



SHAPE-SEA COMMISSIONED THEMATIC RESEARCH 2026 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Theme: Challenging Patriarchal Institutions and Strengthening Anti-Harassment Responses in ASEAN

Convened by

Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in Southeast Asia (SHAPE-SEA),
The ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC),
represented by the Thailand Representative on Women's Rights, and Gender and Development Studies, Asian
Institute of Technology (AIT)

Background and Rationale

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), sexual harassment, and gender discrimination remain persistent across ASEAN societies, including in universities, schools, government agencies, workplaces, public services, and civic institutions. Although many ASEAN Member States have introduced laws, policies, complaint mechanisms, child protection systems, and gender equality commitments, implementation remains difficult. The challenge is not only legal or technical. Anti-harassment work often confronts deeply embedded patriarchal structures: hierarchical authority, institutional silence, victim-blaming, fear of retaliation, weak accountability, informal protection of powerful actors, and gender norms that normalize unequal power relations. These barriers are visible in higher education, where students and staff may face harassment but lack safe reporting channels; in schools, where school-related gender-based violence affects children and youth; and in state agencies, where bureaucracy, rank, and political sensitivity may prevent meaningful institutional reform.

This Call for Research Proposals invites scholars, public officials, researchers, practitioners, and policy actors from ASEAN Member States to critically examine why anti-harassment reforms are difficult to implement and how patriarchal structures within institutions can be weakened or transformed. The initiative seeks evidence-based, policy-relevant, and regionally grounded research that contributes to safer, more inclusive, and gender-just institutions across ASEAN.

Objectives: The grants aim to support research projects that:

1. Examine the effectiveness of existing anti-harassment and anti-SGBV mechanisms and policies within institutions in selected ASEAN member states.
2. Analyze how patriarchal power relations and institutional cultures shape the design, operation, and outcomes of reporting, complaint-handling, investigation, and redress, mechanisms in schools, higher education, state agencies, and other establishments.
3. Identify legal, administrative, organizational, cultural, and political factors that enable or constrain effective reporting, investigation, survivor protection, accountability, and institutional response.

4. Assess promising practices, institutional innovations, and reform efforts that contribute to gender-responsive, survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and discrimination-free environments.
5. Generate practical evidence-based recommendations to strengthen institutional mechanisms and contribute to ASEAN-level dialogue, policy development, and regional learning on preventing and responding to harassment and SGBV.

Expected Outputs: Successful grantees will produce:

1. A research paper, policy report, or policy brief or other knowledge products suitable for wider dissemination;
2. Practical recommendations for ASEAN, national governments, schools, universities, or state agencies; and
3. A presentation for the regional dialogue.

Regional Dialogue: A regional dialogue, convened by SHAPE-SEA, the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), represented by the Thailand Representative on Women's Rights, and the Gender and Development Studies Program of the School of Public Policy and Sustainable Development (GDS-FPSD) at AIT, will be organized as part of the overall project. The dialogue will bring together scholars (including the research grantees), government officials, practitioners, and advocates to synthesize research findings and develop collective policy recommendations on anti-harassment measures, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and institutional transformation across ASEAN.

ELIGIBILITY

1. The applicant must be a Southeast Asian researcher, academic or practitioner affiliated with a research or academic institution in the region and is currently based in Southeast Asia.
2. The proposed research project can be part of an ongoing research but must not have been published yet.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Accomplished Research Proposal [maximum 3000 words]

The proposal must include:

- Title of the Research Project;
- Name and Affiliation of the Researcher;
- Concept Note/brief description of the research;
- Objectives, Research Questions and Methodology;
- Literature Review;
- Risk Analysis and Ethical Concerns;
- Bibliography;
- Timeline; and
- Proposed Budget

2. Curriculum Vitae [maximum of 2 pages]
3. Proof of Employment or Affiliation [e.g. Institutional ID/ certification, etc]
4. Reference/Recommendation letter (1) *[optional]*

APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

The selection committee will assess applications/proposals based on the alignment to the theme, quality of the research proposals, and feasibility of timely completion of the proposed research projects.

MORE INFORMATION

Submission Responsibility Disclaimer

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all submitted documents are complete and accurate. The committee will not be responsible for reviewing, correcting, or redistributing any files that contain errors or mistakes prior to the selection process or at any stage thereafter.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Submission Deadline: 10 July 2026 (11:59PM BKK Time)

Announcement of Result: By or during the week of 17 July, 2026

Documents to Prepare, Upload and Submit

1. Accomplished Research Proposal *[check the outline/ format above]*
2. Curriculum Vitae [maximum of 2 pages]
3. Proof of Employment or Affiliation [e.g. Institutional ID/ certification, etc]
4. Reference/Recommendation letter (1) *[optional]*

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL