



## RESEARCH GRANTS 2013 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

### DEMOCRACY AND EMPOWERMENT: CONTEMPORARY REALITY AND EMERGING ALTERNATIVES

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#### THE LATIN AMERICA/AFRICA/ASIA/SCHOLARLY COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM



The Collaborative Tri-continental Program was launched in 2005 by the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO) and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) with the purpose of carrying out high quality social science research and enhancing the production of knowledge suitable for fostering southern perspectives on critical issues, and feeding these into global debates. The International Development Economics Associates (IDEAs) joins the program from 2013 onwards. The Program includes an annual South-South summer institute, research conferences, and grants for advanced research. The research grants are intended to promote collaboration among researchers from the South and to stimulate analytical empirical studies on topics of relevance for their regions and for the global South.

This call for applications is open to candidates of all disciplines of the Social and Human Sciences, as well as to researchers of other sciences with projects linked to the main theme of the year: **DEMOCRACY AND EMPOWERMENT: CONTEMPORARY REALITY AND EMERGING ALTERNATIVES**. The aim is to explore the connection between democratic renewal and the possibility of an experience with emancipation, taking into account the needs, aspirations and histories of the countries and populations of the South.

Neoliberalism has had a huge influence across the globe in the aftermath of the crises of socialism and state-led development. It has enthroned the market in all spheres as the axis of social life and downplayed, indeed repressed, democratic aspirations, especially when they directly conflict with its credo. The problems generated by neoliberalism have become increasingly clear though, and its appeal has diminished. Yet, neoliberalism has endured in practice and sought to legitimise itself by claiming to have a human face, exemplified by measures to combat poverty and deprivation, without addressing inequality or even recognising the role of the market in adversely influencing the distribution of wealth and income. With regard to the strategy for development, despite its willingness to bring in the state to save bankrupt financial institutions and failing corporations since 2008, it remains committed to a central role for the market mechanism.

If neoliberalism has been a crucially important element in the oppression and exclusion of people worldwide, several sorts of exclusions are being and have been challenged by democratic developments and the empowerment of collectives that thus far have had little voice and little power to affirm their presence. The latter have mobilized themselves in recent years and struggled to change their situation of oppression and exclusion. This has revived the discussion on alternative policies, projects and practices, and given a new vigour to emancipatory perspectives. Issues of class, gender, ethnicity and race and agents connected to these identities have been, in varied ways and with varied outlooks, at the forefront both of specific struggles and of broader democratic developments.

In the event, democracy has normatively become a central element in a range of spheres and locations, even though it has been conceptualized in very different ways and its practice has suffered restrictions across the globe. It has consistently offered instruments and ample space for social mobilization, although it can and must be deepened in order to become a more far-reaching empowering institutional and practical component of modern societies. The internal shortcomings of actually existing democratic political systems are compounded and aggravated by the pressures exerted by capital, especially footloose financial capital moving across borders. As a result, the effort at mounting a challenge to the neoliberal perspective becomes difficult, although the last decade has seen many an effort to question and undermine it and to seek new directions for economic and social development, albeit with limited success as yet.

- ) How have these developments unfolded in the South, in the countries in Latin America, Africa and developing Asia?
- ) What has been the impact of democratic struggles and developments in terms of popular empowerment and of the emergence of alternatives in these diverse regions of the South?
- ) Who has propelled democracy, how has the political space evolved, and how have political forces responded to these dynamics?
- ) How have intellectuals contributed to the understanding of this early twenty-first century challenge?
- ) Which specific characteristics has democracy assumed in each of these regions and the countries that constitute them, and what have been the key advances and setbacks?
- ) What are the alternatives, relating to the full gamut of emancipatory perspectives and issues that have emerged in the last few decades? What lessons can we draw from those experiences?
- ) Is it possible to discern common patterns in these different regions? If so, what are their commonalities and differences that need to be emphasised and understood?

These are the broad themes that this edition of the CLACSO-CODESRIA-IDEAs Research Grants call would like to address. Research proposals should be based on topics that fall under these broad themes. Applicants are also encouraged to formulate projects with a comparative perspective that are not confined to one region or country, but rather develop a broader frame of conceptual and empirical inquiry. Although this is not mandatory, such proposals will receive special consideration during the selection process.

### **Eligibility**

The call is open to researchers with some experience who have masters or doctoral

degrees. Candidates are required to be supported by organizing institutions (CLACSO, CODESRIA or IDEAs) or their host institutions.

The execution of the research will not exceed the 12 months period starting in **July 2013**. A mid-term report will have to be submitted six months after the beginning of the research. A final report will have to be presented no later than 30 days after the date of expiry of the grant period, in accordance with the terms of contract to be signed with the organising institutions. The final report will include a text in an adequate format so as to allow its publication after editing as a book or monograph in paper or electronic format on the websites of CLACSO/CODESRIA/IDEAs.

**Altogether 9 (nine) proposals (three per region) will be selected with a maximum grant of USD 10,000 per project.** Funds can be allocated without restriction to all activities related to the research, such as information collection, data gathering and processing, book purchases and travel. Resources cannot be used for project designing or for direct or indirect costs of the supporting institutions.

Additional prerequisites can be specified by the organizing regional institutes in keeping with their internal rules.

### **Applications**

Applications should include:

- ) A research proposal presenting the research problem and research methodology (including the sources to be examined and a short timetable), reviewing the relevant literature, and indicating the relevance of the research to one or more of the thematic areas detailed.
- ) An academic curriculum vitae.
- ) A letter of support signed by an authority of the host institution.

As the Collaborative Tri-continental Program involves the participation of scholars from Africa, Asia and Latin America, it has been decided that applicants who are residents in Africa should submit their applications to CODESRIA, applicants resident in Asia should submit their applications to IDEAs and those in Latin America to CLACSO. The full contact details for IDEAs, CLACSO and CODESRIA are reproduced below for the attention of all prospective applicants. Applications found to be incomplete or which arrive after the deadline will not be taken into consideration. An independent Selection Committee charged with screening all applications received will meet shortly after the deadline for the receipt of applications. Successful applicants will be notified immediately after the Selection Committee completes its work. The results of the selection exercise will also be published on the websites of IDEAs, CLACSO and CODESRIA.

**African applicants** should send their applications electronically to:

**CODESRIA - 2013 South-South Research Grants**

Email: [research.grants@codesria.sn](mailto:research.grants@codesria.sn)

Website: [www.codesria.org](http://www.codesria.org)

**Asian applicants** should send their applications electronically to:

**IDEAs - 2013 South-South Research Grants**

Email: [grants@networkideas.org](mailto:grants@networkideas.org)  
Website: [www.networkideas.org](http://www.networkideas.org)

**Latin American and Caribbean applicants** should send their applications electronically to:  
**CLACSO - 2013 South-South Research Grants**

Website: [www.clacso.org](http://www.clacso.org)  
Consults: [prosur@clacso.edu.ar](mailto:prosur@clacso.edu.ar)

**The deadline for the receipt of applications is June, 30th 2013.**