Czech Priorities Thesis

2020-2021 support and stipend for young researchers

Many university students want to choose a **high-impact research topic** that could fill a real gap in current academic knowledge and not end up "in a drawer". This is not an easy task and students might get discouraged. We want to help!

We have identified various research gaps in areas close to our mission, where new research outcomes should be 1) potentially high-impact, 2) of interest by respected international research organizations or 3) highly important for the Czech Republic.

In this program, we offer support <u>to all interested applicants</u> in terms of:

1. **Helping to define a specific research question, hypothesis, and approach**
2. **Connecting with experts, organizations and/or advisors**
3. **Offering continuous mentoring and advice from our experts**

In addition, we will **provide a 16.000 CZK stipend** (in two payments) <u>to selected applicants</u>.

Application process

If you are interested in performing research in the areas listed below, first discuss your topic with your thesis advisor (get their approval) and then **contact us by email** (with your advisor in cc)**. Please attach a 1-2 page summary of 1) a description of your past academic work & interests and 2) what specific topic would you like to research and why**. Please be specific about your chosen topic.

We will prioritize **MA-level theses, that are planned to be defended in 2021 and written in English**. In case you have a topic from a different area that is in line with the mission of <u>Czech priorities</u> and you are confident that it may have a high impact, let us know, too.

This is a continuous call, but to be eligible for the stipend, please **apply by May 31, 2020.** We will select the applicants to receive the stipend based on three main criteria: 1) potential impact of research, 2) novelty of the topic and 3) academic rigor of the proposal.

Main contact person

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Research areas

Science-policy interplay

1. Assessment and evaluation of various models and best-practices of evidence-informed policymaking in other countries
2. Assessment of current situation in the Czech Republic and recommended interventions - practical institutional and process improvements, e.g. real functioning of research institutions (their incentives, access to policymakers, research agendas, real results of influencing the policymaking process, etc.) or data availability (concrete gaps in data needed for effective policymaking)

Measuring societal development

1. Alternative well-being metrics and the correlation between GDP and well-being
2. Theoretical avenues of application of alternative approaches to measuring well-being in policymaking, concrete recommendations for the Czech Republic
3. Developing concrete comparisons of the Czech Republic vs. other countries or a functioning dashboard of existing metrics

Methodologies for policy evaluation

1. Map of various approaches and frameworks (selecting optimal approaches for various policy issues and decisions)
2. Concrete methodology gaps (international and Czech-specific - shadow prices, discount rate, VSL, etc.)

Assessment of existing public policies and budgets

1. Impact evaluation of concrete measures in place (new laws & regulations or budgetary decisions)
2. Comparison of their real impact vs. goals and expectations (ideally as formulated in the explanatory report accompanying the regulation)
3. Evaluation of the process of policy formulation and ex-ante impact evaluation (their preparation and approval) and identification of specific gaps and areas for improvement

Socioeconomic priorities

1. Methodology or framework for 1) identification and mapping, and 2) evaluation, assessment, and prioritization of public policies and budgets
2. Both mapping and prioritization of concrete real-life priorities in the Czech Republic based on current socio-economic challenges
3. Learnings from abroad: Successful country-level strategies based on the identification and addressing priorities and subsequent positive development patterns

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The areas are inspired by our findings, the Effective thesis and Oxford´s Global Priorities Institute, among others.