

Pre-Announcement of Call for Research Proposals

(Official call for proposals to be issued June 12, 2006.)

***Eligible applicants:* African Universities, Business Schools,
Independent Private Sector Development Research Institutions,
SME Research Groups and
Investment and Export Promotion Agencies**

***Research Themes:* Entrepreneurship, Business Regulation and Reform,
Public-Private Partnerships, Sustainable Enterprise,
Business-Community Linkages**

The International Development Research Centre and TrustAfrica have established an **Investment Climate and Business Environment (ICBE) Research Fund** which will make available up to US\$2.8 million through various initiatives and rounds of funding for researchers in private sector development based in African universities, business schools and independent research institutions.

Funding available on this round:

Small Grant Program

20 grants of up to US\$10,000 will be available during this funding round.

Proposals will be judged on:

- Their anticipated contribution to building the capacity of the African private sector development research community; and
- The significance of outputs proposed (i.e. research, case study, article, conference presentation, etc.) and its contribution to improving the investment climate and business enabling environment in Africa.

Typically these small grants will be used to support smaller projects or ongoing research such as the writing of case studies, the work of Masters and PhD students, the implementation of research findings and the presentation of papers at international conferences by scholars and researchers, etc.

Intermediate Grant Program

10 grants of up to US\$50,000 will be available during this funding round.

Proposals will be judged on:

- The significance of the proposed research and fit with the ICBE Research Fund's objectives and research themes (as described further below);
- The applicant's qualifications for carrying out the proposed research;
- The quality of the plans for the proposed research;
- Diversity considerations (e.g., gender, ethnic); and
- Partners and relationship to policy process.

Typically these intermediate grants will be used for undertaking substantive research projects.

Closing Date: October 16, 2006, 5:00 p.m. GMT

Overview

The Investment Climate and Business Environment (ICBE) Research Fund will use competitive research grant mechanisms, training workshops and institution-building partnerships between business schools to build the capacity of the African private sector development (PSD) research community and contribute to an improvement in the investment climate and business enabling environment for sustainable enterprise in Africa.

During the 2006 funding round, qualified scholars and researchers will be invited to apply for funding from the small grant program and the intermediate grant program.¹

The grants will be awarded following an open, competitive process involving Peer Reviews and the final deliberations of a pan-African Jury. Proposals will be judged on merit using African experts and scholars as adjudicators. The Fund anticipates research proposals from African universities, business schools, individual professors, graduate students, African investment and SME promotion agencies, private sector entities or similar organizations. The Fund will operate in English and French and will include all regions of the African continent.

Overall Objectives of the Fund

The general objectives of the Investment Climate and Business Environment Research Fund are:

- To generate knowledge that will create a better understanding of, as well as inform policy changes for, improvements in the investment climate and business environment for sustainable enterprises in Africa.
- To strengthen the research capacity of PSD researchers in Africa and their associated institutions.
- To increase the density of networks and relationships among the African PSD research community and PSD experts internationally.
- To contribute to finding solutions to practical problems encountered by the private sector in investing in and operating businesses in Africa.

Research proposals that directly involve the private sector and/or involve other collaborating organizations will be received favorably. Research will be especially welcome where it examines PSD in Africa that is both 'sustainable' and local (i.e., contributing to long term economic development and livelihood creation that does not erode social, human or ecological capital, but rather enhances these assets).

Research Themes

The following research themes are illustrative of the areas of private sector development research that the Fund is seeking to support:

1. Entrepreneurship and human capital development.
2. Public-private partnerships and dialogue.
3. Regulation and reform (i.e., structural changes in the business enabling environment and investment climate) including but not limited to the following aspects:
 - a. Financial systems,
 - b. Market access,
 - c. Customs systems,
 - d. Tax systems,
 - e. Ports and transportation systems,
 - f. Adjudication and transfer of property, and
 - g. Conflict resolution and transparency in government and in private transactions and operations.
4. Business and community linkages associated with foreign and domestic investments, including local, municipal, regional, national and sub-regional supply chains, supply chain processes and small and medium sized enterprises.

¹ The second round of funding in 2007 will include five large grants of up to US\$100,000, in addition to additional small and intermediate grants.

Small Grants

20 grants of up to US\$10,000 will be available during this funding round.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals for small grants will be judged on:

- Their anticipated contribution to building the capacity of the African private sector development research community; and
- The significance of outputs proposed (i.e. research, case study, article, conference presentation, etc.) and its contribution to improving the investment climate and business enabling environment in Africa.

Typically these small grants will be used to support smaller projects or ongoing research such as the writing of case studies, the work of Masters and PhD students, the implementation of research findings, and the presentation of papers at international conferences by scholars and researchers, etc.

Adjudication Process

The small grants will be adjudicated by a pan-African Jury of private sector development experts.

Proposal Guidelines

Proposals are due at on October 16, 2006, at 17:00 GMT and are to be submitted via e-mail as a Word or PDF document to the ICBE Research Fund Secretariat. Proposals for small grants should be a maximum of three pages and should include:

- Brief project description (e.g., focus, scope, timetable of activities, and if applicable, research methodology)
- Summary of expected project impact and outputs
- Description and qualifications of the applicant and their organization (e.g., current position, academic background and summary of relevant experience)
- Brief project budget

Intermediate Grants

10 grants of up to US\$50,000 will be available during this funding round.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals for intermediate grants will be judged on:

- The significance of the proposed research and fit with the ICBE Research Fund's objectives and research themes;
- The applicant's qualifications for carrying out the proposed research;
- The quality of the plans for the proposed research;
- Diversity considerations (e.g., gender, ethnic); and
- Partners and relationship to policy process.

Adjudication Process

The intermediate grants will be reviewed by a maximum of three Peer Reviewers with knowledge of the research area in question. The proposals will then be adjudicated by a pan-African Jury.

Proposal Guidelines

Proposals are due at on October 16, 2006, at 17:00 GMT and are to be submitted via e-mail as a Word or PDF document to the ICBE Research Fund Secretariat. Proposals for intermediate grants should be a maximum of six pages and should include:

- Project description (e.g., focus, scope, timetable of activities, and if applicable, research methodology)
- Expected project impact and outputs
- Description and qualifications of the applicant and their organization (e.g., current position, academic background, and summary of relevant experience, research record, previous research grants held)
- Budget, including information on the amount and source of any funds other than those being sought from the ICBE Research Fund or funds which have already been received that directly relate to the proposed project. Substantial in-kind contributions should be identified. (Note that receipt of funding from other sources is welcomed and will not prejudice the review of the proposal.)

Inquiries

The official call for proposals will be issued on June 12, 2006. For more information, visit the TrustAfrica website at www.trustafrica.org.

About IDRC



Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is one of the world's leading institutions in the generation and application of new knowledge to meet the challenges of international development. For more than 30 years, IDRC has worked in close collaboration with researchers from the developing world in their search for the means to build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies. www.idrc.ca

About TrustAfrica



TrustAfrica is an African grant-making foundation dedicated to promoting collaboration across the continent in dealing with critical issues of peace and security, citizenship and identity and regional integration. TrustAfrica seeks to sustain African initiatives and solutions contributing to the larger purpose of providing Africa's leading thinkers and institutions with opportunities to set and pursue an African agenda for development. TrustAfrica began as an initiative of the Ford Foundation until becoming a separate entity in 2006. www.trustafrica.org

About the Foundation for Sustainable Enterprise and Development



The Foundation for Sustainable Enterprise and Development (FSED) is an international non-profit organization that supports sustainable development and poverty alleviation in the developing world through action research and shared learning that fosters sustainable and self-reliant enterprises to grow and flourish. FSED is working with IDRC and TrustAfrica to implement the Investment Climate and Business Environment Research Fund. www.sustainableenterprisefoundation.org