

IGC energy and growth conference – Call for speakers

The International Growth Centre (IGC) invites you to express interest in giving a presentation at our upcoming conference, “**Energy and growth: Challenges and opportunities for developing countries**” in London on **12-13 November 2015**.

The IGC welcomes speakers and participants from academia/research institutes, policymakers/government, and the private sector. If you are interested, please send us an abstract (1-2 paragraph summary of your presentation topic) using [this link](#) by the submission deadline of **15 September**.

The conference will focus on themes including:

- Improving the reliability of grid services
- Rural electrification
- Energy efficiency
- Minimising the external costs of energy consumption
- Largescale renewable energy sources
- Opportunities for innovative design of largescale centralised energy infrastructure

Speakers may present on research in progress, recently published work, and/or policy learnings from innovative projects or initiatives. Speakers will give a Powerpoint presentation at the conference but will not be required to submit a full paper.

The IGC aims to promote sustainable growth in developing countries by providing demand-led policy advice based on frontier research. The IGC is based at the London School of Economics (LSE) in partnership with the University of Oxford. The IGC has a wide network of world-class researchers who can offer assistance to policymakers and energy practitioners interested in designing evaluations of energy projects.

The conference will offer opportunities:

- To connect with a network of researchers, policymakers and practitioners working on critical issues related to energy and growth in developing countries
- To share cutting edge findings from academic research alongside learnings and best practices from policymakers
- To identify opportunities for future research and form collaborations with new research partners based in developed and developing countries

The IGC will be able to cover accommodation and economy travel expenses for most conference speakers. Graduate students and researchers or policymakers based in Africa or South Asia are especially encouraged to apply.

The IGC operates in 14 countries in Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia) and in Asia (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, and Pakistan). We are open to hosting speakers focused on these countries or other countries whose lessons and experiences are relevant to developing countries.

Conference participants will be invited to apply for energy research grants during IGC’s upcoming funding opportunities. For more information on IGC research in the energy sector, including a more detailed description of the conference themes and research questions, see the [event page](#).

Conference themes and research questions

The International Growth Centre (IGC) welcomes conference speakers to submit proposals to speak on any topic related to the research themes and questions below. We are also open to considering speakers on topics relevant to energy and growth in developing countries outside those listed below.

1. Improving the reliability of grid services

- What power sector reforms have worked and how?
- How can the quality of grid services be improved? What strategies can increase willingness to pay for better service?
- What are the tradeoffs between focusing on improved access for households versus firms?
- What is the potential for technologies like pre-paid cards, smart meters, or other schemes to improve quality?
- How to prevent electricity theft?

2. Rural electrification

- What are the best solutions for areas with low population density, low willingness to pay, and high costs of operation?
- What is the role and cost-effectiveness of stopgap measures like minigrids, solar panels, etc. and how can these measures support longer-term solutions?
- How best to roll out expansion of the grid?

3. Energy efficiency

- What are the best methods to encourage investments in energy efficiency?
- What are success cases where barriers to investment have been overcome and how?
- What is the role of municipality reforms and decentralisation in ensuring energy efficiency and energy access?

4. Minimising the external costs of energy consumption

- What are the effects of energy on health, welfare, pollution and climate change?
- What is the willingness to pay for reducing these effects, and what strategies can build this willingness to pay?

5. Largescale renewable energy sources

- What are the barriers and challenges to successful largescale renewable energy growth?
- How can largescale renewable energy development increase energy access for the poorest and support equitable growth?
- What policy mechanisms and planning tools are needed to encourage use of renewables?
- What lessons can be drawn from performance of international/regional power pools?

6. Opportunities from innovative design largescale centralised energy infrastructure

- What innovative planning, design, financing, implementation, and maintenance methods are available? What best practices can be adopted in developing countries?
- What design options can provide affordable, low voltage supplies to local populations and SMEs?
- What is the potential for modular approaches (where capacity is added in a phased manner for generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure) in poor countries and regions?
- Which smart technologies can be adapted for better grid management in low income countries?