ETF SKILLS LAB NETWORK OF EXPERTS

CALL FOR JOINT RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Background

The ETF Skills Lab Network of Experts is a knowledge community on emerging skills needs. Created in October 2021, it brings together interested researchers, experts and practitioners with an interest in labour markets and skills, from ETF partner countries as well as EU Member States and third countries. The network is part of ETF's Skills Lab initiative to develop, share and disseminate evidence, tools and methodologies on topics related to skills demand.

Two of the network's main objectives are to encourage **knowledge sharing** amongst members, and to **support and disseminate research**, especially that which is multidisciplinary. In line with these twin objectives, the network is looking for research to be developed and published and to feed into the network's wider activities. This may include new methodological tools, findings from research that is already being carried out, or new research projects that require support from the network. In the latter case, the network is particularly interested in bringing together researchers from different countries in order to carry out comparative research on a common topic.

What is in scope

There is a range of activities in scope, including:

- new joint research ideas;
- pre-existing research that could be developed into comparative analysis;
- research which is complete but yet to be published;
- new tools (including software) or methodologies that you are looking to share with other countries / researchers.

Other ideas and proposals are more than welcome. If in doubt as to the relevance of your proposal, please do not hesitate to get in touch by email.

Thematic areas of interest

We are interested in a wide variety of approaches and topics related to skills anticipation and skills demand, ranging from traditional skills anticipation methods to new methods and new topics. Particularly welcome are proposals which:

1. **identify skills trends related to new technologies, digitalisation, and greening of economies;**

2. **produce skills identification / anticipation mechanisms, tools and analysis; and/or**

3. **collect evidence on skills needs, skills gaps and skills mismatches.**

The level of analysis may be at the national, regional or sectoral levels. Innovative proposals will be warmly welcomed. We would also encourage the applicants to incorporate proposals how the research results may inform and advise policy makers in terms of specific actions or feed into *evidence informed policy development* regarding skills development and labour market policies.

Expected outputs

Successful proposals will be expected to deliver one or more of the following:

- a research paper to be published by ETF (potentially as part of an edited collection of several papers);

- a standalone research monograph to be published by ETF;

- a guide to using a particular methodology or research tool to identify skill needs; or

- software which can be shared with members of the Network.

If you have an alternative idea for an output from your proposed research, we would be pleased to hear about it, but there is an expectation that one of the outputs listed above will be delivered.

What is in it for you?

Successful applicants will have the opportunity to:

- **contribute to comparative research** on skill demand analysis in transition and developing countries;
- **obtain visibility** for their research with a wide range of international experts and organisations;
- have their research feed into **international policy debates**;
- become **active contributors to the ETF Skills Lab Network**.

In addition to the above, the network will provide the following.

- **Research findings will be published** digitally in the form of an edited collection of papers. Standalone monograms could also be published in the case of more substantial research projects.

- **Access to editorial expertise**. Assistance will be provided in editing papers or monograms, design and layout, video production.

- **Peer review**. The expertise within the ETF Skills Lab Network can be drawn upon to act as critical friends in the design, analysis and reporting stages of a study. This is potentially beneficial if researchers ultimately want their findings published in an academic journal.

- **Dissemination of research findings.** Successful applicants will be invited to present their work during Network events, and the results will be promoted in other ETF dissemination activities and social media campaigns, while the outputs can also be used for capacity-building activities for network members. Visibility to the research findings can be provided also via the publication of dedicated articles on EU newspapers and the participation in study visits to the EU Institutions in Brussels or ETF.

- **Matchmaking**. If you have an interesting idea but do not have a suitable research partner, we can put you in touch with researchers and potential partners in other countries in order to develop a comparative research project. Comparative studies might include both ETF partner countries and those in the EU.

- **Access to ETF data to support your research.** This includes, for example, the KIESE database, data from the European Jobs and Skills Survey, and the ETF Torino process reports.

Selection criteria

The following should be taken into consideration in preparing your proposal.

- **Partnerships and geographical relevance** - Proposals should include a partnership between at least two members of the network, with at least one partner based in an ETF partner country.

- **Multi/Interdisciplinary approach** - Proposals should aim to break down research silos by using a mix of research methods from different disciplines.

- **Innovation** – Proposals should be novel, contributing to the creation of new knowledge on emerging skill needs in ETF partner countries.

- **Impact –** Proposals should contribute to policy priorities, generate an impact on policy development in the short/long run, and/or lead to new avenues of research being pursued.

- **Scalability and sustainability** - Proposals should be able to be reproduced/multiplied in other countries, and do not constitute a one-off activity.

- **Clarity of purpose** - Abstracts should give clear information on the content, structure and research methodology used and should demonstrate a high level of proficiency in the English language.

Selection process and timetable

The quality and relevance of the applications will be assessed according to the aforementioned selection criteria as well as their contribution to the further development of the Network.

The closing date for receiving applications will be **28th February 2023** and the results will be announced on this page **by 31st March 2023**.

Please note that the proposed research should be finished **within one year from the agreed start of the study**. The deadline for the final publication will depend on the nature of the selected research proposals.

How to apply

Please send an **abstract of your proposal** by **28th February 2023, 17:00 CET** to the following address: network@etfskillslab.eu.

Your abstract should be in **English**, around **500 – 1000 words**, and include a preliminary title, the full names and titles of the authors.

Although there is no specific format to use, please bear in mind the points made above in preparing your proposal.

Your personal data will be processed in compliance with the privacy statement of the "Skills Lab Network of Experts in the area of labour market research".

Further information

If you require any further information, or would like to discuss your research ideas, please do not hesitate to contact Skills Lab: network@etfskillslab.eu.