

Small grant funding for Secondary Analysis of the Longitudinal Small Business Survey

Call for proposals

The Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) have made available £20,000 to fund 3 or 4 secondary analyses of the first wave of the Longitudinal Small Business Survey. The Enterprise Research Centre (ERC) is administering this call on behalf of BIS. Note that applications will not be accepted from anyone who has been supported through earlier or current ERC grant funding.

Applications for funding should be submitted to ERC by 30th June 2016. Successful bids will be announced by 15th July 2016. Funded activity should take place between July and September 2016.

Background

The Department of Business Innovation and Skills supported by a number of other Departments and Agencies recently commissioned the first wave of the UK Longitudinal Small Business Survey or LSBS. Covering around 15,500 respondents in 2015 the LSBS is intended to:

- Improve our understanding of what drives and constrains business performance and growth by addressing evidence gaps relating to the lags between many business activities and associated performance outcomes.
- Provide improved data on current business performance and the factors that affect this. The larger survey size will provide more reliable findings for key sub-groups of the business population and in relation to activities such as seeking finance which are only relevant to part of the sample.

The survey builds on previous Small Business Surveys but is broader in scope and larger in size. It is the intention to repeat the current survey with an updated sample each year for the next five years. Details of previous Small Business Surveys can be found [here](#). Anonymised data from the first wave of the LSBS will be deposited in the [UK Data Archive](#) in June 2016 following the publication of the initial analysis report by the Department. An overview of the survey structure and ambition is [available here](#).

The Department is seeking to fund 3 or 4 focussed research projects costing £5-7,000 each which will explore aspects of the first wave of the LSBS data with a particular focus on exploiting the larger survey size and the potential this offers. It is hoped that a similar call for proposals will be made next year to fund research projects related to Year 2 of the LSBS.

Projects may relate to a focus on specific sub-groups of the business population, regional or more local analyses or specific groups of firms distinguished, for example, by their use of

external finance or exporting activity. Proposals using any aspect of the LSBS data will be considered for funding but three areas are of particular interest: the correlates of business growth and productivity, equality and diversity and methodological issues related to the comparison between LSBS data and that derived from other survey datasets. Each funded project will be required to produce a research paper of publishable quality and a brief non-technical summary (2-3 pages) of the key results.

The application process

Decisions on funding will be made by the LSBS project manager supported by the ERC Directors. **Note that applications will not be accepted from anyone who has been supported through earlier or current ERC grant funding.** Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Strength of the suggested programme of activity 60%
- Strength of the project team 20%
- Project costing 20%

Funding is expected to cover all research and reporting costs associated with each project.

Applications for funding should be submitted to ERC by 31st June 2016. Successful bids will be announced by 15th July 2016. Funded activity should take place between July and September 2016.

As the ERC contract holder grant offers will be made from Warwick University. Proposals will form the basis for a brief contractual agreement. Payment will be made at the end of the project subject to the completion of the proposed programme of activity and related reporting.

Preparing an application

Applications should be prepared as Word documents and excluding appendices should be no longer than 4 pages. These should take the following form:

1. Project title and applicants including full affiliations and contact details. The lead applicant should be clearly identified.
2. Overview of proposed research and potential contribution to understanding
3. Overview of the project team
4. Project costings (in brief).

Annex - Brief two page CVs for the lead applicant and other relevant team members should be included in an annex.

Applications for funding should be submitted to Jiao Liu at ERC (jiao.liu@wbs.ac.uk) by 5pm on 31st June 2016.