



CPA SMALL BRANCHES REGIONAL INITIATIVE FUND TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

Established in 2019 by the CPA Secretariat, the Regional Initiatives Fund (RIF) supports Small Branches in strengthening their capacity, improving processes and procedures and enshrining the independence of the legislature. In pursuing these goals, the RIF aligns with Strategic Objective 1, as outlined in the CPA's Strategic Plan: *'Strengthen the capacity and maximise the effectiveness of Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff and enable mutual learning.'*

Initially the RIF emphasized the importance of peer-to-peer learning and prioritized clerk exchanges. Since the launch of the RIF, however, several Branches have sought to utilise the funds to support or strengthen parliamentary practice and procedure, infrastructure investments, research services, access to information, etc. In recognition of this broad range of projects, and the difficulties and complications that can arise from coordinating bids from two Branches working in collaboration, the RIF is no longer limited to clerk exchanges.

Small Branches are invited to apply individually for funding or together with other Branches in a joint proposal. Regions may also apply for funding, provided the respective project undertakes to support Small Branches in their region and is directed by those Small Branches.

For 2025, the fund comprises a total of £25,000. Individual project proposals can request funding up to £10,000, but this does not guarantee the full amount will be awarded. The CPA may offer partial funding to support specific aspects of the project and apportionment will be guided by the total number of bids from across the Small Branches membership. We therefore encourage Branches to consider applying for smaller amounts to cover focused, smaller-scale initiatives.



FUND MANAGEMENT

Application

Applications for funding will be open from the end of the preceding year to early into the funding year. *(For 2025, the applications will be open from December 2024 – 10 March 2025).*

Branches should propose projects using the RIF Proposal Form, which they should email, once completed, to the Small Branches Coordinator (2025: flora.longley-cook@cpahq.org) and the wider Programmes Directorate (programmes@cpahq.org).

Regions are also able to submit proposals, however it must be clear that the proposal supports Small Branches in the Region. Additionally, multiple Branches can coordinate in the submission of a joint proposal.

The proposal should include the applying Branches details, the project proposal, and budget. Individual project proposals can request funding **up to** £10,000 to address branches specific capacity needs. Projects budgets above this may be considered in special cases.

Branches can seek support from CPA HQ in completing their submission, however this is not an assurance that the proposal will receive funding.

Allocation and Funding

The CPA Secretariat will oversee fund management, with the support of the Small Branches Steering Committee. Successful projects will be chosen based on meeting the proposal requirements in the RIF Proposal Form, meeting the Allocation Criteria (listed below) and the availability of funds.

Branches will be notified of the results of the proposal at the earliest possible moment after the deadline for submitting proposals. In special cases based on the project timeline, Branches may be notified before the deadline.

If requested, feedback may be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

Funds will be provided following the completion of the project and the submission of all necessary reporting. However, if funding is required in advance of the project, Branches can make a request for funds to be shared before the project commences with a full justification for why there is a need for advanced funding.



FUND ALLOCATION CRITERIA

- **Identified Capacity Limits:** Current context regarding identified capacity limits and needs
- **Alignment with Fund Objectives:** The project's role in strengthening the capacity of parliament(s), improving processes and procedures and enshrining the independence of the legislature.
- **Completed Application:** Submission of a completed proposal form.
- **Commitment to Project Reporting:** A commitment to deliver a simple project report upon completion.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Branches will be required to submit a simple report that outlines project activities and outcomes. Additionally, Branches must provide receipts and evidence of spending, which should align with the approved budget provided in the initial proposal and any subsequent amendments agreed and approved with the CPA Headquarters Secretariat. If possible and where relevant, Branches may also be asked to share photos of activities.

Reporting requirements can be discussed with the CPA HQ Secretariat, following approval of bids, to ensure it is appropriate and achievable for Branches.