



Request for proposals

Economics of Basic Income Support

Economic Research Southern Africa (ERSA) Discussion Documents

OVERVIEW

In response to the government's proposal that the Social Relief of Distress Grant will be replaced by an alternative form of household support, Economic Research Southern Africa (ERSA) is looking to commission work to contribute to policy development on this topic.

ERSA is seeking to commission contributions to advance the current debate on development, growth, and the economics of basic income support. Contributions will take the form of 3 discussion documents. These documents will inform a synthesis paper and a closeout public workshop. Proposals to deliver one or all papers will be considered.

The discussion documents should address:

Paper 1: Review of international experience on basic income support, in particular developing countries, and how this is relevant (or not relevant) to South Africa.

Paper 2: Review what the literature and global experience say about breaking structural poverty, and how would we look to locate the discussions on basic income support in South Africa within that landscape.

Paper 3: Review and evaluate current analytical contributions to the basic income support debate in South Africa, and identify potential questions and useful research areas that would assist in policy design.

Any questions about the project can be sent to research@econrsa.org

WHAT IS A DISCUSSION DOCUMENT?

It is not an ERSA working paper. The purpose is to produce an accessible summary of issues, followed by a discussion of how the issues are relevant to South Africa. The document should close with a discussion of questions or issues of priority for the policy making process and identify potential areas where applied economic research could deepen the quality of the debate or improve policy design.

The document should be narrative driven, generally making use of illustrative graphs and tables. Formal statements of problems and models is not required for the discussion document, but if you would like, they would be valued in an appendix. While narrative driven, these are not opinion pieces and should clearly draw on credible analysis, research, and analysis, but do not need to provide a novel contribution of their own.

Document length is not prescribed, but we would generally expect 30-40 pages. Our emphasis on readability suggests that shorter is better. Documents can be accompanied by appendixes without page restriction.

MAKING A PROPOSAL

We are looking to consolidate what is currently known, present it in an accessible form and identify areas for further research. We want to do this timeously.

Should you wish to be considered for funding, a broad proposal covering the following should be submitted to research@econrsa.org by COB 4th March, 2022:

- A summary explanation of how you will approach the topic or topics that you would like to contribute towards;
- Resources you plan to draw on in answering the question and developing the document¹;
- An estimated delivery schedule²;
- A high-level cost estimate aligned with the major resources that you wish to employ.

Should you be selected, you should plan on delivery within 4 months of contracting (the sooner the better). However, we are open to discussing a more flexible delivery schedule that takes account of both the need for timeous contribution to the emerging debate and other commitments that you may have.

PAYMENT

It is expected that contributors will be drawing on their existing knowledge base and resources and will not be required to commit significant time to developing novel work or approaches.

Remuneration will be based on the submitted proposals. Recognizing that research agendas are generally quite inflexible in the short-term, the need for urgent contribution and the importance of this issue, we aim to provide remuneration that is relatively generous in terms of academic payment schedules.

FINALLY...

While this is not an ERSA working paper, our working paper series remains open! Should you wish to discuss our support for an interesting working paper topic within these or other relevant themes, we would be very excited to engage.

research@econrsa.org

¹ ERSA is committed to the development of emerging economic researchers that wish to engage with relevant and salient questions. Proposals that include the development, supervision and coaching of emerging researchers, will have an advantage over similar proposals without those elements.

² We are very interested in what you have to say and your process for getting there. If it is useful for you to schedule engagements for us to discuss the development of the work, we are very keen to talk to you!