



Grants Manual

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Strengthening Impact Evaluation Capacities for Development (SIECD) in East and West Africa

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Introduction

This manual outlines the procedures involved in awarding and administering the various grants awarded by the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) as part of the “*Strengthening Impact Evaluation Capacities for Development (SIECD) in East and West Africa*” program. The program is a multi-country initiative that was launched in April 2022. It is funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The goal of this initiative is to foster a culture of experimental evaluation, strengthen the capacity of governments to commission Impact Evaluations, and facilitate the use of evidence in policy-making.

The following grants are covered in this manual:

1. Research grants

- Fixed research grant (lump sum)
- Data collection grant (lump sum)
- Travel grant to participate in a PEP meeting

2. Professional development grants

- Study visit grant
- International conference grant

3. National conference grants

4. Publication grants (working papers and journal articles)

5. Field visit grants

I. Research Grants

1.1. Description

Under the “Strengthening Impact Evaluation Capacities for Development (SIECD) in East and West Africa” program, PEP research grants are awarded on a competitive basis to teams of government officials and researchers based in East and West African countries who wish to conduct research projects pertaining to general or specific themes/issues identified as particularly relevant to support development policy dialogue.

Under this program, the PEP grants include a core research grant of US\$ 24,000, a data collection grant of US\$ 50,000, plus supporting grants for a variety of dissemination and knowledge-sharing activities as outlined below.

The research teams selected under this program will benefit from the unique and manifold “PEP support program”: a comprehensive package of ongoing scientific support and technical assistance, not only to conduct high-quality research projects and policy analyses, but also to disseminate the resulting evidence nationally and internationally.

Based on a “learning by doing” approach, the PEP program provides grantees with training and mentoring by international experts in the field of experimental research and policy engagement.

1.2. Eligibility

Applicant Nationality

Applicant teams must be comprised of government officers and local researchers, all of whom are **nationals of and will reside for the full duration of the project** in one of the following countries:

- **West Africa:** Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo.
- **East Africa:** British Indian Ocean Territory, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, French Southern Territories, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mayotte, Mozambique, Réunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Team composition

Applicant teams must be composed of a **government sub-team** and a **research sub-team**.

Government sub-team

3 members, including at least one woman

- **One (1) senior government official** with a proven capacity to decide on the implementation of the program proposed for evaluation.
 - The relevance of this representative in informing key decisions must be ensured.
 - There is no gender preference for this role.
- **Two (2) government officers** who are motivated to learn about impact evaluation and committed to work in the evaluation of the proposed project.

One of the three must be appointed as the Leader of the government sub-team. This person will be responsible for leading the team activities concerning policy engagement and communicating with PEP policy mentors.

You are free to pick the best person for the role. As senior government officials generally have very busy agendas, we suggest that you appoint a government officer to this role.

Note: Teams must provide a signed letter from the government office in charge of the proposed policy initiative stating the office's commitment to carry out an experimental evaluation that involves random assignment of subjects to treatment.

Research sub-team

4 members, including at least two women

- **One (1) principal researcher** with a doctoral degree in economics, statistics or equivalent and proven participation in at least one randomized controlled trial (RCT) impact evaluation.
 - This person will serve as leader of the research sub-team and will be responsible for research activities in collaboration with the PEP scientific mentors.
- **One (1) co-researcher** with a doctoral degree in economics, statistics or equivalent and proven participation (in any capacity) in at least one published academic paper. Proven experience in RCTs is a plus.
- **Two (2) assistant researchers** holding a post-graduate degree or currently enrolled in a post-graduate program in economics, statistics or equivalent, who wish to gain first-hand experience in research and policy analysis.

All four researchers, i.e., including the assistant researchers, are required to participate in research production and join research meetings on a regular basis.

Applicants are encouraged to propose candidates for the research team. If an insufficient number of researchers are proposed and the expression of interest is selected, **PEP will assist the team in trying to identify suitable local researchers.**

1.3. Amounts and disbursements

1.3.1. Core research grants

PEP core research grants include a fixed research grant of **US\$ 24,000** and a data collection grant of **US\$ 50,000**.

The **29-month research cycle** begins the moment a proposal is selected at a PEP general meeting and ends following final dissemination. The exact deadlines are available in your Research Grant Contract.

Core research grant disbursements are linked to the production of satisfactory research outputs and technical reports as outlined below.

Proposals and research reports are evaluated by PEP's Experimental Research (PIERI) Committees. Working papers are evaluated by external referees. Draft policy briefs are evaluated and edited by PEP communications staff, in consultation with the team and the project team's mentors.

Payments will be made to the team leader's host institution. Teams may not receive additional funding from outside sources for research that is funded by a PEP research grant without the written consent of PEP's Executive Director.

1.3.2. Travel grants to participate in PEP meetings

For the participation of up to two team members in three PEP general meetings to present the project proposal, interim report, and final research results: up to approx. US\$2,250 per member per meeting.

Each team will receive a travel grant to cover the costs for up to two team members (one from the government team and one from the research team) to present the project proposal, intermediate report and final research results in PEP general meetings, provided that the required deliverables have been approved for the Conference milestones.

In-person visits will be subject to any Covid-19-related travel restrictions in place at the time of traveling.

1.4. Research Ethics

PEP-supported research projects must be carried out in accordance with PEP ethical standards. In their proposals, candidates are required to clearly identify all possible ethical issues relating to their proposed project. Where such issues arise, the PEP Executive Director, together with the relevant PEP Research Director, reviews and presents them to the PEP Program Committee for consideration. In addition, grant contracts include a clause governing ethical issues, as set out in **Annex A**.

All approved proposals involving field experiments are required to submit an independent, external ethical review by a recognized ethical review committee for approval by PEP's Executive Director. If no such committee is available to the team, the project will be reviewed by PEP's own [Research Ethics Review Committee](#).

1.5. Contracts

Research grant contracts include the following information:

- A summary of the research project
- A statement of the lump-sum amount of the core research grant awarded and related calendar of disbursements (or grant payments). Each grant payment is also conditional upon the submission/update of a “technical report”, to keep PEP informed of the project progress and impact in terms of capacity building and research uptake.
- A list of milestones and outputs expected to be produced by the grant recipient.
 - Beyond the core research reports and publications, outputs include:
 - The organization of a knowledge sharing conference to communicate the learnings gathered during the evaluation process, research findings and resulting recommendations to strategic policy stakeholders (compulsory)
 - Contributions to PEP communications activities, including quotes, visual (photo/video) material regarding the research project, and potential blog and/or social media posts (compulsory)
 - Presentation/discussion of research findings at an international conference (see section 2.1.3),
- The above-mentioned research ethics requirements (see also Annex A)
- A clause providing the recipient with “dissemination rights” (see Annex B)

- A clause indicating that significant cases of plagiarism in research reports can lead to the cancellation of the project and that PEP uses software to detect plagiarism.
- A clause indicating that any disbursements are conditional to PEP receiving sufficient funds from its own donors.

Travel grant contracts include the following information:

- An engagement to finance travel costs, lodging, per diem rates and incidentals.
- A clause indicating that any disbursements are conditional on PEP receiving sufficient funds.

II. Professional Development Grants

2.1. Description

PEP researchers may apply separately for grants to finance travel and living costs associated with conducting (or participating in) a variety of project activities that contribute to their professional development (or promote their expertise), provided that the nature of such activities and development is **directly related to their PEP-supported research work**.

2.1.1. Training grants

Training workshops in the various methods and analytical techniques and tools fostered by PEP research are provided at every PEP annual conference. No application procedure is required as all conference participants are also invited to participate in these training workshops.

2.1.2. Study visits

Each team is also invited to propose up to two of its members to complete a three-week study visit at their mentor's institution to complete the team's draft final report or working paper. Teams are required to demonstrate that the study visit would contribute substantially to the research project and professional development of the proposed researchers.

2.1.3. International conferences

Teams are also invited to apply, on a competitive basis and upon approval of their final research report, for a grant to allow one team member to present their PEP research findings at a reputed international conference.

In-person visits will be subject to any Covid-19-related travel restrictions in place at the time of traveling.

2.2. Amounts and disbursements

The amounts of study visit and international conference grants are equal to the cost of the cheapest, economy class round-trip air ticket between the recipient's origin and the location of the activity, plus lodging costs and local per diems for the agreed duration of the activity,

as well as a lump sum for incidentals (visas, taxis, airport taxes, etc.). Registration fees may also be covered in part or in whole on a case-by-case basis.

Participants are asked to quote the cost of the cheapest air tickets they can find before purchase. If the project office is unable to find a cheaper ticket and the cost is reasonable, its purchase is authorized. Upon request sufficiently ahead of time, an advance can be provided through a bank or money transfer. In all cases, researchers are under the obligation to provide PEP with the following documents:

- A complete itinerary
- **ORIGINALS** of their boarding passes
- A photocopy of their return air tickets
- The **ORIGINAL** travel agency invoice indicating the price paid for the air tickets
- The **ORIGINAL** receipt for the payment of any approved registration fees.
- Any other invoice for transportation **for which cost will have previously been approved by PEP.**

Normally, the total costs should not exceed:

- **US\$ 6,000 each** for up to two members per team to complete an international **study visit**
- **US\$ 2,000** for one member to participate in an **international conference**

In both cases, beneficiaries are required to complete and submit an ex-post report.

2.3. Application procedures and requirements

For all professional development grants, candidates must ensure that they have submitted:

- An up-to-date version of their curriculum vitae, uploaded to the PEP intranet
 - Log in at <https://portal.pep-net.org/login>
 - Click on your name (blue button, top right corner)
 - Scroll down to the section "Information required for grant applicants" where you will find "Upload your CV"
- A completed version of the relevant application form, available from <https://www.pep-net.org/guides>
 - Applications should be posted in the team's project on the PEP intranet under "Other documents"

Applications for **study visits** should be submitted according to the deadlines indicated in the "[Important Dates](#)" section of the PEP website. The study visit should last three weeks, excluding travel. In the application, the researcher must include a **detailed work plan** describing the precise objectives of the study visit and any specific needs in terms of scientific/technical support¹. This work plan is analyzed by the relevant mentor prior to final approval.

Applications for **international conference grants** should be submitted only after your paper has been formally accepted by the international conference organizers (proof should be provided with your application) and **at least eight weeks prior to the conference** (earlier if possible, to allow time to obtain visas).

All applications for professional development grants are approved (and grantees selected) by the relevant Research Director.

2.4. Contracts

All professional development grant contracts include the following information:

- An engagement to finance approved travel, lodging, per diems and incidental costs.
- A clause indicating that any disbursements are conditional to the PEP project receiving sufficient funds.

¹ E.g. Help with problems in defining the appropriate methodology, help with problems in applying your methodology, help with technical problems to do with software, help with the interpretation of results, help with writing your report etc.

III. National Policy Conference Grant

3.1. Description

In order to help teams “make their research work count” (i.e. contribute to improve the socioeconomic wellbeing of the concerned populations), PEP also provides its project teams with the necessary means and support to communicate their PEP research findings to policymakers, stakeholders, and the general public at the national level.

A grant of **US\$ 2500** is offered to each team, as a contribution towards the organization of a conference or seminar with the main objective to inform policymaking (via target audiences of policymakers, stakeholders, media and the general public) at the national level. This activity should be considered a **compulsory** element of all PEP-funded projects.

Note that:

- Logistical support and advice from PEP staff is available to help teams reach their target audiences and communicate their findings effectively.
- Specific PEP communications tools (PowerPoint presentation template, PEP policy brief, PEP and donors' logos etc.; templates and guidelines available on the [Guides page](#)) must be used at the event, as well as in any communications of PEP-funded research, to ensure acknowledgement of PEP support and consistency of PEP's image and representation.

3.2. Amounts and disbursements

Disbursements of national policy conference grants are generally made only after the activity and upon presentation of a satisfactory ex-post report (via the PEP intranet) including the list of actual participants and a narrative outlining the conference's expected impact in terms of policy outreach/influence, media coverage (public outreach), its highlights and conclusions (successes, failures, lessons learned). PEP also requires that the event is recorded visually (photo or video) and that this material be submitted to PEP with the report for PEP's own communication activities.

Note that this grant is available only to PEP project teams upon approval by the Experimental Research committee.

3.3. Application procedures and requirements

At least eight weeks prior to the event, teams interested in organizing a national policy conference are requested to submit a proposal indicating:

- The objectives of the conference,
- A detailed draft conference program,
- An initial list of invitees,
- A strategy for announcing the conference and reaching the target audience,
- A short narrative describing the main messages that the event shall serve to communicate (how the related PEP research findings should be used to inform/improve policymaking).
 - Note: if not already submitted to PEP, the team's draft policy brief (highlighting the main policy messages from the project) should be submitted with the proposal.

Find more information and instructions regarding the organization of these events, and related PEP support, here: [PEP National Policy Conference Grant Guidelines](#)

3.4. Contract

National policy conference grant contracts include the following information:

- A brief description of the conference (date, venue, title, objectives, etc.).
- A clause indicating that any disbursements are conditional to the PEP project receiving sufficient funds.

IV. Publication Grants

4.1. Description

To encourage researchers to publish their PEP research findings in formats suitable for wider dissemination, PEP offers an **additional grant** for the publication of a "**journal article**" to both the research team **and**, if co-author and not a regular PEP employee, the mentor according to the following schedule²:

	Team	Mentors (except regular PEP employees)
Any peer-reviewed journals listed in Econlit ³	500 USD	500 USD
REF 2*	1,500 USD	1,500 USD
REF 3*	2,000 USD	2,000 USD
REF 4*	2,500 USD	2,500 USD

The [acknowledgement text](#) stated in your Research Grant Contract must appear in the journal article (and any other form of dissemination of PEP project findings).

4.2. Amounts and disbursements

Note that journal publication grants are available only to PEP project teams with an approved final research report. Disbursements are automatically made after the project team leader notifies PEP of the publication of an article based on a PEP-funded research project by sharing a copy of the approved article and its exact bibliographic reference in the following [format](#).

4.3. Application procedures

No application or proposal is required in the case of PEP publication grants – nor will any contracts be signed. Proof of acceptance for publication must be provided.

² See <http://www.pep-net.org/guides> for the Journal classification for PEP publications.

³ Find the list of Econlit journals here: https://www.aeaweb.org/econlit/journal_list.php

V. Field Visit Grants

5.1. Description

PEP will cover the cost of a field visit of the mentor to the research site to facilitate collaboration and capacity building. The date of the mentor's visit is to be discussed with each team, with the aim of maximizing the knowledge exchange and positive impact on the project development. No application procedure is required of the participant teams.

In-person visits will be subject to any Covid-19-related travel restrictions in place at the time of traveling.

ANNEX A – RESEARCH ETHICS

“PEP research grant recipients” agree to the **principles set out below**, which aim to protect the dignity and privacy of every individual who, in the course of research work carried out under the “PEP-supported project” (hereinafter referred to as the “Project”), will be requested to provide personal or commercially valuable information about themselves or others (hereinafter referred to as a “subject of research”). If reviewers identify other issues, they will notify the grant recipients of the appropriate ethical conditions.

Before an individual becomes a subject of research, they shall be notified of:

- The aims, methods, anticipated benefits and potential hazards of the research;
- Their right to abstain from participation in the research and their right to terminate their participation at any time; and
- The confidential nature of their replies.

No individual shall become a subject of research unless they are given the notice referred to in the preceding paragraph and they freely give consent to participate. No pressure or inducement of any kind shall be applied to encourage an individual to become a subject of research.

The identity of individuals from whom information is obtained in the course of this Project shall be kept strictly confidential. At the conclusion of the Project, any information that reveals the identity of individuals who were subjects of research shall be destroyed unless the individual concerned has consented in writing to its inclusion beforehand. No information revealing the identity of any individual shall be included in the final report or in any other communication prepared in the course of this Project, unless the individual concerned has consented in writing to its inclusion beforehand.

When children are involved in the Project, special care must be taken to ensure that their participation is undertaken in accordance with high ethical standards. Accordingly, children shall not be allowed to participate unless:

- Their parents or guardians have been counselled with respect to the children's participation;
- Their parents or guardians have given their free, explicit, and informed consent to the participation of the children in the Project.

Parents or guardians shall have the right to withdraw their children from the Project at any time.

Depending on the nature of the proposed research project, PEP may also recommend a full ethical review through the [Research Ethics Review Committee](#) (RERC) which may make specific recommendations for action in the process of conducting the research.

ANNEX B – DISSEMINATION

One of PEP's main objectives is to see that the research it funds is disseminated widely in order to contribute most effectively to improvement of development policymaking and socioeconomic wellbeing in developing countries. In disseminating the results of their PEP-supported projects (hereinafter referred to as the "Project"), all PEP grant recipients (hereinafter referred to as "Recipients") shall adhere to the following conditions:

- 1) Recipients have the right to publish, in any form, the results of their Project, or any other information prepared or produced as a result of this grant, and are not required to obtain the consent of PEP to do so. Recipients, however, must recognize the support of the PEP by including in ALL RELATED PUBLICATIONS the following [acknowledgement](#):

This work was carried out with financial and scientific support from the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), with funding from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of PEP.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, it is understood that in any "Collaborative Project" (including PEP and other Collaborative Institutions), publication of project results will be effected jointly by all parties, unless all parties agree otherwise in writing.

- 2) If PEP determines that the results of the Project, or any other information prepared or produced as a result of this grant, would be of benefit to others, it may, after appropriate consultations with the Recipients, publish and distribute, or authorize a third party to publish and distribute, the Project results or information, including but not limited to writings, films, and tapes.
- 3) If a Recipient objects to the publication or distribution of the results or information referred to in 2) above, PEP shall consider the reasons given for the objection before making a final decision on the publication or distribution of the results or information.
- 4) The Recipient shall provide PEP and, if appropriate, other Collaborating Institution(s) with copies of any publication it has made of the results of the Project or of any other information prepared or produced as a result of this grant, as well as of any audio or visual material. In all cases, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant PEP staff or Research Director, an electronic version, specifying the software and, where applicable hardware used, must also be provided to PEP.
- 5) All communication materials meant to disseminate information about a PEP-supported project during an event that is funded – in full or in part – by PEP should be prepared using the relevant PEP templates when available (e.g. policy brief, slide presentation, etc.). In the context of events that are not funded by PEP, use of the relevant PEP templates is encouraged and all communication materials should include the

acknowledgement stated in point 1 and/or the logos of PEP and donors (William and Flora Hewlett Foundation).