CALL FOR PAPERS for the
REDUCING URBAN POVERTY
2015 Graduate Student Paper Competition, Policy Workshop, and Publication
$1000 Grand Prize
Abstracts due: May 15, 2015

To encourage a new generation of urban policy makers and promote early career research, USAID, International Housing Coalition (IHC), World Bank, the Wilson Center, and Cities Alliance are co-sponsoring the sixth annual paper competition for graduate students, seeking abstracts on urban poverty in the developing world. Winning papers will be published and selected authors will be invited to present their work in a policy workshop to be held at the Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. in January, 2016. The grand prize winner will also receive $1000. Papers must be linked to one of the following sub-topics:

Metropolitan Approaches for the Urban Poor
Cities around the developing world are attracting migrants at unprecedented rates. Many of these cities are jurisdictionally fragmented, which results in complex spatial and institutional structures and poor service provision. In the context of the spatial and institutional fragmentation, the urban poor--particularly recent migrants--are often neglected, suffering disproportionately from dysfunctional inter-jurisdictional governance. Papers on this topic might consider for example: integrated regional and urban transport systems; coordination in land use planning, including the distribution of housing and employment across jurisdictions; metropolitan approaches to climate change; and, metropolitan-wide considerations in determining the location of and access to key infrastructure and services such as hospitals, clinics, schools and libraries. If the promise of urbanization as an engine for development is to be realized, how can cities work across jurisdictions to ensure opportunity and access for the poor?

Making Smart Cities Inclusive
Cities around the world are seeking technologies, institutional structures, and policies to optimize efficiency. The challenge in developing countries is to go beyond the efficiencies offered by "smart city" approaches to focus on systems that foster inclusion. How can technology and new institutional frameworks empower the poor to define and communicate their priorities, and hold governments accountable for the provision of services? How are progressive public policies that address the backlog of investments and service provision benefitting the poor? How can technology be used to advance innovative land use policies that help integrate slums into the urban fabric? How can technology be used to improve education and health outcomes of the urban poor? How can technology break barriers to integrate cities divided by income levels, race, ethnicity, and nationality? Papers will examine the relevance and applications of the smart city movement for the urban poor.

Innovation in Urban Water and Sanitation
Rapid urbanization has brought unprecedented challenges for ensuring reliable access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. Substantial inequities in urban water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services produce negative health, infrastructure, and economic outcomes for the urban poor and women in particular. At the same time, urbanization brings important opportunities for more efficient water management and greater provision of services. Papers on this topic might address new approaches to improve access, availability, affordability, and sustainability of water and sanitation in cities, drawing links to urban governance and planning. Papers that address innovative, entrepreneurial and locally-driven approaches that can be readily replicated and scaled up are particularly encouraged.

Cities Through a Gender Lens
Women and men experience cities differently due to their different roles, divisions of labor, resources, needs, constraints, and the opportunities they encounter in an urban environment. Male and female priorities are often different for basic services such as urban housing, water and sanitation, solid waste management, public transport, childcare, and education. Although urbanization is associated with greater access to employment opportunities, lower fertility levels and increased independence, women and girls are still subject to enduring gender roles that predominate in rural areas. Papers might cover topics such as: the opportunities and challenges the urban labor market presents for women; urbanization and gender-based violence; gender-sensitive considerations in urban design and infrastructure; gendered approaches to urban planning, services, and policymaking, or the impact of urbanization on men’s and women’s health.
Process and Timeline

♦ Eligibility
This call for papers is directed at PhD students and advanced Masters students. To be eligible, applicants should be currently enrolled in a degree program as of May 15, 2015. Papers can be co-authored, as long as each author is a graduate student. In this case, only one author will present at the policy workshop.

♦ Abstract Submissions
  o Abstracts (max 500 words) and a brief CV should be submitted to the selection committee by May 15, 2015. Submissions should be sent to UrbanPaperComp@WilsonCenter.org
  o Abstracts should contain a title, paper description, author name and affiliation, and specify which of the sub-topics listed above the paper will most directly address.

♦ Criteria for Selection
  o Abstracts should present a clear, compelling research question.
  o Preference will be given to the presentation of original, field-based research that builds upon existing scholarship as opposed to desk or literature reviews.
  o Paper proposals should be policy-based and solutions-oriented and should critically examine existing projects and/or propose new strategies for tackling issues related to urban poverty in the developing world.
  o Abstracts should be clearly linked to one or more of the sub-topics outlined above.

♦ Request for Full Papers
  o A panel composed of members of the sponsoring organizations will review submitted abstracts and request full papers from finalists.
  o Applicants will be notified in mid-June whether they will be asked to write a full paper, which will be due by August 17, 2015.
  o Completed papers should be a maximum of 20 pages in length including appendixes (double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font) and utilize the guidelines used by the Chicago Manual of Style.

♦ Publication
  o Roughly eight of the full papers will be compiled in a book and published by the Woodrow Wilson Center.
  o Publication of each selected paper is subject to review and will be contingent upon completion of suggested revisions by the authors, should they be requested by the selection committee.

♦ Policy Workshop:
  o Three or four authors whose papers are selected for publication will be invited to Washington, DC in January 2016 to take part in a unique "policy workshop" that will bring together academics, policymakers and students for an interactive discussion of international urban development topics. The session will focus on bridging gaps between policy and academia, theory and practice. Workshop invitees will be provided with a travel stipend to help cover transportation and accommodation costs.
  o At the workshop, students will be paired with an experienced urban development expert who will serve as a discussant for their paper.

Papers from a variety of perspectives are appropriate, including (but not limited to) urban planning, economics, political science, geography, public policy, law, sociology, environment, anthropology, housing policy, governance, emergency services, and public health.

For more information, please contact UrbanPaperComp@WilsonCenter.org

For more information on last year’s competition, please visit: http://wilsoncenter.org/event/urban-opportunities-perspectives-climate-change-resilience-and-inclusion