



Request for Qualifications: Impact evaluation expert support to the Government of the City of Buenos Aires

3ie Policy Window Advanced Programme

RFQ PWA.AR.1

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Deadline for applications: 31 January 2018

1. Introduction

The [International Initiative for Impact Evaluation \(3ie\)](#) seeks applications from impact evaluation experts to receive consulting contracts under 3ie's policy window advanced programme (PWA). Under these contracts, the experts will provide advice and assistance to the technical team of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires in designing and implementing impact evaluation of key interventions introduced by the local government.

2. Overview of the Policy Window Advanced programme

3ie promotes theory-based impact evaluations that make use of a counterfactual (experimental or quasi-experimental) to examine the full causal chain to answer questions about what works, why, how and at what cost. 3ie's PWA grants help policymakers and programme managers to answer questions about the attributable impact of interventions they implement.

PWA grants are restricted to 3ie members. They provide technical assistance to agencies that are already commissioning or undertaking impact evaluations, but where the local capacity to implement them locally is still developing. The grants finance the advisory services of experts in impact evaluation selected through international competition to join either a local research team commissioned to implement an evaluation or internal technical teams at government agencies in low and middle-income countries.

The expert's support may vary depending on the timing at which he or she joins the local research team and on the specific need for expertise of the local research team. The experts are expected to ensure the quality of the impact evaluations they support, as well as to build the capacity of the local team through learning by doing. The experts must be able to work in English and the native language of the country of research.

The consulting contracts are intended to cover the expert's time and travel expenses to work with the local research organisation directly.

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3. Background

The Evaluation Unit (EU) at the General Directorate for Strategic Planning – Secretariat of Planning, Evaluation and Coordination of the Cabinet of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires - has as its main objective increasing the visibility of the evaluation function in the public management cycle, thereby strengthening evidence-based policy-making. In order to do this, the EU provides technical support to the different City jurisdictions and departments in the design and implementation of rigorous evaluations to understand the impact of the different programmes they implement.

The EU undertakes different types of evaluations, including results-based, impact, implementation and process evaluations, all of them jointly executed by the jurisdiction and the EU's technical team.

3ie and the Government of the City of Buenos Aires are seeking highly qualified applicants to serve in the role of impact evaluation expert to the EU technical team leading these different impact evaluations. Each expert will provide the City of Buenos Aires with assistance on the identification strategy and impact evaluation design, will help determine treatment assignment rules and processes if applicable, and will help in the development of survey instruments or the rollout of baseline data collection.

4. Terms of reference

3ie anticipates awarding up to two 12-month consulting contracts for experts in support of the City of Buenos Aires for work in 2018. The programmes to be supported will be featured and updated in the appendices to this document. You will find the description of the first programme to be supported, *Estudiar es Trabajar*, as an Appendix to this document.

Applicants for expert contracts must select one of the programmes and apply to be an expert for the impact evaluation of that programme. Applicants may apply for more than one programme, but must submit separate applications. However, 3ie does not anticipate awarding more than one contract to an individual in a single RFQ call.

Under the consulting contract, contract awardees will invoice 3ie for time and expenses incurred in providing advisory services up to a maximum allowable limit under the contract. The hourly rate will be determined based on the individual's salary history according to 3ie's direct cost policy, but with some consideration of cost reasonableness. The maximum will be based on 25 level of effort days (200 hours) and US\$10,000 for travel.

Awardees may submit invoices monthly but should not submit their invoices less frequently than every quarter for the time and expenses incurred since the previous invoice. Each invoice must be submitted to 3ie with an activities report (in English) and supporting documentation for time and expenses. The final invoice must include a document (in English) for publication on the 3ie website summarising the impact evaluation objectives and design.

5. Instructions for applicants

Responses to this RFQ shall include five components

- A. Cover letter (not to exceed two pages) that includes the following information:
 - Identification of the programme that the applicant is proposing to assist;

- Statement of interest regarding that programme, including initial ideas about identification strategies, data collection and outcome measurement;
 - Statement of availability for the duration of the study; and
 - Verification of ability to work in both Spanish and English;
- B. Curriculum vitae of applicant (not to exceed five pages)
- C. Relevant research experience statement (not to exceed six pages) with a detailed description of past impact evaluations of government-implemented development programmes successfully completed (or currently being conducted) by the applicant. These descriptions should emphasise the following elements:
- The identification strategies, experimental and/or quasi-experimental methodologies employed and the power of the study designs;
 - The use of mixed methods;
 - The researchers' engagement with implementing agencies, either governmental or non-governmental, in the production and use of evidence for decision-making.
- D. Country or region experience statement (not to exceed two pages) with this detailed information:
- The applicant's knowledge and experience with research in Latin America, particularly but not necessarily in Argentina; and
 - The applicant's experience working with and building the capacity of local research organisations in countries of study
- E. Proposed budget in the [PWA budget format available on 3ie's website](#).

6. Submission guidelines

- Components A and B should emphasise publications and experience in quasi and quasi- experimental impact evaluation, particularly in the development context. Please read 3ie's Principles of Impact Evaluation. http://www.3ieimpact.org/media/filer/2012/05/17/principles_for_impact_evaluation.pdf.
- The applicant's qualifications should also highlight experience of having carried out field work;
- The components of the application should be presented in a single Microsoft Word compatible file with all font sizes greater than or equal to 11 point.
- The signature page of the cover letter may be submitted as a .pdf file. The budget should be presented in [3ie budget format and follow 3ie budget guidelines](#). If applicable, budget notes may be submitted as a separate Microsoft Word compatible file with all font sizes greater than or equal to 11 point.
- Incomplete submissions will be considered ineligible.

Please submit all files in a single email message not to exceed 5MB to PWA@3ieimpact.org copied to mpicon@3ieimpact.org no later than 23:59 GMT, 31 January 2018. We encourage early submissions to expedite any clarification needed. Please direct any questions related to this RFQ to mpicon@3ieimpact.org

This RFQ does not constitute a guarantee of award.

7. Selection criteria

The qualifications submitted in response to the RFQ will be reviewed and scored according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight (%)
Credentials of applicant	35
Relevant impact evaluation experience of applicant	35
Relevant regional and/or country experience of applicant	30

Appendix A: Impact evaluation of *Estudiar es Trabajar* – First PWA in support of the Government of City of Buenos Aires

A. Programme Objectives

The Evaluation Unit and the Ministry of Human Development and Habitat (MDHyH) of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires intend to evaluate the programme *Estudiar es Trabajar*. It is expected that a 3ie-funded impact evaluation expert will join the internal team at the Evaluation Unit and provide technical assistance during the process of developing the identification strategy and overall design of the impact evaluation. The expert will provide advice over a period of 12 months with two visits to Buenos Aires included in the plan.

B. Programme Description

Estudiar es Trabajar is one of the components of the Ciudadanía Porteña program (a program of conditional cash transfers to vulnerable residents in the City of Buenos Aires) and aims to contribute to the retention and reintegration of young people between the ages of 18 and 40 in the formal education system.

The program provides a benefit consisting of a monthly subsidy of \$ 970 pesos argentinos (around US\$65) in exchange for the beneficiaries' commitment to; i) regularly attend the formal education institution in which they are enrolled and ii) present a certificate every 3 months that corroborates that they are effectively attending the institution.

C. Population target

Young people aged 18 to 40 who belong to beneficiary households of Ciudadanía Porteña and attend or are enrolled in formal educational establishments.

D. Previous studies

There are only monitoring reports performed by the MDHyH on a regular basis but there are no evaluations of any type previously made.

E. Problem identified

After the meetings held with the team in charge of the implementation of the program *Estudiar es Trabajar*, it was identified that the main problem is the low program coverage. According to the Household Beneficiary Survey of 2014, it was estimated that in that year there were 13,500 young people from homes of Ciudadanía Porteña who were studying and were not beneficiaries of the programme. Since the beginning of 2014, there has been a downward trend in the number of beneficiaries reached by the program.

One of the likely reasons why there are so many young people who do not receive the benefit when they should is the lack of knowledge about the program's existence (65% of young people aged 18-29 surveyed in 2014 reported not knowing about it). It is also noteworthy that 17.5% of beneficiaries fail to prove attendance and, therefore, fail to receive the benefit (Report 2015).

F. Evaluation questions

Initially, what is sought is to implement various strategies (to be defined) to increase participation in the program by potential beneficiaries. Then, in a second phase, the evaluation

unit aims to answer questions about the impact of the program on the beneficiary population, such as the effect of the program on retention in the education system and other variables to be agreed with the program.

G. Preliminary design idea for an impact evaluation

The following are preliminary ideas considered by the evaluation unit. In order to address the first objective, the identification of the most effective strategies for increasing take up, the implementation of different mechanisms is being considered for the target population to establish the one that achieves the greatest increases in participation of the program.

Then, to measure the impact of the program, it is proposed to take advantage of the source of exogenous variability introduced by the random implementation of the strategies mentioned above, to use instrumental variables. It is worth noting that this will be feasible as long as the convening mechanisms effectively increase participation and significantly. If they do not, a Propensity Score Matching methodology can be used to identify a control group within the target population (not intervened by the program).

H. Existing data

The *Estudiar es Trabajar* program has its own database in which there is information about the individuals and the homes to which they belong. However, it may become necessary to collect primary data.

I. Role of the expert advisor hired by 3ie

The impact evaluation expert is expected to assist the Evaluation Unit in the methodological design of the evaluation and in the implementation of the evaluation. This involves the design of interventions to improve the participation rate and the impact assessment of the program.