

Call for expressions of interest

Institutionalisation project

Submission deadline is 1 August 2016 (23h59 East Standard Time)

The Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP, www.pep-net.org) invites developing country-based research centers/institutes to submit an expression of interest (EOI) for undertaking a series of research activities on specific policy issues from late 2016 to 2018.

The **Institutionalisation project** (IP) aims to develop and establish an expertise in policy analysis using Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) models within one selected research center/institute.

By the end of the IP (expected to take about 2 years in each supported institution), PEP expects that the following objectives will have been achieved:

1. Institutionalisation of a powerful analytical tool
2. Strong capacity building, resulting in the development of a permanent team of local experts
3. Creation of a locus of recognized expertise within the nation
4. Creation of a locus of exchange and discussion of sectoral and macroeconomic policies
5. Better visibility of the local institution

The selected centre/institute will implement several policy research projects (at least two) within this period of 2 years to ensure strong and long-term institutional capacity building. Interested applicants should demonstrate their interest and aptitude in conducting rigorous and policy-relevant research.

After review of the EOIs, longlisted centres/institutes will be requested to elaborate a full proposal to be submitted for a second selection phase in October 2016. Please note that an invitation to submit a full proposal is not a guarantee of an institutionalisation grant. Full proposals will be subject to a competitive process of several rounds of evaluation. At the end of the selection process, one institute will benefit from a "PEP support grant", which includes

training and scientific support from PEP-resource persons, financial support¹ of up to 58.5 K USD, as well as various subsidies.

The core team of researchers from the selected institute (those who will be executing the project) will be required to successfully complete an online training course in CGE modeling and to then present their working paper to an audience of peers and PEP-affiliated international experts at the 2017 PEP annual conference.

1. Elements of a Successful Expression of Interest

We seek research centres/institutions with the following attributes that clearly demonstrate their capacity to evaluate a policy intervention or programme:

a) Interest in analysing policy relevant strategies, programmes and interventions

Research institutes/centers must demonstrate past and current research activities on policy relevant issues. They are expected to have been involved in and successfully completed (in the past 5 years) research activities on policy relevant topics. They are expected to demonstrate that they maintain strong and on-going collaboration and dialogue with government agencies/stakeholders (policy makers) identified as key potential users of their research outcomes.

b) Strong technical capacity of the core research team

CGE models and household survey-based microsimulation techniques constitute « laboratories » to simulate macro policies/shocks and their impacts on the multiple agents of a national economy, as well as on the welfare of individual households. Such techniques provide a reliable evidence base for better-informed policy formulation and program design. A group of PEP modeling experts have developed a series of PEP standard CGE models. These models are now valued and acknowledged worldwide as some of PEP's most important contributions to the international research community².

¹ This includes, for each of the two studies, a \$22 K research (cash) grant and up to a maximum of \$36.5 K in various subsidies for participation in PEP meetings, for participation in study visits, for publications in peer-reviewed journals, for presentations in international conferences, and for the organization of national policy conferences.

² Find more information on PEP CGE models and direct access to the related files (including extensive training material) here: <https://www.pep-net.org/pep-standard-cge-models>

The selected center will benefit from full support to guide them through the implementation of successful, policy-relevant research projects. Nonetheless, technical knowledge of CGE models, national accounts data, household survey data, GAMS software, statistical software, and previous experience in policy/shock impact evaluation using these techniques will be highly valued.

Successful EOIs will demonstrate that the research centers/institutes have core teams (in particular the senior researcher) who already have acquired strong expertise in CGE modeling. CGE and microsimulation models rely heavily on recent macro and micro-level data. Research centers/institutes must demonstrate the capacity of their core team to access, collect, compile and analyse data for the models.

c) Potential for capacity building and institutionalisation

One of PEP's core missions is to promote local research capacity. This particular project further aims at institutionalising the above-mentioned analytical tools within the selected centers/institutes.

To ensure capacity building and institutionalisation, PEP/MPIA resource persons will commit to conceptually and technically supporting and participating in the development and use of the models. In parallel, the research centre/institutes should satisfy the following criteria:

1. The director of the Centre and a senior researcher will work together in implanting CGE models as permanent tools of analysis in their institution.
2. Research teams will be composed of at least one senior researcher and several junior researchers. Teams including young researchers (under 30) will be encouraged to participate. Teams composed of at least 50% females will be prioritized. Furthermore, the core team should be composed of researchers with a permanent position in the institution.
3. The Centre will work to maintain the CGE model and the different versions in an operational state (especially with updating the data).
4. At least once a year, the Centre will organize a workshop targeting local policymakers around a particular theme. During this workshop, studies conducted by the team and using the CGE model will be presented and discussed.
5. The theme for the first research activity will be selected after consultation with government counterparts, policy makers and/or other stakeholders. The second and third priority themes will be established at the preceding

workshop. In choosing research issues, the core team will take strong account of the suggestions and the preoccupations of local policymakers.

2. Eligibility criteria and institutional requirements

In accordance with the PAGE II initiative, the Centre will have some experience and willingness to conduct research in one or more of the five priority themes of research³: youth employment; gender and women's economic empowerment; entrepreneurship and financial inclusion for inclusive growth; productive employment in rural farm and non-farm sectors; sectoral composition and patterns of growth.

Applying research centre/institutes and team members must be developing country nationals and reside in a developing country during the full course of the project. Although EOIs are welcome from all developing countries, priority is given to teams from and based in low-income countries (LIC), fragile and/or conflict states⁴.

Applying research centre/institutes and senior team members must have at least 5 years of experience in development policy analysis.

University-level training in economics or equivalent experience is required for the team members. A team leader with PhD in economics is an asset.

The selected Center is expected to produce at least two externally-reviewed working papers (one per theme) by the end of the project cycle. These papers should comply with technical and ethical standards used in peer-reviewed journals (e.g. JDE and AEJ). The final working papers will normally be coauthored with PEP resource persons involved in the project.

All information sources used for the project must be documented. PEP treats cases of plagiarism very seriously; transparency and fairness are considered fundamental research values.

³ A full description of these themes can be found here: www.pep-net.org/page-ii-2016-2020

⁴ Find the list of priority countries here: www.pep-net.org/sites/pep-net.org/files/typo3doc/pdf/Call_for_proposal/PAGE-II/LICs_and_Conflict_states_2015-16.pdf

3. Application Process

The deadline to submit applications is 1 August, 2016. The EOI must be submitted electronically using the PEP “intranet system”. Here are the steps to follow:

- All members of the applicant team must first register on the PEP website (www.pep-net.org). To register, click on "**Register**" (top right corner of the PEP home page, next to "Log in") and follow the instructions.
- Registered members will receive a username and password by email, normally within minutes, which will allow you to access your PEP intranet file, by clicking on the **Log in** button.
- All members of the applicant team must post their personal CV in their PEP intranet file. To do this, each member should "Log in" to the PEP website and then select "**Profile**" and "**Upload CV**". We also strongly encourage applicants to fill out their profile with as much detail as possible (including photo, short bio, etc.).
- To then submit the expression of interest, the team leader must log in, click on "**Submit New Proposal**" and fill out the required information. Upload the (completed) expression of interest.
- When all is done, to make sure that the expression of interest has been successfully submitted to PEP, return to your PEP intranet file and click on "**My Projects**" to review.

PEP encourages teams to submit proposals in English, but will accept proposals submitted in French in cases of (justified) language barrier. If you have difficulty completing the steps above, please consult our FAQ page.

Requests for Clarification

If you have questions about the submission process, how to use the intranet or the PEP grant, visit our **FAQ webpage**⁵. If you do not find your answer, contact us at info@pep-net.org for assistance on the submission process and technical questions. Questions concerning this call for expressions of interest can be

⁵ Find it here : <https://www.pep-net.org/node/62>

addressed to lulit.mitik@gmail.com, cc to Helene.Maisonnave@ecn.ulaval.ca. It can take up to one week for a response.

