

New Economic Thinking Landscape Review

Request for Proposals

Laudes Foundation, in collaboration with Partners for a New Economy, seeks an independent research team for undertaking the New Economic Thinking Landscape Review. Complete proposals must be submitted by 11 June 2021. More details are given below in the request for proposals. Key findings of the landscape review will be published.

1. Introduction

Laudes Foundation is an independent foundation here to advance the transition to a just and regenerative economy. We do this by supporting brave action that will inspire and challenge industry to harness its power for good. Action that inspires industry, to work collaboratively to create solutions and tools. And action that challenges industry, holding it to account and incentivizing change. Founded in 2020, Laudes Foundation is part of the Brenninkmeijer family enterprise and builds on six generations of entrepreneurship and philanthropy. In particular, we advance the industry-changing work of C&A Foundation. Learning from these experiences, we work to persistently and collaboratively influence capital markets and transform industry, starting with the built environment and fashion industries.

2. Background and Context

Neoliberal thinking, or neoliberalism, has dominated economics for decades. Roosevelt Institute describes neoliberalism as an ideology about free markets and individual economic liberty.¹ This ideology has translated itself into economic thinking in academia, mainstream media, public policy, corporate governance and in some countries, even individual values. The narratives associated with neoliberalism include ideas like markets can efficiently allocate resources, economic growth will trickle down and economic freedom equals political freedom. Whilst neoliberal economics has led to global increases in wealth, it has done so at the expense of planetary boundaries and its financial gains are not being equally realised. Positive externalities are flowing increasingly to capital holders, while negative externalities flow increasingly to the public, workers, communities and the environment.

Yet, there is new economic thinking that offers alternative ideas to neoliberalism that may be better suited to solving the challenges of the 21st century. The 2008 financial crisis, the global climate crisis and the COVID crisis offer an 'opening in the clouds' to alternative thinking. We could see an economic paradigm shift out of the COVID crisis.

Laudes Foundation aims to support this shift in two ways:

- Building the new economic paradigm: Applied research in new economic thinking, which involves working with think tanks, academics, policymakers and industry to rethink how value is created and measured.
- Mobilising around the new economic paradigm: Using policy advocacy and strategic communications to build support within government, business and society for new economic thinking.

3. Purpose and Scope

Laudes Foundation and Partners for a New Economy need a better understanding of the individuals and organisations contributing to a new economic paradigm shift and what tactics they are using. We also need an inventory of who is funding these organisations and individuals.

The geographical scope of study will focus on a selection, e.g. 3 – 5, of European countries (to be determined by the research team once research begins).

Some further scope considerations include:

- Laudes Foundation is also part of a group of funders that share perspectives and lessons on how paradigms are shifted —to interrogate different and complementary theories of change and impact. This landscape review must complement, not duplicate, what this group has already mapped.
- The study will also need to build on and fully credit landscape analysis that has already been done by organisations and initiatives such as Roosevelt Institute, Exploring Economics, the Club of Rome and 36x36.

4. Research Questions

Recognising the complexity of this research, the research team, Laudes Foundation and Partners for a New Economy will need to agree on how to structure the research in phases. **The funding for this RfP will only cover the first phase of research. Depending on how the research progresses, Laudes Foundation will then determine what additional funding can be provided to cover remaining research questions.** The phases described below are indicative and the scope of Phase I will need to be refined by the research team, Laudes Foundation and Partners for a New Economy once research begins.

The overall landscape review is expected to unpack key research questions, including, but not necessarily limited to:

Phase I: Inventory (estimated effort 60 - 70 working days)

1. Understanding the frameworks in new economic thinking

- Identify which analytical frameworks exist to understand the range of new economic thinking in Europe and how they can be mutually reinforcing or contradictory².

2. Who are the key actors (individuals and organisations)?

- Which key organisations / individuals, including some key international organisations such as the OECD, are creating and/or moving new economic thinking from research into advocacy?
- What are the connections between the organisations / individuals and the typical ways they collaborate?
- To what extent are these individuals and institutions working with actors in the Global South, including who those actors are and where they are located in the Global South?

3. Funder analysis - This will build on existing funder reviews.

- Who is funding the key actors in new economic thinking?
- If available, what theories of change are these funders using?
- How are European philanthropic funders contributing to new economic thinking beyond financial support?
- What recommendations would you give to funders on how to measure and evaluate narrative shifts related to new economic thinking?

Phase 2: Analysis and engagement (estimated >100 person days)

1. Assess the extent to which there is a new and coherent intellectual economic paradigm emerging within Europe. This should include, but is not limited to:
 - Describe and group the ways in which the organisations and individuals identified try to increase uptake of their thinking. This should include the following:
 1. On what level (e.g. principles, scenarios, roadmaps) are they intervening, and what is their implementation strategy?
 2. Who specifically are they trying to influence and what strategies or theories of change do they use?
 3. What outcomes are they trying to achieve?
 4. What tangible examples of success are they having, for example, in terms of shifting mindsets and policy? Are there external factors that are enabling them to do this?
 5. What barriers are they facing in the uptake of new economic thinking? What needs do the organisations have to address these barriers? "
 - Where is there potential convergence in new economic thinking and where are areas of contention and why?
 - To what extent are the areas of contention necessary and/or inevitable?

Methodology

1. About the methodology

The methodology of this research should include a literature review, as well as interviews with appropriate actors and stakeholders, including other funders in the field. All sources must be appropriately referenced. Methods will be further informed through consultation with Laudes Foundation, Partners for a New Economy and one other research institute with relevant experience in this field. This will need to be done during the inception phase of the research.

The Research Team and research methodology should be gender sensitive.

2. Data Collection

Primary data collection methods could include micro-surveys, interviews, focus groups and questionnaires.

Important sources of information for this work may include Laudes Foundation staff and partners relevant to new economic thinking.

A draft report will be discussed in a meeting and circulated to relevant staff and management for review and comment prior to finalisation.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Research Manager (Programme Manager, Laudes Foundation) is responsible for:

- Overall responsibility and accountability for management and delivery of the research up to and including approval of the research report (in consultation with the Effective Philanthropy team at Laudes Foundation)
- Leadership of the research draft report review process including collating comments from Laudes Foundation and Partners for a New Economy and facilitating discussion and feedback
- Identification of peer reviewers (internal and external) and management of peer review process
- In all of these roles, necessary support will be provided by other members of the Laudes team
- Leadership in use of the research and its publication with support from the Brand and Communications team at Laudes Foundation

The research consultant(s) is responsible for:

- Conducting all necessary literature review and qualitative and quantitative assessments and data collection as necessary
- Day-to-day management of the research and methodological approach
- Regular formal and informal reporting to the programme manager
- Preparation of and participation in key research related meetings (kick off meeting, inception report meeting and draft findings meeting etc.)
- Support in identification of peer reviewers
- Addressing peer review feedback in the research
- Production of deliverables (inception report and research report) in accordance with the request for proposals, Laudes Foundation editorial style guide, Laudes Foundation report style guide and contractual arrangements

The peer reviewers are responsible for:

- Reviewing the draft research report
- Providing peer review feedback to ensure quality of the research report
- Liaising with the research consultant(s), as required

The Researcher (or research team) will report directly to Megan McGill, Senior Programme Manager, Laudes Foundation.

7. Research Process

The research will be carried out according to the principles set out in Laudes Foundation Research Procedures.

The inception and workplan should operationalise the Request for Proposals. The inception report will be based on initial documentary review and preliminary interviews. The inception report and workplan will address the following elements:

- Literature review
- Expectations from and objectives of the research;
- Roles and responsibilities within the research team;
- Any refinements and elaboration to research questions;
- Methods – qualitative and quantitative and data collection, including possible constraints, ethical considerations and risks;
- Addressing peer review feedback;
- Outline of the final research report.

The inception report and work plan will be approved by the Programme Manager in consultation with the Effective Philanthropy team at Laudes Foundation and act as an agreement between the consultants and Laudes Foundation on how the research is to be conducted.

The research consultants will prepare the draft and final research reports that describe the research methodology, discuss referenced literature review and key findings.

Research Process	Due Date	Responsibility
Selection and contracting of consultancy	01 July 2021	Programme Manager at Laudes Foundation
Inventory of existing mapping completed	14 July 2021	Researcher / Research Team
Inception report prepared	09 August 2021	Researcher / Research Team
A consultation workshop with internal stakeholders and two peer reviewers carried out by the Research team once the inception report is concluded to increase the relevance of the landscaping	31 August 2021	Researcher / Research Team

study to the needs of key European funders of new economic thinking.		
Completion of document review / literature review and interviews	15 September	Researcher / Research Team
Draft report for comment	30 September	Programme Manager at Laudes Foundation (facilitator)
External peer review	15 October	Research Team
Final report	01 November	Research Team

8. Deliverables

The research requires the Research Team to complete the following deliverables:

- Inception report
- Research Findings Meetings
- Draft and Final Report

The Research Team should attend meetings and calls with Laudes Foundation staff to align on requirements, needs and guidelines for activities.

9. Audience and Dissemination

This research is for Laudes Foundation staff and governors, but the key findings from the study will be published on the Laudes Foundation website and can also be published by the author(s) through their own communication channels.

10. Proposal, Research Team Requirements and Level of Effort

The proposal **should only be for Phase I of the research** and not exceed 3 pages (excluding annexes). It should include:

1. Research Methodology: Describe your overall approach and research methodology.
2. Relevant Experience: Provide details of projects of similar scope, methodology, complexity and nature you have worked on previously.
3. Specific Expertise: Describe your level of knowledge and expertise conducting the specified type of research and in geographies (as needed).

4. Specific Expertise of the researcher (or research team). Include CVs (no more than three pages each and attached as annex).
5. Timeline: Confirmation that you agree to the research timeline as outlined in this RFP +/- 2 weeks.
6. Sample reports: One sample research report authored by the team lead (will be treated as confidential and used for purposes of selection)
7. The financial proposal should include a line-item budget and a budget narrative. The cost estimates used to prepare the budget should be presented in Euros. The proposal should include costs of a professional editor to prepare the report for external publication. The proposal should include estimated costs for the peer review by two qualified peer reviewers in the inception phase and of the draft report (per peer reviewer a minimum EUR 500 per day x 6 days and the rate should assume a 20% VAT charge).

Each proposal will be evaluated based on methodology and relevant organisational and staff experience and capabilities. The total budget for this landscape review should include travel expenses (if applicable) and VAT.

The members of the Research Team must have:

- A strong understanding and proven experience regarding new economic thinking and ability to undertake this research;
- Excellent research skills including data collection, interviews, literature review, focus group facilitation.

- Fluent ability to communicate in English;
- Strong facilitation skills;
- Good project management skills;
- No conflict of interest with Laudes Foundation.

Level of effort:

- This research is estimated to not take longer than 60-70 working days.

Proposals should be submitted by 11 June 2021 and emailed to Megan McGill at m.mcgill@laudesfoundation.org.