

# GDLab

GENDER AND DIVERSITY  
KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE

## Call for Research Proposals

GDLab, the Gender and Diversity Knowledge Initiative of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), contributes to informing the design of policies and reforms in Latin America and the Caribbean with the production and dissemination of new evidence. To this end, GDLab announces a continuous call for research proposals that advance the knowledge of all types of existing inequalities between men and women in the region, as well as those faced by **indigenous** peoples, **African descendants**, **persons with disabilities**, and **LGBTQ+** persons.

### WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THIS CALL?

**GDLab will fund** innovative research that advances our knowledge of all types of existing inequalities faced by these vulnerable groups. The call for proposals seeks to fund research studies that:

- Rigorously document the inequalities affecting these vulnerable groups with new and innovative data.
- Explore the effectiveness of innovative programs and solutions that contribute to reducing inequalities.

### MORE EVIDENCE FOR THE NEW NORMAL: WHICH TOPICS WILL BE PRIORITIZED?

Preference will be given to proposals that focus on areas where there is still limited information due to lack of data and/or methodological challenges and those that focus on addressing the consequences of the economic and health crises associated with COVID-19. Specifically, the following topics will be prioritized:

- **Recovery and creation of employment with a gender and inclusion perspective.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, more jobs have been destroyed than in any previous crisis the region has experienced. This crisis has strongly affected female employment since women tend to hold jobs in sectors that are more vulnerable to this crisis. On the other hand, the interrup-

tion of face-to-face educational and care activities has led to an increase in the burden of household chores, which has disproportionately fallen on women. Proposals in this area should focus on innovative solutions that: (i) support the development of workers' talent, with a gender and diversity approach, (ii) promote regulations and laws that foster inclusive employment and reemployment, (iii) support companies that promote the employment of women and other diversity groups. Specifically, proposals may focus on regulations that promote a more flexible labor market to help balance household chores for men and women (i.e., regulations that encourage more flexibility at work, parental leave or expanded care support). In the area



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of business entrepreneurship, proposals may focus on access to credit for micro, small and medium-sized companies led by women and diverse populations, the impact of the pandemic in fintech companies by gender, and the role of the private sector in the dissemination of more inclusive workplace practices.

- **Prevention and care of victims of violence against women.**

During times of crisis such as the one caused by the spread of COVID-19, the prevalence and incidence of domestic violence have increased, endangering the lives and wellbeing of millions of women. Proposals in this area can focus on: (i) better measuring intimate partner violence (IPV), particularly during the pandemic, (ii) interventions or reforms that explore the effectiveness of innovative tools (i.e., digital content) to safely report cases of IPV and seek help, (iii) interventions or reforms that rely on technology to provide care to victims of IPV.

- **Innovative models of care and healthcare for vulnerable populations.**

Indigenous peoples, African descendant persons, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ persons in Latin America and the Caribbean face significant access barriers to quality health services. These access inequalities relative to the rest of the population have widened during the pandemic. Proposals in this area can focus on: (i) better measurement to record these barriers through primary and secondary data, (ii) interventions or reforms that explore the effectiveness of innovative programs aimed at closing these inequalities.

- **Innovative education models for vulnerable populations.**

The COVID-19 crisis adds on to the existing barriers that young vulnerable populations face to access quality education. Proposals in this area can focus on: (i) better measuring the gaps and learning losses faced by vulnerable groups relative to the rest

of the population, and (ii) interventions or reforms that explore the effectiveness of innovative programs aimed at closing these inequalities.

- **Migration patterns during the pandemic and its recovery.** The massive migration movements taking place in Latin America and the Caribbean are different from previous migration waves. The pandemic has forced several temporary migrants to stay abroad and has also fueled return migration flows. Proposals in this area can focus on: (i) gender gaps in migration rates and patterns, differential effects of women's and men's migration on labor markets in both sending and recipient countries, and productivity impacts of female migration, (ii) differential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable migrant groups, (iii) interventions or reforms that can aid migrant households, particularly those led by women and other vulnerable groups.

**The GDLab will also fund proposals that tackle structural inequalities among these vulnerable populations.**

Specifically, in terms of gender, [there are lifelong gaps in education and health](#), [women benefit less from technological innovation](#), [labor market equality continues to be a challenge](#), [there is a low participation of women in leadership positions](#), [female entrepreneurs face higher barriers than their male counterparts](#), [violence against women is a pandemic in the region](#), and [there is a need for better quality statistics to improve resource allocation](#). In terms of diverse populations, [there are unequal opportunities in access to services](#), [they face large labor gaps](#), and [greater barriers to accessing entrepreneurial support services](#). [Women from diverse populations face a high risk of violence](#), [better information is crucial for closing gaps](#), and [indigenous peoples play a key role in protecting nature](#).



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### WHO CAN APPLY?

Any research team (or individual consultant), government, university, or private sector institution can apply. Research teams should partner with an Inter-American Development Bank specialist before submitting the proposal. If no such coordination exists and the proposal is selected, GDLab will facilitate the match of the research team with a Bank specialist that can contribute to the project on a technical level. Studies should focus on one or more of the [Inter-American Development Bank's borrowing member countries](#).

**The call for proposals aims to foster cooperation in the creation and exchange of knowledge and best practices, with a view to creating a support network and promoting integration**

**across Latin America and the Caribbean.** Research teams are therefore encouraged to reach out and exchange ideas with governments in the region and other policymakers before submitting their proposals. Once a proposal obtains funding from GDLab, the research team should be open to feedback and lessons learned in neighboring settings through workshops organized by GDLab to exchange the knowledge generated by the research proposals. In terms of dissemination, GDLab expects the research team to share their results in seminars organized by GDLab with governments, academia, and the private sector in the region. It is expected that the final study become an IDB Working Paper (in addition to being published by the research team in a peer-reviewed journal) and be part of the GDLab research repository.

### HOW ARE RESEARCH PROJECTS SELECTED?

1. Teams submit their proposal (in Spanish or English).
2. Evaluation Committee (composed of IDB specialists from different sectors) will screen the proposals according to the eligibility criteria.

### WHAT ARE THE EVALUATION CRITERIA?

**I) Relevance and innovation.** Does the research proposal address a knowledge gap? How does the study contribute to closing this knowledge gaps? What innovation does the study propose to address the problem?

**II) Data and methodology.** Does the proposal present a clear research design and methodology? The call for proposals is open to the use of alternative empirical methods, but the proposal must include a strong quantitative approach. Proposals should contribute in at least one of the following dimensions:

- a. Analysis of new survey or administrative data,
- b. Implementation of a rigorous empirical strategy to isolate gender and diversity gaps (i.e., experimental or audit studies, quasi-experimental techniques, etc.), and/or

c. Quantification of the impact of gender and diversity gaps on productivity and/or economic growth.

**III) Implementation capacity.** Does the team have the skills, capacity, and experience to deliver the proposed research project? Are the budget and research project plan realistic, and do they show a clear understanding of the topic that they would like to address?

**IV) Scalability and replicability:** Are the ideas and potential results applicable to other contexts? Are there obstacles to scaling the project?

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### WHAT PIECES SHOULD THE PROPOSAL CONTAIN?

**a) Objective and research question:** The proposal should specify the country or countries and the specific topic on which the research will focus, as well as the main research question(s).

**b) Policy relevance and innovation:** The proposal should specify the knowledge gaps that it aims to address, how the study contributes to closing the knowledge gaps, and what innovation the study proposes to address the problem (ej. research question, methodology proposed, data, etc.)

**c) Scalability and replicability:** The proposal should describe how appropriate the proposed study is for wider implementation and scalability, acknowledging if there are barriers to scaling the study or if the ideas and potential results might be applicable to other contexts.

**d) Data source(s):** A detailed description of the data that will be leveraged, including whether the data sets are publicly available or restricted. For the latter, the team should show that access to the data is possible and specify whether they can share the data with the IDB after the draft is completed.

**e) Methodology:** A detailed description of the research design and estimation strategy. In the case of studies that rely on quasi-experimental or experimental methods, the proposal

should include a discussion of the identification strategy that will allow estimating causal effects. Ideally, proposals should include identification strategy validation tests (e.g., balance tests, tests of common trend, placebo tests, etc.). If the proposal includes implementation and fieldwork activities, a timeline and description of these should be provided.

**f) Research team:** The names of the researchers and their ability to meet the objectives of the project, including relevant prior experience. Each researcher's curriculum vitae (maximum 3 pages per researcher) should be included in a separate annex.

**g) Execution period:** A timeline indicating the activities that will be conducted within the context of the research work plan. The study should be completed in a maximum of 24 months.

**h) Budget:** A budget indicating the resources that will be used within the context of the research work plan. The budget should distinguish between amounts assigned to professional honoraria, data collection, implementation activities, overhead, and other major categories of research expenditures. Please describe other sources of funding, if any.

Proposals must be submitted in English or Spanish. The proposal should not exceed 5 pages in length. A proposal template can be found [here](#).

### HOW MUCH IS THE FUNDING?

GD Lab will allocate between US\$15,000-150,000 (or its equivalent in local currency) to the total budget of each study. Research teams can apply to two categories of funding depending on the proposed budget and the scope of the proposed work:

- **US\$15,000-40,000:** for studies that require resources to complement existing funds, or studies that require funding to cover research activities or access to primary data sources.

- **US\$40,000-150,000:** for studies that seek to implement and evaluate a pilot intervention.