

The Edinburgh Group launches a call for research proposals:

“The SMP of the Future”

Deadline: 8 December 2017

25 September 2017

Glossary

EG: Edinburgh Group [see www.edinburgh-group.org]

IFAC: International Federation of Accountants

PAO: Professional Accountancy Organization

SMP: Small and Medium Practice

Introduction

The Edinburgh Group is a coalition of 16 accountancy bodies from across the world, representing over 900,000 professional accountants in countries from Africa, North America, Asia, Australia, Europe and Latin America. Formed in 2000, the mission of the Edinburgh Group is to ensure that the development of the international accountancy profession meets the needs of its diverse stakeholders, reflecting progress in the global economy and society at large.

To do this, the Edinburgh Group champions the interests of SMEs, SMPs, professional accountants in business and developing nations, in particular within IFAC (International Federation of Accountants).

Topic

“The SMP of the future, within a changing world (technology, regulation and/or deregulation, etc.)” is the provisional title of the project. A final title will be decided when the results of the research are known.

The impact on ethics, required skills and education, market competition (including between SMP and larger firms), etc. of the changing world will be studied. The technological and regulatory changes will be considered at first, but other challenges may be reviewed. The IFAC SMP annual survey is an inspiring source of analysis. Audit, accounting but also tax activities of the SMP will be investigated.

Both relatively short and long term impact of the rapidly changing world will have to be investigated, but in any case the study should not be obsolete too soon. Its global coverage is essential. Balance of opportunity and risk should be studied.

The purpose of the study is to help SMPs and PAOs to adapt to changes.

Methodology and report

The study should include:

- A review of existing literature, for which EG member bodies will help and for which the online IFAC Gateway is also a relevant source;
- Questionnaires to EG member bodies and/or their SMP membership, while taking into account the language issues linked to such questionnaires. The EG member bodies commit to respond and/or

to circulate questionnaires prepared by the researchers. The questionnaires should not involve too heavy a workload to be carried by the EG member bodies or their SMP membership;

- Case studies (with failure and success stories);
- Practical recommendations for SMPs and PAOs, including checklists with points for attention.

The final report should ideally not exceed 50 pages (plus possible annexes) and will be drafted in English.

Research body

In order to achieve better impact of EG research activities, the research will preferably be carried out by an independent body. According to the circumstances, a member body is also eligible to carry out the research.

The applications should develop the scope of the research and how it would be implemented.

Applications should be delivered by email to Joanne.Jackson@accaglobal.com by no later than **8 December 2017**.

The selection of a successful proposal will be made mainly on the basis of the detailed scope and methodology proposed as well as the quality of the research team and its global coverage potential. The price will also be taken into consideration. The timeframe is fixed.

Timeframe

Once a proposal has been accepted, the researchers would have five months to present preliminary conclusions to the EG research monitoring committee and a further four months to finalise the project after having received feedback from the monitoring committee.

The research report and an accompanying EG policy paper will be published during the World Congress of Accountants to be held in Sydney in November 2018.