

**ACE Impact**  
**Pre-identified Regional Development Challenge**  
**Public Policy and Quantitative Skills**

**Terms of Reference**

**Guidance**

Proposals that respond to the Public Policy and Quantitative Skills Pre-identified Regional Development Challenge should address the following Terms of Reference (ToRs) in the appropriate section of the proposal. While it is unlikely that a single proposal can address all of the ToRs, the proposal should make a substantial, credible effort to respond in a way that presents a cohesive, integrated program of education, research and partnership activities that aligns both with the ToRs and with the goals of the ACE Impact project.

**Background**

On the continent, there is a growing demand for building a new cohort of ‘change agents,’ young quantitatively trained African economists and public policy professionals to lead the economic transformation agenda and tackle pressing economic policy challenges. These roles could range across African governments, non-governmental agencies, research institutes and development agencies. Currently, such roles are often filled by graduates of US and European graduate schools, and there is a lack of appropriate representation of talented African development professionals based in the region.

African universities have also struggled to produce, in sufficient quantities, Masters and Ph.D. level graduates with the quantitative training and the necessary skills in rigorous program evaluation and economic analysis as well as skills in change management. In order to address this skills gap, the Africa Centers of Excellence project will support the establishment of a ACE Impact Center in Public Policy and Quantitative Skills. The Center is expected to partner with leading institutions and organizations worldwide to design appropriate curricula, explore innovative approaches to pedagogy, and promote a skills-centric approach to learning. The overarching goal is to produce a critical mass of high-quality graduates trained to address complex issues surrounding economic policy, retain them in the region, provide them with a vibrant intellectual environment, and equip them with the necessary tools and hard skills in the field of public policy and quantitative economics for key roles in institutions that shape the policy environment on the continent. Intrinsicly linked to the education program is an applied research program that builds, and disseminates, the foundational knowledge necessary for evidence-based public policy development.

**Terms of Reference**

- I. The selected Africa Center of Excellence in Public Policy and Quantitative Skills will consider the following skills related aspects of the Development Challenge:
  1. Public policy training
  2. Quantitative skills in microeconomics
  3. Quantitative skills in macroeconomics
  4. Program and Impact Evaluation
  5. Change Management/Leadership

II. To address the skills needs, long-term degree programs available through the Center should include:

<b>Master's Degree Programs</b>
1. Masters Degree in Public Policy and Quantitative Skills
2. Masters Degree in Economics for Development
<b>Ph.D. Programs</b>
1. Ph.D. in Public Policy
2. Ph.D. in Applied Economics

III. To address professional trainings needs, short-term courses should include:

<b>Short-Term Courses</b>
1. Public Policy
2. Economic skills
3. Program and impact evaluation

IV. The selected Africa Center of Excellence in Public Policy and Quantitative Skills will address the following applied research related aspects of the Development Challenge:

1. Economic Policy in Africa
2. Development Economics
3. Political Economy of Development

V. The selected Africa Center of Excellence in Public Policy and Quantitative Skills will undertake an applied research program that includes the following themes:

<b>Applied Research Themes</b>
1. Impact Evaluation
2. Macro-economic modelling
3. Cost-benefit analysis
4. Applied econometrics

VI. The selected Africa Center of Excellence in Public Policy and Quantitative Skills will have an established network of core sectoral partners identified in the proposal, including:

1. Ministries of Finance, Central Banks, and appropriate line ministries (e.g. those with strong program evaluation work programs)
2. African Think Tanks
3. Non-Governmental Organizations in the region
4. Development Agencies and Development Banks

VII. The selected Africa Center of Excellence in Public Policy and Quantitative Skills will have an established network of academic and/or research institute partners identified in the proposal, including:

1. Regional universities that maintain active education and/or research activities focused on quantitative economics and public policy
2. Regional networks of economists and economics training
3. Recognized global universities that maintain active international research collaborations focused on quantitative economics and public policy
5. Regional and domestic think tanks that maintain active research activities focused on quantitative economics and public policy.