



**Programme for Institutional
University Cooperation**

Call for IUC Concept Notes South

Stage 1 of the IUC intake 2022

**Open for universities in Cambodia, Cuba,
DR Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, Philippines,
South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda & Vietnam**

3 July 2019

Table of contents

Summary	4
1. Background	5
1.1. <i>Introduction VLIR-UOS</i>	5
1.2. <i>A new call for Institutional University Cooperation (IUC)</i>	5
1.3. <i>Policy priorities</i>	6
2. General concepts	7
2.1. <i>Definition and general objective</i>	7
Definition	7
General objective	7
2.2. <i>What is an IUC about?</i>	7
The I in IUC	7
Societal Change	8
2.3. <i>Main characteristics of an IUC partner institution</i>	9
Institutional characteristics	9
A basic institutional capacity is required	10
A reasonable but meaningful level of VLIR-UOS support	10
History of cooperation	10
Partnership and ownership	11
2.4. <i>Programme Cycle and structure</i>	12
3. Timeline - Stages in the IUC intake process	13
4. Budget	16
5. Eligibility criteria	17
5.1. <i>Eligibility criteria for IUC partner universities (applicants/countries)</i>	17
Universities	17
Countries	17
5.2. <i>Eligibility of submission modalities</i>	17
Format, compulsory annexes, and deadline	17
English	17
Proposed local IUC coordinator	18
Re-submissions	18

6. Selection	18
6.1. <i>Selection criteria</i>	18
6.2. <i>Selection commission</i>	21
7. Application modalities and support	22
7.1. <i>Formulation</i>	22
7.2. <i>Formats and annexes</i>	22
7.3. <i>Deadline and submission modalities</i>	23
7.4. <i>Application support</i>	23
8. Background documents	23
Abbreviations	25

Summary

Object	Call for proposals for Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) This Call for Concept Notes South is a <u>first stage</u> within the IUC intake procedure 2022 leading to the shortlist of a maximum of 8 potential IUC partner institutions that will move into a next selection stage (institutional assessments, followed by a call for extended concept notes). Final aim is to have a maximum of 5 partner universities starting an IUC partner programme on 1 January 2022.
Budget and duration	The maximum annual budget of an IUC programme is € 600.000, meaning that the full budget for a first phase of cooperation is up to € 3.000.000 for the whole five-year phase. An estimated number of 5 IUC Programmes is foreseen to start with a first five-year phase of cooperation as of 2022, preceded by a pre-partner programme that will run from mid-2020 until the end of 2021.
Eligibility	Open to all universities in the below mentioned countries, except for the top 2.000 institutions in the webometrics international ranking of HEIs (see background document).
Countries	Cambodia, Cuba, DR Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam
Launch of the call	3 July 2019
Deadline submission to VLIR-UOS	15 October 2019, 23:59 CET
Submission	By the applicant (local university in one of the eligible countries) to VLIR-UOS through e-mail

VLIR-UOS supports partnerships
 between universities and university colleges
 in Flanders and the South
 looking for innovative responses
 to global and local challenges
www.vliruos.be

1. Background


1.1. Introduction VLIR-UOS

VLIR-UOS supports partnerships between universities and university colleges in Flanders (Belgium) and the South looking for innovative responses to global and local challenges.

VLIR-UOS is the platform through which Flemish higher education stakeholders have been working together on university cooperation for development since 1998. Funded by the federal government, the organisation is the main sponsor of cooperation projects between academics from Flanders and the South, as well as of scholarships for students and professionals from both Flanders and the South.

VLIR-UOS is part of the Flemish Interuniversity Council. VLIR-UOS receives funding from the Belgian Development Cooperation within the framework of Five-Year-Programmes. The present Five-Year Programme covers the period 2017-2021. More information at www.vliruos.be.

VLIR-UOS funds cooperation projects within the framework of multi-annual country programmes. A country programme consists of different intervention types:

INTERVENTION TYPE				LEVEL
NETWORK				COUNTRY
				INSTITUTION
	Institutional University Cooperation (IUC)	TEAM South Initiatives		DEPARTMENT/ FACULTY
		JOINT	(Individual) Scholarships	INDIVIDUAL

1.2. A new call for Institutional University Cooperation (IUC)

IUC is the flagship of VLIR-UOS cooperation in the South. Interventions are identified based on country-level and strategic pre-identification exercises. As such, calls for IUC programmes are policy initiated and restricted to a selected number of countries where potential for institutional university cooperation has been identified. Proposals from different countries enter in competition with each other in order to permit cross-national appraisal and selection.

Initiated in 1997, VLIR-UOS is facilitating Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programmes. So far, 32 IUC programmes have been implemented in 18 countries. 15 programmes are ongoing.

Recently, VLIR-UOS conducted 9 external evaluations of IUC programmes. Additionally, an impact evaluation of the Belgian university cooperation for development, funded by the Special Evaluation Service, was conducted. Based on the conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations of these evaluations, a meta-analysis was conducted. A number of topics for optimization were identified. These topics were discussed during a broad consultation workshop organised on 1 April 2019 in Brussels, with participation

of Southern stakeholders. The input from those workshops was used to optimise the IUC call, intake procedure and monitoring system.

The present call is meant to select a maximum of 5 partner universities starting an IUC partner programme as of 1 January 2022, at the start of the new five-year programme of VLIR-UOS (2022-2026).

1.3. Policy priorities

- *VLIR-UOS Country strategies and Synergy and complementarity*

Following an agreement with the Belgian Minister of Development Cooperation in April 2010 and in order to further concentrate, harmonise and optimize its cooperation efforts, VLIR-UOS introduced a Country Strategy Approach. A VLIR-UOS country strategy represents the strategic niche for future VLIR-UOS cooperation projects in a specific country and contains a thematic focus and sometimes an institutional/regional focus. A strategy starts from the needs of the partner country, and in particular the national priorities in terms of poverty reduction and national policies for higher education. Furthermore it takes into account the interest in cooperation at the level of the Flemish higher education institutes, and its potential added value. All new VLIR-UOS cooperation projects must align within the overall framework of VLIR-UOS country strategies as a means to concentrate and generate more impact.

Synergy and complementarity (S&C) is a top priority of the Belgian minister of development cooperation, yet again in order to generate more impact by pooling expertise and efforts. Belgian non-governmental development actors (ANGC) elaborated a Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) per country in which a set of common strategic goals were outlined around which potential for synergy and complementarity among the Belgian actors and/or their local partners can be further explored.

VLIR-UOS bundled all information on the link between the VLIR-UOS Country strategy and the Joint Strategic Framework per country in a **background document¹ per country** (see [section 8.](#)). For this call for IUC concept notes, the focus is on the link with the VLIR-UOS country strategies. The link with the VLIR-UOS country strategies is taken into account when assessing the (developmental) relevance of the concept note proposals. Specific synergy and complementarity with Belgian actors is not assessed at this stage, but will be more important at a later stage in the IUC selection process.

- *Transversal themes of the Belgian development cooperation*

According to the Belgian law on development cooperation of 2013, the following themes need to be integrated in a **transversal** way within all interventions funded by the Belgian development cooperation as to reach sustainable and inclusive development:

- the **gender dimension**, which aims at the empowerment of women and at the equality between men and women in society;

¹ Via the background document per country you can find the link with the country strategy document of VLIR-UOS and be informed on the potential for cooperation with Belgian ANGC.

- the protection of the **environment** and of **natural resources**, including the fight against climate change, drought and global deforestation.

VLIR-UOS engages in integrating both transversal themes in all interventions, including IUC. All new VLIR-UOS cooperation projects will need to justify how these transversal themes have been integrated in the project logic and project design. More information on the transversal themes can be found in the formulation guidelines for this call (see [background document 2](#) under section 8.).

- *Other priorities of the Belgian development cooperation*

Belgian development cooperation focuses on other priorities as well : result based management, integrity, human rights approach, digital for development, and cooperation with private sector.

More information on Belgian development cooperation can be found on https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/policy/development_cooperation. VLIR-UOS signed the integrity charter. https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/newsroom/news/2018/compulsary_ethical_codes_all_ngos

2. General concepts

2.1. Definition and general objective

Definition

An **Institutional University Cooperation (IUC)** programme is a long-term (12 years) institutional partnership between a university in the South and Flemish universities and university colleges.

General objective

The general objective of Institutional University Cooperation is “**Empowering the local university as institution to better fulfil its role as development actor in society**”. This means that an IUC envisions not only a contribution to developmental change –linked to different academic priority domains– outside the university but also a change process within the university leading to improved performance of the Higher Education Institution (HEI) in a number of institutional priority domains.

2.2. What is an IUC about?

Linked to the general objective of an IUC envisioning both institutional and developmental change, the following sections are meant to support a common understanding of the concepts of the ‘I in IUC’ and ‘Societal impact’.

The I in IUC

The ‘institutional’ in IUC means that an IUC programme envisions a change process within the university leading to improved performance of the institution as an Higher Education Institution (HEI) in a number

of institutional priority domains. The change within an institution is proposed as capacity building at different levels, having different dimensions (see below).

	Capacity creation	Capacity utilization	Capacity retention
Individual level	Development of adequate skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes (e.g. PhD)	Application of skills, knowledge, competencies on the workplace (e.g. PhD holder applies new knowledge and skills)	Reduction of staff turnover, facilitation of skills and knowledge transfer within institutions (e.g. PhD remains staff member)
Organisational level	Establishment of efficient structures, processes and procedures (e.g. introduction of lab procedures)	Integration of structures, processes and procedures in the daily workflows (e.g. well-functioning lab)	Regular adaptation of structures, processes and procedures (e.g. Integration of regular evaluation mechanisms for lab management)
Institutional and policy environment level	Establishment of adequate “institutions”, policies, rules and regulations (e.g. development of a new research/ accreditation/ HR policy, ..)	Enforcement of rules and regulations for good governance (e.g. implementation of new research, accreditation/ HR policy, ..)	Regular adaptation of institutions, rules and regulations (e.g. evaluation mechanisms for research, curricula, HR, ..)

This change realised through **academic theme-based projects** (research and educational strengthening of involved departments) and mandatory **transversal (institutional strengthening) projects**. These “transversal projects” are expected to focus on institution-wide organisational capacity building in a number of prioritised institutional policy domains (research policy, curricula/accreditation, university management, HRD, international relations, finance department, gender policy); and/or in domains of internal service delivery (ICT, library, language, basic sciences labs, ..); and/or in domains of external service delivery (outreach services, dissemination, extension/ Research and Technology Transfer (RTT) - offices, communication, ...)

Societal Change

The aforementioned projects, the academic theme-based projects in particular, also aim to have an impact outside the academic context (cf. the VLIR-UOS motto “Sharing Minds, Changing Lives”), not only after the intervention but also during the intervention via stakeholders involvement and by creating - from the start – the conditions for uptake. Societal impact requires uptake to take place: uptake of new knowledge created by projects, applications, products, services, etc. This ‘uptake’ does not happen automatically. It is important that IUC programmes develop the capacities and strategies to create the conditions for this uptake.

2.3. Main characteristics of an IUC partner institution

Institutional characteristics

- Priority is given to institutions that see it as their **mission to make a specific contribution to the development of their country**. This goes back to the mission statement of VLIR-UOS university cooperation for development of 2000 referring to the three functions of a university and the role of a university in society: *“The university combines three functions in a unique manner. The university generates knowledge through research. The university disseminates knowledge, inter alia via instruction. The university permanently and critically reflects on the society in which it is situated, and with which it continuously interacts in various ways. Through this combination, which is essential to the university, and by the fact that the university makes the knowledge generated available to society, universities play a specific and fundamental social role.”* VLIR-UOS wishes to collaborate with universities in the South which adopt the three above-mentioned missions and which attempt to freely disseminate and make accessible the acquired knowledge.
- A candidate IUC institution is expected to have the track record or **potential of playing a role as driver for change in its surrounding environment**, national sub-region and country, referring hereby to the general objective of an IUC programme (*“Empowering the local university as institution to better fulfil its role as development actor in society”*). IUC partner universities are selected both on the basis of their potential with respect to university education and research as well as the emancipatory role they play within their society. IUC partner institutions have a proven track record or potential in terms of uptake (e.g. proven capacity to work with stakeholders), change and **impact on society**.
- Classically an IUC partner institution is **not a first tier institution in a country, but a mid-range institution with sufficient academic capacity to build upon**, and with the potential for playing the envisaged role of driver of change in a specific regional setting but also with a number of clear needs in terms of institutional capacity building that can be met through cooperation.
- **Preference is given to public institutions**. However, both public and private universities may be considered insofar as the private universities are able to meet the selection criteria and fit within the VLIR-UOS country strategy. In some countries the country strategy gives explicit priority to public universities) or even includes a list of priority IUC partner universities. However, all universities in the listed countries (except top 2000) can apply, also private universities and universities not listed in the respective country strategies, but they need to justify why they believe that they fit within the IUC programme logic in the given country.
- Preference is given to universities that because of reasons of distance, communication and/or other factors are **less privileged** in terms of accessing national or international resources. **This could be translated in a preference for regional versus metropolitan universities**.
- Partner institutions are expected to pursue an active policy of cultural, ethnic, social and philosophical **non-discrimination**.
- Preference is given to those universities that are active in south-south networking such that possible outputs and results may be spread and/or shared with a wider group of institutions in the South.

- The national context in both political and economic terms, as well as the local context must be sufficiently safe and stable to allow for a long term commitment to collaboration with the Flemish universities and university colleges.

A basic institutional capacity is required

VLIR-UOS is not a funding agency. Therefore, an IUC partner programme based on academic collaboration, does not cater for:

- major investments in terms of facilities and infrastructure
- institutional funding (salaries or other recurrent costs)
- basic institutional functioning.

Put differently, an IUC partner university is expected to be able to function adequately at all levels, and be able to direct its own institutional destiny in a coherent manner. This assumes an adequate level of institutional planning and management, and an institutional environment that is transparent. This includes a sufficient exposure to research as well as the availability of trained human resources. There is need for institutional stability, and a minimum of own financial means. It also assumes a readiness to engage in a process of change management.

An IUC partner university is expected to have or work on a gender policy, as well as an integrity policy.

English is the IUC working language. Consequently, potential IUC partner universities will be required to demonstrate a sufficient ability to use English as a working language. However, at the level of local programme implementation, other languages can be used (e.g. French in DR Congo, Spanish in Latin America, ...).

A reasonable but meaningful level of VLIR-UOS support

Irrespective of size and development stage, a fixed annual budget is availed to IUC partner universities through the VLIR-UOS IUC programme. At the same time a situation of over-funding (risk of over-dependence) or under-funding (no impact) has to be avoided.

As such, VLIR-UOS will give preference to collaboration with partner universities whereby VLIR-UOS is one of the more important donors ensuring impact and a genuine institutional dialogue. However, in order to avoid a situation whereby the level of funding is disproportionate to the level of basic/recurrent (government) funding, only partner universities with a reasonable size (e.g. staff, student body, recurrent budget, ..) can be considered.

History of cooperation

Preference might be given to a partnership that could build up on existing links with one or more Flemish universities and university colleges, but only if it adds on to the quality of the proposal. In this manner, it might be much easier to arrive at the required institutional dialogue and partnership. The ability to mobilise broad based support among Flemish universities and university colleges referring to existing links may contribute to the quality of the application. However, having had earlier cooperation with one or more Flemish HEI(s) is not required.

Partnership and ownership

- An IUC is based on a partnership concept. Therefore the proposed cooperation programme is not only guided by both developmental and institutional priorities (mission and vision, strategic plan of the institution) guaranteeing local ownership and embeddedness, it also has to be matched with the expertise available and the willing offer by the Flemish HEIs. Each IUC partner programme should try and integrate all available expertise from interested Flemish academics from as many Flemish HEI as possible; insofar as this adds on to the quality of the programme.
- In order to achieve institutional impact at level of a partner programme should be sufficiently broad based and provide multi-disciplinary opportunities, i.e. not be limited to one department or be very discipline specific. IUC partner programmes have a need for and generate interdisciplinary cooperation. At the level of the selected partner universities this could imply a preference for so-called 'complete' universities. However, exceptions can occur (e.g. in countries where universities are organised by discipline) taking into account the extent to which the concerned partner university is meeting other criteria or considerations.

2.4. Programme Cycle and structure

Partner programme

An IUC partnership between one partner institution in the South and Flemish universities and university colleges is described in a multi-annual partner programme composed of successive annual programmes covering an earmarked phase of cooperation. The proposed partner programme is guided by a strong overall programme strategy and logic supported by a coherent set of projects involving interdisciplinary approaches.

Programme Cycle

The IUC programme Cycle starts with a Phase In (different steps in the IUC intake process leading to final selection of a partner programme) period of at least 1 year.

The core of the IUC programme consists of 10 years of partner programme funding, divided in 2 phases of 5 years each and followed by a Phase Out. The transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2 depends on a mid-term evaluation followed by a positive assessment of a Phase II proposal for cooperation. At the end of Phase 2 an end evaluation is foreseen in order to draw post-programme lessons.

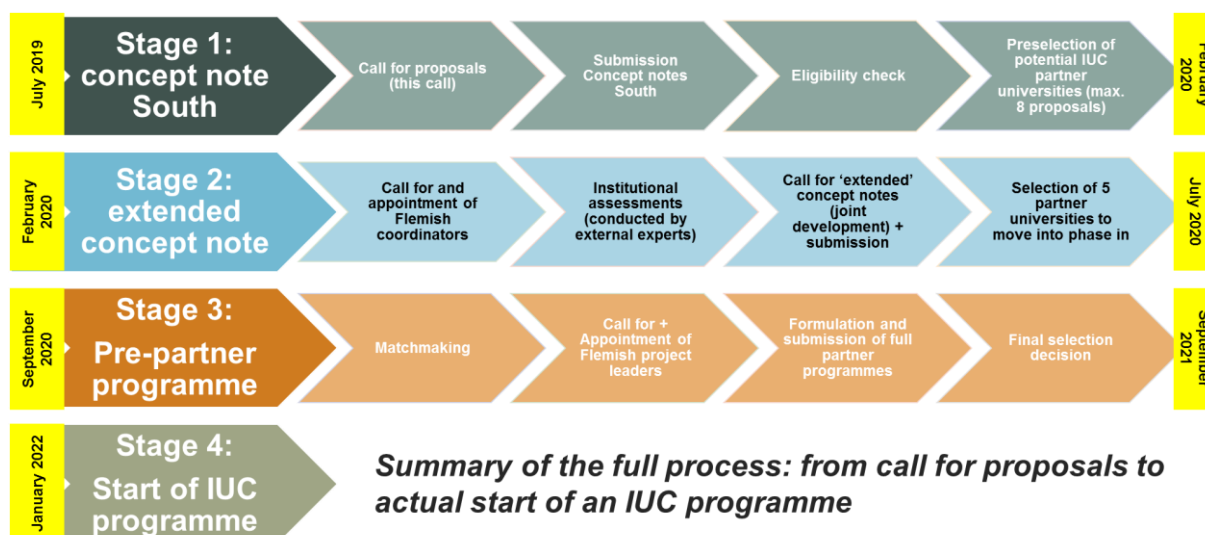
IUC Programme Cycle	Phase In - Pre Partner Programme	Phase 1 partner programme Capacity Building					Phase II partner programme Consolidation and valorisation					Phase Out: Valorisation	
Year	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Partnerships	2020-2021	2022-2026					2027-2031						

The approved phase 1 partner programme is jointly implemented via a tripartite agreement between the local partner university, the Flemish coordinating university and VLIR-UOS. At the local level, the local institution proposes a local coordinator and at the Flemish level, VLIR-UOS appoints a Flemish coordinator of the IUC cooperation of the partner institution with the Flemish HEIs. The Flemish institution to which the Flemish coordinator is affiliated will function as Flemish coordinating university, meaning assuming, together with the partner institution, full responsibility for the management and implementation of the partner programme with the partner institution on behalf of the participating Flemish institutions.

The formulation and implementation of each individual project within the IUC is managed by project leaders, academics from both the (local) partner institution and Flemish HEIs. Flemish project leaders are appointed by VLIR-UOS after stage 2 of the IUC selection procedure on the basis of an open competition facilitated via a matchmaking procedure and taking into consideration the advice of the IUC partner institution.

3. Timeline - Stages in the IUC intake process

The IUC intake process is a multi-stage process with 3 main selection stages, each consisting of several steps in the procedure. In the following scheme a visualisation of the stages was included:



The following table provides further detail with regard to the different steps as identified in the IUC intake process 2019 – 2021 (timing of certain steps are still indicative)

Steps	Detail	Timing
Stage 1 – Concept Note South		
1. Call for proposals for IUC cooperation	Call for proposals for IUC cooperation addressed to Southern partner universities – Concept note South	3 July 2019
2. Submission concept notes South	Submission by the Southern universities to VLIR-UOS	15 October 2019
3. Eligibility check	Decision by Bureau UOS	Final week of October 2019
4. Shortlist of potential IUC partner universities (max. 8 proposals)	4.1. IUC selection commission (SC) formulates a binding advice as to the shortlist of potential IUC partner universities (no ranking) 4.2. The Bureau UOS ratifies the shortlist of the SC	4.1. SC: week of 25 November 2019 4.2. 2 nd week of December 2019
Stage 2 – Extended Concept Note		
5. Call for and appointment of Flemish coordinators	5.1. Call for Flemish coordinators	5.1. Call: week of 16 December 2019

	<p>5.2. Submission of applications for Flemish coordinatorship via the ICOS of the Flemish universities</p> <p>5.3. Advice of the southern universities as to the appointment of Flemish coordinators</p> <p>5.4. The Bureau UOS appoints the Flemish coordinators on the basis of the advice of the Southern universities</p>	<p>5.2. Week of 27 January 2020 (</p> <p>5.3. Mid-February 2020</p> <p>5.4. Week of 24 February</p>
6.a. Institutional assessments (max. 8)	Institutional assessments performed by external expert teams, leading to an institutional assessment report	Institutional assessments : February – mid April 2020; submission reports to VLIR-UOS ultimately on 17/4/2020
6.b. Call for 'extended' concept notes to max. 8 shortlisted proposals (partner institutions and Flemish coordinator)	<p>6.b.1. Call for 'extended' concept note</p> <p>6.b.2. Submission of the jointly elaborated extended concept note (through the Flemish coordinator) to VLIR-UOS</p>	<p>6.b.1. Call: early February 2020</p> <p>6.b.2. Submission: 15 May 2020</p>
7. Selection of partner universities to move into phase in (pre-partner programme stage including formulation of partner programme proposals) (max. 5)	<p>7.1. The institutional assessment reports and 'Extended' concept note proposals will be submitted to the SC</p> <p>7.2. SC formulates a binding advice as to the selection of partner universities moving into phase in and programme formulation, on the basis of institutional assessment reports and extended concept notes</p> <p>7.3. The Bureau UOS ratifies the binding advice of the SC as to the selection of partner universities moving into IUC Phase In</p>	<p>7.1. Ultimately in the week of 19 May 2020</p> <p>7.2. SC meeting: week of 29 June</p> <p>7.3. Week of 6 July 2020</p>
Stage 3 – Pre-partner programme (incl. formulation of final partner programme proposals)		
8. Selected IUC partner institutions start a phase in (max. 5)	<p>8.1. Preparing pre-partner programme document and contract:</p> <p>8.2. Tripartite agreement until end of 2021</p>	<p>8.1. July-Aug 2019</p> <p>8.2. Start and end contract PPP: September 2020 to end of December 2021</p>

9. Matchmaking	Delegations of selected IUC partner universities –appointed local teams as part of the IUC extended concept notes–will travel to Belgium to meet with (potential) Flemish universities and university colleges stakeholders	End of October 2020 (indicative week of 26 October 2020)
10. Launch of Call and appointment of Flemish project leaders	10.1. Call for Flemish project leaders prior to matchmaking 10.2. Submission of applications for Flemish project leadership by Flemish academics 10.3. Advice of the southern universities as to the appointment of Flemish project leaders 10.4. Bureau UOS appoints the Flemish project leaders, on the basis of the advice of the Southern universities	10.1. September 2020 10.2. Week of 16 November 2020 10.3. Week of 31 November 2020 10.4. Week of 14 December 2020
11. Formulation missions	Joint elaboration of partner programme proposals by the appointed local and Flemish teams	February-May 2021
12. Submission of IUC partner programme proposals	Jointly elaborated S/N, final submission by the Flemish coordinator	Indicative mid-June 2021 (indicative on 18/6)
13. Appraisal of partner programme proposals and final selection decision	SC appraises final partner programme proposals and formulates a binding advice as to the final IUC selection and start-up in 2022.	Early September 2021
14. Final decision by the Bureau UOS and confirmation of all mandates	Bureau UOS ratifies the binding advice of the SC as to the final selection and reconfirms all Flemish mandates	Week of 20 September 2021
Stage 4 – Start of IUC programme		
15. Start of IUC programmes	Start in new FYP 2022-2026	1 January 2022

This **call for concept notes South** fits into stage 1 (Identification Stage) of the above detailed overview of steps in the IUC intake process, leading to a shortlist of max. 8 partner universities.

It is only at the end of Stage 2 (appraisal of the extended concept notes leading to the selection of max. 5 partner universities starting with a Phase In) that pre-partner programmes agreements are planned to start (Stage 3, indicative start in September 2020). These agreements will cover matchmaking and formulation activities (steps 8-12) and the preparation of a local support structure for the start of the institutional partnership. The final stage of the IUC selection will be the assessment and final revision of partner programme proposals jointly elaborated by appointed local and Flemish teams.

The final IUC phase 1 partner programmes will start in 2022, based on a tripartite contract agreement and will be subject to the approval by the Belgian Minister for Development Cooperation for the VLIR-UOS programmes 2022-2026.

4. Budget

VLIR-UOS foresees a budget for indicatively up to 5 new IUC programmes starting with a pre-partner programme by ultimately mid-2020 and running until the end of 2021.

After successful formulation, selected IUC partner programmes will start full programme activities in 2022².

The indicative maximum annual budget for an IUC programme for this call is € 600.000, meaning that the full budget for a first phase of cooperation is up to € 3.000.000 for the whole five-year phase.

An IUC programme of such volume typically has up to 5 academic theme-based projects (research and educational strengthening of involved departments) and one or more Transversal Institutional Strengthening project. However, these numbers are for illustration only. Also a institutional programme support unit is included, gathering the administrative support and coordination costs related to the programme. Depending on the assessment of the concept notes, the institutional assessments and the final selection advice, this maximum annual budget of an IUC programme can be downscaled with an indicative minimum annual budget being € 450.000.

No budget proposals are to be included in this Call for Concept Notes South.

More information on the expenses allowed in the framework of an IUC programme can be found in the VLIR-UOS [financial guidelines](#) for IUC programmes (*Update of 5 March 2018*).

² The overall budget for this call is subject to final approval by the Belgian government of the overall VLIR-UOS budget for 2022 and the multiannual programme 2022-2026.

5. Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria define whether or not a proposal can be accepted to enter the selection process. Eligibility criteria will be checked on the basis of an objective and simple yes/no answer. Therefore, eligibility criteria which are not fulfilled, will in principle result in the rejection of a proposal.

Each call for proposals defines clear eligibility criteria, based on the following sections.

Eligibility of applicants /countries	Eligibility of the proposed institution in a country listed as eligible for this IUC call
Eligibility of submission modalities	Timely and complete submission following the format guidelines, thereby answering all questions

5.1. Eligibility criteria for IUC partner universities (applicants/countries)

Universities

Only **universities** located in the **VLIR-UOS partner country list for the call for proposals** are eligible.

In view of the VLIR-UOS mission statement that refers to all three functions of a university (including education) research institutes cannot be considered as IUC partner institutes.

International top institutions are not targeted. As such the top 2000 institutions of the webometrics ranking are not eligible for participation (see background document).

Countries

For the IUC call 2019 the list is limited to **DR Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru, Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam.**

5.2. Eligibility of submission modalities

Format, compulsory annexes, and deadline

The proposal must meet the application and submission requirements as described in chapter 7 of this call 'Application modalities'. Non-compliance with the mandatory format, including not answering specific questions will lead to non-acceptance of the proposal.

English

As in the past, English will remain the IUC working language. Thus, all IUC documents, formats and reports will need to be compiled in English in order to retain a coherent programme level approach.

Proposed local IUC coordinator

In view of the importance of the position of the programme coordinator, the application of a proposed partner university should also include the proposal of a local coordinator³ (e.g. Annex to the IUC concept note proposal to be filled out). This mandate will be provisional during the Phase In. All mandates will also be confirmed as part of the final programme selection.

Re-submissions

Partner universities that have submitted a concept note in the past, and were not selected, can re-submit. In order, however, for a re-submission to be meaningful, observations and comments raised by the Selection Commission in the past will need to be addressed in a satisfactory manner. Former IUC partner universities cannot apply for an IUC programme

6. Selection

6.1. Selection criteria

VLIR-UOS applies the same set of six selection criteria for all its calls for project proposals.

These criteria are further defined and translated into a non-exhaustive list of descriptors that are illustrative but provide an objective interpretation of the criteria, both for the applicant as well as for the selection commissions.⁴

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY <i>The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).</i>
RELEVANCE <i>The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.</i>
EFFECTIVENESS <i>The extent to which the proposals' objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.</i>
EFFICIENCY <i>A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.</i>
IMPACT <i>Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.</i>
SUSTAINABILITY <i>The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed.</i>

³ Background document IUC blueprint management structure (incl. profile of the local IUC coordinator).

⁴ Based on the ERC (European Research Council) and OECD-DAC (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee) definitions.

The following scoring system will be applied for the preselection of partner institutions in stage 1 (Concept Note South) :

The standard selection criteria as presented below will be applied.
The following descriptors and weighting are foreseen:

Policy initiated Call		
IUC – shortlist of partner institutions (Stage 1 – Concept Note South)		
Weight		
Factor	Score (max.)	
SCIENTIFIC QUALITY <i>The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).</i>	4	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The concept note is original, creative, innovative The partner institution has sufficient academic, scientific and/or technical expertise and experience (knowledge of the issues to be addressed) to successfully engage in an IUC partnership The concept note is ambitious in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> envisaged institutional change vision and strategy on how academic capacity building and progress (e.g. educational and scientific progress; evolution towards more research-based academic programmes, role of research in this process, ...) can be achieved with the support of an IUC cooperation the role of the university as a driver of change in society 		
RELEVANCE <i>The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.</i>	6	30
Contextual relevance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institution is less privileged in terms of accessing national or international resources and has potential for playing the envisaged role of driver of change. The institution is in line with the main characteristics of an IUC institution The concept note is based on a genuine, adequate and convincing analysis of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the partner's institutional capacities and needs local needs and development challenges (can also be national needs and challenges) stakeholders The concept note shows that an IUC partnership would be well in line with the partner's institutional strategy and institutional development status The priorities of the proposed programme match well with the institutional and local context The concept note's proposed programme has potential to deliver applicable results relevant to development and the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries Policy relevance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The concept note is in line with the objectives and priorities of the intervention type (IUC) The concept note is in line with the respective VLIR-UOS country strategy and the Joint Strategic Framework The concept note seriously considers, identifies and (if relevant) integrates potential for synergy and/or complementarity with other initiatives/interventions/actors The concept note takes into account gender and environment throughout the proposal (e.g. in the context and stakeholder analysis, programme vision and strategy, domains of change,...) 		
EFFECTIVENESS <i>The extent to which the proposals' objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.</i>	3	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The concept note identifies long-term objectives to which the programme can realistically contribute 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept note defines a number of domains of change the programme wishes to contribute to. These are ambitious but realistic and coherent (academic and/or developmental) • The concept note identifies approaches as to how to approach the domains of change in terms of key strategies that will be used to translate these in capacity building approaches • The concept note has a convincing vision on the domains of transversal institutional strengthening to be addressed within the IUC programme • The concept note has a convincing theory of change at the level of the programme demonstrating a sound idea about the envisioned change process • The concept note has identified the most important uncertainties (assumptions/risks) and adequately deals with them 		
EFFICIENCY <i>A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to results.</i>	2	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partner has sufficient (financial) management capacity and experience, illustrated by experience with other external funding. • There is a clear vision on how the necessary resources/inputs (financial, personnel, ..) can be put in place to implement a successful IUC programme • The proposed programme already has links with Flemish HEI (may also include earlier/current VLIR-UOS interventions) or has a sound strategy to easily initiate them 		
IMPACT <i>Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.</i>	2,5	12,5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept note has a clear vision on the impact it wants to realise via an IUC programme • The proposed partnership is experienced in successfully working together with external stakeholders (e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc) • The proposal has a vision on dissemination/extension/valorization strategy which increases the likelihood of uptake/upscaling/... and impact • The proposed programme shows a high potential for effective impact on ultimate beneficiaries (outside the partner institution: e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc) 		
SUSTAINABILITY <i>The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed.</i>	2,5	12,5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept note (process leading to the concept note, persons involved, etc) demonstrates high levels of ownership of the institution • The proposed programme is likely to realize a clear institutional embeddedness (within the partner organization; with relevant local, national, international networks and stakeholders) allowing the activities to continue after the funding (institutional sustainability) • The concept note demonstrates awareness of sustainability risks and has adequate measures (technical and social sustainability) • If applicable, the concept note takes into account the positive/negative impact of the programme on the policy level (political sustainability) • The concept note takes into account the negative/positive environmental impact of the programme (environmental sustainability) 		

In addition to the descriptors presented in the table, in stage 1 under the criterion ‘relevance’, in particular “policy relevance”, a reasonable spreading over countries and regions of the IUC proposals, if so possible, will be aimed at, as overall policy consideration to be taken into consideration by the IUC selection commission. : The commission will also relate all proposals to the overall IUC objective, being a programme that facilitates capacity building at the level of partner universities but also mobilises and involves a maximum of Flemish HEIs.

More details on the selection criteria and scoring and decision making are to be found in the Selection System (policy& guidelines) document of VLIR-UOS (details under [section - 8. background annex 1](#)).

6.2. Selection commission

A specific IUC commission will be composed to assess the proposals for IUC cooperation during its different selection stages starting from a Concept Note South to a final IUC partner programme proposal. Considering the IUC call is directed to a limited set of VLIR-UOS partner countries in different continents (Africa, Latin America and Asia) a mixed commission is installed prior to the selection stage of Concept Notes South.

The submitted IUC concept notes South will be assessed in a comparative way, crossing over regional borders.

The IUC selection commission meeting for the assessment of the Concept Notes South will take place in the 2nd half of November 2019 (indicative). The selection commission formulates a binding advice as to the shortlist of potential IUC partner universities (no ranking).

The Bureau UOS will ratify the shortlist during the 1st half of December 2019 (indicative).

7. Application modalities and support

7.1. Formulation

All IUC programme proposals need to be identified and formulated following the general principles of the Theory of Change approach and the Managing for Development Results paradigm. This involves formulating a project strategy, analysing stakeholders and identifying engagement strategies, defining objectives, identifying indicators, managing risks, integrating transversal themes, etc. VLIR-UOS foresees project formulation guidelines (cfr. [Background document 2](#)). These guidelines provide a clear and succinct overview of what is expected from the formulation process and provides ample examples. Using these guidelines is strongly advised.

7.2. Formats and annexes

A proposal for an IUC Concept Note “South” must comprise the following parts (enclosed formats except if indicated below):

Formats	Explanation
<u>Annex 1</u> : Format for a Concept Note South proposal	<i>Main narrative document. This format is to be followed when drafting the proposal and to be submitted (with the signature of the rector enclosed).</i>
<u>Annex 2</u> : Institutional Fact Sheet	<i>The format is included and to be followed, except if indications are included that own data formats can be added</i>
<u>Annex 3</u> : Format for the application of a local coordinator (including a CV)	<i>The format is included and to be followed, the included CV of the proposed local coordinator is in free format (relevant info for this mandate, with a maximum of 2 pages)</i>
<u>Annex 4</u> : Mission statement and latest strategic plan	<i>Free format</i>
<u>Annex 5</u> : Confirmation letter by the local rector	<i>Free format, The project proposal has to contain a confirmation letter (e.g. e-mail) of the rector of the university proposing itself for an IUC cooperation and supporting the proposed local coordinator</i>

The annex 1 and 2 include indications on the maximum number of pages per section, a font type& size, and must be submitted in English. All compulsory fields are to be completed within the format. The format must be signed by the local coordinator and by the university authority (rector / VC). (can be an electronic signature). Besides the documents listed above, other annexes are not accepted. They are not taken into consideration.

7.3. Deadline and submission modalities

This concerns the deadline that applicants should respect when submitting to VLIR-UOS. This will be the same deadline for all candidates.

Proposals must be submitted to VLIR-UOS directly (electronic copy) on 15 October 2019 (23:59 CET) at the latest.

Proposals should be submitted in English by one single email to info@vliruos.be and Kris-tof.vanderperren@vliruos.be. VLIR-UOS accepts scanned signatures in the application phase.

7.4. Application support

The VLIR-UOS programme managers per country are the first line contact persons to assist the local institutions with regard to specific questions related to the IUC application process and formats.

Name and function	Phone	Email
Peter De Lannoy, <i>Head of Programmes (and resp. for Cuba and Ecuador)</i>	+32 2 550 19 64	peter.delannoy@vliruos.be
Kathleen Wuytack, <i>Programme Manager (resp. for DR Congo and Uganda)</i>	+32 2 289 05 55	Kathleen.wuytack@vliruos.be
Inge Vandevyvere, <i>Programme Manager (resp. for Indonesia, the Philippines and Kenya)</i>	+32 2 550 19 67	Inge.Vandevyvere@vliruos.be
Christophe Goossens, <i>Programme Manager (resp. for Cambodia, Vietnam and South Africa)</i>	+32 2 550 19 65	Christophe.Goossens@vliruos.be
Ragna Frans, <i>Programme Manager (resp. for Tanzania)</i>	+32 2 289 05 57	ragna.frans@vliruos.be
Wannes Verbeeck, <i>Programme Manager (resp. for Peru)</i>	+32 2 550 19 68	wannes.verbeeck@vliruos.be
Kristof Van Der Perren, <i>Administrative officer (for questions of general administrative support)</i>	+ 32 2 550 19 66	kristof.vanderperren@vliruos.be

Due to holidays, above persons are not available the whole summer.

8. Background documents

Following [background documents](#) can be downloaded from the VLIR-UOS website when formulating a programme proposal (background doc 1 to 5: generic supporting guidelines; background doc 6 to 17 – document per country) :

Background document 1 VLIR-UOS Selection System – Policy and Guidelines (Version 3 July 2019)	<i>Currently, the present Info Document describes the selection modalities for VLIR-UOS calls.</i>
Background document 2 IUC Concept Note South - formulation guidelines 2019	<i>Formulation guidelines specific for this call for Concept Notes South</i>
Background document 3 Overall task division in IUC coordination and programme management	<i>Introductory document including the overall profile of an IUC (local) coordinator</i>
Background document 4 VLIR-UOS financial guidelines for IUC programmes (Update of 5 March 2018)	<i>The VLIR-UOS financial guidelines indicate what expenses are allowed in the framework of an IUC programme.</i>
Background document 5 Webometrics list of universities (publication date June 2019)	<i>Universities that are in the top 2000 ranking of this list are not eligible for this call</i>

Background doc 6 to 17 – documents per country, with information on the country strategy and informative background with regard to the joint strategic framework (Concept note proposals should maximally align with the identified themes and priorities for cooperation in the country strategy):

Background document 6: Cambodia
Background document 7: Cuba
Background document 8: DR Congo
Background document 9: Ecuador
Background document 10: Indonesia
Background document 11: Kenya
Background document 12: Peru
Background document 13: Philippines
Background document 14: South Africa
Background document 15: Tanzania
Background document 16: Uganda
Background document 17: Vietnam

Abbreviations

ANGC	Belgian Actor of the Non-Governmental Cooperation
Bureau UOS	Board of VLIR-UOS
DGD	Directorate General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid
FYP	Five-Year Programme
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution(s)
ICOS	Institutional Coordinator for Development Cooperation
IUC	Institutional University Cooperation
JOINT	Joint (inter)national Academic Networking project
JSF	Joint Strategic Framework
SI	South Initiative project
RTT	Research and Technology Transfer
TEAM	TEAM project
ToC	Theory of Change
UOS	Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (University Cooperation for Development)
VLIR	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad (Flemish Interuniversity Council)
VLIR-UOS	VLIR-Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (VLIR-University Cooperation for Development)