



# CEDIL Call for Proposals

Overview

March 2019



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## Preface

This note provides an overall summary of the research agenda of CEDIL and the structure and priorities of its research and evaluation programme. It contains important information required to apply for funding, and prospective applicants should familiarise themselves with the entire document. It should be read in conjunction with the **Call Specifications** for the three Programmes of Work, the call **Application Guidance** and the **Budget Guidelines**, available on the CEDIL website.

# 1. Introduction to the Centre

CEDIL is a new international research centre, established to innovate and improve methods to undertake and maximise the value of impact evaluations and evidence synthesis in international development. The centre consists of two parts. The first, the **Directorate**, is a collaboration between six organisations:

- the Campbell Collaboration,
- the Centre for the Evaluation of Development Policy (EDePo),
- the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre),
- International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie),
- the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and
- Oxford Policy Management (OPM).

Core Directorate staff are based at the London International Development Centre (LIDC) and Oxford Policy Management. In addition, the Directorate includes an Intellectual Leadership Team composed of leading researchers from the Directorate's member organisations and several external experts from around the world.

The role of the Directorate is to set the research agenda for the centre, and coordinate, manage and ensure the quality of its delivery. To date the Directorate has published a series of papers on its website, with a selection of these appearing in the Journal of Development Effectiveness, which articulate several priority challenges to methodological innovation in impact evaluation and evidence synthesis.

The second part of CEDIL, the **Programme**, will consist of a portfolio of research and evaluation projects commissioned by OPM to deliver the research agenda determined by the Directorate. **We are now pleased to open this call for proposals for projects to constitute the programme.**

We welcome proposals from research and evaluation teams based in legally established organisations anywhere in the world. The projects are particularly appropriate for teams based at academic research organisations, but we welcome proposals from other organisations with the necessary expertise and capacity, including non-governmental not-for-profit organisations (NGOs) and private sector companies. Applicants need not be UK-based, and we particularly encourage applications from organizations based in low- and middle-income countries.

In addition to delivering project objectives, the programme aims to generate a community of practice that will collaborate to deliver the Centre's objectives. Project teams selected for funding will be expected to participate in and contribute to a range of Centre activities, including annual conferences and workshops (see further details below). The costs of participating in these activities should be included in project budgets.

## 2. Structure of the Programme

The Programme is structured into three **Programmes of Work** which reflect priority areas for research to innovate and build capacity in the field of international development impact evaluation and evidence synthesis. These are:

1. Evaluating complex interventions
2. Enhancing the transferability of evaluation through middle range theory
3. Enhancing the use and usefulness of evaluation findings

Full details of the projects to be commissioned under each programme of work are provided in separate call specifications on the CEDIL website.

Through these programmes of work, CEDIL will build bodies of evidence and knowledge which will strengthen the fields of international development impact evaluation and evidence synthesis. The programme will deliver a range of short- and longer-term knowledge outputs providing useful findings and tools for policy makers, implementing agencies and evaluation practitioners. Our work will improve the capabilities of evaluators to rigorously assess interventions and increase the range and quality of evidence which policy makers and implementers can draw upon when making decisions and designing evaluations

To achieve this, CEDIL will commission a range of smaller and larger projects to deliver results throughout the lifetime of the Centre. The types of project invited under each programme of work vary, as illustrated in the following table and summarised below.

	Project Type	Maximum Budget	Maximum Duration	PoW 1: Complex Evaluations	PoW 2: Middle-range theory	PoW 3: Evidence Use
Large Projects	Evaluations	£1,000,000	3 years	YES	YES	NO
	Secondary Data Analysis	£300,000	2 years	YES	YES	NO
Small Projects	Evidence Synthesis	£200,000	18 months	YES	YES	YES
	Exploratory Projects	£100,000	1 year	NO	YES	YES

### 3. Project types

**Evaluations:** CEDIL will provide up to £1 million over three years for evaluation projects that work directly with development interventions to generate innovative approaches to impact evaluation. Evaluations are appropriate to deliver research objectives under PoW 1 (complex evaluations) and PoW 2 (middle-range theory).

**Secondary data analysis:** CEDIL will provide up to £300,000 in funds over two years for projects which use and combine existing sources of data, including big data and other new forms of data, to develop and apply new methods to address evaluation questions. This would include retrospective impact evaluations using secondary data, including multi-country evaluations or simulations. These evaluations will not collect primary data in the field. Secondary data analysis projects are appropriate to deliver research objectives under PoW 1 (complex interventions) and PoW 2 (middle range theory).

**Evidence synthesis:** CEDIL will provide up to £200,000 over 18 months for projects to develop and conduct innovative approaches to systematic reviews and other methods to synthesise research and evidence from impact evaluations published in scholarly and grey literature. Evidence synthesis projects are relevant to all three CEDIL programmes of work.

**Exploratory projects:** CEDIL will provide up to £100,000 over one year for exploratory research projects in areas where substantial bodies of published research or datasets do not yet exist. Exploratory projects are relevant to PoW 2 (middle-range theory) and PoW 3 (evidence use).

### 4. Identifying interventions for evaluation

Whilst CEDIL's purpose is to develop and test innovative methods, CEDIL is also concerned to generate evaluation findings of interest to DFID and the wider development community. It is therefore expected that proposals will be based on the research and evaluation questions related to interventions designed and implemented by governments and NGOs, not interventions designed by researchers for the purposes of the study.

In particular, the large evaluation projects will require collaboration between research and evaluation teams and agencies implementing development interventions. **Our call provides for two routes to establish these collaborative relationships.**

First, prospective teams with existing relationships with implementing agencies are encouraged to develop proposals based on these. We encourage the proposals to be developed collaboratively with implementing partners. Staff time from implementing agencies can be costed against CEDIL projects to collaborate with the research and evaluation team. However, costs associated with delivering an intervention, as opposed to conducting research and evaluation activities on that intervention, are not eligible for CEDIL funding.

The second route is for expressions of interest to be submitted which do not identify a specific intervention but propose a team and innovative approaches to address the challenges set out in this call. The CEDIL Directorate has been working with several DFID country offices to identify DFID funded interventions which would benefit from the type of evaluations described in these call specifications. Proposals submitted by teams through this route, after shortlisting by the CEDIL Directorate, will be invited to participate in a matchmaking process with DFID programme staff to

co-produce project proposals. This process will ideally involve participation in one or more matchmaking workshops being planned for June 2019, though it may be possible to make alternative arrangements for collaboration.

Detailed guidance for applying through these two routes is provided in the Application Guidance.

## 5. Priority countries

Existing evaluations are heavily concentrated in a small number of countries. CEDIL aims to broaden the contexts in which high quality impact evaluation can be conducted. To this end, CEDIL has identified a priority list of countries in which impact evaluations are limited, and which are a priority for CEDIL's funder, DFID.

Any project conducting primary data collection, including all evaluation projects, must focus on at least one of these priority countries. Comparative work is allowed, but the primary focus of research, and principle beneficiaries of the impact of that research, should be in at least one of the countries listed below. Project teams submitting expressions of interest through the matchmaking route should note their preference and relevant expertise for working in any of the priority countries.

The list of countries includes several Fragile and Conflict-Affected States, or countries with fragile and conflict affected environments. These are of particular interest.

Projects focused on synthesis of existing evidence should frame their proposals explicitly around the development challenges and interventions directly relevant to one or more of these countries and for which current evaluation evidence is lacking. However the data and evidence used will be determined to some extent by the availability of data and evidence and may not be as tightly focused to the priority countries.

Countries			
Afghanistan	Jordan	Niger	Somalia
Bangladesh	Kenya	Nigeria	South Sudan
Burma/Myanmar	Lebanon	Occupied Palestinian Territories	Sudan
Chad	Malawi	Pakistan	Tanzania
Democratic Republic of Congo	Mali	Rwanda	Uganda
Ethiopia	Mozambique	Sierra Leone	Yemen
Iraq	Nepal		Zimbabwe

## 6. Priority themes

Along with improving the geographic range of impact evaluations, CEDIL also aims to increase the range of development sectors in which impact evaluations can be conducted. Projects will be prioritised which involve research in areas which do not yet possess a significant evidence base of impact evaluations. CEDIL has identified the following broad thematic areas in which it wishes to encourage evaluation research and which CEDIL's current funder DFID has substantial policy and programming interest:

Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic development, inclusive growth, trade, investment, infrastructure and building markets</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance, conflict, extremism, security and stability, justice</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anti-corruption including illicit financial flows</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Humanitarian</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Migration and modern slavery</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change and sustainable resource management.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerating use of family planning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disability and gender</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrition</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Southern innovation and use of technology</li> </ul>

Projects are not restricted to addressing these themes, but projects which work in sectors which have substantial bodies of evaluation evidence, and for which existing evaluation methods are well-suited, are unlikely to be a priority for funding.

## 7. Southern partnerships

CEDIL particularly encourages applications from or including researchers and evaluation practitioners in the Global South, particularly from the priority countries noted above. Projects with strong intellectual leadership from southern partners will be prioritised.



## 8. Expected contributions to CEDIL

CEDIL funding is intended not only to support independent research and evaluation projects, but to build a community of practice among researchers and evaluation experts and to engage with the Centre's broader ambitions to innovate in the field. All recipients of CEDIL funding will be expected to make substantive contributions to the wider work of the Centre. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Submitting a number of research outputs over the lifetime of the contract which will enable the Centre to identify and develop synergies and overlaps with other projects;
- Contributing to Centre-level efforts to enhance user engagement with CEDIL's research agenda by, for example, writing blogs for the CEDIL website or collaborating with other project teams, the CEDIL Directorate and the Intellectual Leadership Team to produce policy briefs, guidance notes or other user-oriented outputs;
- Participating in annual CEDIL workshops or conferences;
- Participating in Centre-managed workshops on thematic and methodological issues

Proposal budgets should include an allocation for the above activities.

In consultation with the project teams, CEDIL may attach an Intellectual Leadership Team member to the project teams to provide additional technical expertise and support to contribute to the overall objectives of the Centre. If that is done, CEDIL will add the appropriate costs to the project budget.

## 9. Research uptake and impact component

CEDIL aims to achieve research uptake and policy impact through the commissioned projects. As such, applicants will need to a) set out how their projects will produce findings that are useful to policy makers and other research users, and b) articulate plans to engage with users throughout the project to maximise the value and use of the project's outputs. Projects will need to demonstrate they have allocated sufficient levels of resources to prioritise impact.

The CEDIL Directorate will work with projects to ensure they effectively pursue opportunities for impact and uptake from their work. Projects will be particularly encouraged to maximise the relevance of work to CEDIL's funder, DFID, by addressing DFID funded programmes or DFID policy areas.

## 10. Application and selection process

Prospective applicants should refer to the separate Application Guidance document for detailed instructions on how to submit a proposal. Submissions will be made through an online form by following a link on the CEDIL website.

**One month prior to submission (see specific dates below), applicants for small projects will be required to register their intention to submit via an online form on the CEDIL website.** Applicants who register will be provided with the detailed contractual terms and conditions, and submission of the full application will be considered as acceptance of these terms

and conditions. **Applicants who do not register an intention to submit may not be eligible to submit a full proposal.**

Proposal submission involves a combination of completing information on the form and uploading separate documents. Information entered in the form *cannot* be saved and returned to later. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to follow the application guidelines to prepare all the required information in advance and then copy it into the form.

Project proposals will be assessed through two distinct review processes, reflecting the scale of the projects.

- **Large Projects** (evaluations and secondary data analysis projects) will be subjected to a two-stage review process. First, prospective applicants are required to submit an Expression of Interest describing their project, or team and methodological approach (see below). Up to 30 large projects will be shortlisted by the CEDIL Directorate and will then be required to develop a full proposal. Full proposals will be independently peer reviewed by external experts with appropriate knowledge of the research and policy areas addressed by the proposal. A review panel will be convened to assess and rank the shortlisted proposals, and their funding recommendations will then be submitted to DFID for final decision and approval.
- **Small Projects** (evidence synthesis and exploratory projects) will go through a single stage review process. Following eligibility checks by the Directorate, projects will be reviewed by at least two members of a 'reviewer pool' with relevant expertise. The member of this reviewer pool will then convene to discuss and rank the proposals, and their funding recommendations will then be submitted to DFID for final decision and approval.

Prospective applicants should refer to the separate selection criteria document for further details on how their proposals will be assessed.

CEDIL aims to commission a programme that includes a balance of projects across the programmes of work and project types. Proposals within different programmes of work will be assessed by the same Reviewer Panel or Pool, which will include expertise across the programmes of work. However, the priority is for the centre to commission high quality projects, and consequently there may not be an even balance in PoWs or project types, if this is not reflected by the submissions received.

## 11. Selection timeframe

Proposals will be reviewed according to the following timetable:

<b>14 March 2019</b>	Call launch
<b>11 April 2019</b>	Deadline for registration of intention to submit on the CEDIL website
<b>8 May 2019</b>	Deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest (evaluations and secondary data analysis)
<b>14 May 2019</b>	Deadline for submission of Full proposals (evidence synthesis and exploratory projects)
<b>3 June 2019</b>	Outcomes of shortlisting for large projects announced
<b>15 July 2019</b>	Outcomes of small projects call announced
<b>18 July 2019</b>	Deadline for submission of full proposals for large projects (not involved in matchmaking process)
<b>1 August 2019</b>	Deadline for submission of full proposals (based on matchmaking)
<b>2 September 2019</b>	Latest date for small projects to start
<b>30 September 2019</b>	Decisions on funding for large projects announced
<b>31 January 2020</b>	Latest date for large projects to start