

AUA Policy Development Research Fund (PDRF)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

THEME: THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON THE LABOR MARKET IN ARMENIA

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), the Policy Development Research Fund seeks an established researcher based in an Armenian university and/or team of researchers (with the project leader based in an Armenian university) with a proven experience and ability to analyze the policy framework and labor market policies of the Armenian Government. A strong research background reflected by a record of publications and/or practical past experience with policy making, program evaluation, experience in labor market regulation/service delivery, as well as experience in general public policy advisory is highly desirable.

1. BACKGROUND

Historically, most pandemics have somehow reshaped the economy, thus having major impact on the labor market. From one side, it causes economic recession and consequently, job losses in many sectors, from the other side, it affects the labor force through human capital diminishment.

Given the nature of the coronavirus pandemic, it is expected to have major labor market outcomes. Not only the distortion in global value changes and trade, but also imposed lockdowns and other restrictions, as well as the direct impact of the virus on people's health is already causing major harm to the labor market in terms of job losses and wage cuts. Not surprisingly, many countries already alarm about unprecedented levels of unemployment.

Further, many experts and international organizations emphasize that the observed impact might be more on some groups than on the others. Particularly, low-skilled workers and those in the informal employment and labor-intensive sectors are more vulnerable to this transformation.

However, the coronavirus pandemic not only affects the labor market in terms of job losses but also accelerates its transformation in many ways. During the pandemic the "future of work", i.e. mostly remote and freelance, with extensive use of modern technologies, does not seem a future anymore.

Hence, labor market economists and social scientists already predict considerable shifts in this field. Therefore, governments should already start planning their response measures during the pandemic and after it.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective is to assist the Government of Armenia in evidence-based policy-making to analyze the ongoing and predict the upcoming changes in the labor market to design effective response mechanisms.

3. SCOPE OF THE WORK

The research should be focused on the Armenian labor market and aimed at assessing:

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- The possible impact of the economic recession on the labor market (preferably disaggregated into sectors and/or labor force groups) in terms of job losses
- The impact of the pandemic on the transformation of jobs

Tasks and deliverables

Task 1. General Overview of the impact the coronavirus pandemic on the global economy and labor market

The Researcher(s) should present the snapshot on how the pandemic is affecting the global economy and what will be its implications on the labor market. It would be preferable to also review several cases of countries, comparable with Armenia.

Task 2. Assessment of the pandemic on the Armenian labor market

Based on the analysis of primary and secondary data, the Researcher(s) should assess the possible impact of the pandemic on employment, preferably with a particular focus on selected sectors. Further, the researcher(s) is expected to explore the changing nature of work under pandemic and describe its prevailing characteristics.

Task 3. Policy actions to mitigate the effects of the pandemic

The Researcher(s) should study the respective international experience and based on primary and secondary data, design policy recommendations that will be used by the government to develop response mechanisms.

Key policy documents to consult

In their analysis, the researcher(s), amongst other strategies and programs, should explore and duly refer to the 2019-2023 Employment Strategy (to be available as of January 2020), “Work Armenia” Concept, and the Government of Armenia program for 2019-2023.

1. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

The research team will be responsible for its own logistics (including getting to/from meetings and site visit locations as required.).

2. REQUIREMENT TO DESIGNATE A POLICY LIAISON

The applicant must identify a team member who will be acting as the project Policy Liaison. The Policy Liaison, who shall be an integral part of the project team (and could be the principal researcher), will ensure continuous contact between research project and the responsible government body for which the policy research is being conducted. The role of Policy Liaison is to facilitate the integration of research results and findings into national policies and programs. The Policy Liaison should help to prepare a final report reflecting on the successes and barriers to engagement and integration of project results. The Policy Liaison designee shall have experience and demonstrated capabilities in performing her/his prescribed responsibilities.

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3. EXPERTS REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Eligibility

- Solid research background reflected by a record of publications and/or practical past experience with labor market regulations and policies in Armenia
- Availability of liaison officer/expert in the team familiar with the MLSA and PES policy-making.

Competitive selection

Funds are awarded on the basis of a competitive selection process that ranks applicants according to their research price/outputs/methodology and relevant professional experience).

- The PDRF funding is administered by the American University of Armenia in collaboration with the Armenian Government and Swedish Government. PDRF Committee ranks all applications in accordance with their experience and ability to perform.
- Priority is given to research teams with student inclusion.