

Better Evidence Project
Request for Concept Papers for Minigrants
October 2020

The [Better Evidence Project](#) (BEP) announces plans to award minigrants of \$5-10,000 USD to support short-term research projects that will improve the evidence available to donors, policy makers, practitioners, and scholars in the peacebuilding community, thus strengthening our collective efforts to address the problems of war and violence. We seek to support research that will in some way address one of these priorities:

1. **Develop evidence on indicators that facilitate the development of more useful measurement methodologies, including input from practice and policy communities.** What are the most innovative approaches for capturing key measures of peacebuilding successes and effectiveness? Do frameworks exist that can organize existing best practices/lessons learned peacebuilding findings, or are there gaps? How might existing research on indicators be organized to better support the needs of local peace organizations and practitioners?
2. **Develop evidence of effective ways to support local peacebuilders in successfully contributing to peace in their communities.** How can donors recognize and appropriately support diverse local peacebuilders directly, including youth-led and women-led groups, movements, and organizations? What are the most effective models for international, national, and/or sub-national peacebuilding organizations to identify and support locally-led peacebuilding efforts? What are characteristics of effective local-international partnerships in peacebuilding? Regarding efforts to prevent war, what community-rooted peacebuilding methodologies (particularly those which have been innovated at the “local” level) have been proven effective and adopted into global good practices and methodologies? How do community-based peacebuilders access information on the growing evidence base about what is effective and what is ineffective in peacebuilding? What are the best practices for adapting global knowledge to local contexts? How do peacebuilding actors at the local level address the political dynamics and influences in a way that enables them to accomplish their intended results?
3. **Present an innovative approach to ensuring results-driven, measurable, and cost-effective success in peacebuilding.** What are the most innovative research ideas for significantly, measurably improving warfare prevention and mitigation efforts? A strong case for why this individual project could substantially contribute to the war prevention evidence available to the peacebuilding field is required, as well as details regarding how the proposed project contributes to results-driven, measurable, and cost-effective success in the broader field of peacebuilding.
4. **Add to our collective understanding of what evidence peacebuilding donors and practitioners need and would use in allocating resources more effectively (“market research”).** BEP maintains its long-standing interest in supporting the best allocation of scarce peacebuilding resources and welcomes research to guide this work. How should donors identify, allocate funds, and partner with collaborators to improve sustainability

and effectiveness of peacebuilding results? How can operating organizations more efficiently and effectively analyze conflicts, their potential contributions, allocate resources, and measure impacts? What best practices presently guide the field, and what would we need to know in order to improve on these practices?

Interested researchers or research teams should submit a *very brief* concept paper, presenting an overview of the central ideas that their research project aims to address. Concept papers should begin with a cover page with the project title and contact information for the project leadership. Then, present in maximum one page (11 or 12 point font, single spaced):

- Research focus, research question and rationale for research including the practitioner, policy, and/or donor relevance of your project and contribution the research will make to better evidence and one of the priority areas
- Short overview of research methodology
- Brief timeline, starting in February 2021, indicating quarterly progress planned, what (if any) preliminary results will be ready to share in September 2021, and completion date in or before January 2022.

Additional pages are requested with:

- Research team CVs or bios highlighting relevant experience

Selected applicants should be prepared to submit a full proposal at the beginning of January 2021. The full proposal will include more detail on the project as well as a complete budget with indirect costs limited to a maximum of 15% of direct costs.

Brief concept papers for this round of 2020 minigrants are due by November 9, 2020 by e-mail to BEP@gmu.edu. Due to the volume of inquiries, only shortlisted proposals will be contacted. We anticipate funding no more than \$84,000 in this round, divided into projects between \$5-10,000 each. Funded researchers will be asked to present preliminary findings in September 2021, provide quarterly progress reports, submit final reports by January 2022, and make photographs of their working process available for use in BEP communications.