

Research Development Fund Request for Proposals (RFP) – Round 1

Release Date: 11 December 2017

Close Date: 30 January 2018

The Lahore School of Economics is calling for proposals for exploratory and independent studies (up to **PKR 500,000**) to rigorously test potential interventions that can encourage industrial growth, improve the effectiveness of social sector delivery and public institutions in Pakistan. This research grant is designed to allow early career researchers at the Lahore School to explore research ideas that will culminate in an impact factor publication; or CREB working paper and a proposal for a full study funded externally. The call will fund studies with duration of one year or less.

Interested applicants should email Ms. Zenab Naseem (naseemzenab@gmail.com) with an expression of interest (one paragraph description of their research idea) to receive proposal and budget templates. Proposals will be accepted till 5 00 pm, **30 January 2018** and evaluated on a rolling basis. Please save completed proposals, consisting of cover sheet, proposal and budget, in one compressed folder with the name *LSDRF_Round1_Lead PI Name_SubmissionDate* and upload to this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/YjhbofXAoQwwCfcJ5oC>.

For this round, the deadline are:

Submission and Notification stages	Expected Date
Submission of proposal	<i>30 January 2018</i>
Comments by reviewing committee (first round)	<i>Within 30 days of receiving the proposal</i>
Submission of revised proposal	<i>Within 15 days of receiving the comments</i>
Comments by reviewing committee (final round)	<i>Within 30 days of receiving the revised proposal</i>
Submission of final proposal	<i>Within 15 days of receiving the comments</i>
Notification to successful applicants	<i>Within 30 days of submission of final proposal</i>
Disbursement of funds	<i>After approval from the Lahore School Research Ethics Review Committee (RERC)</i>

Research Development Fund Background

In 2017, the Lahore School of Economics launched the Lahore School Research Development Fund (LSRDF). A core motivation for the LSRDF is to provide experience to early career researchers of designing and implementing funded projects to produce research that will be published in an impact factor academic journal. The fund will also support exploratory studies that can help young researchers develop a robust empirical research idea and methodology,

where the outcomes will be a CREB working paper and to provide input for the design of a larger study for external funding. The LSRDF will fund studies for up to PKR 500,000.

Applications for further funding can be considered in exceptional circumstances.

The grant is only intended to fund studies involving field-work and cannot be used to buy-out PI time. Young researchers are encouraged to work in teams and involve a more experienced local and/or international researchers as an advisor for the study. Doctoral students are also encouraged to submit a proposal for their dissertation work to be evaluated and reviewed by the reviewing committee with successful proposals being forwarded by CREB to the Rector for approval of funding.

Proposed projects are expected to be of a high quality, with clear external validity. As detailed in the guidelines below, the reviewing committee will expect proposals to outline how their research ties to existing work in their selected topic. The role of the reviewing committee is not to just to approve or reject a proposal but it is to provide constructive inputs on promising proposals so that the research team can improve their proposal and bring it up to level that would be competitive for external funding.

Proposal guidelines

All applicants will be expected to submit a proposal form due **Monday, 30 January 2018**.

Applicants must specify if the study is intended to feed into a doctoral dissertation; if it should be considered a small study (“A”, below), where the primary outcome will be intended to be publication in an impact factor journal; or an exploratory study (“B”, below), where the primary and immediate outcome will be to inform a proposal for a full scale study and to publish a CREB working paper. Applicants must prepare the relevant application provided in the submission documents folder.

A. Small study:

The Lahore School will accept proposals for small studies that have a very clear research contribution and are expected to result in an impact factor journal publication. Studies meant to be a part of a doctoral dissertation will be under the “small” study category. Small studies will be at a more mature stage of development than exploratory studies and should ideally demonstrate a robust research design, a feasible implementation plan, a strategy to overcome limitations to external validity and, preferably, well defined research instruments. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate a strong commitment from implementation partners (e.g. NGOs, government departments) if any.

Applicants should submit a proposal addressing issues indicated in the proposal template.

B. Exploratory Study:

The Lahore School will accept proposals for exploratory studies that have a very clear research question and lay the groundwork for a full-scale project. Exploratory study proposals are expected to fully elaborate on their project design, with a fully developed method of sampling, clear outcome measures, power calculations and a scale-up plan. Proposals must clearly articulate what the exploratory study will enable researchers to learn; and the conceptual and

methodological distinction between the proposed exploratory study and any future follow up studies. Exploratory proposals will be reviewed more favorably if they identify opportunities and willingness to engage with stakeholders should the study be expanded to a full-scale study. Only applicants with a track record of externally funded projects are eligible to apply.

Applicants should submit a proposal addressing issues indicated in the proposal template.

Evaluation Criteria:

The reviewing committee will score each proposal by on criteria such as technical merit, logistical viability, innovation, potential and value for money (as given in Annex A of the proposal template), using a ranking system from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent). At the first stage of submission, the reviewing committee will use these criteria to provide comments that should be incorporated before a revised proposal is submitted.

Grant Requirements:

Start-Up Report

Selected applicants will be required to submit a short start-up report as a deliverable, which details the early activities of the initiative, any changes to project design, or linkage opportunities identified. Specific submission deadlines will be determined based on the length of the study.

Quarterly Progress Reports and Final Technical and Financial Reports

Researchers should provide concise progress narrative and financial reports on a quarterly basis. Lahore School requires a final technical report and a final financial report within 60 days of completion of the grant period.

Outputs - Draft Working Paper for small studies/Proposal for External Funding for exploratory studies

Researchers selected to receive funding for small studies are required to submit at least one working paper with preliminary observations from their LSRDF-funded projects within 6 months of completing field work.

Researchers selected to receive funding for exploratory studies are required to submit at least one proposal for external funding based on their LSRDF-funded projects within 6 months of completing field work.

Data

Researchers are reminded that the terms of their award will detail the intellectual property of all outputs, giving Lahore School of Economics an irrevocable worldwide license to use all material produced through research, while allowing researchers to retain all intellectual property rights over that material. All primary data collection funded by the LSRDF will be anonymized.