

## **Context Matters Research Grant 2020 Call for Proposals: Teacher Education to Support Girls' Empowerment**

**Deadline for submission: Friday, July 3, 2020**

CODE, through its Context Matters program funds research initiated, designed and undertaken by African researchers. To date, research on literacy learning has largely been carried out in high-income countries and contexts and generalized to low-income countries and contexts. CODE established Context Matters to support African researchers as they take the lead in evidence-based, exploratory studies. The intent is to support research which is clearly situated in local contexts and recognizes the multifaceted and complex relationships between the local and global in education.

This is the third annual Call for Proposals for CODE's Context Matters Research Grants. CODE will offer up to five (5) research grants of a maximum CAN \$10,000 each.

CODE invites researchers, academics and educators who are resident in the countries listed below to submit proposals to CODE at [ContextMatters@code.ngo](mailto:ContextMatters@code.ngo) by 3, July 2020.

Eligible countries include<sup>1</sup>: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The Context Matters Research Grants are designed to:

- Support work by African scholars and researchers addressing issues identified in collaboration with the African literacy and teacher education communities.
- Strengthen the research capacity, knowledge and recommendations of those working in the African context.
- Fund research initiated, designed and undertaken by local teams.
- Foster international partnerships and alliances that bolster Africa's ability to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the areas of education and gender equality.
- Build a body of evidence that can be used to support education policy recommendations at local, regional or national levels.

In 2020, CODE is primarily interested in research projects that relate to one or more of the following:

- the intersection between literacy, education and girls' empowerment;
- the role that pre-service teacher education and professional development plays in strengthening the educational opportunities for girls;
- the concept of “comprehensive sexuality education” and how it is approached in both teacher education programs and in schools (formally, informally); (see <https://en.unesco.org/news/why-comprehensive-sexuality-education-important> for a full definition); and
- the factors and/or interventions that contribute to reducing barriers to quality education for women and girls (especially in fragile, conflict, refugee and crisis situations).

Call for Proposals and application forms: <https://code.ngo/approach/research-initiatives/>

## **2020 Context Matters Call for Proposals**

**Deadline for submission:** Friday, July 3, 2020

Send all inquiries and completed documents to: [ContextMatters@code.ngo](mailto:ContextMatters@code.ngo)

CODE seeks research proposals that:

- Are realistic in terms of scope, number of research questions to be addressed, number of participants, the amount of data collected, timeframe, and budget.
- Examine the development of communities of learners that awaken an interest in social change, support empowerment, and foster individual literacy growth.
- Include K-12 education programming, which can be interpreted broadly to include but not limited to: pre-service or in-service teacher education (especially as it relates to women teachers); family literacy programs; and women's community organizations.
- Include interventions aimed at increasing access to quality education for girls with disabilities, and that explore ways to ensure that their interests and priorities are taken into account.
- Include methodologies that are rooted in indigenous and local epistemologies that incorporate local ways of knowing and research methods, participatory action research, and/or involve and engage the community in meaningful ways. Be sure to give a description of how participants will engage actively in the research process (for example where appropriate: data collection, analysis, and/or interpretation of findings and subsequent recommendations).
- Clearly demonstrate how the research results will contribute to the evidence-base for research on gender-inclusive pedagogy, interventions and tools that improve educational opportunities for women and girls, and increase knowledge about how to best measure the impact of such interventions on the learning, health and wellness outcomes of women and girls.

**Proposals should address the areas of inquiry listed below.**

### **1. Teacher Education**

- How do schools and/or teacher education programs support and prepare teachers to address gender equity, and sexual health and wellbeing?
- What are the attitudes toward sexuality education (comprehensive sexual education) of pre-service, in-service teachers of adolescent girls? How do these influence the messaging, lessons, practice of teachers?
- What are the barriers and/or successful pathways to implementing curriculum related to comprehensive sexual education?
- What is the level of sexual health literacy of pre-service teachers and practicing teachers of adolescent girls?
- How do teachers and students define empowerment and what are effective interventions for supporting the further empowerment of teachers, girls and boys?
- What are the experiences of pre-service and practicing teachers who have attended training related to sexuality, preventing gender-based violence, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual and reproductive health, etc.?
- What is the impact of government policies and the formal curriculum in comparison to civil society or community initiatives? (For example, what are the messages reflected in the formal curriculum and directives versus the messages in society/community / sexual health messaging and programs?)
- What is the role and the impact of formal and informal instruction within clubs, coaching programs, mentorship programs, etc.?
- How can communities of practice support teachers as they strive to promote empowerment and equality in their classrooms and schools?

## 2. Literacy Practices

- How do classrooms, community agencies, networks and structures support adolescent girls' empowerment and education? (For example in book clubs, writing circles, reading groups, gender clubs and human rights clubs).
  - How are new technologies and digital literacies being used in these contexts? How do we measure the impact that such interventions have on the wellbeing of adolescent girls and boys?
- What is the relationship between literacy and empowerment?

## 3. Sexual Health Literacies

- What is the role of information about sexual and reproductive health and rights, as adolescents negotiate safer and more gender equitable relationships in education systems and in society at large? How is gender, puberty, menstrual hygiene represented in reading materials? (For example in mass media/pop culture.)
  - How are these various representations understood by youth in a variety of contexts? For example, how do these materials work in classrooms, after-school programs, families and communities?
- How do literacy policies support or discourage girls' education and empowerment?

Submissions can also include:

- Proposals that build on successful pilot research projects that address the themes and concepts listed above.
- Proposals that draw from other aspects of Context Matter's guiding Landscape Review, entitled [Girls' Empowerment through Language and Literacy \(GELL\): A Landscape Review of Gender and Literacy Research in African Contexts.](#)

### Who can apply?

In 2020, CODE welcomes proposals from researchers, academics, and educators who are resident and working in the education sector in eligible countries listed on page 1.

Funded researchers must be affiliated with and/or collaborate with an academic Institution. All proposals should reflect current professional research standards and

must articulate how they will adhere to ethical standards and procedures for research involving human participants.

### **Terms of Research**

The studies can be of any duration but are envisioned to cover a two-year period.

### **Funds MAY be used to support**

1. Items needed for the research and not routinely available through the place of employment of the applicant
2. Materials and supplies (paper, books, etc.)
3. Travel directly related to the research
4. Books for student and teacher use or library reference
5. Administrative expenses (postage, duplication costs, printing)
6. Payment in support of a graduate student

### **Funds may NOT be used to support**

1. Salary of the Principal Investigator
2. Equipment (computers, mobile devices, audio-visual equipment); Specialist equipment required to implement the proposed study can, in certain instances, be supported, if justified.
3. Indirect costs (costs not directly associated with the project such as charging for existing office space).
4. Costs of conference attendance and/or support for the dissemination of the research, will not be supported. (However, upon successful completion of the study, new funds may be made available for this purpose).

### **Review Process**

- Proposals will be reviewed by CODE for adherence to the stated submission requirements indicated in Call for Proposals, Application Form, and Submission Guidelines.
- A panel of anonymous jurors comprised of African researchers and/or researchers from African institutions will then review all eligible applications and provide recommendations to CODE.
- CODE's advisory committee will then provide feedback, recommendations and requests for more information as needed. CODE will then determine which proposals to fund.

- All efforts will be made to notify all applicants of the status of their applications on or before November 30, 2020.

## **Assessment Criteria**

**Intellectual Merit:** For example, will the research results advance knowledge, contribute to the evidence-base on gender-inclusive pedagogy, increase knowledge about how to best measure the impact of interventions that improve educational opportunities, health, wellbeing for women and girls? Does the proposal examine go beyond existing research?

**Potential Impact:** For example, will the research results make an impact on an aspect of the education system / society? Will the results of the project help African countries to meet the UN's sustainable development goals? Will it contribute to evidence-based decisions regarding policy, better data collection and evaluation of gender equality? In what ways will it contribute to Context Matters targeted areas of interest (such as reading materials, literacy practices, or sexual health literacy)?

**Methods:** For example, are the methods employed ethical, gender sensitive, and inclusive? Is there a sufficient level of detail provided in the proposal in relation to the data collection, analysis and interpretation of research information? Does the research methodology clearly demonstrate the procedures for how participants will engage in activities where appropriate such as data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings and subsequent recommendations? Will the methods employed result in relevant/valid data regarding gender-responsive practices? How do the methods align with “best practices” of education researchers?

**Qualifications of Researcher:** For example, does the research team have the necessary skills (personal, social and technical) to carry out the proposed research project? Is there a track record indicated? Are the researchers affiliated with an institution with adequate subject matter and methodological expertise to monitor their work? Can the researchers clearly demonstrate the strategies that will be used to build trust and rapport with participants around sensitive topics. Have issues around consent for children under 18 to participate, child protection and code conduct including prevention of sexual exploitation been identified and addressed?

**Budget:** For example, is the proposed budget adequate to complete the research? Are the costs outlined in keeping with stated requirements in the Call for Proposals? Are the overhead costs in line with CODE's requirements?

If the proposed budget is beyond the \$10,000.00 CDN grant, indicate where the remaining funds will come from. Collaborations/joint research projects are encouraged and acceptable.



## **ANNEX I: GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION**

**Please review these Guidelines for Submission carefully before completing the Application Form**

All proposals should be submitted in English using the attached Application Form.

Proposals should be a maximum of six pages plus references and required attachments (CVs, work plan, budget, letters of reference). Follow the guidelines below for each section.

CODE strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to participate fully in all of its programs.

### **Section 1: Contact information**

### **Section 2 . Institutional Affiliation**

- The Principal Investigator must have a formal institutional affiliation evidenced by the signature of an senior official from the Affiliated Institution in sections 2 and 9 of the Application form

### **Section 3. Project Summary**

- Summary should be one (1) page or 500 words maximum, single spaced, font 12.
- The summary of the proposed project **MUST** include the following:
  - Proposed title
  - Statement of objectives and research questions
  - Description of the intellectual merit of the proposed activity
  - Statement on the expected impacts of the proposed activity

### **Section 4 Project Description**

- It should be 2,000 words maximum (about 4 pages), single-spaced, font 12.
- It must include a description of each of the following:
  - Proposed target population (including specific ages and estimated number of participants) being investigated

- Objectives and research questions
- Methodology
- Definitions of key terms/concepts including precise definitions of variables to be measured
- Activities to be undertaken
- If using focus group discussions (FGD) give sample questions and indicate strategies for building trust and rapport with participants when discussing sensitive topics
- Data collection tools, instruments
- Proposed data analysis procedures
- Intended outcomes including a note on what would make this research project a 'success'
- Work plan with timeline

### **Section 5. Ethical Clearance**

- CODE expects strict adherence to ethical standards and procedures and the rules of attribution. Describe the ethical standards and clearance procedures of your institution and how you will meet these. If your institution does not have such standards or procedures in place, describe the standards and procedures you will follow to ensure compliance with best practices. Note that this section must be completed in order for the proposal to be forwarded to the review jury

### **Section 6. Budget**

- Complete **Annex II. Proposed Research Project Budget Template** (separate Excel template). The proposed budget should clearly link your expected results to the amount requested
- If the proposed budget exceeds the \$10,000.00 Canadian dollar amount indicate where the remaining funds will come from. Collaborations/joint research projects are acceptable.

### **Section 7. Appendices.** Complete and attach the following to your application:

- Annex II. Proposed Research Project Budget Template (separate Excel template)
- Reference list (up to one (1) page single-spaced, font 12).

- Letters of support from those involved in the project (for example target group, government officials, community members, school administrators, up to 3 letters). Please note that letters of support are not required for jury review. However, if your proposal is accepted, you will be asked to provide these letters of support.
- CV of the Principal Investigator
- CVs of co researchers

**ANNEX II: PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT BUDGET TEMPLATE**

**Please provide an estimated budget for your research projects including notes with justifications using the Excel template provided.**

---