

# Call for Proposals

## **AI for Spatial Mapping and Analysis – Toolkit for Urban Planners**

Technical support to develop a toolkit for urban planners and policy makers to responsibly adopt AI solutions in addressing urban challenges.

**February 2025**

<b>Reference:</b>	UN-HABITAT/UNITAC/19022025
<b>Size of Grant:</b>	Up to 40,000 USD
<b>Published Date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2025
<b>Submission Deadline:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Submission:</b>	Applicants shall submit their call for proposals response by email until the specified deadline above to the attention of Abdinassir Sagar to this e-mail address: <a href="mailto:abdinassir.sagar@un.org">abdinassir.sagar@un.org</a>

## Project Key Information

<b>Lead Organization:</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
<b>Region/Country:</b>	Global
<b>Maximum proposed value:</b>	Up to 40,000 USD
<b>Partners:</b>	UN OICT, HafenCity University

## Purpose of the Call for Proposals

The purpose of the Call for Proposals is to solicit proposals from interested non-profit and/or civil society organizations to provide technical support in developing a toolkit on use of artificial intelligence (AI) for spatial mapping and analysis for urban planners and policy makers. We are looking for an organization to conduct desk-based research and interviews to develop a toolkit on how urban planners can adopt AI solutions in undertaking urban planning and addressing urban challenges. The toolkit should provide practical insights and include case studies on how artificial intelligence and related technologies are and can be applied to enhance urban spatial mapping, land use planning, infrastructure development and data-driven urban development.

The work will contribute to the realization of the targets in [SDG goal 11](#), the commitments of Member States in the [New Urban Agenda](#) and the principles in the [Pact for the Future](#), [Global Digital Compact](#) and the [Declaration on Future Generations](#). It will be guided by the upcoming [International Guidelines on People-Centred Smart Cities](#) currently being developed by UN-Habitat following a request by 193 Member States at the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly. The guidelines are expected to serve as a non-binding framework for developing national and local smart city regulations, plans and strategies to ensure that digital urban infrastructure and data contribute to making cities and human settlements sustainable, inclusive, prosperous and respectful of human rights. It will also be aligned with UN-Habitat's [Ethical Framework for AI and Cities](#) and respond to the capacity gaps identified in UN-Habitat's [Global Assessment of Responsible AI in Cities report](#).

This call for proposals is addressed to organizations specialized in urban research, particularly in the domains of geospatial artificial intelligence, spatial planning, broader frontier technologies and smart cities. The toolkit is expected to cover the following topics:

1. Introduction and explanation of key terms, technologies, methods and techniques related to geospatial artificial intelligence.
2. Discussion of related emerging trends, challenges and opportunities.
3. Framework for integrating AI solutions into urban planning workflows and practices
4. Step-by-step guidance on application of geospatial AI in urban planning processes, with evidence of workable approaches from case studies and best practices related to applications of geospatial AI in areas such as housing and informal settlements, land use planning and change, basic services, climate resilience, urban growth and expansion and crisis response, recovery and reconstruction.
5. Compilation of open-source solutions, checklists, templates and capacity building materials.

## Who we are

### About UN-Habitat

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. UN-Habitat is the focal point for all urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system and works with partners to build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities. UN-Habitat promotes urbanization as a positive transformative force for people and communities, reducing inequality, discrimination and poverty. With its work spread in over 90 countries, UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities and human settlements through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance and collaborative action.

[www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)

### About UNITAC

The United Nations Innovation Technology Accelerator for Cities (UNITAC Hamburg) is a UN entity managed by UN-Habitat with the support of the United Nations Office for Information and Communication Technology. It is a partnership between UN-Habitat, OICT, and HafenCity University, a German technical university with a focus on the built environment. UNITAC Hamburg supports national and local governments with their digital transition, applying a multi-level governance strategy and helping them build skills and capabilities to develop, procure and effectively use digital technologies in an ethical and inclusive way to make sure that no one is left behind. UNITAC Hamburg is part of the “People-Centered Smart Cities” Flagship program of UN-Habitat, which provides strategic and technical support on digital transformation to national, regional and local governments. The projects and tools developed by UNITAC aim to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and more specifically goal 11: make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

### About the project

AI and AI-enabled solutions are opening new opportunities for cities, where most of the world population resides, where most of the production and consumption activities take place, and also where most of the negative environmental externalities are generated. The advancements in AI over the last years present major opportunities for addressing some of the major global crises shaping the world today, including extreme urbanization, migration and climate change - which have over the years significantly impacted on cities' basic services, infrastructure, housing, human livelihoods, health and education among other things. At the same time, as AI is triggering opportunities and change, it is presenting significant risks and challenges such as potential bias and discrimination, privacy and other human rights violations, which like most new technologies, can exacerbate existing quality of life challenges and reinforce structural inequalities.

To achieve the agenda of leaving no one and no place behind, AI and AI-enabled solutions need to be lawful, ethical, and robust, and they should be appropriately governed, managed and deployed to ensure the prosperity they bring is shared among all. The right capacities at different levels, policy makers and technical groups, supported by relevant international standards, should also exist to ensure local governments have the full knowledge and skills to govern, regulate, adopt, deploy, and measure AI solutions.

This project expands UN-Habitat’s AI & Cities portfolio by introducing a comprehensive toolkit for urban planners and policymakers to integrate AI solutions safely and responsibly into urban planning practices and workflows. In particular, the project responds to the AI capacity needs and gaps experienced by cities from around the world where close to half of the surveyed cities identified lack of AI knowledge and skills as persistent barriers to achieving responsible AI in cities<sup>1</sup>

## What we are looking for

The selected organization will work directly with UN-Habitat, and partner organizations in UNITAC (UN-OICT and Hafen City University). The organization needs to have demonstrated experience in research and technical expertise in the topics of geoAI and smart cities and should have the capacity to design a comprehensive toolkit covering different aspects of the application of AI in urban planning and management.

The selected organization is expected to undertake the following activities:

1. Conduct comprehensive desk-based research to document trends, methods and case studies of existing geoAI technologies and solutions and produce a narrative report on the key findings.
2. Organize a collaborative co-creation workshop bringing together diverse stakeholders including local government practitioners, urban planning professionals, researchers and policy makers.
3. Participate in bi-weekly progress reviews, share interim findings and co-develop content with UNITAC partners.
4. Draft 2-page snapshot for each selected case study (minimum of 10) capturing how AI was integrated in geo-spatial mapping, analysis and planning and lessons learned.
5. Compile all collected and relevant material into a toolkit, which would act as a guide to cities interested in applying geoAI in urban planning processes

## Expected Deliverables and Timeliness

Deliverables	Estimated Duration (working days)	Comments
1. Comprehensive inception report including methodology, scope, and timeline.	10 days	Report to include detailed objectives, stakeholder mapping, refined workplan, risk analysis, etc. Approval required from stakeholders.
2. Co-creation workshop to validate the methodology and derive key principles and scope of the toolkit.	2 days	Validation workshop with key internal and external stakeholders.

<sup>1</sup> [Global Assessment of Responsible AI in Cities report](#)

3. Analysis of emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in GeoAI.	10 days	Focus on identifying risks, opportunities, and ethical considerations in GeoAI applications.
4. Framework for integrating GeoAI solutions into urban planning workflows and practices.	20 days	Detailed, practical framework to guide implementation in real-world urban planning contexts.
5. Compilation of case studies and best practices on GeoAI applications (e.g., mapping, resilience).	20 days	Repository of diverse applications, showcasing both successful and challenging cases, and 2-page snapshot for each selected case study (minimum 10).
6. Compilation of open-source solutions, AI models, checklists, templates, and capacity-building materials.	15 days	Includes user-friendly tools and training resources to support practitioners.
7. Draft toolkit integrating all sections: introduction, trends, framework, step-by-step guide, case studies, and resources.	20 days	Toolkit draft to be shared with stakeholders and subject matter experts for review.
8. Final toolkit incorporating feedback and revisions.	10 days	Includes editing, formatting, and branding for dissemination.

## Eligibility Criteria

The following eligibility criteria shall apply

- Independent legal status and capability to receive funds and direct project activities. This can be demonstrated through documentations such as certificate of registration/incorporation.
- Clear organizational profile and management structure. This can be demonstrated by providing details on organization's vision, mission and objectives, management structure and governance, i.e., profiles of board of directors, head of organization and chief of finance.
- Continuous operation over a period of at least 2 years to demonstrate its financial sustainability, capacity and relevance. This can be demonstrated by providing audited financial statements (balance sheet and income statement) and auditors report for the past two years.

## Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be assessed using the following criteria.

1. Does the organization have the **relevant experience** and proven track record in implementing activities in the areas of the project? Has it managed projects of similar technical complexities and financial size in the past? Is the project linked with the core business of the organization?
2. Does the organization have **qualified technical staff** with the experience and the technical skills required by the project?

3. Is the budget for each component of the activity to be performed **cost-effective** i.e., the cost should be economical and prudently estimated to avoid any under/over estimation, justifiable/well supported, accurate and complete?
4. Is the **proposed methodology** sound and does it respond adequately to the project objectives, specifications, and requirements?

### Format and requirement for proposals

Organizations responding to the call for proposals are expected to submit a technical proposal that covers, at a minimum, the following:

1. Organization details including name of the organization, logo, and details of the contact person.

Please attach proof of registration or certificate of incorporation, organizational profile and audited financial statements.

2. Organization relevant work experience and proven track record in implementing proposed project activities. Outline a list of similar projects that the organization has implemented in the following areas demonstrating how the experiences in past projects are relevant in the execution of the current proposal.
  - a. Experience of leading research work, researching artificial intelligence in cities, smart cities, or related concepts, developing toolkits, etc.
  - b. Experience of facilitating workshops and other stakeholder engagement sessions.
  - c. Established technical expertise in the fields of innovative technologies, smart urban planning, and smart cities, artificial intelligence and other relevant fields.
  - d. Experience in publishing high-quality, impactful, and policy-oriented research products.

Please attach any relevant supporting documents verifying your organizations experience in the required areas, such as project reports, publications, media articles/news, references from your partners, etc.

3. Description of proposed project implementation methodology and relevant approaches including toolkit design, data collection and analytical frameworks, approaches for addressing GeoAI's ethical and technical challenges, proposed activities and expected outputs and outcomes.

Please attach a project work plan.

4. Details of proposed staff, including experience, education background and areas of expertise, and their different roles in the project.

Please attach summary CVs of key management staff, technical and non-technical staff that will be involved on the project.

5. Preliminary breakdown of budget for the project activities with justifications

## Instruction to Applicants

1. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.
2. Applicants shall submit their proposal by email until the specified deadline above to the attention of Abdinassir Sagar, [abdinassir.sagar@un.org](mailto:abdinassir.sagar@un.org)
3. Proposals and accompanying documents submitted to a different email addresses will not be considered.
4. Any clarification queries and correspondences should be sent by email.
5. Proposals failing to provide the requested information will be disregarded.
6. All costs must be in USD.
7. The proposal language should be in English.
8. The technical proposal will be evaluated based on whether it responds adequately to the specifications and requirements of the call for proposals. All proposals will be assessed on a comparative basis against the criteria specified in the call for proposals document. Interested organizations must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochure, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc). Please refer to the documents in the announcement in annex A, B and C.
9. Only shortlisted applicants will be notified, and their respective project managers asked to participate in in a technical session organized to help evaluate the technical performance of the applicant organization.