



International  
Growth Centre

International Growth Centre  
London School of Economics and Political Science  
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[www.theigc.org](http://www.theigc.org) | @The\_IGC

# Important information for applicants

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## 1. About the special call for proposals

This is a special call for proposals on **urgent or time-sensitive** economic policy issues in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The project proposal form application should be filled and submitted by email only to [special.call@theigc.org](mailto:special.call@theigc.org). 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 their proposals.*

Please email [special.call@theigc.org](mailto:special.call@theigc.org) with any questions.

## 2. Types of applications

For projects with more than one applicant (investigator) please indicate the name of the applicant who will act as the Principal Investigator.

Please indicate whether this project will be managed by an **institution's research department** or by an **individual researcher**. For an institutional project, it is the institution (university, NGO, etc.), not the Principal investigator, who will be managing the grant funds.

**Institutional projects:** If the project is to be administered by an institution, only the IGC Project Proposal Form needs to be submitted. The project proposal must include the name and contact details for the institution's authorised signatory. The IGC and its Country Offices do not count as managing institutions. Note that the signatory may not be a researcher on the project. Exceptions are only made for very small organisations. Please email [special.call@theigc.org](mailto:special.call@theigc.org) with any questions in this regard. If your proposal is successful, disbursements will be made to the named institution following the delivery and approval of the agreed outputs in Section 12 of the proposal form.

**Projects submitted by individuals ("Individual projects"):** Individually managed projects need to submit the IGC Project Proposal. If there are going to be Research Assistants, Copy Editors, or other Non-investigator positions on the project, the Principal Investigator also needs to submit the IGC Project Proposal Research Assistants form when named participants are selected. 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.

DIRECTED BY



The IGC is Directed by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and the University of Oxford. The LSE is a charity and is incorporated in England as a company limited by guaranteed under the Companies Act (Reg. 70527).

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### 3. Budgets and remuneration

**Fees:** Proposals can include Principal Investigator remuneration where this is not covered from other sources. However, the IGC discourages numerous Principal Investigator fee days on projects, and puts weight on this category when considering a project's value for money. Typically, projects with more than 22 Principal Investigator fee days are not approved.

All fees, including RA fees, must be costed at a fixed daily rate and clearly identified in the budget breakdown. For all fees that are part of the budget, we will not provide funds for employment benefits.

**Services:** For any service (such as a firm hired to conduct a survey) included in the budget amounts to £8,000 or more, researchers are encouraged to obtain competitive quotes in order to ensure value for money. For auditing purposes, the Principal Investigator/ institution should retain all receipts from all service providers.

**Expenses:** The IGC follows strict equipment procurement guidelines from the IGC funder. All procurement of equipment must be undertaken in accordance with DFID Guidance on Procurement of Goods and Environmental Procurement Policy or such other procedures as may be agreed in writing. Procurement must also achieve value for money and be conducted in a fully transparent manner; and be on the basis that the ownership in equipment shall vest in DFID, and shall be so marked. Please email [special.call@theigc.org](mailto:special.call@theigc.org) with any questions in this regard.

**Overhead:** If a project will be administered through an **institution**, overhead can be paid but is capped at a maximum of 15% of all direct costs specific to the project. The proposal's budget should reflect this level of overhead as appropriate.

In all budget categories, applicants should bear in mind that 'value for money' is one of the IGC evaluation criteria, and that **fee** and **overhead costs** are particularly weighed in this respect.

If your project is funded by the IGC and we have approved the submitted budget, it will not be possible to move funds **across** the fees and expenses categories in the course of the project. However, IGC rules do allow for some flexibility in shifting funds across budget items **within** those two broad categories within the approved budget. Please note that those changes will need to be justified in the Final Financial Statement at the end of the project.

### 4. Timeline of outputs

In Section 12 of the Project Proposal Form, you will be asked to provide a project timeline. You should allow time within your schedule to complete deliverable outputs. It is common for draft reports to undergo a number of iterations, and you should allow for this when creating the proposal timeline.

In your output timeline, you are asked to estimate **when** you expect to need your requested budget. For institutionally managed projects, all funding payments must be tied to output deliverables. We encourage projects to think about how their funding needs will match different research stages, using deliverable outputs to mark transitions between phases.

Giving the IGC accurate and detailed information in the application form will allow us to better match grant disbursements to your needs and to match payments to major blocks of research activity.

Please note that for institutional projects, all payments are made upon the approval of agreed deliverable outputs, as outlined in Section 12 of this form. At least 20% of the requested funds need to remain until the final project outputs have been reviewed and approved by IGC. Institutions also need to submit a Final Financial Statement, using an IGC template provided with the contract, and a detailed transaction list to support the figures on the template.

For projects managed via individual contracts, fee payments will be made upon the approval of agreed deliverable outputs, as outlined in Section 12 of this form. At least 20% of fee days in a contract will only be reimbursed after the final project output is reviewed and approved by IGC. Expenses will be reimbursed up to the agreed project budget as incurred with original receipts. Please note that all travel expenses must be in line with the IGC Travel Policy.

All projects—both institutional and individual—will be required to submit a Project Influence Report with their final output, using an IGC template provided with the contract.

## 5. IGC award conditions

The LSE's Standard Sub-contractor Terms and Conditions for the IGC, which form part of all awards to institutions and contracts to individuals, is attached to the proposal form. Also detailed are the IGC Terms and Conditions for Research Ethics and Human Subjects.

You will be asked in the form to indicate that you have read these documents and are able to agree to them and abide by their conditions. We strongly advise researchers on institutionally managed projects to send a copy of these Terms and Conditions to their Institutional Signatory as soon as possible to avoid contracting delays.

Please note that amendments to these terms and conditions are only agreed to in exceptional circumstances. The IGC may have separate terms and conditions pre-agreed with some institutions. Please email [special.call@theigc.org](mailto:special.call@theigc.org) if you have any questions or concerns about the terms and conditions.

Please note that post-award discussions about these terms and conditions may substantially delay project contracting. A copy of the LSE's Standard Sub-contractor Terms and Conditions for the IGC will be sent to all successful project applicants with their contracts.

## 6. Other conditions of funding

Investigators receiving funding agree to engage with the IGC during the period over which the project receives IGC funding. This includes:

- Investigators staying in contact with the relevant IGC country team(s) (especially the Lead Academics and the In-Country Economists) or Research Programmes and explore opportunities to collaborate;
- Investigators engaging with policymakers in IGC focus countries when such opportunities arise within the context of the IGC's work. This could entail taking part

in IGC-organised country visits, conferences and workshops, as well as direct interaction in person or remotely with policymakers, in coordination with the IGC Country Offices;

- Investigators are strongly encouraged to involve researchers resident in IGC partner countries in their work where possible.

## 7. Reporting & disbursement

Should your application be successful, you will receive two documents while your project is in contracting. First is a New Supplier Set Up form, to set up grant payments in the LSE accounting system, and second will be a Project Influence Plan form, to help the IGC assess how context and engagement affect the impact of research on policy. These forms should be returned promptly, as should all countersignatures on contracts.

The IGC will disburse funding in different ways, depending on if your project is managed by an institution or individual.

**Institutional projects:** If your project will be managed by an institution, payment will be made on delivery and approval of agreed outputs/deliverables.

The IGC will draft a disbursement plan based on the information given in the Timeline of Outputs provided in Section 12 of this proposal form. Typical deliverable outputs for 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 submitted at the project start.
- A blog post, written for a general audience and suitable for publication on the IGC website.
- Regular Progress Reports (typically every 4-6 months) during the course of the project based on a template provided by us.
- Final deliverable outputs 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/or 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 at the end of the project.
- All final deliverables must include submission of the Final Financial Statement and a detailed transaction list to reconcile the total project expenses with the original approved budget. They must also include the Project Influence Report. At least 20% of the total project budget must be held back until IGC approval of the final deliverable output.

**Individual projects:** If your project will be managed by an individual, **all individuals who earn fees** will receive separate, individual contracts. The IGC needs the IGC Project Proposal Research Assistants form submitted when non-investigator participants (Research Assistants, Copy Editors, etc.) are identified in order to draw up their contracts.

All fees will be paid as agreed deliverable outputs are approved. Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators, RAs, etc. must submit an IGC Fee Invoice Form to the IGC Fee Invoices unit at [lgc.fee.invoices@lse.ac.uk](mailto:lgc.fee.invoices@lse.ac.uk). A template of this form is included with the contract.

The IGC will draft a disbursement plan for fees based on the information given in the Timeline of Outputs provided in Section 12 of this proposal form. Typical deliverable outputs for projects managed by individuals 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 submitted at the project start.
- A blog post, written for a general audience and suitable for publication on the IGC website.
- Regular Progress Reports (typically every 4-6 months) during the course of the project based on a template provided by us.
- Final deliverable outputs 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/or 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 at the end of the project.
- All final deliverables must include the Project Influence Report. At least 20% of the total project budget must be held back until IGC approval of the final deliverable output.

Reimbursable expenses will be paid as incurred with original receipts. Principal Investigators must submit an IGC Expense Claims Form and original receipts to the IGC Expense Claims unit at [lgcexpenseclaims@lse.ac.uk](mailto:lgcexpenseclaims@lse.ac.uk). A template of this form is included with the contract.

Disbursement of all funds will be conditional upon the quality review and approval of all deliverables. Delays of more than 90 days in submitting outputs could lead to the inability of the IGC to pay for contractual deliverable outputs.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to notify the IGC of any project delays or research plan changes as soon as possible. Failure to do so may lead to payment delays and even threaten overall project success.

## 8. Outcome of applications

We aim to issue all contracts as soon as possible after funding decisions, and we expect prompt countersignatures for all contracts. Incorrect information on the project proposal form, costs which do not adhere to IGC guidelines and negotiations with institutions regarding the IGC Terms and Conditions can all lead to contracting delays.

Therefore, the IGC strongly encourages applicants to give detailed and accurate information in the proposal form. While the IGC recognises the need to adapt research plans to current country situations, please note that significant post-award changes to project proposals may result in delayed contracts. For institutionally managed projects, we advise researchers send the IGC Terms and Conditions to their institutional signatory as early as possible.