

**2025 – 2027 United Nations Academic Impact
Sustainable Development Goal Hubs (UNAI SDG Hubs)**

Terms of Reference

3 July 2024

I. Objectives and scope

The United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) is excited to announce a call for new cohort of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Hubs to advance the global goals with support from academic institutions, in particular to:

- Incorporate the SDGs into academic curriculum, research activities, operations, community outreach and partnerships.
- Develop and implement projects that contribute to research, knowledge production, teaching and learning about the SDGs.
- Bridge the research to policy and practice gap by fostering partnerships for the SDGs with academia, governments, civil society, and the private sector.
- Cultivate best practice, capacity-building, knowledge exchange, monitoring and evaluation of SDG impact and engagement.

Through these collaborative efforts, the UNAI SDGs Hubs aim to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet. The UNAI SDG Hubs aim to harness the potential of academia in driving positive social, economic, and environmental change in line with the SDGs and inspire a new generation of leaders and change-makers committed to making a positive impact in the world.

II. Organizational structure

The network of 17 distinct hubs, each dedicated to advancing a specific Sustainable Development Goal while respecting the strong interdependencies across all 17 SDGs:

- UNAI SDG Hub 1: No Poverty
- UNAI SDG Hub 2: Zero Hunger
- UNAI SDG Hub 3: Good Health and Well-Being
- UNAI SDG Hub 4: Quality Education
- UNAI SDG Hub 5: Gender Equality
- UNAI SDG Hub 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- UNAI SDG Hub 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- UNAI SDG Hub 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

UNAI SDG Hub 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
UNAI SDG Hub 10: Reduced Inequalities
UNAI SDG Hub 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
UNAI SDG Hub 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
UNAI SDG Hub 13: Climate Action
UNAI SDG Hub 14: Life Below Water
UNAI SDG Hub 15: Life on Land
UNAI SDG Hub 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
UNAI SDG Hub 17: Partnership for the Goals

The primary mandate of UNAI SDG Hubs is to mobilize strategic collective action of students, faculty and staff across teaching, research, operations, community engagement and partnerships for the Sustainable Development Goals. This involves fostering collaborations, organizing research initiatives, hosting events and training sessions, spearheading awareness campaigns, and leveraging connections with local, regional, and global UNAI members to propel progress towards the SDGs.

It is envisioned that each hub will comprise multiple UNAI members, with the following roles: (1) Hub Chair, (2) Research lead, (3) Outreach & partnership lead and (4) Teaching & education lead, thereby enabling a multifaceted approach to driving meaningful impact in support of the SDGs. The Hubs Chairs' will be selected first and will contribute to the selection of other UNAI members to the UNAI SDG Hubs. The Hub Chair will be responsible for coordinating the work of the SDG Hub and for providing updates on ongoing and planned activities, events, and projects to UNAI. The role of the Hub Chair can be rotated among members of the UNAI SDG Hub.

III. Roles and responsibilities

UNAI is committed to provide support and guidance to the Hubs as they work towards awareness-raising and support-mobilization for SDGs, including:

UNAI:

- Promote best practices, foster communication among the hubs and coordinate impactful events.
- Serve as a bridge between UNAI SDG Hubs and other UN entities.
- Connect UNAI members from Global North and Global South.
- Share relevant information about UN events, reports, campaigns and initiatives that are relevant to the academic community and their efforts to promote sustainable development.
- Guide UNAI SDG Hubs how to participate/engage with the UN meetings and events.
- Support UNAI SDG Hubs in organizing annual virtual events.
- Work to establish an online platform for knowledge sharing to facilitate communication across multiple time zones (pending funds availability).

UNAI SDG Hubs will commit to promoting and advancing SDGs within their respective regions by raising awareness about the SDGs, facilitating collaboration and partnerships, and implementing initiatives and strategic aims on their campuses that contribute to the achievement of the goals.

Hubs:

- Secure strong institutional commitment from the institution's leadership, across the relevant departments and among students in support of SDGs.
- Foster knowledge sharing, collaboration, and innovation to promote SDGs globally, regionally and locally.
- Organize one virtual/hybrid event per year which will result in production of a short document with recommendations/guidelines/best practices pertinent to the selected goal.
- Facilitate research, teaching collaborations and/or project opportunities that draw in other universities in the UNAI network, and universities seeking to become UNAI members.
- Facilitate mentorship programmes to pair experienced Hubs with newer ones for mutual support.
- Establish communities of practice for the SDG goal(s) they serve to support sustainable development initiatives among the UNAI member institutions in their respective regions.
- Collaborate with local communities and partners to mobilize action towards the selected SDG.
- Submit annual report via UNAI online form.
- Send a minimum of one story for UNAI multilingual website about an initiative that contributed to the achievement of SDGs.

Interested, outgoing Hubs/focal points may express interest in becoming hub emeritus/advisors to UNAI and the incoming hub institutions.

We encourage all UNAI SDG Hubs to utilize English where possible, as the language of communication to maximize the impact of our collective efforts towards sustainable development.

IV. Timeline and eligibility criteria

All UNAI members are eligible to apply for hub status. The new cohort of UNAI SDG Hubs tenure will span three-year period from **1 January 2025 to 31 December 2027.**

Applications should be submitted for a particular UNAI SDG Hub align with academic, research and outreach efforts of applying institution. If UNAI is unable to accommodate your first choice, we kindly ask for your second preference for the UNAI SDG Hub that you would like to apply for. This will ensure that we can consider alternative options and provide you with the best possible opportunity to participate in the initiative in a meaningful way.

V. Conclusion

UNAI SDG Hubs will play a crucial role in advancing the SDGs through education, research, and collaboration. They will serve as catalysts for innovative solutions to global challenges, bringing together academia, students, local communities and partners to address a wide variety of issues - poverty, gender equality, access to education and climate change. The goal of the UNAI SDG Hubs is to harness the expertise and resources of academic institutions to accelerate progress towards a more sustainable and equitable world for all.