justified. The total salary costs requested under this proposal shall not exceed **40% of the total project budget**. All staff receiving salary must be located within the LMIC.

All organizations must have the necessary indemnity insurance in place for any project related activities. Indemnity insurance for project activities is an eligible cost.

Note: The annual value of the Award must not exceed 50% of the Lead Organizations' annual income.

Ineligible Costs

Costs for administrative personnel, routine business operations, IP protection and management, and professional development are not allowed.

Indirect Costs (Overhead Costs)

The maximum total cost for indirect costs should not be more than 20% of the applicable direct research costs.

The rate provided above is the maximum rates allowed under the CORDAPs policy. An Awardee, or Co-Applicant, organization with an actual indirect cost rate lower than the maximum rate provided above should not increase the funding request to the maximum allowed.

It is important to note that CORDAP is a charitable entity, funded by voluntary contributions, and does not have the financial capacity to match the indirect-cost rates that national science funders may pay to its awardees.

Cost Share/Matched Funding (Cash and In-Kind Contributions)

Contributions, both cash and in-kind, are encouraged in projects in order to maximize the leveraging of CORDAP funding. Applicants should outline what contributions they intend to make towards the proposed project. It should be noted however that cost share contributions are not mandatory on applications, though they will be taken into consideration in evaluating the overall impact of the project.

7. Proposal Preparation and Online Submission

The Award Term can be between a minimum of 12 months up to a maximum of 24 months with a total Award Budget not to exceed USD \$100K.

Application Process

The Lead Applicant should go to [myCORDAP](#) to register through our online submission system. Once successfully registered you can start your application.

Only the Lead Applicant is required to register and can submit an application.

myCORDAP is accessed through the internet; no additional software needs to be installed. You can access the system online from any location. The configuration of some browsers and internet infrastructure (popup blockers, firewalls, etc.) may restrict an individual's access to the internet and as a result to the myCORDAP system.

Submission templates (Submission Form and Budget Template) can be downloaded from the [CORDAP website funding pages](#), and are available on the [myCORDAP](#) portal.

The Lead Applicant will be notified of receipt and the decision on the proposal.

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

[myCORDAP](#) is accessed through the internet; no additional software needs to be installed. You can access the system online from any location. The configuration of some browsers and internet infrastructure (popup blockers, firewalls, etc.) may restrict an individual's access to the internet and as a result to the myCORDAP system. If you are having any such difficulties, please contact your organization's internal IT support team.

The main steps in applying are as follows:

- If there is more than one applicant the research team must designate one member as Lead Applicant, who will be responsible for the proposal submission of the project on behalf of the team.
- The Lead Applicant will need an account on myCORDAP. This will provide access to the online application form and further instructions concerning the online submission.
- The proposal along with the required documents must be submitted before the submission deadline. No changes can be made after final submission.
- The Lead Applicant will be notified of receipt and the decision on the proposal.
- Adhering to CORDAP submission guidelines (e.g. using provided templates is mandatory).

8. Award Reporting and Payment Schedule

The Lead Applicant/Lead Organization will receive the CORDAP funds for the entire team (where applicable) and has the obligation to distribute the payments received from CORDAP to the other Co-Applicant Organizations.

Awardees will be required to submit brief quarterly traffic light reports, as well as semi-annual and final progress and financial reports, using templates and forms that CORDAP will make available. All projects should develop and maintain a risk register and submit it as part of their progress reports. Payments will be

initiated upon signing of the Award Agreement, and receipt and approval of progress and financial reports. Reports must demonstrate sufficient progress against the project milestones for the reporting period, otherwise subsequent payments may be delayed until progress has been shown. Awardees may also be requested to submit project highlights and contribute to CORDAP's communication outlets, publicity, review and evaluation, and resourcing efforts. Such highlights are important to raise the profile of CORDAP-funded research and ensure continued resourcing.

The payment schedule is outlined below. It is recognized that many organizations may not have the resources to take on much of the project costs in advance. Applicants who may require more money upfront than what the disbursement timeline below shows can make such request in their submitted budget, but will need to make a compelling case for approval of the additional upfront funding.

Payments are lump sums. Unspent funds may be carried over to the next period, but a significant underspend may affect the timing of subsequent payments. At the project close, a financial reconciliation of spent project funds against the awarded budget will take place. Any unspent funds must be returned to CORDAP within 90 days from the end of the project.

	Reporting Deliverable	1 Year Project	Up to 2 years
Upon agreement signing/before project start date		Up to 50% of Project total	Up to 40% of Project total
6 Months	Progress and Financial Reports	40% of Project total	Up to 20% of Project total
12 Months/ End of Year 1	Final Progress and Financial Reports (1 Year Projects); Progress and Financial Reports (2 Year Projects)	Financial Reconciliation – Payment of remainder of project funds spent.	20% of Project Total
18 Months	Progress and Financial Reports	NA	
24 Months/End of Year 2	Final Progress and Financial Reports	NA	Financial Reconciliation – Payment of remainder of project funds spent.

Proposal Submission Checklist

1. Completed Proposal Submission Form (including biographical information form using the provided template)*.
2. Completed Budget Template (using the provided template)*.
3. Details of Authorized Institutional representative (AIR)*
4. Statement of Intent (SoI)* to participate needs to be submitted along with proposal. For applications with more than 1 applicant, SOI to collaborate will be required from each applicant organization, (please note if signed SoI's cannot be obtained before the submission deadline and explain why in your proposal; they will be required before formal start of the project)- using the provided template)*.
5. Financial statements of the lead institute applying for at least previous 2 years (duly attested)
6. Letters of Support – Optional

**Required*

Application Assistance

Potential applicants are encouraged to refer to the [Call FAQ](#) and [Submission Assistance](#) document for guidance. In addition, webinars will be held (and made available afterwards on the CORDAP funding page for reference). If your query is not addressed in these sources, please contact the CORDAP funding team at pcn@kaust.edu.sa

Appendix A

CORDAP Coral R&D Capacity Development Guidance

Research and Development (R&D)- in the context of a proposal submitted to **CORDAP**, refers to systematic and creative activities undertaken to generate **new knowledge**, technologies, or solutions, rather than merely applying existing practices. A proposal should clearly demonstrate an R&D component by showing that the work involves **original inquiry, knowledge gaps, and technical advancement**. Accordingly, proposals should explain how the planned activities go beyond routine implementation, articulate clear research questions or objectives, and justify how the outcomes will contribute novel insights or innovations aligned with CORDAP's objectives.

Coral R&D capacity development aims to strengthen the scientific foundation and practical capabilities necessary to address the challenges facing coral reefs, such as climate change. By enhancing research capacity and fostering collaboration, these efforts contribute to informed decision-making and effective conservation strategies for the long-term health and sustainability of coral reefs worldwide.

CORDAP appreciates the significant capacity development needs that underpin the ability of both scientists and marine practitioners to undertake high-quality research on coral conservation and restoration in most areas where corals are located. In a region with no air compressors, for instance, how can local scientists be expected to survey deeper reefs, let alone pitch a compelling scientific proposal based upon vastly understudied habitats? As another example, how could a research team without access to a molecular research lab compete for funding with one that has access to a state-of-the-art one?, one means by which this could be achieved is via international collaboration. Although the scientific goals may well be achieved through collaboration (e.g., transporting biopsies for molecular analysis elsewhere), no local capacity may have been developed in the process, and there is certainly long-term value to establishing in-house scientific capabilities. The most competitive CORDAP proposals will be those that not only produce disruptive technologies or approaches for saving or restoring reefs, but also grow the capacity to conduct groundbreaking coral research in all team members' organizations and communities (in particular those located in developing nations, where there is likely to be a greater need for this).

"R&D capacity development," projects are projects whose major focus is on growing the collective ability of a science team, organization, or an entire community to undertake coral research. In many instances this is distinct from simply growing the capacity of the community, which could involve, for instance, paying marine protected area (MPA) officials to protect a reef from poachers. Although there is a clear need for such protection, it does not lead to increased capacity of the community to undertake coral research. Projects to

develop or maintain MPAs, or even simply to collect baseline monitoring data are not eligible in this call, however there are likely other funding sources and mechanisms beyond CORDAP for these activities.

1. What is Coral R&D Capacity Development?

It is important to emphasize the distinction between “capacity development” and “R&D capacity development.” The latter is specifically focused on increasing the ability to undertake scientific research, while the former is more general and could include other, non-research-oriented goals such as community education and outreach. Although CORDAP appreciates that, in most areas, significant capacity development must occur before even the most modest research can be undertaken, the most competitive proposals will instead be those that specifically prioritize growing R&D research capacity. This could include travel to more advanced facilities, training in research methods, adopting new research tools or protocols, or accessing or integrating essential research equipment needed to perform coral conservation or restoration R&D over the duration of the project and in the longer term. It is worth noting here that it is important to think carefully about how you categorize your project with respect to project type, because if you believe your proposed work indeed aligns most closely with R&D capacity development, it will be judged accordingly; importantly, these projects might not have as many novel elements as a “Novel R&D project”.

2. What is a ‘transformative’ or ‘disruptive’ capacity development project?

In addition to funding A) development of novel protocols for conserving or restoring coral habitats (including coral reefs) and B) initiatives that seek to grow local coral R&D capacity using predominantly tried-and-true measures such as community outreach, education, and/or purchasing of key scientific materials, CORDAP will also fund “transformative capacity development projects.” These are projects that present novel means of growing coral R&D capacity and could include, for instance, fundamentally improved means by which stakeholders and community members partake in the project. Innovative ways of rapidly leveraging the power of field or lab data collection to make informed capacity development decisions is another example. Using scientific data to inform coral reef management and restoration decisions will likely be at the core of many, if not most, CORDAP projects. A scientific approach to optimize the capacity development integral to the project could also be important. In other words, CORDAP welcomes projects whose focus is on improving capacity development approaches, provided that the project is still R&D-focused. If you are unsure whether your proposal aligns more closely with novel R&D vs. R&D capacity development, feel free to reach out to us at pcn@kaust.edu.sa and we will be happy to provide guidance. Ultimately, given the high degree of competition in the CORDAP CAP calls to date, it is likely that those projects that feature strong science, conservation/restoration, and capacity development components will be prioritized for funding.

3. What constitutes a competitive R&D capacity development project?

CORDAP will consider proposals whose primary goal is to increase the capacity of a team or institute to conduct coral reef conservation and/or restoration research. However, this should not be read to mean that providing a “wish list” alone of instruments, infrastructure, personnel, etc. will make for a strong proposal. Instead, these components should be requested and packaged within a well-conceived research plan that outlines clear scientific goals and deliverables. The data and technologies emanating from the projects will not only advance our knowledge of corals and lead to improved ways to save and/or restore their associated habitats, but they can also be strategically exploited to additionally grow local capacity for coral R&D, as well as conservation and restoration (i.e., “disruptive capacity development;” see question #2.).

Examples of characteristics a good R&D Capacity building project will have:

- Works with the technical level of the target audience and builds them to the required level.
- Ensures methods used that are effective for the trainee's situation.
- Identifies and filters out the best candidates for further capacity development.
- Where appropriate, combines interactive theoretical and practical training.
- Builds effective trainers (train the trainer) to amplify the project impact.
- Have integrated longer term support mechanisms and plans.
- In addition to the scientific goals, equipping local communities, universities, and/or NGOs with the knowledge they need to better manage, or even restore, their reefs via incorporation of data emerging from primarily innovative approaches.