



International
Growth Centre

International Growth Centre
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International Growth Centre

Frequently Asked Questions:

Submission of IGC Proposal Form

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General Questions

1. What are the funding opportunities for this Call for Proposals?

This is a comprehensive IGC call for proposals which encompasses its two central programmes: the Research and Country Programmes. The Research Programme is primarily focused on the production of cutting-edge and policy-relevant academic research (global public goods) that go towards informing effective policymaking in developing countries. The Country Programme is focused on tailoring top-quality research with the specific policy needs of the IGC's partner countries. While funding decisions will be made centrally, projects can be sponsored under the umbrella of either the Country or the Research Programme, or potentially jointly. The IGC runs this call on a biannual basis.

As the IGC is currently unable to contract projects beyond the end of its Phase 2 funding (March 31, 2017), it is looking for short-duration, high-impact projects that produce a deliverable and generate policy influence by March 2017. If, as is hoped, funding for Phase 3 is confirmed, it will then be possible for current projects to apply for extension funding. Please email igc.research@lse.ac.uk with any questions.

2. How do I apply for this round of Call for Proposals?

Instructions and an application form are posted on the IGC website:

<http://www.theigc.org/research-themes/funding/igc-call-for-proposals/>

Please be sure to save the application form as a Word document. Other formats will be returned and researchers will be asked to re-submit their form in Word format.

3. When is the deadline?

The deadline for submission is 11:59pm, 21st June 2015, GMT time. Applications received late will not be considered.

4. How should the application be submitted?

The application form should be filled and submitted by email only to igc.research@lse.ac.uk. No other document is required for the proposal. Hard copies of proposals will not be accepted. ***Please be sure to save the application form as a Word document.*** Submissions in other formats will be returned and researchers will be asked to re-submit.

5. Are there any requirements regarding format, length of application, etc.?

Please be sure to save the application form as a Word document. Proposals submitted in other formats will be returned and researchers will be asked to re-submit. The application form contains instructions with words limits for each section, which you are expected to comply with. Your inputs for each question should be pasted in the appropriate box. Please attach any tables, charts, graphs, etc. to your application email as a separate Word or PDF document.

6. Do you fund researchers who are not engaged at top universities or who are not local (where applicable) to the country of research focus?

Yes, IGC gives equal opportunity to researchers from all over the world, and proposals are assessed on quality and the selection criteria outlined in the "Important Information for Applicants" document (<http://www.theigc.org/research-themes/funding/igc-call-for-proposals/>)

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7. Do you accept proposals directly from individuals?

Yes, but the IGC Research Programme is unable to offer research funding for individual contracts. Therefore proposals for individual managed projects would only be eligible for funding from the Country Programme. Also, with individually managed projects, expenses are only reimbursed in arrears, with original receipts. This means that some expenses—such as flights, hotels, survey costs, etc.—may need to be fronted by researchers.

8. Can a single institution submit multiple proposals?

Yes.

9. Can a single researcher be included in multiple proposals?

Yes.

10. Can a research assistant be hired?

Yes, it is typical for researchers to hire their own Research Assistants for these projects. For Institutionally-managed projects, these Assistants are contracted by the managing institution. For individually-managed projects, these Assistants are contracted by the IGC. There is an annex titled “IGC Project Proposal RA Form” for adding named Research Assistants to Individual projects (<http://www.theigc.org/research-themes/funding/iqc-call-for-proposals/>). This can be submitted at a later stage when specific Assistants are identified, but it is the Principal Investigator’s responsibility to send it to the IGC as soon as possible after selecting participants. The IGC is unable to contract and pay these additional participants until the form is received.

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Evaluation Questions

11. Which are the thematic areas covered?

The IGC welcomes proposals that are relevant for growth within four broad themes: (i) state effectiveness, (ii) firm capabilities, (iii) cities, and (iv) energy. For more information, see document entitled IGC Research Priorities: <http://www.theigc.org/research-themes/funding/igc-call-for-proposals/>

12. Which are IGC partner countries?

The IGC has active country programmes in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India (Central), India (Bihar), Liberia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Please note that research themes or countries outside the mentioned priorities are also welcomed.

13. Can we submit a proposal for countries or theme outside of IGC priorities?

Proposals that align with a specific IGC country's areas of focus but are not directly tied into an IGC research theme will not be discounted. Likewise, proposals that involve one of IGC's four research themes, but are not directly tied into a country's area of focus, are analogously not at a disadvantage. In summary, it is possible for any submitted proposal to be sponsored under the umbrella of either the Country Programme, the Research Programme, or potentially jointly between the two. Please see the "IGC Countries Priorities" document: <http://www.theigc.org/research-themes/funding/igc-call-for-proposals/>

14. Do we need prior engagement with the respective IGC country team and stakeholders?

Prior engagement is not a requirement, but the proposal is more likely to be successful if it responds to policy demands in the country selected. The IGC strongly recommends researchers submitting country-focused research discuss their proposals with the relevant IGC partner country team. Proposals supported by the IGC partner country team have a higher probability of success. Country teams can also facilitate dialogue between researchers and policy makers. Researchers can contact the country teams for more information (<http://www.theigc.org/countries>).

15. We are applying for other sources of funding, or have already received other funds. Is it still possible to apply?

Yes. The IGC encourages applicants to indicate budget priorities in their proposals under Section 11 and 12. In the event that the IGC is unable to fund the entire project, it will then be easier to identify which modules are essential.

Applicants who have secured or aim to secure other funding are also welcome to apply for only partial funding for their project from the IGC. In this scenario, applicants should make clear what proportion of overall funding for the project is being requested from IGC, and which proposed milestones will trigger IGC payments.

16. What are the eligibility criteria?

The IGC will assess the submitted proposals against the following criteria:

- (i) The extent to which the proposed research is innovative and contributes to substantive creation of knowledge, specifically helping to expand and strengthen the



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existing relevant literatures. This criterion captures general academic rigour and quality, and rewards proposals which are able to effectively define their contribution with respect to the existing literature. Special attention will be given to whether or not holes in the literature are filled and how the paper proposes to advance the frontiers of knowledge.

(ii) Whether and how the proposed research can be used to inform better and more evidence-based policymaking in developing countries. Researchers should make the case that the proposed study will have the potential to inform policy which relates to economic growth in developing countries. Proposals developed with input from country priority areas are preferred, and researchers are encouraged to show plans for engagement with the IGC's country teams in their proposals.

(iii) The makeup of the research teams and contributions to local capacity. Special attention will be paid to the makeup of the research teams and their ability to carry out the proposed research. The IGC wishes to build the capacity of researchers based at institutions in developing countries and it would therefore count positively if a proposal originates from a team which includes researchers, policymakers, or other stakeholders based in the relevant developing countries under investigation in the research process.

(iv) Value for money.

The IGC strongly recommends researchers submitting country-focused research discuss their proposals with the relevant IGC partner country team. Proposals supported by the IGC partner country team have a higher probability of success.

17. What are the expected deliverables?

Funding will be disbursed on a milestone/installment basis tailored to each specific project. Typical milestones for medium-term projects managed by institutions include:

- A popular summary of the project's motivation and background (500 words in length), written for a general audience and suitable for publication on the IGC website and/or blog submitted at the project start.
- A blog post, written for a general audience and suitable for publication on the IGC website. As part of the IGC's goal to bridge the gap between research and policy, we strongly encourage researchers to include an IGC Blog Post as a project output.
- Regular Progress Reports (typically every 4-6 months) during the course of the project based on a template provided by us.
- Regular (mid-project) Progress Reports during the course of the project based on a template provided by us, as well as a Financial Statement (on IGC template) reconciling the previous milestone disbursement.
- Final deliverables including an academic article suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, a 2-3 page IGC policy brief based on the findings of the research, and a popular summary of the project's main findings and implication (500 words) written for a general audience and suitable for immediate publication on the IGC website/blog at the end of the project. All final deliverables must include submission of a Financial Summary to reconcile the total project expenses with the original approved budget.

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In addition, for major IGC projects, researchers will be requested to produce a ‘Policy Influence Plan’ before the start of the project, as well as a ‘Policy Influence Report’ after project completion. In the Policy Influence Plan, researchers will be asked to describe the mechanisms and steps the project will take to influence policy. In the ‘Policy Influence Report’, researchers will provide an account of the extent to which the project achieved the anticipated policy influence, and describe the main ways in which this was achieved. The template of both documents will be provided by the IGC.

18. What details are required for the “Stakeholders, dissemination, and next stages” category?

Please include a brief summary of the interested parties who you aim to engage and how you would plan to disseminate the research project findings.

19. Does the IGC provide technical support for the preparation of the proposals?

No, the IGC funds proposals that already meet high standards of technical rigor, as the goal of the IGC is to push the knowledge frontier in topics that are relevant for policymaking in the partner countries. However, the IGC is committed to supporting local research, and where appropriate, non-awarded proposals will receive feedback which might be useful for future proposals.

20. Do you provide preliminary feedback when writing the proposal?

No.

21. When are decisions going to be made and confirmed to applicants?

Funding decisions will be taken by a Commissioning Board by mid-September 2015. Researchers will be notified of the Boards’ decisions soon after this date, and we expect the contracts to be finalised quickly afterwards.

22. Our proposal was rejected. Could you send us specific comments regarding our proposal?

Due to the large number of proposals the IGC receives, we are unable to provide in-depth feedback to rejected proposals.

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Budgetary Questions

23. In which currency is the award made?

The award is made in pound sterling (GBP).

24. Can the costs of inflation and/or depreciation be taken into account for billing purposes?

No, inflation and depreciation risks must be borne by the applicants whose projects are approved.

25. Is a detailed budget, including activities and project timeline, required at this stage?

Sections 11 and 12 of the IGC Proposal Form should be filled with different budget category expenditures, as well as a preliminary timeline of activities and outputs linked to budget share. In all budget categories, applicants should bear in mind that 'value for money' is one of the main evaluation criteria. Note that at least 20% of the requested funds cannot be released until the final project output has been reviewed and approved by the IGC.

26. What is the maximum number of days that a Principal Investigator can bill on a project?

Principal investigators can bill a maximum of 22 days on a project.

27. What proportion of the budget can cover institutional overheads (indirect costs)?

For projects managed by institutions, overhead can be paid but is capped at a maximum of 15% of the total direct costs specific to the project. Please note that the IGC defines an institution as an organization occupying a physical space where it is located, and that actively incurs costs (such as rent and services) which are consistent with overhead costs. Overheads typically cover the institution's IT infrastructure, insurance costs, electricity, etc. The proposal's budget should reflect this as appropriate. Please note that **only institutions** can apply for overhead recovery.

28. What is the travel policy?

Please read the IGC Travel Policy for detailed information: <http://www.theigc.org/research-themes/funding/igc-call-for-proposals/>

29. Do you fund business class travel?

No, IGC follows the UK DFID's travel policy, and is not able to fund business class travel.

30. Do you pay per diems?

No, IGC follows the UK DFID's travel policies, and is unable to pay per diems. It does, however, fund expenses if they have been budgeted for in the proposal, and **only if** original receipts are presented. See the IGC Travel Policy for further details.

31. Are there any budgetary limitations on proposals?

No, there is no maximum (or minimum) budget for the proposals to be considered. It should be noted though that the more expensive the projects, the more likely they are to receive partial funding only. Importantly, each project will be assessed individually based



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upon ‘value for money’ criteria and therefore, when drafting proposals with larger budgets, one should be mindful of this.

32. What is the typical budget for the funding awarded for a successful project?

The IGC funds such a large range of projects with many varying different structures and budgets that there truly is no “typical” IGC project by any measure.

33. Is there a maximum on the time length of the project?

No, there is no hard limit on the length of proposed projects. However, as the IGC is currently unable to contract projects beyond the end of its Phase 2 funding (March 31, 2017), it is looking for short-duration, high-impact projects that produce a deliverable and generate policy influence by March 2017. If, as is hoped, funding for Phase 3 is confirmed, it will then be possible for current projects to apply for extension funding. Please email igc.research@lse.ac.uk with any questions.

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