

NetCIEx Collaboration Hub

Call for Research Collaboration



Application Deadline: 30 October 2026

Programme Overview

The NetCIEx Collaboration Hub connects PhD students and early-career researchers (pre- and post-doc) from NetCIEx partner institutions with CC-ME (Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation) teams to develop research projects addressing European Commission priorities and targeting publication in peer-reviewed economics journals.

Research Focus: Causal Inference and Microeconomic Impact Evaluation

CC-ME specialises in causal inference methodologies and microeconomic impact evaluation through counterfactual analysis. Research proposals should leverage these methodological strengths to address policy-relevant questions.



What Selected Participants Receive

- ✓ Structured peer-based collaboration with CC-ME researchers
- ✓ Supervision and feedback from Commission policy experts
- ✓ Possibility of an on-site visit to the Joint Research Centre in Ispra for direct project coordination



How to Apply

Applicants should send the following materials by email to the relevant call contact person(s), indicated below in the corresponding topic:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Either a research proposal related to one of the call topics listed below, or a motivation letter detailing the applicant's interest in one of these topics (or both).

✉ *Note: Applications on topics not listed below are also welcome, provided the proposed research is relevant to EU policy. In this case, please send application material to Simone Ferro (simone.ferro@ec.europa.eu) and Giulia Romani (giulia.romani@ec.europa.eu).*

Proposal Guidelines

Broadly defined research ideas are welcome. However, original research proposals that include one or more of the following elements will be prioritised:

- Causal identification strategy
- Potential policy relevance
- Clearly identified data sources

✉ *Note: The research proposal is not a binding commitment. Successful applicants will work with CC-ME mentors to refine and develop the proposal.*

For general questions on the programme, please contact Simone Ferro (simone.ferro@ec.europa.eu) and Giulia Romani (giulia.romani@ec.europa.eu).

Open Research Topics

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Topic 1: Cohesion funds and firm performance

We welcome research proposals on the effects of cohesion funds targeting firms in Italy. Candidates are invited to develop an original research idea within this area, potentially exploiting project-level information on funded and non-selected interventions – including project scores – and firm-level data to study the role of public investment in supporting firms and regional development.

✉ **Contact person(s):** Luca Barbaglia (luca.barbaglia@ec.europa.eu), Giulia Romani (giulia.romani@ec.europa.eu)

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Topic 2: Housing energy efficiency renovations

We welcome research proposals on the effects of housing energy efficiency renovations. Candidates are invited to develop an original research idea within this area, potentially exploiting micro-level data at the dwelling level to assess the impact of renovation programmes on energy consumption, as well as other relevant outcomes, including property values, housing market dynamics, residential mobility and neighbourhood composition. Proposals may also examine distributional effects, programme take-up and the broader social and economic consequences of investments in residential energy efficiency.

✉ **Contact person(s):** Luca Barbaglia (luca.barbaglia@ec.europa.eu), Giulia Romani (giulia.romani@ec.europa.eu)

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Topic 3: Environmental impact of the Common Agricultural Policy

We welcome research proposals on the environmental and climate effects of CAP instruments, including for instance eco-schemes, agri-environment-climate commitments, and organic farming support. Candidates are invited to develop an original research idea within this broad area.

✉ **Contact person(s):** Simone Ferro (simone.ferro@ec.europa.eu)

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Topic 4: EU Roaming Regulation and Telecommunications Market

We welcome research proposals further investigating the effects of the roam like at home regulation as well as effects on the telecommunications market overall (investment, retail, EU integration).

✉ **Contact person(s):** Fabian Reutzel (fabian.reutzel@ec.europa.eu)

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Topic 5: State aid for R&D and FID

We welcome research proposals leveraging firm-level information from BvD and customs declaration data to investigate the effects of state aid programs (e.g., Important Projects of Common European Interest) on innovation, employment, trade and strategic interdependence.

✉ **Contact person(s):** Fabian Reutzel (fabian.reutzel@ec.europa.eu)

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Topic 6: Open Banking & Open Finance regulations

FinTech emerged as a disruptive force in the financial industry around 2010, introducing innovative applications and business models. Open Banking is a regulatory framework that enables consumers and businesses to grant authorised third-party providers (typically FinTech firms) electronic access, via secure application-programming interfaces (APIs), to the banks' account information and payment-initiation capabilities. We welcome research proposals on the impacts of regulatory-led open banking or open finance, including financial services such as payments, financing, crypto & DeFi, lending, and insurance. Expected outcomes of open banking are greater competition within the banking industry, financial inclusion, and adoption of innovative payment models and financial systems. Candidates are invited to develop an original research idea within this area.

✉ **Contact person(s):** Fernando Martínez-Santos (fernando.martinez-santos@ec.europa.eu)