

***Amy Mahan Research Fellowship Program to Assess the
Impact of Public Access to ICTs***

***Instructions for Submitting a Topic
Query***

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About the Topic Query

A research topic is suitable for grant funding under the Program if it is expected to contribute to our understanding of the impact of public access to ICTs; and does not duplicate efforts of the Global Impact Study's in-depth probes.

By enabling an advance review by the Core Program Team of the (preliminarily), a [Topic Query](#) makes it easier for applicants to choose a topic that meets these criteria. Within five working days after submitting a Topic Query, participants will receive a **confidential** email from the Program Manager indicating:

- i. Whether the chosen topic is considered suitable or not, and if not why this is the case.
- ii. The Program Implementation Team may also make suggestions regarding possible adjustments in the chosen topic, to strengthen the research issues addressed by the study.
- iii. Whether other known candidate applicants are addressing a similar topic. If other Principal Investigators are found to be working on a similar topic, they will be introduced to each other by email and encouraged to explore ways to collaborate by either joining forces in one research team or by submitting separate applications covering complementary aspects of the research.

A Topic Review by the Program Implementation Team issued in response to a query made with sufficient lead-time, could enable applicants to adjust and improve their choice of topic and its justification.

The information needed to complete a [Topic Query](#) is practically the same that is needed to complete PART I of the Application Form; except that, unlike the Application, the Topic Query does not require references or information on the Support Institution.

Once they are ready to complete their application, candidates may transfer the pertinent information from the Topic Query to the Application Form, adjusting or changing the text as desired.

Principal Investigators aspiring to an Amy Mahan Fellowship may submit Topic Queries to the Program Implementation Team no later than **30 November 2009**. After this date only very specific procedural queries will be entertained, on an exceptional basis. Please remember that the deadline for submitting an application is **midnight Eastern Standard Time 31 December 2009**.

Submission Instructions

A Topic Query needs to be completed by a Principal Investigator. Please use a Word Processor (Verdana font 10 pt) to complete the Topic Query. Do not attach any pictures or diagrams unless this is absolutely necessary.

The completed Topic Query should not exceed 3 pages: 1 page for Basic Information, 1 for Background and 1 for Research Questions and Justification.

Once completed, convert the Topic Query form to a pdf file and send it attached to an email addressed to: amymahanfellowship@upf.edu.

In the subject matter of your email, please write:

TOPIC QUERY, COUNTRY, TITLE OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

COUNTRY stands for the country of residence of the Principal Investigator and of the Support Institution.

For TITLE OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL, please use the same title that you give below under Basic Information.

In the body of your email, please include the following affirmation:

I hereby declare my intention to submit an application as Principal Investigator to the *Amy Mahan Research Fellowship Program to Assess the Impact of Public Access to ICTs* before the deadline on 31 December 2009.

It is recommended that the Principal Investigator use as email address one that readily identifies the sender. For example, a Principal Investigator named Mary Anybody using Mary.Anybody@bellsouth.net, or MAnybody@bellsouth.net or MAnybody3@bellsouth.net, will be more readily identified than if she were to use ma@bellsouth.net.

Annotated Copy of Topic Query

Basic Information

1.1 The Study

The Study is the term used to identify the research investigation or research study that applicants propose to carry out using Amy Mahan Fellowship Research Grant Funds.

Title of Research Proposal:

Principal research country:

Specify other research countries studied (if any):

Number of Researchers in the Research Team (including Principal investigator):

1.2 Principal Investigator (PI)

The Principal Investigator is the leader of a research team applying for a Program Fellowship. She or he must be trusted by other team members (Associate researchers) as a responsible leader capable and accountable for directing the study proposed, and of managing Research Grant funds as is necessary to realize the study successfully. The Principal Investigator must also have the full backing of the Support Institution endorsing the application.

Name:

Surname:

Nationality:

Present position (at work or place of study):

e-Mail:

Alternate email:

Home Telephone Number:

Mobile Phone Number:

Work/Study Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

Explain why you qualify as an emerging researcher.

Background

(1 page maximum)

Instructions:

Give the background that puts the research question or questions and the study proposal in context.

i. Specify, as pertinent, the kinds and critical features of public access venues that the study will focus on, for example:

Venue type: library, school, cybercafé, postal office, supermarket; community center; etc.

Owner of facility: private, university, public agency, municipality, religious center, NGO, other;

Business model: For-profit, not-for-profit, small entrepreneur, corporate franchise, on consignment by owner of venue;

Characteristics of the users targeted and of frequent users of the venues to be studied.

User charges: Free, paid, hybrid;

Kinds of support that the venues under study receive, from public, private or mixed sources, and the ways that these support are made available.

ii. Describe and quantify, to the extent possible, the total number of venues or users or kinds of intervention that will be studied or that will be affected by the findings of your study. Give this information for the study country (or countries) and, where possible, also give a rough estimate of the numerical significance of your study subjects elsewhere (i.e. in the region or in the world).

iii. Describe critical factors or features (e.g. rural-urban location, degree of competition, costs of connectivity, digital literacy of users, proximity of maintenance and service suppliers, proximity to educational institutions, etc.) that condition or affect the service or the sustainability and impacts of public access venues or of public access interventions (public or private) that will be the subject of study.

iv. Specify the literature that motivates this study and the chosen research questions and explain how the proposed investigation will use or build upon this literature.

Priority Research Questions and Justification

(1 page maximum)

Instructions:

List up to 3 priority research questions that the study will address. List the most important ones in simple language and using a single sentence for each.

The following website has some useful tips on developing good research questions:

http://www.esc.edu/esconline/across_esc/writerscomplex.nsf/0/f87fd7182f0ff21c852569c2005a47b7

Specify the reasons behind the choice of research questions, including: importance of research topic in addressing social and economic development priorities of the location/region where the research will be carried out, availability of data, expertise of applicants, research design considerations, opportunities for learning, target audience of the research, etc.

Identify research gaps in the literature on the impact of public access to ICTs that this study will help fill. Explain how the research questions addressed, the theoretical framework adopted, or the methodology and data to be used in this investigation compares with previous studies.