



## **POVERTY AND ECONOMIC POLICY (PEP) RESEARCH NETWORK**

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

The Poverty and Economic Policy (PEP) Research Network is a major source of funding for developing country researchers. At the same time, every effort is made to devolve the scientific leadership of the network to Southern individual and institutions. It is natural that Southern individual and institutions that accept to take on responsibilities for the PEP network – membership in the PEP steering committee, resource persons, regional directors, administrative staff, etc. – do not want this to prevent them and their institutions from competing for PEP funding. At the same time, PEP has adapted an extremely transparent selection process in order to ensure that decisions are made fairly and on purely objective grounds in a way that can be understood by all involved. Every effort must be made to ensure that there is no real or perceived conflict of interest in the allocation of PEP grants in order to ensure the long-term reputation – and viability – of the network. This document sets out PEP’s policy in this regard.

To begin, let us quote the IDRC’s “Management and Administration of IDRC-Funded Grant Projects: A Source Book and Guide”<sup>1</sup>

“To ensure that there is transparency and fairness in all decisions, care should be taken to determine if there is a real or perceived conflict of interest between any of the members of the committee and the applicant. If this is the case, this person should withdraw from the assessment of that submission (guidelines for dealing with potential conflicts of interest among the committee should be developed and agreed upon in advance).”

Building on these principles, PEP establishes the following guidelines:

1. No researcher can submit a proposal to a competition for which s/he participates in the selection committee.
2. Researchers can submit proposals to other PEP competitions for which they do not participate in the selection committee.
3. If a proposal is submitted by a researcher from the same institution as a member of the selection committee, the member must withdraw from the assessment of that specific proposal. More generally, all committee members are required to disclose any real or apparent conflict of interest with respect to any proposals they are required to evaluate. The other members of the committee will determine

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<sup>1</sup> [http://archive.idrc.ca/admin/brochures/GP\\_eng.pdf](http://archive.idrc.ca/admin/brochures/GP_eng.pdf)

- whether the conflict is real and, if so, will require that the member withdraw from the evaluation of the proposal in question.
4. In negotiations with the donor, if interested, the managing institution could propose a specific budget to support its own research activity within the initiative based on the average size of the grants provided by the competition.
  5. No PEP office can manage grants paid to researchers within the host institution. These funds would instead be transferred to another PEP office to disburse as directed by the initiative leader.

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