

Directors of Lancet Countdown Centre in South Asia

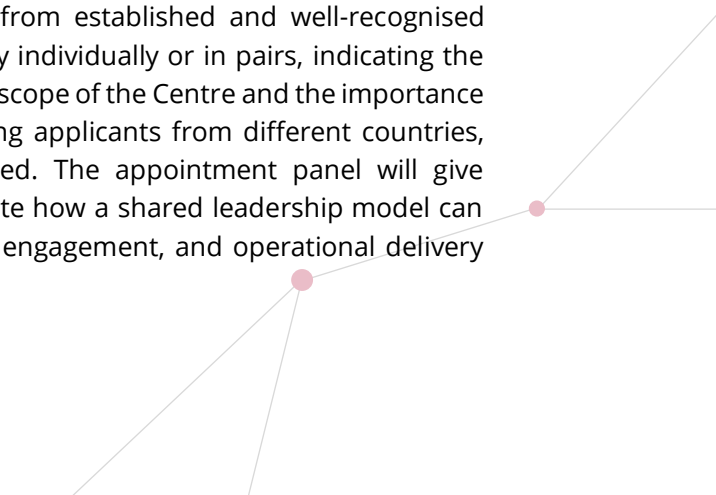
1. Background

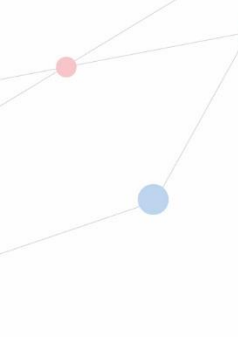
The *Lancet* Countdown on Health and Climate Change is an independent, international, multidisciplinary research collaboration core funded by the Wellcome Trust. It brings together almost 300 researchers across the globe, to track the world's response to climate change and monitor the associated health implications through indicators built on the latest science.

The *Lancet* Countdown was established in 2016 and has since grown to include regional centres, gaining international recognition and relevance as a global authority on climate change and health. Currently, the Lancet Countdown has established Regional Centres in Asia (focused on China), Europe, Latin America, Oceania Small Island Developing States and Africa. These centres are led by local researchers, to promote in-depth regional assessments of the links between health and climate change, and contribute to fostering health-centred climate change action in their region. Each Centre includes a regional secretariat, and is led by the Regional Director(s), coordinating the research activities, and engaging in national and regional policy processes.

The *Lancet* Countdown is developing a new Regional Centre for South Asia, which will be led by two joint co-Directors, or by one Director and one Vice-Director and supported by one or more host institutions with the capacity and commitment to support the Regional Centre's establishment, ongoing activities, and long-term development as a regional centre of excellence for climate change and health research. This new Centre will initially have a regional focus on India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The Lancet Countdown is now inviting applications from established and well-recognised researchers to direct the centre. Individuals may apply individually or in pairs, indicating the preferred leadership structure. Given the geographical scope of the Centre and the importance of regional representation, leadership pairs comprising applicants from different countries, particularly India and Nepal, are strongly encouraged. The appointment panel will give favourable consideration to proposals that demonstrate how a shared leadership model can strengthen regional reach, collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and operational delivery across South Asia.





Applicants may propose a range of leadership arrangements, including Co-Directors with equal responsibilities, Co-Directors with differentiated portfolios, or a Director/Vice-Director model. The appointment panel will consider the proposed leadership structure, distribution of responsibilities, and collective expertise as part of its assessment.

The successful (Co-)Directors will join the Lancet Countdown's Governance Structure, and will be supported in their role by the Regional Chair, Prof Soumya Swaminathan, who will provide strategic guidance, enhance regional visibility, and contribute senior leadership to the Centre.

The Regional Centre will also be supported by funding up to approximately £600,000. Funding will be allocated across up to two host institutions, as appropriate, with final allocations determined in consultation with the *Lancet* Countdown Board and aligned with the proposed leadership and delivery model. Please note, overheads will be covered at a maximum of 15% of the funding.

2. Application process

Candidates interested in applying to this role are invited to do so by email to info@lancetcountdown.org, sending:

- The CV of each applicant, including the contact details for two referees available to provide references.
- A cover letter no more than two-pages long detailing the points described below
- A letter of support from each hosting institution, a description of how the host institution will support the Regional Centre and its (Co-)Directors, and confirmation that the overhead rate for the institution will not exceed 15%, as per the Lancet Countdown's Wellcome Grant policies.

Applications may be submitted by individual candidates or by joint applicants proposing a shared leadership model. Joint applications are strongly encouraged, particularly where applicants are based in different South Asian countries, especially India and Nepal, and can demonstrate complementary expertise, networks, and institutional support.

The cover letter should:

- Demonstrate how the candidate(s) meets the person specification outlined below;
- Describe their vision for establishing and leading the South Asia Centre;
- Outline how they would build as well as promote research collaboration and evidence translation across South Asia (initially India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) while navigating regional political, institutional and cultural diversity;
- Outline their strategy to build a regional network of researchers to conduct annual Lancet Countdown regional indicator reports for South Asia, and how they'll promote the scientific development and improvements of indicators for the region;

- Outline their strategy to translate the Lancet Countdown's scientific evidence into action across the region;
- Describe the institutional support available to host the Centre Secretariat, including any administrative, financial, logistical, and in-kind contributions;
- For joint applications, explain the proposed leadership structure, division of responsibilities, and added value of the partnership;
- For joint applications evidence of previous joint working experience will be beneficial;
- Where relevant, describe how funding and activities could be coordinated across up to two host institutions.

To ensure strong regional ownership and leadership, applications from South Asian nationals based in the region will be prioritised. Candidates must be based at an academic or research institution within South Asia. The institution must be willing to host and support the establishment of a Lancet Countdown centre, support its activities, and support the evolution of the regional centre as a centre of research excellence to catalyse further research of climate change and health. Where a joint application is submitted, applicants must be based at different institutions and be able to demonstrate effective arrangements for coordination and delivery.

The appointment process will be open and competitive, consistent with the Lancet Countdown's commitment to fairness, transparency, excellence, and regional ownership. In assessing applications, the panel will consider the strength of the proposed leadership model, the applicant's track record in leading successful multidisciplinary and international research projects, their institutional support, regional representation, and the ability of the candidate(s) to build and sustain productive collaborations across the region.

Applications for this role will close on 30 November 2026 at 23.30 GMT.

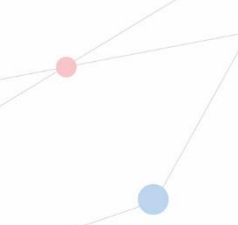
Members of the Lancet Countdown's Board, Director's Group, Global Secretariat and Academic Steering Group will be invited to score candidates, to help select the future Directors for the Regional Centre.

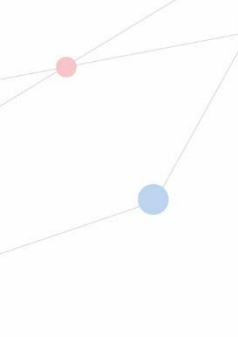
Note that, by sending your application to info@lancetcountdown.org, you are agreeing to your application being shared with the bodies mentioned above.

3. Person Specification

Each (Co-)Director of the Lancet Countdown in South Asia should be a South Asian national, based in an academic institution within South Asia, which shall agree to (co)host the Regional Centre of the *Lancet* Countdown. To be successful in their role, the Regional Director should:

- 1) Be established academics, within academic research institutions:
 - i) Be an established academic, with widely recognised expertise in areas relevant to the link between health and climate change, preferably including expertise in global health.

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- ii) Have an excellent track record of publishing peer-reviewed papers in leading international journals in the field, with relevance to health and climate change.
 - iii) Have an excellent track record of securing research funding, and leading and managing international grants.
 - iv) Have experience leading complex, multi-country or international research collaborations.
 - v) Demonstrate understanding of the unique climate and health challenges facing South Asia, and the local opportunities for climate change action for health.
 - vi) Preferably have experience in developing or working with indicators on health and climate change.
- 2) Have strong leadership and communication skills:
- i) Have experience of successfully chairing multidisciplinary projects, especially within global academic collaborations.
 - ii) Be skilled in building, leading, and motivating teams, fostering a collaborative and results-oriented culture.
 - iii) Demonstrated ability to work productively across countries with differing political, institutional and cultural contexts
 - iv) Demonstrated professionalism, tact, and discretion, with the ability to navigate complex multicultural environments and engage effectively with senior and executive-level stakeholders. This includes strong written and verbal communication skills in English, together with proficiency in other relevant languages, enabling effective collaboration across diverse international contexts.
 - v) Have an established track record in influencing policymakers and translating complex research findings into accessible content for policymakers, media, and the public.
 - vi) Have demonstrable experience acting as spokespersons for their own research, or for that of a research collaboration, in particular experience communicating scientific findings to media or at high-level policy events.
 - vii) Have demonstrated expertise in leading complex projects and interdisciplinary teams.
 - viii) Have excellent resource management skills, and the ability to deliver complex work against tight deadlines.
- 3) Have the ability and capacity to work effectively within an international collaboration
- i) Be able to sporadically join meetings outside of normal working hours to collaborate with colleagues in various time zones.
 - ii) Have the capacity to dedicate sufficient time to enable the successful development and operation of the regional centre
 - iii) Be committed to working across cultures and disciplines, ensuring diverse, inclusive and effective collaboration.
 - iv) Be committed to promoting regional collaboration, data sharing, and knowledge exchange while respecting national and institutional data governance arrangements.

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- v) Be willing to work collaboratively with the Regional Chair and the other (Co-) Director,
 - vi) Be willing to engage in broader Lancet Countdown activities, support the work of the broader Lancet Countdown collaboration, and participate as an active member of its governing bodies.

4. Role of the Regional Director

Regional Directors are crucial to delivering the vision of the *Lancet* Countdown.

The South Asia Centre (Co-)Director(s) will work closely with the Regional Chair, the *Lancet* Countdown Global Secretariat, and regional Working Group Leads to establish and lead the South Asia Centre. They will also work closely with the Lancet Countdown Global Secretariat, other Regional Directors, and WG co-chairs to support, shape, and deliver the vision of the Lancet Countdown.

The governance structure of the South Asia Regional Centre will comprise:

- A Regional Chair providing strategic guidance and regional visibility;
- A Director and a Vice-Director or two Co-Directors, depending on the outcome of the appointment process, to lead the centre's secretariat and broader work;
- Five Working Group leaders distributed across the region, leading each of the five academic working groups for the centre (that will be selected by a transparent competitive process) across participating countries to ensure broad regional representation;
- A Regional Secretariat hosted within the selected institution(s).

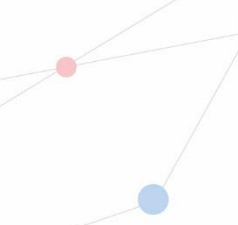
The Director(s) will have the following responsibilities, as further outlined in Section 5:

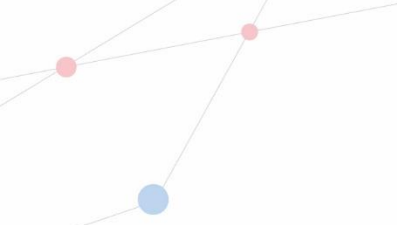
- i. **Convene and lead the regional academic collaboration**, including by appointment and supporting the work of WG leads;
- ii. Lead and oversee the delivery of the strategic direction of the Regional Centre, including its **public representation and evidence translation** activities;
- iii. Lead the **Regional Centre's secretariat** and manage the Centre's budget;
- iv. **Represent the Regional Centre** in the Lancet Countdown's governing bodies, including the Directors Group and the Academic Steering Committee.

The distribution of tasks above between Co-Directors or Director/Vice-Director pairs will be at the discretion of those individuals, with allocation of responsibilities clearly agreed with the Executive Director.

5. Responsibilities of the Regional Director

- i) **Lead on the Regional Centre's academic activities and outputs:**

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- a. Lead the development of the network of regional academic collaborators and strategic partners of the Regional Centre;
 - b. Oversee the appointment of Regional Centre Working Group Leads for each of the five *Lancet* Countdown working groups, and the development of a regionally-representative network of academic contributors to the South Asia *Lancet* Countdown's Regional Indicator Reports;
 - c. Work with the Regional Centre Working Group Leads to support the incorporation of regional perspectives in the *Lancet* Countdown's global working group frameworks;
 - d. Lead the production and publication of the Regional Centre's annual indicator report, including by promoting and overseeing indicator improvements;
 - e. Oversee the production of additional academic outputs of the Regional Centre, including coordinating correspondence with publication journals;
 - f. Ensure coordination in messaging of the Regional Centre's indicator report and academic outputs, in alignment with the overarching strategy of the *Lancet* Countdown.
- ii) **Lead the Regional centre's public representation and evidence translation**
- a. Represent the *Lancet* Countdown's Regional Centre in external-facing events, raising the profile of the *Lancet* Countdown's regional indicators and science in both regional and global events;
 - b. Oversee the policy engagement activities of the *Lancet* Countdown in the region in pursuit of the shared Theory of Change, identifying local policy stakeholders and networks, building regional policy partnerships, overseeing the development of policy products and engagement activities, and supporting policymakers as relevant;
 - c. Oversee the dissemination of the Regional Centre's findings through a programme of strategic communications and public engagement products, including media engagements and briefings, social media, and other activities;
 - d. Oversee a programme of activity to support regional capacity building on climate change and health monitoring, helping to elevate the voice of local researchers, and enabling knowledge transfer between *Lancet* Countdown regional centres;
 - e. Act as ambassador for the *Lancet* Countdown, helping build its reputation and promoting its work as a regional leader in reporting on the implications of climate change for health and the health opportunities of climate action. This includes having strong engagement with regional initiatives such as South Asia Hub of the Global Heat Health Information Network (GHHIN) Hub and other climate-health partnerships;
 - f. Identify and engage with key stakeholders in the region, building relationships of trust and mutual benefit, in support of the *Lancet* Countdown's broader goals.
- iii) **Oversee the development of the *Lancet* Countdown's South Asia Regional Centre:**
- a. Act as the focal point for the *Lancet* Countdown Regional Centre;
 - b. Act as a representative for the Regional Centre on the *Lancet* Countdown's governance structure;

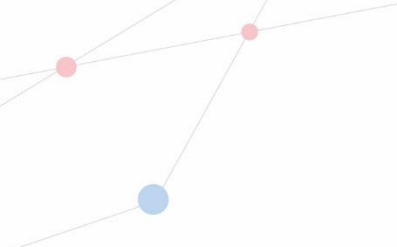
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- c. Lead the appointment and management of the Regional Centre's secretariat team, and the strategic coordination of these core-functions within the Regional Centre;
 - d. Secure additional funding of regional activities for the Regional Centre, and lead on the production of co-funding proposals with other members of Lancet Countdown;
 - e. Manage the budget allocated to the Regional Centre;
 - f. Monitor and annually report on the impact of the Regional Centre's activities to contribute towards an Impact Report, and required reports to funders;
 - g. Actively promote and improve the representation and diversity of cultural and regional backgrounds in the *Lancet* Countdown's academic and stakeholder community;
 - h. Ensure that themselves, as well as the Regional Centre Secretariat and all contributors abide by the overall direction and policies of the *Lancet* Countdown;
 - i. Ensure the alignment between the activities of the Regional Centre and the broader *Lancet* Countdown collaboration;
 - j. Oversee administrative tasks within the Regional Centre, including in response to requests from the Global *Lancet* Countdown, and regarding monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and risk management.

iv) **Contribute to the Lancet Countdown's broader governance and strategic leadership**

- a. Represent the Regional Centre in the Directors Group, contributing to developing a cohesive and effective strategy for the Lancet Countdown collaboration across its academic, communications, policy engagement, and operational workstreams, sharing knowledge and opportunities across the Lancet Countdown's centres, and supporting the translation of the overarching Lancet Countdown strategy to the Regional Centre. The Directors Group is expected to meet two to four times per year virtually, in alternating time zones;
- b. Represent the Regional Centre in the "Academic Steering Committee", in charge of delivering a cohesive academic strategy for the collaboration. The Academic Steering Committee will meet virtually four times per year;
- c. Participate in the annual in-person strategic meeting of the broader Lancet Countdown collaboration.

6. Support

The South Asia Regional Centre (co)Directors will receive funding to support Centre development and activities initially to 30th of April 2028, with possibility of extension until April 2029.



Once appointed, the Regional (co)Directors will be expected to develop, in collaboration with the Regional Chair and any (co)Directors, a working budget to access allocated funding for the South Asia Regional Centre. They will be required to develop a budget that is prepared in line with Wellcome's funding categories and in consultation with the Lancet Countdown's Global Secretariat Finance and Research Manager.

The funding must be used to support anticipated activities of the Regional Centre and the hiring of key staff positions of the Secretariat, including as a minimum: i) a Regional Centre Research Fellow, ii) a Regional Centre Policy Manager and iii) a Regional Centre Communications Manager. Depending on budget constraints and strategic considerations, some of these posts may be part-time and/or co-appointed and/or co-supervised by both Directors' institutions.

To increase their resources, the Centre (Co-)Directors will be further supported in the application to co-funding opportunities, including with other Lancet Countdown Regional Directors.

In accordance with Wellcome's funding policies, higher education institutions, healthcare organisations, and research institutes located outside the UK may apply for a contribution towards their indirect costs (overheads). This contribution will be capped at 15% of the eligible costs assigned to each organisation.

The institution undertaking the role of Regional Centre will be required to provide a signed letter from its Finance Director, or an equivalent authorised signatory, detailing a breakdown of the requested overhead costs.

Further guidance on budget development and overhead letters will be provided by the Global Secretariat Finance and Research Manager during the budget preparation stage.

7. Commitment

Fulfilling these responsibilities requires a commitment of approximately 0.2 FTE from the Regional (co)Director, on average. The salary of the Regional (Co-)Director will be preferably provided in-kind and guaranteed for the duration of the support provided (as above) by the applicant's institution or other verifiable sources of support (e.g., external grants).