Call for Research Proposals 2021

Faculty and (post-doctoral) researchers in CIVICA universities (Bocconi, CEU, EUI, Hertie, LSE, Sciences Po, SNSPA, SSE) are invited to submit proposals for new research projects under one of CIVICA's four core themes. The aim of the initiative is to encourage innovative research and foster new cooperation between CIVICA's partner universities.

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The 1st CIVICA Call for Research Proposals is now open.

We invite proposals for collaborative research projects under one of CIVICA's four research themes: *Democracy in the 21st Century*, *Europe Revisited*, *Societies in Transition-Crises of Earth*, and *Data-Driven Technologies for Social Sciences*.

The application deadline is:

23 March 2021, 12:00pm (CET)

More information: https://www.civica.eu/2021-research-call

WHO CAN APPLY?

Collaborative research projects - each proposal should be developed and submitted by a research team consisting of members from a minimum of two CIVICA universities. We strongly encourage applications from teams comprised of three or more CIVICA partner institutions. Faculty and (post-doctoral) researchers from CIVICA universities are eligible to apply. (Hires can include PhDs or MAs from CIVICA partners.)

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

All types of collaborative research projects that relate to the topics of one of the four CIVICA research themes, or a combination thereof, are eligible. Applicants should describe which theme their project pertains to. We encourage projects that are cross-cutting thematic boundaries. Only innovative, new research will be considered. We also welcome projects that look for seed funding in the initial phase of a long-term project.

HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE EVALUATED?

Submitted applications will be evaluated by the 'Permanent Design Team' (PDT) of CIVICA. The PDT consists of vice-presidents for research and/or senior faculty of the eight CIVICA universities. Formal grant decisions are made by each CIVICA partner following the decision of the PDT. Rejected applications may only receive informal feedback on request.

HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

This current call is for c. €355,000. Several projects will be funded from this. It is financed from [CIVICA's Horizon 2020 funds](#) and partners' own resources. However, each partner university has a different budget for this call and can finance its own faculty to a different extent. To find out more on available funding contact your local grant coordinating unit – see below.

WHAT EXPENSES ARE ELIGIBLE?

All expenses directly related to research projects are eligible, considering that they are indicated in the estimated budget and are incurred in connection with the expected results. They must be identifiable and verifiable and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency. They may cover primarily personnel specifically hired for the project, travel, and individual cost items (ex: purchase of equipment or data). Recurring institutional (and/or indirect) costs, including personnel costs (overhead, faculty salaries) are not

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eligible. For details on what specific expenses are eligible, and how much CIVICA funding is available at your university, please contact grant units at your respective universities <u>before</u> submitting the application, well before the end of the first week of March (the list of contact persons at each CIVICA partner is attached in Section B). Adequate supporting documents to prove the costs declared, such as contracts, invoices and accounting records may be requested.

HOW LONG SHOULD PROJECTS LAST?

Projects should be concluded by early 2023. Research consortia should showcase their research and any early results to project outsiders in February 2022 in the form(s) they deem most appropriate.

WHAT ARE THE DELIVERABLES FOR SELECTED PROJECTS?

The PDT should receive from the project leader: a summary report – both half-way into the project (February 2022) and at the end of it. The summary report should provide information on activities; names of who was involved in those activities; publications (if any). The mid-term report can be substituted by another output of the research team's choice as long as that output is tangible and accessible for an audience outside the research team. Summary reports might be published on the CIVICA website. Each project should have a small, virtual academic event toward the end of the project, presenting their findings to the CIVICA community and beyond.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND MORE INFORMATION

All applicants should use the application form, available at https://civica.eu/2021-research-call.

Applications need to be submitted electronically to research@civica.eu by the set deadline:

12:00pm (CET) - 23 MARCH 2021

For more information on the financing, please write to your local grant/research support unit. For more information on the substantive aspects of the call, please write to: research@civica.eu

TIMELINE

1 February 2021 – Call for Proposals announced

23 March 2021 – Application deadline

31 March 2021 – Formal eligibility check completed

19 May 2021 – Announcement of winners on CIVICA.eu

February 2022 – Projects/early results showcased

Early 2023 – Projects concluded

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(A) Themes

The following text outlines the topical foci of the four CIVICA research themes.

1. Societies in Transition, Crises of Earth

Under the broad heading of sustainability, the **Societies in Transition, Crises of Earth** theme invites faculty members in the CIVICA network to submit proposals related to societal dimensions of the Earth System. In particular, proposals that engage with the societal dimension plus at least one of the other key pillars of sustainability – the economy, the environment and the overarching theme of governance are encouraged to seek initial funding.

This theme recognizes that European societies are confronted by multiple crises. The manifestations of crises such as social inequalities, climate changes, the COVID-19 pandemic, geo-political fragmentation or the continuing loss of nature may vary, but they are connected at the root: unsustainable development patterns. Proposals under this theme should address interlocking Crises of the Earth through the lens of societal transitions, recognizing the need for integrated solutions based on integrated diagnoses. As general eligibility criteria, the primary focus of the proposals may be on the following indicative themes:

- economic and social levers to deal with Crises of Earth in Europe and beyond;
- the conditions for getting on a credible climate change mitigation or adaptation pathway; and
- Cities and Crises of Earth: from epicentres to laboratories for sustainable solutions.

Together with the Europe Revisited theme, Societies in Transition, Crises of the Earth will be happy also to consider proposals that are well suited to address the complexities of Green values and green economy in Europe. Provided that they meet the general eligibility criteria, proposals can be conceived as applications for seed funding or take the form of small, short-term research projects. Proposals that are multi- or interdisciplinary in nature and include plans for linked micro-events under the CIVICA label (e.g. PhD workshops, lecture tours, other outreach activities including transdisciplinary engagement) will be viewed favourably. Proposals that involve three or more CIVICA institutions are strongly encouraged.

2. Europe Revisited

"Constitutional resilience in the European Union"

The EU's constitutional, institutional and political order has been subject to major structural changes. Has it absorbed shocks to its system and adapted while maintaining its fundamental premises? What resources have been mobilized to address the challenges? This call invites proposals that consider the question of constitutional resilience in the EU order, broadly conceived.

The scope of the call includes questions concerning the internal institutional and legal (dis-)order in the contemporary EU, how the constitutional structure of the EU responds to current challenges to the EU's integration process, and the extent to which that constitutional structure shows resilience in the face of political crises across different levels.

Specific topics may include, but are not limited to, differentiated integration and "multi-speed Europe," the politics of the rule of law, the role of courts in EU integration (judicial activism), the competence constraints on effective EU policy-making, and the possibilities for EU institutional reform.

Europe Revisited will be happy to consider, together with Societies in Transition, Crises of Earth, proposals pertaining to "Green values and green economy in new Europe".

3. Democracy in the 21st Century

The Democracy in the 21st Century Theme Group invites faculty at the CIVICA partner universities to submit research proposals that deal with the challenges and promises of democracy in the 21st century. Recent developments can be grouped under four broad headings.

First, democratic backsliding. What are the causes behind the decline in the quality of democracy worldwide? How have the expectations of citizens changed and how do they differ across countries?

Second, new polarization. What are the drivers of the surge in polarization and populism? How have identity and climate change become issues that divide societies?

Third, weakening of the social embeddedness of democracy. Political processes are situated in space and time. How do democracies cope with inequality, social mobility, multiculturalism, migration, globalization and gender-relations?

Finally, democratic innovation. Novel decision-making techniques (deliberative polls, participatory budgeting, among others) and technological developments (e-democracy, artificial intelligence, etc.) are impacting the individual and the polity. The democratic toolbox is richer than ever, opening up new possibilities for democratization and democratic deepening.

Research proposals that offer links with other CIVICA thematic areas are welcome.

4. Data-Driven Technologies for Social Sciences

Our lives are increasingly influenced by digital technologies. For example, new communication tools have dramatically changed our availability, working and learning habits, forming and maintaining social ties and have got history forming factors. With many of our activities we produce a huge amount of data, which can be used for good and bad. Data analysis can support governance, commerce and research but, at the same time, data usage can also be a serious threat to people. How can we prepare to the new era, when humans and algorithm-governed entities form an ecosystem? What are the societal changes due to the transition? How can the new technologies be used for the social good?

To address these and related questions, the Data Driven Technologies for Social Sciences proposes the following topic for the research call:

Artificial Intelligence and the Society

The topic has been selected with respect to the following viewpoints.

1. Generality. We wanted to formulate the call such that all CIVICA partners feel encouraged to submit proposals.

2. Interpretation of AI. In the call Artificial Intelligence includes but is definitely not restricted to machine learning. Proposals about a diversity of social aspects of digital technology are welcome.

3. Social good. The research within this topical category should put special emphasis on exploring how digital technology can be used to make the world a better place from social point of view.

4. Links to other themes. The selected topic has obvious touching points with the other three themes (Democracy in the 21st Century, Societies in Transition–Crises of Earth, Europe Revisited).

Given the complexity of the scientific questions we encourage building of interdisciplinary teams from different CIVICA partners.

(B) The Application Process

Applying to CIVICA grants consists of the following steps:

Step 1 – Members of the applying research team are to contact their respective grant coordinating units (e.g. ACRO in CEU, Research Development in LSE, etc.) in the planning stage of the application (well before the end of the first week of March) to enquire about funds available for CIVICA partners at each university, and about formal requirements and eligible expenses. In other words, applying consortia will be required to submit **cost calculations separated by CIVICA partners** with their applications.

List of contact persons at each CIVICA partner:

Bocconi	Francesca Fazio grants.office@unibocconi.it
CEU	Eva Vas vase@ceu.edu
EUI	Pauline Depierreux deanofresearch@eui.eu
Hertie	Enora Palaric palaric@hertie-school.org
LSE	Grace McConnell g.mcconnell@lse.ac.uk
Sciences Po	Guillaume Plantin guillaume.plantin@sciencespo.fr
	Elsa Bedos elsa.bedos@sciencespo.fr
	Marinela Popa-Babay marinela.popababay@sciencespo.fr
SNSPA	Mihai Paunescu mihai.paunescu@politice.ro
SSE	Goran Lindqvist goran.lindqvist@hhs.se

Step 2 – Research teams are required to prepare **one single joint application (including the separate cost calculations) and submit it to CIVICA's 'Permanent Design Team'** (PDT). Application is by filling in the Application Form available at https://civica.eu/2021-research-call and sending it to research@civica.eu.

Through a Single Review Process, the PDT will select projects on merit and inform the grant units in universities concerned. The PDT will also check whether the application meets the formal criteria set in the application guidelines. If one CIVICA partner finds that its part of the budget does not meet the criteria, applicants are consulted to fix any error.

Step 3 – Following the decision by the PDT, grant coordinators at partner universities will formally decide on the financial aspects, in line with the decision of the PDT and within the limits of their available CIVICA funds.

Step 4 – Grant units of CIVICA partners inform the PDT. The PDT announces winners. Members of winning consortia contract with their respective universities for funding.