



Results Call for Proposals Fall 2015

Next Call for Proposals: March 28 – May 23

Denise Reis Costa

Denise Costa is a Researcher at Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (INEP), Brazil. She holds a PhD in Statistics and was responsible for planning, supervising, coordinating and developing studies for evaluating large-scale Brazilian government educational assessments such as Enem (National Examination of Secondary Education) and SAEB (System of Evaluation of Basic Education).



Fellowship project:

Denise's project aims to monitor the learning levels of Brazilian students over time and in comparison with other countries and also to evaluate whether Brazil's performance in PISA 2015 met the National Education Plan goals.

In 2014, the Brazilian House of Representatives voted on and approved a National Education Plan which includes goals for monitoring the learning outcomes on PISA assessments. For 2015, it is expected an average combined performance on the three areas of PISA (Reading, Mathematics and Science) near 438 points; for, 2021, 473 points is the projection. It is common in Brazil to monitor education outcome in large-scale assessments proposing goals based on a measure that combines results of the cognitive outcomes. Although this measure can help policy makers have a general idea about the performance of students in different cycles of the assessment, the indicator proposed reduces too much the wealth of PISA information about the scales of proficiencies and contextual data, besides being able to induce erroneous inferences about the quality of education in Brazil.

After understanding the limitations of this analysis, in this study she will propose an indicator based on the mean of standardized grades in math, reading and science that also includes information about enrolment rates that are also impacting Brazil's performance. Over the last decade, Brazil has greatly expanded enrolment in primary and secondary schools. The primary school has recently changed from a system with eight school grades to nine. Ignoring the population changes over time in PISA analysis of Brazilian results will implicate misleading interpretation of the data. This analysis intends to contribute knowledge about the genuine learning outcomes, trying to isolate factors related to population changes over cycles, and propose a new measure that takes into consideration changes in enrolment on PISA assessments.



Ellen Boeren

Dr. Ellen Boeren is Chancellor's Fellow at the Moray House School of Education at the University of Edinburgh, UK. She actively researches participation in adult lifelong learning activities, has completed a PhD at the Catholic University Leuven, Belgium, and recently finished her first monograph 'Lifelong learning participation in a changing policy context: an interdisciplinary theory', published by Palgrave-Macmillan. In the next three years, from October 2016 onwards, she will lead the Edinburgh team in the 2.5 million euro Horizon2020 project ENLIVEN - Encouraging Lifelong Learning for an Inclusive and Vibrant Europe.



She is currently the Programme Director of Edinburgh's MSc in Educational Research, teaches Comparative Analysis in Education within this MSc programme and is Chair of the Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (SCUTREA).

Fellowship project:

Migration is a timely policy issue and extremely important if we want immigrants to be fully integrated in society. We know from previous research that immigrants' chances to participate in adult lifelong learning activities vary across countries compared to their native peers (see Desjardins, 2015), suggesting different structural support for the integration of immigrants. This Thomas J. Alexander fellowship project will explore immigrants' lifelong learning participation patterns in a wide range of OECD countries, based on data from PIAAC's (Programme for the International Assessment of Adults Competencies) Survey of Adult Skills. Using these data, I will provide an answer to the question whether differences in participation patterns in lifelong learning relate (a) to different lifelong learning and social policy structures in countries or (b) to differences in the type of immigrants countries attract, leading to different lifelong learning needs. This will be done through comparison of profiles of immigrant lifelong learners, not only including their socio-economic and socio-demographic characteristics and skills levels, but also through exploration of the characteristics of the lifelong learning activities they participate in. The project will use a number of statistical methods, building from straightforward descriptive analyses to more complex multivariate models.

This project will be of academic and policy-oriented relevance. Findings will inform educationalists and sociologists on the increased theoretical knowledge base on integration of immigrants in the OECD's lifelong learning systems. The major aim is to help policy makers to tackle the persistent inequalities in many lifelong learning systems, affecting immigrants' participation in the labour market and society in general.