



Results Call for Proposals Fall 2013

Next Call for Proposals: 4 April to 30 May 2014

Tommaso Agasisti

Agasisti holds a Laurea Degree in Economics, and a PhD in Management Engineering. He is Assistant Professor at Politecnico di Milano (Italy), where he teaches "Theory and Organisation of Public Administrations", and is co-director of the School of Educational Management at MIP - Politecnico di Milano School of Management. Agasisti's research focuses on economics and management of education, including such related topics as the efficiency of higher education institutions and schools, financing models for higher education systems, school choice, and educational production functions (EPFs). To know more about Agasisti's work, click [here](#).



Fellowship project:

Agasisti will use data from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to derive direct and measurable indicators for the quality of the education provided by – and education outcomes of – school, and will integrate them into efficiency analyses conducted through frontier techniques (especially Data Envelopment Analysis). First, Agasisti will conceptualise and measure school outcomes and factors related to those outcomes, using the questionnaires developed by PISA. Then, he will measure the efficiency of schools for each country and conduct within-country and between-countries comparisons. As part of this second phase, Agasisti will also analyse the within-country and between-countries distribution of PISA test scores (equity) and compare them with the picture that emerged after only considering efficiency, to test for eventual trade-offs between efficiency and equity.

Using a common conceptual framework for measuring inputs and outputs (through the use of the PISA database) allows for a direct comparison of efficiency scores between groups of countries, as well as for testing specific cross-national economic, social and educational factors that are associated with school's efficiency.



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Daniel Caro

Daniel is a Research Fellow at the Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment (OUCEA). He completed a PhD in Education at the Freie Universität Berlin under a fellowship awarded by the International Max Planck Research School on the Life Course (LIFE). Daniel also completed a Master's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of New Brunswick sponsored by the Canadian Research Institute for Social Policy. His research interests include education inequalities, social mobility, and international assessment studies. Daniel has developed a package in the R programming language, 'instvy', to manage and analyse data from international assessments. Find more about Daniel's work [here](#).



Fellowship project:

The ranking of countries based on student performance receives the greatest attention from the media and policy-makers every time a new PISA cycle is released. The rankings, however, reflect the cumulative effect of social, economic, and cultural processes as well as policy interventions acting together over long periods of time. It is therefore difficult and often misleading to compare the performance of national educational systems using the rankings alone. Policy-makers and media commentators are waking up to this. An alternative ranking is proposed based on indicators of education system effectiveness. Effectiveness indicators compare educational systems whilst taking into account previous performance and the socioeconomic context in which they operate. Educational systems that perform above what is expected for their socioeconomic context and previous performance are regarded as more effective. This work will examine which factors amenable to policy intervention contribute to education system effectiveness and whether effectiveness-enhancing factors vary for emerging economies and developed economies. Data visualisation tools will be used to facilitate the communication of results to policy-makers and the media. The proposed research contributes a contextualised, effectiveness perspective of performance that can shape the way policy-makers and the media reflect on results of international assessments.



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Seong Won Han

Seong Won Han (Ph.D. in Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison) is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy at University at Buffalo, The State University of New York. Her research interests include international and comparative education, gender inequalities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), educational policy, and teacher quality. Using large-scale international surveys and student achievement data, her current project focuses on cross-national differences in students' expectations for STEM careers. Her research has been supported by a dissertation grant from the American Educational Research Association (AERA). She also investigates the factors that help to improve instruction and student outcomes in urban public schools in the United States, with a focus on how comprehensive school reform can support instructional change among teachers, and how education leaders can support teachers' improvement efforts. Her research has been published in the *Review of Higher Education*, *Teachers College Record*, and as part of an edited collection on leadership and instructional change. Find out more about Seong Won's work [here](#).



Fellowship project:

Top-performing countries recruit the best high school graduates to the teaching profession, but little is known about the factors that make teaching a desirable career choice among students. Several international reports suggest that competitive salaries, the status of teaching, and better work environments will help recruit high-quality candidates. But several top-performing countries, such as Korea, Singapore and Finland, build high-quality education workforces by recruiting the best high school graduates into teacher education institutions and the teaching profession. Because strong interest in teaching among high school students contributes to the high quality of teaching workforces in these nations, it is important to investigate factors that make teaching a desirable profession for strong students. Using large-scale international surveys and student achievement data from the 2000 and 2006 PISA surveys, Seong will examine the degree to which teachers' working conditions and salaries are associated with students' expectations for the teaching profession across countries. This work will give policy makers a chance to gain some insights about the extent to which improving teachers' pay and working conditions can help to attract talented students to the teaching profession and ultimately improve the quality of the teaching workforce in both developed and developing countries.



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V. Darleen Opfer

Opfer is director of RAND Education and holds the Distinguished Chair in Education Policy at the RAND Corporation. She was previously on the faculty of education at the University of Cambridge, England, from 2005, where she was the director of research and senior lecturer in research methods and school improvement. She has conducted policy research studies for a number of local, state and national governments on issues that affect teachers and schools, including recruitment and retention, professional development and impacts of accountability policies. This work includes a national, mixed-method study of the recruitment and retention of school leaders in Scotland. Her work on teacher professional development includes national studies conducted for the Training and Development Agency in England and the Turkish Education Foundation. She has also conducted a study of the effects of high-stakes accountability policies on teacher professional development in six states in the United States which was funded by the Spencer Foundation. She recently served as an advisory board member to the National Council of Educational Research and Training in Delhi, India. She previously served as a consultant for the U.S. Agency for International Development, working on the Increased Access to Quality Education and Training Initiative and focusing on improving capacity for teachers. Her research has been published in such journals as the American Journal of Education, the Curriculum Journal, Educational Administration Quarterly, Educational Policy, European Journal of Teacher Education, Review of Educational Research, and School Effectiveness and School Improvement.



Fellowship project:

Opfer will use data from the 2013 OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) to investigate how teachers' beliefs and practices, and school contexts influence teachers' professional development within and between countries. Using an exploratory hierarchical structural equation modeling process that will start by constructing independent models of influence on professional development, building to a combined model, she will explore how the influences interact with each other and contribute to teachers' engagement in professional development activities and the reported outcomes of this engagement. Part of the project will also use data from PISA 2012 and the Mathematics Teacher Module of TALIS 2013 to consider whether student assessment information is associated with differences in teachers' professional development and its influences. These analyses will provide information about patterns of practice to allow for more targeted intervention in providing professional development to teachers and thereby improving teaching quality.



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Henry Braun (innovation award)

Braun holds a Ph.D. in mathematical statistics from Stanford University. After serving as an assistant professor of statistics at Princeton University, he joined the Educational Testing Service in 1979, where he served as the director of statistical and psychometric research from 1982 to 1990, and vice-president for research management from 1990 to 1999. He held the title of distinguished presidential appointee from 1999 to 2006. In 2007, he retired from ETS and assumed the position of Boisi Professor of Education and Public Policy in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. He is a fellow of the American Statistical Association and of American Educational Research Association (AERA). He is a co-recipient of the 1986 Palmer O. Johnson Award of the AERA and a co-recipient of the National Council for Measurement in Education's 1999 Award for



Outstanding Technical Contribution to the Field of Educational Measurement. He has presented keynote addresses at many conferences around the world, and serves on a number of state and national advisory committees on testing. Braun's interests include school and teacher accountability, the role of testing in education policy, and statistical methodology. In recent years, he has published on a variety of topics including the black-white achievement gap, comparative school effectiveness, applications of multi-level modelling, and the role of literacy in economic and social welfare. His current work includes policy-related data analysis of large-scale assessment surveys, like the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), investigation of the dynamics underlying income inequality and stagnant inter-generation mobility in the United States, and methods for evaluating the relative effectiveness of teacher preparation programmes.

Fellowship project:

Nations are concerned with the development of their human capital so that they can compete effectively in a global economy. Two essential questions are: How do they compare with other nations? and What strategies are likely to be effective in enhancing key skills? For participating jurisdictions, PIAAC provides findings on adults' proficiency in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in technology-rich environments. It also includes a wealth of individual-level background data for the (potential) workforce population that facilitates both useful disaggregation and more refined analyses. This project will employ a variety of regression methods applied to individual-level data to examine the nature of the relationships of problem solving in technology-rich environments to literacy, numeracy, and individual characteristics. The goals are to understand how the patterns of statistical associations vary across age and socio-economic status within and across jurisdictions; and to infer possible causal relationships in order to inform policy choices. The project will be the first in-depth investigation of performance in a 21st century skill, and will provide policy insights relevant to the enhancement of this skill in different sub-populations.