

## **Call for Papers: Revised**

### **Advancing Research on Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) within the APEC region**

July 21, 2025

The School of Public Policy of the University of Calgary, in partnership with Global Affairs Canada, has begun a research project to support the work of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation's (APEC) Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Working Group (SME-WG). The focus of this project is to produce and disseminate evidence-based research to address critical issues in the development of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the APEC region. This project will be supported by a network of international experts that will be responsible for producing outputs and a comprehensive research program that aligns with the priorities of the APEC SME-WG.

There is an urgent need to support improved economic performance of MSMEs, which account for most businesses in the APEC region. Improving the performance of MSMEs within the region is critical to economic growth and ensures that economic prosperity can be widely shared. In recent years, economic growth from MSMEs in the region has slowed or has been restricted due to factors such as post-covid supply chains issues, the climate crisis, geo-political tensions, and challenges to globalization and the rules based international order. In turn, policymakers and stakeholders face numerous challenges in advancing appropriate policy tools and measures to support MSMEs' inclusive growth and development.

This **Call for Papers** seeks to address the challenges faced by policy makers and stakeholders by generating policy-relevant and evidence-based research to advance dialogue and practical discussions towards economic growth for MSMEs in the region. The papers are expected to address measurement concepts and methods, best practices and present practical, actionable policy recommendations in the following five areas:

- a. Start-up, scale-up, entrepreneurship and innovation
- b. International trade, market access and global value chains
- c. Digitalization and transformation
- d. Bio-circular green transformation and business practices
- e. Inclusion and sustainable development

Within these five priority areas, examples of representative topics related specifically to MSMEs, but not limited to, include:

- Empirical approaches to measuring growth and development
- Start-up, entrepreneurship and innovation
- Regulatory issues, standards, taxation, competition law, and other administrative constraints.
- International trade agreements, trade facilitation, financing, controls and barriers, global value chains, internationalization cooperation

- Digital transformation, technology adoption, and e-commerce MSME green transformation, environmental considerations, and sustainable practices.
- increasing inclusive economic opportunities generated by MSMEs, in particular how to support those owned or operated by traditionally disadvantaged groups so they can fully participate in the economy

### **Submission Procedure:**

Authors should submit a two-page concept note in English, by **July 31, 2025**. Successful applicants will be notified no later than **August 25, 2025**. Only 10 concept proposals will be selected for the development of full papers. Priority will be given to work that is applicable to more than one APEC economy or involves collaboration of researchers from more than one APEC economy. The selection committee, comprised of experts from within the research advisory board and nominated reviewers, will conduct the review process.

The format of the concept note should outline: the research topic, background, methodology and expected policy implications. Concept proposals should be no more than two pages in length. Please submit to: [sharon.sun@ucalgary.ca](mailto:sharon.sun@ucalgary.ca)

### **Paper and Conference Details:**

Authors of selected proposals must submit a 5,000-word first draft of their research paper first) by **November 15, 2025**.

Authors of the selected papers will present this draft at a conference hosted by the School of Public Policy, tentatively scheduled for **January 2026**. The conference will allow reviewers and authors to meet and discuss the papers.

The full paper, totaling 7,000-9,000 words, should be submitted no later than **February 15, 2026**, and clearly address the research issues stated in the submission. The format of the full paper should include paper title; author(s) information (name, affiliation, address, email); executive summary (200 words); introduction; main text (sections with headings and subheadings); recommendations for policy makers; conclusion; references. A two-page policy brief that comes out of the full research paper should also be submitted by **the end of February 2026**, along with the full paper. Further instructions will be provided after acceptance of the concept note.

A final symposium will be held in the Spring of 2026 where authors will present their final papers and discuss their findings and recommendations with policy makers.

An honorarium of \$10,000 CDN will be awarded to the selected contributors upon the final submission of their papers. The costs of travel, accommodation and subsistence for the two conferences will be met by the organizers with certain exceptions. The selected papers will be published by the School of Public Policy, University of Calgary.