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The **Atlantic Equity Challenge (AEQ)**, a new research opportunity administered by the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity housed at the International Inequalities Institute at the London School of Economics and Political Science is inviting expressions of interest (EOI) from researchers and research teams working on projects that are seeking to find solutions to the challenges of inequality in its different forms. Successful projects will be closely aligned with and make a contribution to the International Inequalities Institute (III) research themes, connect to the AFSEE programme, and integrate a Global South perspective.
The Atlantic Equity Challenge, offers researchers and practitioners, working in collaboration an opportunity to undertake innovative, solutions-oriented research and thinking directed at fundamental questions underpinning global inequalities. Successful applicants will receive funding for 12-24 month long projects.

The Atlantic Equity Challenge aims to support projects that are located at the intersection of research and practice and which offer insights into alternatives and solutions that reduce inequality – rather than focusing solely on the causes and consequences of inequality. These collaborations will draw on multiple forms of knowledge and experience, from across disciplines and sectors. Successful projects will propose new models, policies and approaches that have the potential to disrupt the systems and structures driving inequality. AEQ-funded research teams will produce research that informs and enriches the III’s research themes, providing insights from the Global South. Successful projects will produce rigorous outputs including both academic and non-academic outputs. For example, projects may produce academic outputs such as: journal articles; book chapters; and/or research papers, alongside non-academic outputs such as: blog posts; policy papers; and workshops engaging varied audiences.

This fund is a unique opportunity for research teams with a minimum of two people. Each team must include an LSE Faculty, Teaching Fellow, Research Fellow, or an Assistant Professorial Research Fellow (APRF) as Principal Investigator (PI) or co-PI, but other members of the research team can be researchers or practitioners from non-LSE registered academic and non-academic institutions. Each team will be asked to specify how their work will include a global South perspective. Ideally, teams will include at least one individual who is based in the global South. Collaborations with Atlantic Fellows are encouraged.

The deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest for the Atlantic Equity Challenge is 11:59 GMT 31 January 2021. All submissions must be made via email to Katie Boulton k.boulton@lse.ac.uk.
Expressions of interest should be closely aligned with and make a contribution to one of the following III Research Themes:

**WEALTH, ELITES AND TAX JUSTICE**

This theme, led by Mike Savage considers the ways in which tax allows the wealthy to become wealthier, thus entrenching elite systems, and deepening inequalities. It examines how tax havens, personal and corporate tax avoidance and other mechanisms propel elites and set the scene for anti-democratic approaches and plutocracies.

This research theme contains the following clusters:

1. Measuring and conceptualising wealth inequality, including trends over time
2. Global financial capitalism: offshore wealth and tax havens
3. Wealth and social mobility: meritocracy and the legitimisation of inequality
4. Developing comparative studies of plutocratic elites

**CITIES, JOBS AND ECONOMIC CHANGE**

This theme, led by Neil Lee explores how information technology revolution has led to huge changes in society, reshaping social relationships, the type of work we do, and patterns of consumption. Many countries have seen a decline in mid-skill, mid-wage jobs, with polarisation between high skill, high pay employment and low skill, low pay (and often precarious) work. There is often an increasing divide between the experiences and prospects of those who enter the labour market as university graduates and those who do not.

One striking feature of economic change has been its tendency to concentrate economic prosperity in selected locations. In high income countries the loss of industrial employment has been a feature of all major cities and towns, but the knowledge-based service economy has flourished in only a small number of these places. Other once-thriving urban areas are ‘left behind’, struggling to replace their historical economic purpose.

As concentrations of skilled workers and high-wage industries in prosperous cities increasingly become the driver of national economic prosperity, geographic divides in education, employment opportunities, political attitudes and cultural values have been thrown into sharp relief. Discontent with this uneven geography of opportunity is manifest in the rise of populist politics across Europe and the United States, challenging the stability of democratic societies.

**GLOBAL ECONOMIES OF CARE**

This theme, led by Alpa Shah addresses the global crisis in care. Without care the global economy could not function, yet care is rarely recognised as a key economic driver of value. Without care, workers would not be born, fed, educated and replenished. But care is not just a labour issue, not just caring for but also caring about. Care is about how we relate to others, the fundamental social relations that underpin our lives and survival. Caring is also intimately connected to the politics we get. We are currently experiencing a cruel, brutal age where children can be ripped from their mothers and caged.

The care theme will examine different scales, spaces and experiences of care. From the increased financialisation of care provision by national states, to the increasing privatisations of welfare states, to distributions of care worker across the globe as a result of structural adjustment policies, to the conditions for formal and informal care, to family structures and moral duties. Care is the crisis of our times and this theme will insist that we pay close attention to its significance.

**POLITICS OF INEQUALITY**

The Politics of Inequality theme, led by Armine Ishkanian and Ellen Helsper, explores the practices of resistance, mobilisation, and contestation which constitute a politics of inequalities from a bottom-up perspective. Research within this theme addresses how a range of actors working within the space of civil society, from social movements, grassroots groups, NGOs, trade unions, solidarity networks, as well as ordinary citizens and non-citizens are confronting, challenging, and resisting political, social and economic inequalities.
at various levels, including the local, (trans)national, and international. Alongside examining the forms of action, the theme considers the (re)-production of ideas, understandings, and knowledge; how and under which circumstances grassroots actors are challenging and transforming narratives and public debates around inequalities, as well as how inequalities are reproduced and resisted in everyday practices, discourses and interactions. Our research also investigates emergent forms of political organising among subaltern groups, popular struggle, the “vernaculars” of collective action, and engages with struggles for epistemic justice. In doing so, it critiques the epistemic violence occasioned by social inequalities and probes different conceptualisations and instantiations of justice, equity, inequality, and imaginations of a better world.

**GLOBAL INEQUALITY OBSERVATORY**

The Global Inequality Observatory (GIO), soon to be launched as a cross-cutting program within the III, aims to monitor the evolution of income and wealth inequality around the world. Headed by Stephen Jenkins (working with III Director, Francisco H.G. Ferreira), the Observatory seeks to promote rigorous research methods from a wide range of social sciences, so as to foster a greater understanding of the levels, trends, causes, and consequences of economic inequality in multiple countries and regions. The Observatory’s core values for empirical research are (i) rigour; (ii) transparency for reproducibility; and (iii) interdisciplinarity. It aims for broad – but not exhaustive – geographical coverage, including the Global South as well as advanced industrial countries. It will host the Latin American and Caribbean Inequality Review (LACIR), a multi-year stock-taking exercise of what social scientists have learned about inequality in the world’s most unequal region (in close competition with Africa). LACIR is led by a panel of fifteen leading scholars in this field, and is a joint project with the Inter-American Development Bank, the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Yale University.

GIO will also host the British Academy funded project, Measuring the Quality of Employment (QoE) in Middle Income Countries; the South Asia Growth and Inequality programme (formerly the LSE India Observatory) and the project Transforming Social Inequalities through Inclusive Climate Action (TSITICA) led by the University of Cape Town and partnered by III.
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever does.
The **London School of Economics and Political Science** is a leading research and teaching university focused on the social sciences and based in London in the United Kingdom. The Atlantic Equity Challenge is directly aligned to LSE’s 2030 Strategy of “curating cross-cutting research themes to join up international expertise and interests to shape evidence-based interventions around key social and economic issues”.

The **International Inequalities Institute** brings together experts from many LSE departments and centres to lead research that seeks to understand why inequalities are escalating in numerous arenas across the world, and to develop critical tools to address these challenges.

Based at the International Inequalities Institute since its inception in 2017, the [Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE)](https://www.lse.ac.uk/AFSEE) programme is building a catalytic, values-led global community of people who are committed to using collective leadership to work towards social and economic justice for all. Drawing on the insights of academic research, innovative social change strategies and Fellows’ own expertise, the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity programme is empowering a new generation of change-makers, including practitioners, activists, researchers, policymakers and campaigners, to work together across disciplines, backgrounds and borders. It aims to deepen the knowledge and practical skills that Fellows need to envision and explore alternatives to the world’s deeply unequal economic, political, legal and social structures.

**Funding:** successful AEQ projects will be supported over a 12-24 month period, budgets should range from £50,000 to a maximum of £100,000 in total per project. Budgets may include personnel expenses (for the core team and for research assistance) as well as non-personnel expenses such as travel costs, consumables, acquisition of data, and equipment.

**Family care support:** Limited additional funds are available to support AEQ project team members who have family care responsibilities. These funds are given in addition to the project funding detailed above.

**Connection:** AEQ project teams will have the opportunity to build connections with International Inequalities Institute researchers and the Institute’s wider networks (particularly the members of the Institute’s research themes), as well as to the AFSEE programme and its Fellows. This connection is intended to facilitate collaboration and peer insight.

**Knowledge exchange and impact:** AEQ project teams are encouraged to and will be supported to produce non-academic outputs alongside academic project outputs. Teams will be supported in the conceptualisation of knowledge exchange and impact (through activities such as public events, workshops and conferences, and blogs and other public-facing written materials) to enhance the impact and engagement of their research projects. Finalists will be invited to attend a KEI workshop as they develop their proposal. Where possible, teams are expected to identify additional sources of funding (or co-funding) for such activities.

**REQUIRED PROJECT OUTPUTS**

- All project teams are expected to produce a working paper or action brief (which will be published as part of the [III Working Paper or Action Brief series](https://www.lse.ac.uk/IIIWPAB), in a language and style that is widely accessible.
- Project teams are encouraged to generate multimedia outputs.
- Project teams are welcome to produce materials for the AFSEE curriculum.

**EXPECTATIONS AND REPORTING**

We are looking to support teams of researchers and practitioners who are open to developing a relationship with the III and the AFSEE programme.

Teams will be required to submit narrative reports every six months, and to provide yearly budget reports. Teams will also be required to acknowledge the AEQ support that they receive in promotional, publicity and informational materials related to supported activities, and in attributable publications.
EOIs and ensuing project proposals are expected to show:

- **Clear link to and engagement with the III Research Agenda.** Projects will be well aligned with an III research theme, with clear indication of which theme this is linked to.

- **Global South orientation:** Each team will be asked to specify how their work will include a global South perspective. Ideally, teams will include at least one individual who is based in the global South.

- **Clear link to the AFSEE programme:** Project proposals should clearly indicate how the project will engage with and/or contribute to the AFSEE programme.

- **Impact focus and Engagement:** Each team will clearly indicate how they will engage with non-academic communities and stakeholders.

- **Research approach:** Projects will demonstrate academic rigour, especially around research approach and methods. Successful applicants will be required to comply with the LSE’s Research Ethics Policy and to provide evidence that they have complied with the LSE’s Ethical Review procedures prior to the disbursement of any funds. Information on the LSE’s Research Ethics Policy and the form are available online.

- **Experience and commitment to collaboration:** Team members should be able to demonstrate prior experience and/or a strong commitment to working in a collaborative team.

- **Value for Money:** Successful project proposals will demonstrate a value for money. Proposed budgets must be realistic.

*The application form for expressions of interest can be found here.* Successful applicants will be decided based on the selection criteria above, and will be invited to develop a full project proposal.
What type of projects will be considered for AEQ funding?
We welcome project proposals from across a range of disciplines, including: the social sciences, the creative arts, the humanities, and the ‘hard’ sciences. You can find more information on project specifics in the eligibility and selection criteria listed above. All projects should closely align to III Research Themes as listed above and must have an LSE Faculty, Teaching Fellow, Research Fellow, or an Assistant Professorial Research Fellow (APRF) as the PI or co-PI.

Do you accept proposals from individuals?
No. The Atlantic Equity Challenge is intended to bring together small teams with a minimum of two researchers and practitioners. We do not accept expressions of interest from individuals.

Do I need to have previously worked with the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity or the International Inequalities Institute at LSE in order to apply?
No. While we welcome applications from those with no prior connection to AFSEE or the III, each group must involve an LSE Faculty, Teaching Fellow, Research Fellow, or an Assistant Professorial Research Fellow (APRF) as PI or Co-PI. If you’d like to learn more about the AFSEE programme, please visit our website at https://afsee.atlanticfellows.org.

Can the co-PI be from outside LSE?
Yes. As long as one co-PI is an LSE Faculty, Teaching Fellow, Research Fellow, or an Assistant Professorial Research Fellow (APRF), another co-PI can be from outside LSE, but the non-LSE co-PI must be part of a registered academic or non-academic institution.

Can the PI or co-PI be a PhD Student?
No, the LSE PI or co-PI should be an LSE Faculty, Teaching Fellow, Research Fellow, or an Assistant Professorial Research Fellow (APRF). Unfortunately, PhD Students, or post-doctoral researchers are not eligible to apply as PI.

Are Senior Atlantic Fellows eligible to apply?
Yes, Senior Atlantic Fellows from all seven Atlantic Fellowships are welcome to apply as part of a team. Each team must also involve an LSE Faculty, Teaching Fellow, Research Fellow, or an Assistant Professorial Research Fellow (APRF) as PI or Co-PI. Senior Fellows who would like to learn more about the AEQ are welcome to email Katie Boulton k.boulton@lse.ac.uk. Senior Fellows who would like to discuss potential collaborators within the III may also contact Tahnee Ooms t.ooms@lse.ac.uk for an initial discussion.

Are there examples of previously funded AEQ projects?
No, The Atlantic Equity Challenge is launching in 2021 and we are welcoming expressions of interest for the first time. However, you can find more information on other projects we have previously supported on our website at https://afsee.atlanticfellows.org/projects-and-partnerships.

Can I receive comments on my draft EOI before submission?
Unfortunately, due to the high volume of applications we expect to receive, we are not able to read or provide feedback on draft EOIs.

Do you provide feedback on every EOI you receive?
If requested and depending on capacity, we will endeavour to provide limited feedback on EOIs.

How much funding is awarded per research team? What does this funding cover?
Funding between £50,000 up to a maximum of £100,000 is available per research team. This funding is intended to cover project and research costs, including any visits to LSE and AFSEE. You are expected to submit a basic budget with your EOI, and a more comprehensive and detailed budget will be required if your team is invited to submit a full project proposal.
Can indirect and estate costs be included in our budget?
Indirect and estate costs are not eligible for inclusion in budgets.

How many projects will be supported in this round of applications?
We expect to support two - four projects in this first round. There will be further opportunities in future years.

When is funding made available to successful applications?
Funds will be available from September 2021.

Do you pay per diems?
No, we do not provide per diems for team members. Any individual and ongoing costs should be included in your budget calculations and planned for via larger grant payments.

Does the funding cover research assistants?
Yes, you are welcome to include a budget line to cover the costs of one or more research assistants (RAs). Please note that these RAs should be contracted by your home institution/organisation. In certain exceptional situations, they may be formally employed by LSE, although this will usually depend on meeting HR, visa and other requirements. Additionally, we cannot guarantee to provide the use of office space, or facilities, by any RAs. This should be provided by your home institution/organisation.

Does the funding cover family care costs?
Your initial proposed budget does not need to include family care costs, as the programme has separate limited financial support available to support those with family care responsibilities. If you require family care support, this should be detailed in your full project proposal, and not at the Expression of Interest stage, as this factor will not be taken into consideration when shortlisting.

Can we carry out visits to institutions where our team members are based?
Yes. AEQ funds can be used to facilitate visits to partner institutions, if this is considered essential to enabling research collaboration. An estimation of these costs should be included in your budget.

When will you hold another call for Expressions of Interest?
We anticipate holding another call for expressions of interest in 2023. Please subscribe to the International Inequalities Institute’s newsletter to be kept up to date with announcements from AFSEE.

I have further questions. Who can I ask?
Contact AFSEE Programme Manager Katie Boulton at k.boulton@lse.ac.uk, and she will be happy to speak with your further.

Does the funding cover administrative costs?
A modest portion of the project may be allocated to administrative costs, although there should be a strong justification as to why this is essential to the success of the project.