

CALL FOR PAPERS

Understanding the latest trends in Firm Innovation, Productivity and Performance in the Caribbean

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
Monday, September 28, 2026

SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO
competecaribbean@iadb.org

The Competitiveness, Technology and Innovation (CTI) Division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) invites proposals for research papers drawing on its latest 2025-2026 PROTEGIC firm-level dataset to generate new empirical evidence on firm innovation and productivity in the Caribbean.

The call seeks to update and extend the evidence base on firm innovation and productivity in the Caribbean, building on earlier IDB research while introducing new areas of focus reflecting emerging dimensions of firm performance and competitiveness. Particular emphasis will be placed on research that exploits the richness of the 2025-2026 data, addresses important gaps in the existing literature, applies rigorous and innovative empirical approaches suited to the characteristics of Caribbean firms and small economies, and generates evidence with clear relevance for policy dialogue and the design of operational interventions in the region.

Data

The 2025-2026 PROTEGIC survey provides a rich and current source of firm-level information across Caribbean economies, covering:

• General Information	• Investment Climate
• Management Practices	• Marketing and Sales
• Human Resource Management	• Production and Operation Management
• Finance and Accounting	• Risk Management and Security, including cybersecurity
• Innovation	• Strategy and Overall Management

The public research questionnaire is attached. It includes researcher-facing variables, question text, response categories, definitions, and other relevant questionnaire content in a readable landscape format.

Topics of Interest

Including, but not limited to

Proposals should contribute to the overarching theme of firm innovation and productivity in the Caribbean. Particular interest will be given to research in the following areas:

- Intangible Assets and Firm Performance
- Management Practices and Firm Performance
- Digital Transformation, E-Commerce, Cybersecurity, and Firm Performance
- Skills, Human Capital, and Firm Performance
- Financing (including alternative financing) and Firm Performance
- Services, Innovation, and Productivity
- Green Innovation and Sustainable Firm Performance
- Climate Resilience, Natural Disasters, Shocks, and Business Performance and Continuity
- Public Support for Innovation and Technology Adoption

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- Competition, Business Environment, and Firm Performance
 - Gender and Firm Performance

Where relevant to the research question, researchers may also complement PROTEGIC with earlier Caribbean firm-level surveys—including LACES, PROTEqIN, and IFPG—to examine changes in firm characteristics, capabilities, constraints, innovation, and productivity over time (accessible at: <https://www.competecaribbean.org/proteqin-ifpg-datasets/>). As these surveys do not constitute a longitudinal panel of the same firms across rounds, such analysis should use harmonized repeated cross-sectional approaches or other appropriate empirical methods, with due attention to differences in survey coverage, sampling, and variable definitions across survey years.

Regional and country-specific proposals are welcomed.

Proposal Submission

Interested researchers should submit a concise research proposal of approximately 2–3 pages outlining:

- the proposed research question and its relevance to the call;
- the contribution to existing literature and evidence on Caribbean firms;
- the proposed empirical methodology;
- the principal PROTEGIC variables and, where applicable, complementary data sources to be used; and
- the expected policy and operational relevance of the research;
- The proposed research workplan and budget (max US\$12,000 – participation in workshop participation to be financed separately)
- Lead researchers' CVs

Submission deadline: Monday, September 28th, 2026

Submission mechanism/email: competecaribbean@iadb.org

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be assessed based on:

- **Methodology and effective use of the PROTEGIC data (40%)** including the appropriateness of the proposed empirical strategy for the available data; and, where relevant, earlier Caribbean firm-level surveys, including the potential to exploit new variables and dimensions available in the 2025-2026 survey and to leverage earlier survey rounds to generate comparative evidence over time;
- **Quality and originality (20%)** of the proposed research question and its contribution to the existing evidence;
- **Policy Relevance (20%)** to the overarching theme of firm innovation and productivity in the Caribbean and to the areas identified in this call, including the potential to generate actionable findings that can inform policy dialogue and the design of interventions to strengthen firm capabilities, investment, innovation, productivity, and resilience;
- **Qualifications and relevant research experience (10%)** of the lead researcher;
- **Feasibility to complete the research within the proposed timeline (10%).**

Expected Outputs

Selected researchers will be expected to prepare a full-length research paper based on the approved proposal. Papers will be subject to a peer-review process as part of the preparation of the final publication.

Selected papers are expected to form part of an IDB monograph on firm innovation and productivity in the Caribbean, updating and extending the evidence generated through earlier IDB research on Caribbean firms.

Researchers will also be expected to present preliminary findings at a technical workshop organized by the IDB and to revise their papers in response to feedback received through the workshop and peer-review process. The research should clearly identify the principal policy and operational implications arising from the findings.

Indicative Timeline

Stage	Indicative Date
Launch of Call for Papers	September 11, 2026
Deadline for submission of proposals	September 28, 2026
Notification of selected proposals	Week of October 11th, 2026
Rough draft with preliminary results	December 7th, 2026
Workshop (approximate date)	January 2027 (TBC)
Final papers	February 2027 (TBC)

By submitting a proposal in response to this Call for Papers (CfP), applicants are expected to commit to the indicative timeline outlined above. The IDB will enter into an individual consulting contract with the lead researcher to deliver the research product; this research product however can have multiple co-authors.