

Fourth Young Researcher Fellowships

Strategies for the development of the Information Society among low-income sectors in Latin America and the Caribbean

DIRSI (Regional Dialogue on Information Society - *Diálogo Regional sobre la Sociedad de la Información*) is a network of Latin American researchers who, from various disciplinary perspectives, study the challenges posed by the development of the Information Society, together with the problems and solutions it arises for public policy and regulation.

DIRSI researchers focus on the generation of knowledge that stimulate reflection on, and the design of policies that promote inclusion of all society sectors to the benefits of the Information Society. At present, DIRSI is financially supported by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) of Canada and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Promoting research among young people interested in the regulatory challenges posed by the information society and the inclusion of poor and marginalised sectors of the region is one of DIRSI's primary objectives. As one way of meeting this objective DIRSI is inviting young Latin American researchers to submit applications to its fourth Young Researcher Fellowships, which support research within the network's current themes: Bandwidth for All, Mobile Opportunities 2.0 and New Indicators on ICT Access and Use.

Topics

1. Bandwidth for All

Research projects will seek to discuss and promote mass access to broadband service, of high-quality and at affordable prices. Such studies may focus on: the regulatory framework to promote investment in broadband; the use of universal access funds in broadband service; policies to stimulate demand for broadband services, among others.

2. Mobile Opportunities 2.0

A project on this subject may analyze the appropriation and use of mobile services by low income users. As an example, topics in this research area could include: regulatory framework for the diffusion of mobile telephony among low-income population; the use and appropriation of mobile technologies; the impact of mobile technology in socio-economic development strategies; access strategies to mobile technology among low-income population; the use of mobile telephony to promote economic development - such as mobile financial services or the use of mobiles for the dissemination of market-prices-; investment funds for mobile services, among others.

3. New Indicators on ICT Access and Use

A project on this subject may develop new indicators for assessing access opportunities and the impact of ICTs use, as well as market performance and the associated regulation and policy tools. The prime subjects in this theme are the level of affordability of services; the impact of ICTs use on households' welfare and business' performance; the use of ICTs and the competitiveness of small enterprises; ICTs in innovation processes, and quantifying regulatory variables.

Presentation of proposals

Proposals can be made from any disciplinary perspective, and should include a pro-poor approach in the context of a market economy. Innovative proposals that discuss these topics introducing a gender perspective; social or cultural problems or effects; environmental issues or those associated to climate change in the challenges of the development of Information Society will be particularly welcome. So will be proposals from any methodological framework that involve significant empirical work (as an example, public databases that can be used are OSILAC's or DIRSI's Mobile Opportunities, cf. <http://dirsi.net/node/421>). It is fundamental that proposals have implications for the formulation of regulation and policies that promote access to the benefits of information society by the poor.

The evaluation of proposals will consider their academic value, their relevance for policy-making and their feasibility. The jury will be formed by well known academics of the region. DIRSI members will supervise the development of the research process. Three fellowships up to US\$6,000 (six thousand dollars) each will be granted.

DIRSI wishes to encourage participation of female researchers in the field of Information Society. For this reason, the author of the proposal that receives the highest qualification among women applicants will be automatically funded. Additionally, once the research is over and the findings presented, the author of the best report will be awarded with complete funding to participate in an international event, proposed by DIRSI, to present research results.

Formal Aspects

- Research proposals may be submitted in Spanish, English or Portuguese language, in a maximum length of 10 pages, single spaced using Arial 12 points font.
- Proposals must be anonymous (only an alias can be used) and must include:
 1. Title of the proposal and applicant's alias
 2. Summary
 3. Justification
 4. Objectives
 5. Methodology
 6. Budget
 7. Schedule
 8. Bibliography
- Proposals are to be submitted only via e-mail, in a text file (MS Word or Open Office), to the following address: becas2010@dirsi.net, together with the applicant's CV and a support letter. The applicant's Curriculum Vitae must use the downloadable form at <http://dirsi.net/jovenes2010> and must be attached to the message separately, together with a letter introducing the applicant, written by a senior researcher in the region.
- The applicant's name must appear only in the CV form and not in the research proposal. Any proposal that includes the name of the applicant will be automatically rejected.
- Research proposals and final reports can be written in Spanish, English or Portuguese.



- Eligible applicants are young researchers (born in 1975 or after) conducting their academic activities in Latin America, from any disciplinary perspective.
- Proposals must be submitted by and the final reports must be completed by 10 January 2011.

Calendar

Activity	Deadline
Submission of proposals	30 July 2010, 5 PM (GMT -5)
Evaluation results and announcement of winners	17 August 2010
Project's starting date	No later than August 23, 2010
First activity report	November 15, 2010
Final report	January 10, 2011

IMPORTANT

- Assigned funds should not be used for pilot tests, implementation of development projects, nor software development. They can be used to make independent assessments of pilot tests or of development projects implementations.
- DIRSI can cancel, suspend or modify the competition at any time, notifying the applicants in due time in such cases.
- This competition is financially supported by funds assigned to the IEP by the IDRC and the CIDA.