

India Forum for Nature-based Solutions: Research Program

Background

Nature-based solutions (NbS) have emerged globally as cost-effective, sustainable solutions offering a range of benefits including improved resilience, limiting climate change impacts and enhanced biodiversity along with the co-benefits of improved health and social well-being. However, the potential of NbS has yet to be realized in India, due to some significant challenges. While some of these challenges, like the availability of urban land, are consistent with global challenges facing NbS, many more are specific to the Indian urban context. There is still limited awareness, experience and documented evidence with NbS in Indian cities and available knowledge on NbS models, impact measurement framework, and operations and maintenance methodologies are yet to be tailored or adapted to the Indian experience.

About the India Forum for Nature-based Solutions

The India Forum for Nature-based Solutions (NbS) is a coalition of research and practice organisations working to scale up the adoption of NbS to shape climate resilient cities and communities in India. The forum aims to climate proof 100 million residents and infrastructure worth \$100 billion in Indian cities by 2030. Alongside peer-to-peer exchange of best practices, technical training and knowledge sharing, **the Forum will support research towards strengthening local knowledge and evidence situated within the local context of political, social, economic and institutional structures.**

Through the research program, the Forum will support at least two research projects annually through short term contracts of between 6 to 12 months, and under Rs. 8 Lakhs per project. The Forum's partners will provide expertise or identify external experts to provide review and oversight, assist researchers with the scoping and definition of research question and help sharpen findings and recommendations. Applications are welcome from doctorate students, individual researchers, practitioners and firms with demonstrated track records working in the nature-based solutions space.

Timeline

Last date for applications: 20th September, 2024

Announcement of shortlist: 11th October, 2024

Jury: 21st October, 2024

Announcement of selected researchers/teams: 25th October, 2024

Topic 1: Procurement guidance that will help cities onboard NbS

This project aims to strengthen institutional capacities to onboard NbS through procurement mechanisms. The research will look at identifying current institutional arrangements and processes, their alignment with different typologies of NbS, and what cities will need to consider to ensure delivery of quality NbS.

Scope of Work

Over 9 months, consultants under this scope of work will:

- Identify existing institutional arrangements, pathways and processes and assess them for ease of adopting NbS
- Determine ways to mainstream NbS in public procurement (including but not limited to tender specifications, budget allocations, targets and schedules)
- Validate recommendations with public procurement stakeholders through interviews and focus group discussions
- Develop an easy-to-use procurement guidance for city governments

Deliverables

- Proposed research structure and plans
- Quarterly reviews as presentation with progress updates, early insights and outstanding questions
- Final report (20 pages + appendices) including
 - An easy-to-use procurement guidance on procuring NbS for city governments
 - Learnings and recommendations
 - Supporting documentation

Timeframe

The project will commence November 2024 and continue for 9 months.

How to Apply

To apply please email us at nbsforumindia@wri.org with

- Subject: Research Program_ProcurementGuidance_Organisation/Applicant Name
- A cover letter detailing experience, team profile and approach
- CVs of team members
- Any previous research products
- Research proposal including the following details:
 - Research objective and questions
 - Proposed scope
 - Research Methodology (include validation and feedback mechanisms)
 - Researcher/Team Background

Applicants are encouraged to narrow the scope in terms of NbS typology or institutional entry points to define a research scope that is feasibly deliverable within the time and budget constraints defined.

Interviews will be held with shortlisted applicants. Applications are welcome from doctorate students, individual researchers, practitioners and firms with demonstrated track records working in the nature-based solutions space.

Topic 2: Common MEL framework and standards for NbS

This project aims to strengthen decision-making frameworks for NbS. The research will focus on social, environmental and/or economic indicators to examine the effectiveness of nature-based solutions, and determine benchmarks or standards.

Scope of Work

Over 9-12 months, consultants under this scope of work will:

- Review existing frameworks and indicators to assess impact and effectiveness of NbS implementation and determine standards and baselines assessments for metrics and indicators
- Determine measurable metrics and methodologies to measure outcomes of nature-based solutions in the urban Indian context
- Test and validate the indicators, metrics and methodologies in the Indian context through consultations with experts and public and private stakeholders

Deliverables

- Proposed research structure and plans
- Quarterly reviews as presentation with progress updates, early insights and outstanding questions
- Final report (20 pages + appendices) including
 - An evaluation framework to measure NbS performance including indicators, metrics and standards
 - Learnings and recommendations
 - Supporting documentation

Timeframe

The project will commence November 2024 and continue for 9-12 months.

How to Apply

To apply please email us at nbsforumindia@wri.org with

- Subject: Research Program_MEL_Standards_Organisation/Applicant Name
- A cover letter detailing experience, team profile and approach
- CVs of team members
- Any previous research products
- Research proposal including the following details:
 - Research objective and questions
 - Proposed scope
 - Research Methodology (include validation and feedback mechanisms)
 - Researcher/Team Background

Applicants are encouraged to narrow the scope in terms of hazard addressed, NbS typology or indicators to define a research scope that is feasibly deliverable within the time and budget constraints defined.

Interviews will be held with shortlisted applicants. Applications are welcome from doctorate students, individual researchers, practitioners and firms with demonstrated track records working in the nature-based solutions space.