

**CIFAR SOLUTION NETWORKS**

# DESIGN SOLUTIONS

**FOR RESPONSIBLE AI**

**CIFAR SOLUTION NETWORKS CALL FOR  
AI GOVERNANCE SOLUTIONS IN LOW-MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**CIFAR**



**IDRC | CRDI**

- 1. What is a Solution Network?**

A Solution Network is a global team of cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary experts who design and develop responsible and beneficial AI solutions. For this call, the Network will be focused on the governance of AI and machine learning (ML) systems in low-middle income countries/regions.
- 2. Where should the solution be focused?**

The solution funded through this call should be focused on a low-middle income country as defined by [The World Bank](#). Solutions focused in Eastern Europe, Cairo, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and Yemen will not be accepted. Individuals from these regions/countries will also not be accepted as part of a proposed Solution Network.
- 3. Can an organization be part of a Solution Network?**

No, the proposed members of the Solution Network must be individuals. Organizations as a whole cannot be part of the Solution Network. An individual can represent their respective organization, however they must be the active contributor and dedicated member of the Solution Network.
- 4. Can an individual from a for-profit organization be part of the Solution Network?**

Yes, as long as the required eligibility criteria have been met.
- 5. Can an individual apply as part of more than one Solution Network?**

No, individuals can only apply as part of one proposed Solution Network.
- 6. Can the solution be focused in more than one low-middle income country?**

Yes, the proposed solution may address a challenge in governing AI that is present in more than one low-middle income country as part of a larger region. Applicants will be asked to describe the current context and cultural logic in which the solution is being developed.
- 7. Will unsuccessful expressions of interest receive feedback?**

No, due to the amount of submitted expressions of interest expected we will not be providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants. However, if you have specific questions you may email [solutionnetworks@cifar.ca](mailto:solutionnetworks@cifar.ca).
- 8. Can I apply with a Solution that has already been designed?**

The focus of this call is on the governance of AI/ML systems. We are looking for novel governance solutions to an AI/ML application either existing or in development.
- 9. Can CIFAR or IDRC help me connect to others interested in the Solution Networks call?**

No, CIFAR or IDRC will not be able to help connect interested individuals.
- 10. How can the funding be spent for the Solution Network?**

The Solution Networks funding is flexible and may be used for teaching/course release, salary support, trainee support, travel-hosting expense, professional and technical services, in addition to other research and development related activity costs. EOIs that are invited to proposal development will be requested to provide a three-year budget.
- 11. Can a Solution Network include team members from an excluded region/country if the solution is not focused on that region/country?**

No, CIFAR and IDRC cannot disburse funding to the excluded regions (either for the solution or the Network members) therefore the Solution Network cannot include team members from an excluded country/region.

- 12. Can the co-directors be from the same country/region and/or sector?**  
Yes, as long as the required eligibility criteria has been met. However, we do encourage diversity of membership in the proposed Solution Network.
- 13. Can the Solution Network receive funding from other sources for the proposed solution?**  
Yes, the Solution Network is permitted to receive funding from other sources for the proposed solution.
- 14. Can alternate financial arrangements be made in cases where a Solution Network member can not receive financial support?**  
No, we cannot make alternative arrangements if there is an individual that cannot receive Solution Network funding.
- 15. How many Solution Networks will be funded through the call for AI governance solutions in LMIC?**  
One successful Solution Network will be funded through this call. Future calls for Solution Networks will be announced on the [cifar.ca](https://cifar.ca).
- 16. What are the different components of the EOI application?**  
Questions for the EOI application can be found in the [CIFAR application portal](#). Create an account to view all of the questions and learn more about word limits, etc. Only one member of your proposed Solution Network can complete the application, so we encourage you to work on a shared document before completing it in the application portal.
- 17. What are the qualifications you are looking for in a proposed Solution Network member, in terms of experience and expertise?**  
Other than the eligibility requirements as stated for the membership of the Network, we do not have specific criteria in terms of work experience and expertise. CIFAR creates global communities of exceptional experts dedicated to open, sustained collaboration, exploration, and impact creation. Potential team members should be experts in their communities. Applicants should demonstrate the excellence of proposed team members and make clear how the team members reflect the necessary expertise required to support the solution proposed.
- 18. Does the proposed solution have to relate specifically to improving AI governance, as opposed to general AI applications?**  
For this call the proposed solution must address the governance of AI/ML systems.
- 19. Can an individual from a for-profit organization be part of a proposed Solution Network?**  
Yes, as long as all of the required eligibility criteria of the membership of the Network has been met.
- 20. I was born in a low-middle income country but I am a Canadian citizen, do I meet the required criteria for at least one member of the Solution Network to be based in Canada?**  
The criteria—*at least one member of the Solution Network should be based in Canada*— will be met if you are currently based in Canada, it is not dependent on citizenship.
- 21. I am based in the low-middle income country where the proposed solution will be focused but I am not a citizen of that country, do I meet the required criteria for at least one member of the Solution Network to be based in a low-middle income country (where the Solution will be focused)?**  
Yes, this criteria is not dependent on citizenship status. If you are based in the low-middle income country where the solution will be focused, you meet this criteria.

**22. Should these AI governance solutions be something the governments of low-middle income countries have identified, or can we flag an issue and propose a solution?**

The governance solutions do not need to be identified by the governments of low-middle income countries. The challenge and solution in governing AI/ML can be identified by the proposed Solution Network. We are looking for novel and creative solutions that differ from solutions that have been attempted in the region or more broadly.

**23. Should proposals be more oriented to research or to the implementation of solutions to concrete problems with real users?**

The Solution Network funded through this call should:

- Apply leading research and practice insights in the development of novel interventions, to respond to current gaps in governing AI systems;
- Test interventions to ensure uptake, including a community consultation within the first 18 months of the project (if not already completed at the time the Network is funded);
- Inform policies or practices that mitigate potential social, ethical and economic harms of AI/ML systems; and
- Initiate efforts to scale the intervention

Proposals whose primary goal is to drive new knowledge or understanding in order to advance a field of study or that focus solely on technical solutions (e.g. improving machine learning algorithms) will not be considered.

**24. Would proposals that use data science techniques or predictive analytics tools for governance be considered?**

The focus of this call is on the governance of AI systems. AI systems are defined as algorithmic decision-making machine learning systems (AI/ML). With regard to the governance of the AI system, we are interested in novel interventions that are not solely focused on technical solutions.