

# Invitation to contribute stories and strategies for a more equitable future of research

Call Open until July 31, 2024

We are thrilled to invite you to participate in sharing stories and strategies to rebalance power in the knowledge ecosystem. Your stories and strategies will be a source of inspiration, mutual learning, and the basis for strategizing a long-term action and research agenda.

## Background

As part of an ongoing initiative, teams at Southern Voice and the Institute for Development Studies have developed a framework to guide future work on equity in research, particularly in the research for development sphere. The framework centres on rebalancing power in the knowledge ecosystem with the ultimate aim of advancing research aligned with societal needs. With equity as a means to broader societal goals, we want to see concrete changes: redistribution of resources and authority, stronger agency and leadership of Global South research and other actors, and an active role for them in defining research agendas and priorities. The framework identifies three pivotal spaces for change: research funding, academic rules and incentives, and publication and dissemination of research. By targeting these 'spaces of change', we can catalyse systemic shifts to redistribute power within the knowledge ecosystem, promoting inclusivity and impacting how relationships unfold. This approach seeks to strengthen the leadership of Global South actors and enhance their influence on local, regional, and global research practices and policies.

Within this framework, we are seeking your input to help us answer two questions:

- How has strengthening the agency/leadership of Global South actors in the research process led to knowledge that is more relevant to societies across different contexts?
- What kind of shifts in the spaces of change (namely funding, academic rules and incentives, and publication and dissemination) lead to strengthening the Global South actors agency and leadership?

## What are the inputs we are looking for?

Based on the framework and two guiding questions summarised above, we welcome contributions in the form of:

- **Stories of past or ongoing initiatives or actions:** We would like to learn more about what is being done to strengthen the agency of global South actors across the different spaces of change. We are interested in learning how these initiatives came about, how they have worked, and their limitations or challenges. We welcome stories at a personal or institutional level.
- **New or emerging strategies:** We are interested in your proposals on how to approach reforms with a focus on equity in the spaces of change identified. We would like your ideas about actions within the spaces of change that could strengthen the agency of Global South actors. These strategies could be blue-sky ideas, or more concrete proposals based on current projects.
- **Learning from other sectors:** The research for development space can also learn from other spaces, where debates on strengthening the leadership of the Global South show more progress. We are interested in experiences that shed light on other sectors/groups, such as social movements and other research disciplines.

## Why should you share your story?

This storytelling project is part of an [initiative](#) led by Southern Voice, in partnership with IDS, and supported by IDRC. Through this activity, we will share your insights with a broader community of actors committed to change in the research field, such as donors, research leaders and others.

This will also serve as a source of practical guidance when we develop ideas and recommendations for a future agenda to promote further leadership of Southern actors in research for development. It will help establish communities of peers across the North/South divide who are on similar journeys to achieving power-aware research partnerships and support efforts to grow a body of evidence, which in turn can help reinforce the accountabilities of different actors within the development research ecosystem.

## How can you apply?

To apply for inclusion in this project, we kindly ask you to provide the following information, sending it to Geetika Khanduja [geetika@southernvoice.org](mailto:geetika@southernvoice.org)

- Name and email (required): Please provide your full name and e-mail address.
- Organisation (optional): If you are associated with an organisation, specify the organisation for which you are currently working.
- Overview of Potential Story (required): In a few sentences (300 words maximum), provide a brief overview of the idea you wish to share. Summarise your story or strategy and include how you think the story relates to the proposed framework.

We encourage you to provide a concise but informative overview that allows us to assess the potential of your idea accurately.

We also hope to organise webinars inviting contributors to share their experiences and ideas verbally with others to help promote further learning and experience exchange.

## **Which stories will be selected, and how will they be produced?**

The project team (Southern Voice and IDS) will review submitted applications on a rolling basis for compelling stories and ideas.

1. We will work closely with the selected individuals, conducting virtual interviews or providing written interview questions. We will then refine and polish the stories, ensuring they fit within the project's overall framework. The stories will be published as part of the initiative's final document.
2. If you are a passionate writer or have talented communication specialists within your organisation, you may write your own story following the provided guidelines. If necessary, we will have meetings to support you. In this case, we will conduct a final editing and proofreading of the text to ensure it aligns with the overall framework of the project.

## **More questions?**

If you have any questions or would like to explore other ways to collaborate, do not hesitate to email [geetika@southernvoice.org](mailto:geetika@southernvoice.org).