

2025 PCC Long-Term Research Program

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

1. The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) implements its PCC Long-term Research Program (PLRP) to advance research in the field of competition policy and law (CPL) in the Philippines. The program aims to encourage scholarly research to support merger and acquisition reviews, competition enforcement and advocacy initiatives of the PCC; fund research projects on CPL; and disseminate research findings that address competition issues especially from a developing country perspective.
2. The Commission invites its employees and external researchers to collaborate and submit proposals on any of the following areas: (i) monitoring and impact assessment of PCC interventions, (ii) market and institutional design as inputs to improve regulations, or (iii) competition issues in priority areas including water, food and agriculture, health and pharmaceuticals, transportation and logistics, telecommunications, financial services, digital platforms, and energy/electricity (with special focus on liquefied natural gas).

Eligibility and funding

3. The call for proposals is open to all employees of the PCC, and external researchers who are interested in collaborating with PCC on a research study. Each applicant team must include at least one PCC employee.
4. Each proposal selected for support shall receive a funding of up to One Million Pesos (Php1,000,000.00), inclusive of all applicable taxes, to cover the cost of data gathering, hiring of research assistants, presentation in conferences, and other research-related activities. Since research expenditures are subject to the usual government budgeting and accounting rules, the research proponents are not eligible for compensation. Requests for additional funding may be granted, subject to availability of funds, evaluation, and approval of the PLRP Committee chaired by the PCC Executive Director.¹ Refer to the *PCC Long-Term Research Program Guidelines on Research Support*.
5. Final research projects must be completed within **36 months** from the date of the project team's acceptance of the research award.

¹ All proposals shall be evaluated based on the budget cap of Php1,000,000. Requests for funding beyond this cap shall only be granted upon approval of the PLRP Committee of the original proposal, subject to justification.

Application

6. All applicants are required to submit the *2025 Project Proposal Form* no later than 5:00PM Manila time on **14 February 2025**. The email submission to oed@phcc.gov.ph (cc: eo-pmd@phcc.gov.ph) with subject “PLRP Project Proposal 2025” must include a cover letter addressed to the PCC Executive Director.
7. For any queries, you may contact the PCC Economics Office by email (eo-pmd@phcc.gov.ph) or landline (+632 8771 9711).

PCC Long-Term Research Program Guidelines on Research Support

Background

Republic Act No. 10667, otherwise known as the Philippine Competition Act (PCA), mandates the PCC to conduct, publish and disseminate studies and reports on competition in various sectors affecting consumers and businesses.

The PCC Long-Term Research Program (PLRP) seeks to help advance research in the field of competition policy and law (CPL) in the Philippines by encouraging scholarly research to support merger and acquisition reviews, competition enforcement and advocacy initiatives of the PCC; funding grant proposals on CPL-related research activities; and disseminating research findings that address competition issues especially from a developing country perspective.

Who may apply?

All employees of the PCC may apply. External collaborators may also apply provided that the research team will include at least one PCC employee. The primary responsibility of delivering the research outputs rests on the PCC staff. If the research project requires the direct involvement of an external research institution, a memorandum of agreement between PCC and the external institution shall be signed.

Research areas

Research projects funded under the PLRP must fall under one of these broad research areas:

1. *Monitoring and impact assessment* of PCC interventions with respect to merger control, competition enforcement, and advocacy. As the PCC relies on its counterparts in other jurisdictions for best practices, whether competition concepts and tools adopted from mature competition agencies will result in the PCC implementing adequate and effective measures in the conduct of its mandate remains an empirical question.
2. *Market and institutional design*. PCC participates in public consultations on market regulation and market design, and drafts guidelines that complement the implementing rules and regulations of the PCA. The PLRP can provide evidence-based studies to support PCC's position on important issues.
3. *Commission's priorities*. Priority areas and/or issues identified by the Chairman and the Commissioners. Proposals that explore competition issues in priority areas including water, food and agriculture, health and pharmaceuticals, transportation and logistics, telecommunications, financial services, digital platforms, or energy/electricity (with special focus on liquefied natural gas) are welcome.

Terms and conditions of the research award

1. *Amount of financial assistance and use of funds.* Proponents may apply for up to One Million Pesos (Php1,000,000.00), inclusive of all applicable taxes, to cover the cost of (i) data purchase, (ii) data gathering (e.g., payment for enumerators/interviewers and encoders, cost of focus group discussions, payment to participants in an experiment), (iii) hiring of programmers and research assistants, (iv) cost of meetings, and (v) other research-related costs such as journal submission fees². Funding may also cover the costs of presenting the study's results in conferences, but this shall be limited to those incurred by the PCC staff in the research team. No part of the research award shall be spent for salaries, honoraria, or allowances of any of the research team members.

All proposals shall be evaluated based on the budget cap of Php1,000,000. If the research team later deems that the approved research proposal requires a total budget beyond this cap, additional funding may be granted, subject to justification. Such a request must be made through a letter addressed to the PCC Executive Director. The letter must include a detailed justification, outlining the specific activities or items necessitating the additional funds. Requests for additional funding are subject to the availability of funds, review, and approval of the PLRP Committee chaired by the PCC Executive Director.

2. *Timeframe.* Each approved proposal must have a clear timeline for each expense item and funds shall be obligated accordingly. The draft manuscript of research outputs must be completed within 36 months from the project team's acceptance of the research award. Request for an extension of final output submission is subject to the approval of the PCC Executive Director. However, the period of extension should not exceed six (6) months and should not involve additional monetary cost to PCC.
3. *Obligations of the grantee.* The research grantee's obligations include the following: (i) inform the Office of the PCC Executive Director through the Economics Office any changes in the research program/schedule; (ii) obligate and disburse funds as stipulated in the project's work program subject to the usual government accounting rules; (iii) submit to the PLRP Committee all data used in the study and an expressed permission for the PCC to use the data with the appropriate acknowledgement of the source of the same; (iv) acknowledge the financial assistance of the PCC in the primary research work and the variants of the work completed; (v) submit to the PLRP Committee a copy of the research manuscript in a timely manner; (vi) present the findings of the research during meetings, workshops, seminars, or other fora that may be organized by PCC; (vii) provide a written request to PCC if the grantee wishes to publish the research output as a PCC discussion paper or as a PCC policy note, subject to the approval of the PCC Editorial Board; (viii) inform the PCC if the grantee plans to submit the research output as a journal article or a book chapter.

² Total budget to cover submission fees shall be limited to US\$400. If an initial paper submission is rejected by a journal, the grantee may charge submission fees to a second or third journal subject to the US\$400 cap.

4. *Outputs of the research team.* At the minimum, the following are the required outputs of each research team: (i) detailed work and financial plan for the entire duration of the project, (ii) complete draft research manuscript, and (iii) raw data, if any.
5. *Use of official time for PLRP-funded research.* PCC staff with research funding shall continue to prioritize work-related assignments. Activities related to the PLRP research award should be done either outside of office hours or during office hours only when the current workload allows.
6. *Contract of agreement.* A contract outlining all the above terms and conditions shall be entered into by and between the research team lead and the PCC Executive Director. Failure to comply with the conditions of the research award shall render the research team ineligible for future PCC research awards.
7. *Dissemination.* Any written output produced under the program shall include an acknowledgement that the study has been carried out with financial support provided by the PCC, and a disclaimer saying that the PCC is not responsible for the findings and opinions expressed in the research.

The grantee's research results shall be shared within PCC in at least one (1) brownbag seminar. The PCC retains the right to publish or disseminate the work as a discussion paper or a policy note. The grantee has the option to present in local or foreign conferences but shall acknowledge funding support from PCC.

The grantee may endeavor to secure publication of the research output or its variant in a peer-reviewed journal. If the grantee decides to do so, a notice addressed to the PCC Executive Director must be made.

8. *Data ownership and access.* The PCC shall assert ownership over and take custody of the research data³ for projects conducted under the PLRP. After data gathering or data purchase, PCC grantees and external collaborators shall be granted access subject to relevant confidentiality restrictions.

After completion of the research, all research data shall be surrendered and shall remain the property of PCC. Research data may be accessible to employees of PCC, external collaborators and other researchers upon request from the PLRP Committee, subject to: (a) the prior written approval of the PCC Executive Director; and (b) relevant confidentiality restrictions, where appropriate.

Application requirements

³ Research data refer to all information in whatever form collected and/or generated in the course of the research project conducted under the PLRP. These include processed and raw data, including recordings of such data.

1. Proponents must submit a detailed research proposal clearly explaining the relevance of the study's results to PCC's operations. At the minimum, the proposal should explain the specific research objectives, the relevance of the project relative to the existing literature, research methodology, and the research team's composition.
2. Grant applicants are required to submit the following: (i) a detailed research proposal, (ii) a cover letter addressed to the PCC Executive Director, (iii) a work plan which provides the schedule of activities and the indicative research timeline, and (iv) a financial plan which provides a breakdown of the estimated financial requirements of the project and the proposed timeline on the release of funds.

Evaluation of proposals

The PLRP Committee shall be responsible for evaluating research proposals. The following constitute the set of criteria to be used in evaluating the proposals:

1. Relevance of the proposed research to PCC and the identified research areas;
2. Contribution of the research results to the CPL literature; and
3. Technical and financial feasibility.

Release of funds

The release of project funds shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions stated in the signed Contract of Agreement and the detailed work and financial plan. Procurement and disbursement of funds shall be subject to the usual government rules.

Grant administration

The PLRP Committee shall oversee the implementation of all approved projects. It shall ensure that the conditions and policies concerning project implementation are strictly followed. The PCC Executive Director shall issue a certification on the completion of each required deliverables.