



Request for research proposals

Macroeconomic analysis

Background

United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), together with its partners, now invites research proposals for the [Southern Africa Towards Inclusive Economic Development](#) (SA-TIED) programme.

UNU-WIDER is implementing over the period 2018–21 the SA-TIED programme with the aim of enhancing economic research, capacity-building, and policy dialogue.

The papers generated under this request for proposals should assist policy makers with evaluating and improving the operation and coordination of macroeconomic policy and will be published as a part of the [Macroeconomic modelling for policy formulation](#) work stream of the programme.

Offer

UNU-WIDER, the National Treasury of the Republic of South Africa (NT), and the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) invite proposals from qualified researchers for high-quality economic research in the focus areas listed below, that contribute directly or indirectly to evaluating and improving the operation and coordination of macroeconomic policies.

The objectives of this request for research proposals are to:

- 1 Provide an opportunity to researchers to conduct policy-relevant research on topics of relevance to macroeconomic policy in South Africa.
- 2 Facilitate policy dialogue through engaging with researchers on policy-relevant issues and ensuring that research findings are communicated effectively to all stakeholders — including the academic community, policy makers, and civil society via policy summaries and dialogue.

Proposals from individuals, groups of individuals, and non-profit organizations are welcome. Researchers can be based in South Africa or internationally, and research teams can combine researchers from different countries and institutions.

Special consideration will be given to research teams that include junior and early-career researchers.

Individual researchers will be issued Consultant Contracts (CTCs) and non-profit organizations will be issued Institutional Contractual Agreements (ICAs) by UNU-WIDER. A staff member from

UNU-WIDER will assess satisfactory completion of the contract.

A total research honorarium in the range of US\$3,000-10,000 will be paid upon delivery of a working paper, depending on the qualifications of the lead researcher and assessment of the proposal.

The remuneration will be expected to cover all costs associated with the conduct of all research proposed under the proposal, except attendance at the work-in-progress workshop and other knowledge-sharing and dissemination events organized by UNU-WIDER.

What is expected of researchers?

All successful applicants will be expected to:

- Produce a relevant research paper of sufficient quality to merit publication in [the WIDER Working Paper Series](#).
- Attend a 1–1.5-day workshop in South Africa (in January or February 2020) where work in progress will be presented to other contracted consultant researchers and selected international experts
- Prepare a policy summary that brings together the key findings from the research paper and the key policy lessons
- Participate in a workshop/policy dialogue after completion of the final paper to communicate the policy implications and lessons from the research.

Focus areas

Proposals within the following five focus areas are particularly sought, but proposals in other areas may also be considered:

- 1 Projects on macroeconomic policy and inequality
- 2 Projects on macroeconomic policy and labour market hysteresis
- 3 Projects on forex volatility and macroeconomic stabilization policy, or on estimation of real exchange rate equilibrium and deviations
- 4 Projects on costs of disinflation (sacrifice ratio)
- 5 Projects on fiscal policy planning

Proposals should indicate an understanding of SA-TIED's objectives and current work and, in particular, the work completed and undertaken in SA-TIED work stream 3, Macroeconomic modelling for policy formulation. Research from accepted proposals will be conducted within SA-TIED work stream 3. Relevance to the completed or ongoing research of the work stream is desirable but not necessary.

Dates

15 November 2019	Final opportunity for questions on the request for research proposals
30 November 2019	Proposals due
15 January 2020	Target date for informing on final decisions
29 February 2020	Target date for completion of necessary administrative procedures
25 May 2020	Target window for submission of first draft papers and work-in-progress workshop
15 July 2020	Target window for submission of final paper
September 2020	Target window for policy dialogue

Evaluation process and criteria

Proposal evaluation will follow the process described below:

Technical panel

A technical panel drawn together by NT, SARB, and UNU-WIDER will score proposals along four criteria: technical merit, technical capabilities of the research team, policy relevance, and capacity-building. During this assessment, proposals must meet both a minimum level of technical merit and research team capabilities, and a minimum total score.

The assessment of the technical aspects of the proposal will be in accordance with the following criteria:

Criteria		Point allocation
Technical merit	This refers to (1) the technical merit and (2) the originality of the proposal.	30
Capabilities of the research team	This refers to the technical capability of the research team.	25
Capacity building	This refers to the capacity building of South African researchers, junior researchers, and female researchers.	20
Policy relevance	This refers to the degree of policy relevance to the South African and regional context.	25
Total		100

The proposals will need to score a minimum of 40 points out of the total of 55 points awarded for technical aspects and capabilities to be recommended by the panel.

As the programme aims to support policy-relevant research and build research capacity in Southern Africa, proposals will also be awarded points for their potential contribution to Southern African analytical capacity and their degree of policy relevance.

A maximum of 100 points can therefore be awarded. Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 points to be recommended by the technical panel to stage two of the assessment. The technical panel will provide written recommendations and total scores to the policy panel for their input.

Policy panel

The policy panel will comprise of officials from relevant institutions such as NT and SARB. The policy panel will consider the policy relevance of the proposal ensure that the proposed paper/ outputs can be published without contravening confidentiality issues, and that the proposed use of data is in line with the requirements of best practice.

UNU-WIDER will make the final funding decisions taking into account inputs provided by the technical and policy panels.

A maximum number of two (2) proposals per researcher may be received, and only one (1) contract per individual researcher may be awarded (the panel may consider more awards in the case that a researcher is part of multiple teams). Successful proposals may receive assistance with obtaining confidential data from the National Treasury and the Reserve Bank.

UNU-WIDER will not provide individual feedback on submitted proposals. Only the final decision on whether to fund the proposal or not will be communicated to applying researchers.

Proposal submission details

- 1 Submission of proposals is done electronically using a form on [the RFRP announcement page](#).
- 2 There are three forms to select from; one for [individuals](#), another for [groups of individuals](#), and a third one for [non-profit institutions](#).

- 3 Details (such as address, gender, nationality, date of birth) of all researchers involved are required to complete the form. Upload the proposal and brief CVs (two pages or less) for each researcher. Please familiarize yourself with the form in advance of applying.
- 4 The technical proposal should be no more than five pages (A4) in length, excluding cover page and references, using 12-point font, 1.5 line spacing, and standard margins. The cover page should contain the complete contact information of each researcher and a 200-word proposal abstract which should summarize the research question, main methods, data, and expected contribution to the policy debate.
- 5 Submission of a budget is not required for the proposal.
- 6 Any questions on the proposal process should be sent to researchproposal@wider.unu.edu by 31 October 2019. All queries and responses will be published on the announcement page after this date.

Other considerations

For successful proposals:

- 1 Researchers or their institutions (non-profit) will sign a consultant contract or institutional contractual agreement with UNU-WIDER that follows the UNU conditions of service for [Consultant Contracts \(CTC\)](#), or [Institutional Contractual Agreements \(ICA\)](#).
- 2 Researchers/institutions will transfer copyright of research produced under the contract to UNU-WIDER. An important purpose of this copyright transfer is to allow UNU-WIDER to effectively negotiate with book publishers and editors of journals in order to seek the most desirable possible publication outlet for a related set of papers. If no (further) publication is to be expected by UNU-WIDER, the copyright can be transferred to the author(s).