



Let's Research: Call for Research Proposals on blockchain and distributed ledger technology (DLT)

What? Researchers will submit research proposals (two-page abstracts) that propose use-cases for how blockchain based technological solutions can mitigate private sector development challenges in the Caribbean. A maximum of four (4) proposals will be selected to receive a minimum of USD\$1,000.00 and to work with a committee to develop each research paper over a period of three months. The preliminary findings of the selected research proposals will be presented and validated at a date and venue to be determined by the UWI and Compete Caribbean. In April 2020, the research papers will be finalized after which only high-quality papers will be published by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in partnership with the Shridath Ramphal Centre of The UWI (SRC).

Why? Blockchain technology holds a host of opportunities for helping small economies to overcome size-based limitations and to improve the efficiency and productivity of public and private organizations. Blockchain technology has the potential to address inefficiencies related to administrative procedures and to facilitate compliance with regulations in both the public and private sectors which in turn, can, inter alia improve the ease of doing business and reduce transaction costs; address inclusive access to cost-effective financial services to conduct business within and across borders; and protect and support the monetization of ideas/intellectual property assets.

Given that many are not aware of the use-cases of blockchain technology, this research will support both the public and private sector with an improved understanding of the potential benefits of blockchain technology to address private sector development challenges in the Caribbean. Please note that blockchain or DLT will be assessed as a potential solution to the problem identified, but if the findings reveal other forms of technologies such as artificial intelligence, internet of things, or even simpler software, please explain.

Who? Researchers from across the world¹ are invited to submit their applications electronically. **Suggestions of challenges and research questions include, but may expand beyond, the following:**

1. **Inclusive Tourism:** How to facilitate online booking and payment for tourism experiences offered by Caribbean MSMEs (eg: walking/hiking tour, cooking class, music show, etc.)? Can blockchain facilitate environmental branding through green certification?
2. **Trade facilitation:** How to use blockchain and smart contracts to enable interoperability of Caribbean systems and customs procedures?
3. **Access to finance:** Can blockchain enable digital footprints to increase access to finance and build credit history for underprivileged groups cost-effectively? Can it be used to track crop progress to de-risk lenders interested in farmers?
4. **Traceability:** Can blockchain enable farmers and agro-processors to be more

¹ IDB's 48 member countries (see <https://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/who-we-are>)

rewarded for their production when it's handled or sourced in a high quality, environmentally, and socially responsible manner? As well as green certification?

5. **Creative industry:** How to use blockchain to track downloads and distribute revenues among artists, producers and copyrighters?
6. **High social impact:** Building the market at the base of the pyramid: use cases that support vulnerable populations including but not limited to remittances and financial inclusion, social transfers, digital identity for poor and vulnerable populations.
7. **Efficiency & transparency:** property records, land registration, professional certifications, etc.
8. **Blue or green economy:** Can blockchain be used to track the value/ownership of relevant resources or assets for more sustainable economic development?

Where?	The research must be relevant to the 13 beneficiary countries ² .	
How much?	The Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility will provide a minimum of USD\$1,000.00 lump sum contracts to each selected research proposal.	
When?	Call for Research Proposals Launch	October 31, 2019
	DEADLINE	November 22, 2019
	Selection of Research Proposals Announced	December 2019
	Kick-off Meeting (Peer Review Session 1)	Dec 2019
	First Draft of Research Paper Due and Peer Review Session 2	End of January 2020
	Presentation of research findings	March 2020
	Final Research Papers Due	April 2020
	IDB Publication of selected final research papers	2020
How to Participate?	<p>Submit an application to this Call for Research Proposals by the deadline of November 22, 2019. Submit proposals electronically competecaribbean@iadb.org with the Subject "RESEARCH PROPOSAL: Blockchain, [Your Name/Institution]". Inquiries related to this call can be sent to competecaribbean@iadb.org.</p> <p>Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee coordinated by the SRC, Compete Caribbean and the IDB based on the relevance of the proposed research to address inclusive and sustainable economic development in the Caribbean, the originality and feasibility of the proposed technological solution, the proposed methodology, and the qualifications/experience of the researcher or research team.</p>	

² Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago



FAQs:

Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants should be 18 years and older and a citizen of at least one of the IDB's 48 member countries (see <https://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/who-we-are> for the full list). Applicants must have prior research experience.

Can Teams submit a proposal?

Yes and in such cases, please (i) identify the Lead Researcher and (ii) submit the CVs of all team members. Do note that the Lead Researcher must be eligible (see FAQ on Who is eligible to apply).

How will my proposal be evaluated?

Eligible applications will be shortlisted based on the clear relevance of the proposed research to addressing private sector development challenge(s) in the Caribbean, the originality and feasibility of the proposed technological solution to addressing the identified private sector development challenge, the proposed methodology, and the qualifications and experience of the researcher or research team.

What type of proposals are being sought?

We are seeking proposals that assess the potential of innovative technological solutions to challenges unique to the Caribbean. Whilst we encourage a primary focus on blockchain technology, papers can also explore other technologies such as: internet of things (IOT), natural user interface, robotics, virtual reality, augmented reality, and artificial intelligence amongst others. Topics can range from those proposed in the call for papers, to assessing the need for adequate legal frameworks for new technologies, case studies on proposed business models for sectors such as healthcare or government provision of services, etc. Examples of papers:

1. How can blockchain help to increase access to finance for Caribbean SMEs? (Compete Caribbean Supported research paper) <https://competecaribbean.org/news/how-can-blockchain-help-to-increase-access-to-finance-for-caribbean-smes/>
2. The Impact of Digital Innovation and Blockchain on the Music Industry (IDB financed research): <https://publications.iadb.org/en/impact-digital-innovation-and-blockchain-music-industry>
3. Top 50 Blockchain Research Papers from around the World: <https://medium.com/blockchain-connect-conference/top-50-blockchain-papers-and-research-team-lead-you-to-the-frontier-of-blockchain-academic-277b0358b784>

Should the blockchain solution only be applicable to Caribbean countries? And if so, which ones?

Proposals will be selected based on the proposed solution's potential impact on solving private sector development challenges in the Caribbean. As such, preference will be given for solutions in the following Caribbean countries:

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|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Antigua & Barbuda | 8. Jamaica |
| 2. The Bahamas | 9. Saint Kitts & Nevis |
| 3. Barbados | 10. Saint Lucia |
| 4. Belize | 11. Saint Vincent & the Grenadines |
| 5. Dominica | 12. Suriname |
| 6. Grenada | 13. Trinidad & Tobago |
| 7. Guyana | |

About Compete Caribbean

(www.competecaribbean.org)

Compete Caribbean is a multi-donor facility whose objective is to support the Caribbean region in increasing productivity and Caribbean firms' contribution to economic growth, by providing technical assistance for business climate reforms, cluster initiatives, and innovation. The program, jointly funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Government of Canada, supports projects in 13 Caribbean countries.

About the Shridath Ramphal Centre (<https://shridathramphalcentre.com/about-page-src/>)

The Shridath Ramphal Centre for International Trade Law, Policy and Services (SRC) is the premier trade policy training institution in the Caribbean. We train and build the capacity of young professionals and key stakeholders to effectively interact and negotiate with global, regional and national institutions. At the SRC we also provide research and outreach services for the wider Caribbean in trade, industrial and development policy matters.

About the University of the West Indies (<http://www.uwi.edu/about.asp>)

Established in 1948, UWI is the largest and longest standing higher education provider in the English-speaking Caribbean .

About IDB (<https://www.iadb.org/en>)

The IDB Group is the leading source of development finance for Latin America and the Caribbean. It helps to improve lives by providing financial solutions and development knowhow to public and private sector clients. The group comprises the IDB, which has worked with governments for 60 years; IDB Invest, which serves the private sector; and IDB Lab, which tests innovative ways to enable more inclusive growth.