



2008 Call for Proposals:
Thought leadership, Evidence-based thinking, Policy
advice

Information note on

Research Awards
(flagship and specialist research projects)

December 2007

Part 1: Background

Part 1: Poverty Research Initiative

Combat Poverty is the lead public body for promoting research on poverty. It has developed the **Poverty Research Initiative** to support independent, policy-relevant research, with the twin aims of promoting public understanding of poverty and informing the development of policy frameworks to tackle poverty, especially the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016. It aims to provide thought leadership, inform evidence-based thinking and offer policy advice for relevant stakeholders.

In 2008 the Poverty Research Initiative will continue to fund a range of research awards, fellowships and postgraduate internships, as well as provide funding for promotional events to disseminate research findings and facilitate exchanges of learning. Those preparing proposals for Poverty Research Initiative funding should be aware of new deadlines for applications.

The outputs of the research are published online as research working papers (see www.combatpovertypublications.ie). Authors may also be asked to contribute to supporting publications and to present at Combat Poverty research seminars.

2008 Call for proposals

Proposals are now invited from qualified individuals and organisations under the following funding strands:

- **Research Awards** (for researchers in third-level institutions and not-for-profit organisations)
- **Research Promotion Events** (to facilitate the public dissemination of research findings from PRI-funded projects through regional or national level events)

The separate Research Promotion Events fund, for small or large-scale events, is also available to promote research findings of PRI-funded work.

This information note relates to **research awards**. Separate notes on the other strands are available on the website www.combatpoverty.ie/research.

Part 2: Research Awards

Research Awards are provided for new research on poverty undertaken by established researchers in third-level institutions, not-for-profit research bodies and non-governmental organisations. The funding provides research resources to gather and analyse data relating to poverty and policy.

Flagship research projects: Funding is provided for flagship research projects that gather new information on poverty and on policies to tackle poverty. Projects that focus on providing thought leadership, informing evidence-based thinking and/or offering policy advice for relevant stakeholders are especially welcome. These projects are likely to have a national or comparative focus and to provide significant new insights on key poverty and related issues. They will generally have a timeframe of not more than one year. The maximum award is €40,000,

subject to a ceiling of 75% of the total costs. ***Closing date for applications: 18 January, 2008.***

Specialist research projects: Funding is provided for small-scale studies of poverty which use existing data sources or have a small fieldwork component. These projects will tend to be specialised in nature and address niche issues relating to poverty. These studies will generally have a timeframe of 6 to 12 months. The maximum award is €20,000, subject to a ceiling of 75% of total costs. ***Closing date for applications: 18 January, 2008.***

Research projects should involve the application of a conceptual framework, the collection and analysis of data and the preparation of a high-quality final report, including conclusions and policy recommendations. Studies should have an applied focus and be from a social science background, such as social policy, sociology, geography, economics, political science or applied social studies.

The topic of research proposals must be on poverty in Ireland. A comparative dimension may be included, as long as Ireland is the primary focus.

Research themes

Specific research priorities under the 2008 call for proposals are:

- Using EU SILC data to analyse and measure specific aspects of poverty, or the prevalence of poverty among social groups
- Exploring the links between atypical/low-paid work and poverty
- Exploring the links between educational disadvantage and poverty, particularly the role of investment in quality services and its impact, or the costs of education at primary and secondary level
- Identifying and clarifying the role of new forms of rights-based 'activation' (e.g. active citizenship) to address poverty and related concerns
- Exploring public perceptions of and attitudes to poverty in the current Irish economic and social context
- Exploring the links between poverty and the social determinants of health, particularly in terms of poor health outcomes
- Exploring the rural dimensions of poverty, especially to identify gaps in understanding and inform policy developments.

Proposals would also be welcome if they contribute to the evidence base and/or inform policy developments in relation to:

- new and emerging forms of poverty, especially those relating to consumption
- policy and/or service delivery aspects of the developmental welfare state and life cycle approaches
- and/or effectiveness of anti-poverty and social inclusion policies.

Further information on Combat Poverty and its work is available from its website (www.combatpoverty.ie). Information on national policy priorities is also available from the Office of Social Inclusion (see www.socialinclusion.ie).

Eligibility

Applications can be submitted by:

- established academics in third-level institutions
- not-for profit research bodies

- non-governmental organisations with a research expertise.

In all cases, the body must be located in Ireland or Northern Ireland.

Applications must specify a principal investigator with a research capacity from one of the above bodies. In turn, these bodies must indicate their willingness to host the research project and to provide the necessary supports to ensure its successful completion.

Research funding

The research awards can be for any amount up to €20,000 (specialist studies) and €40,000 (flagship studies). The maximum award in both categories will only be awarded to projects of exceptional merit and where the costs are fully justified.

Funding will cover up to 75 per cent of the full research costs (including institutional overheads, where applicable, capped at 10 per cent). The other 25 per cent can be made up of contributions in kind (eg 'own-time' research) or other funding sources. The maximum Combat Poverty contribution for co-funded studies is 50 per cent. Funding will not cover capital items. Guidelines on eligible research costs are set out in the application form.

Funding will be awarded to and administered by the eligible bodies defined above. A valid tax clearance certificate will be required. A statement of expenditure will be provided to Combat Poverty upon completion of the research project. Combat Poverty will have no liability whatsoever in respect to the management of the research project other than the provision of research funding. Combat Poverty has recently moved to a system of purchase order numbers. Successful applicants will be expected to quote issued purchase order numbers on all correspondence and invoices.

Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to liaise and engage with Combat Poverty over the course of the research and to submit progress reports and a final report in accordance with the agreed timescale for the research. Any changes to the research over the course of the project must be notified to Combat Poverty within two weeks. Additional correspondence may be required on this or other aspects of the project.

The findings of the research will be presented at a Combat Poverty research seminar or similar event. The final report will be submitted to Combat Poverty. A research working paper will also be submitted based on the final report for publication as part of the Combat Poverty Research Working Paper Series. An article on the research (900 words) will be written for Combat Poverty's *Action on Poverty Today* magazine. A two-page abstract of the research will also be submitted. Additional publications may be requested. All publications must conform to the house style of Combat Poverty.

All publications arising from the research and any related publicity must acknowledge the funding received from Combat Poverty. The Poverty Research Initiative logo should be used, where appropriate. Copyright of the research will remain with the authors.

Applications

Applications must be completed on the official application form, available from the website. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Applications headed *Poverty Research Initiative - 2008 Call for Proposals - Research Awards* should be emailed to research@combatpoverty.ie or posted (unbound) to the Combat Poverty Agency, Bridgewater Centre, Conyngham Road, Dublin 8. The closing date for receipt of applications is **Friday, 18 January, 2008 at 5pm**. Applications will be acknowledged.

Assessment

Applications for research projects will be assessed on a competitive basis. Applications are first assessed by a research staff member of Combat Poverty, based on the established assessment criteria (see below). This assessment is then considered by an official assessment panel including external experts. The final recommendations are approved by the Board of Combat Poverty and will reflect the level of resources allocated to this specific strand.

The criteria for assessing proposals are:

- relevance to the research priority themes, policy developments and/or national policy priorities
- quality of research proposal in terms of the aims, objectives, research design and methodology
- contribution to the evidence-base on this topic
- added-value in terms of thought leadership, policy advice, public understanding, teaching, etc
- capacity and expertise of research team
- timescale for completion and project planning
- value-for-money

A report of the assessment will be provided to all applicants.

Research ethics

Applications should reflect a commitment to high ethical standards in the research. Where ethical issues arise, these should be resolved in accordance with the code of research ethics in the applicant organisation. A statement to this effect is required from the organisation or the in-house ethics committee, where this exists. In addition to conventional ethical issues, applications should display an appreciation of the difficulties arising in conducting research on poverty. In particular, the vulnerability of people experiencing poverty should be respected when collecting sensitive information and the risk of stigmatising people in poverty when reporting on research should be minimised.

Further information

For further information and informal discussion about potential proposals, contact Joanne Mulholland at telephone: 01-6026633, email: research@combatpoverty.ie. See also www.combatpoverty.ie/research.

Combat Poverty Agency, Bridgewater Centre, Conyngham Road, Dublin 8