



## **The Education Support Program of the Open Society Institute Announces an Individual Research Competition**

As part of the *Advancing Educational Inclusion and Quality in South East Europe Initiative* the Education Support Program of the Open Society Institute (OSI) announces a competition open to individuals on the elaboration of research papers using the statistical data collected as part of the **2009 Cross-National Survey of Parents in South East Europe (SEE) countries**. Proposals are invited primarily from graduate students and early career researchers.

The **2009 Cross-National Survey of Parents in SEE countries**, funded by OSI's Education Support Program, yielded a tremendous amount of data assembled by researchers in each of the following ten SEE countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined by UNSCHR 1244), Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia. This survey provides a panoramic view of parental participation in schools from the perspectives of parents, parent representatives and principals in each of the aforementioned countries. Face-to-face household surveys of representative samples of parents (N=9600) in 320 public schools covering grades one to eight, including booster samples of Roma parents are combined with interviews with principals and parent representatives on related topics in the same schools.

For more information regarding the **Cross-National Survey of Parents in South East Europe (SEE) countries**, please view the survey report in its entirety at the Advancing Educational Inclusion and Quality in South East Europe Initiative's website at <http://www.see-educoop.net/aeiq>.

In order to best utilize the important data collected by the researchers of the Initiative, OSI's Education Support Program will provide grants to successful applicants who will write publishable research papers. The primary purpose of these grants is to cull additional information from the Survey data which can be used for education reform, policy development, and strategic planning.

### **Grant Qualifications**

Successful applicants will be focused individuals who are interested in bringing data and evidence to bear on policy decisions aimed at increasing accessibility to inclusive educational environments for all students. This grant program aims to clarify the lessons to be found in the data. By understanding these lessons, the research papers written by the grantees should shed additional light on how policymakers and educators can improve education for all students, particularly those who are underrepresented, in each of the eight SEE countries.

The sponsors have identified a few priority topics of research. Although funding will be provided for other areas as well, proposals relating to the following areas will receive priority consideration:

- ❖ Exploring the factors that attract some parents to crucial school activities and the barriers that prevent others from becoming engaged in their child's education and school life.
- ❖ Congruence/lack of congruence between the views of parents, parent representatives and principals,
- ❖ Predictors of satisfaction with participation on the part of these three stakeholder groups,
- ❖ Differences and similarities between Roma and mainstream parents: participation attitudes, barriers and behaviour,
- ❖ Analysis of open-ended answers,
- ❖ Devising strategies on how to include more parents in the school governance process,
- ❖ Similarities and differences between countries on these and similar topics, and the link with policy environments

Proposals may cover the entire dataset or focus on subsets of one or more countries.

## Funding Details

The paper is to be written in English and is to be between 5,000 and 10,000 words in length. Work must begin no later than March 5<sup>th</sup> 2010 and end no later than April 15<sup>th</sup> 2010. Selected researchers are expected to participate and to present their:

1. Final draft of the research papers at a fellows meeting to be held on April 8-9, 2010. Location will be defined in a due course.
2. Final papers at the "Parental Involvement in Life of School Matters" regional conference to be held between April 22 and 25, 2010 in Becici, Montenegro.

Preferably, applicants will be residents of the country from which they are applying. Applicants must reside in one of the following ten countries studied in the *Cross-National Survey of Principals in South East Europe*: **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, or Serbia**. Although applicants who are residents in the country from which they are applying is preferred, they may be of any nationality.

A lump-sum of U.S. \$ 2,000 will be given to successful applicants who compose publishable research papers based on the data collected as part of the **Cross-National Survey of School Principals in South East Europe**. Funding will be released 50% upon being awarded the fellowship and 50% after the research paper is reviewed and approved by an OSI panel.

## **Application Process and Deadlines**

1. A resume/ CV.
2. A cover letter describing your interest.
3. A full research proposal specifying the project title, the thematic area to be addressed, research question(s), research methodology, mailing address and email address.
4. An abstract of no more than 200 words outlining the significance of the research and the methodology to be used.
5. An initial bibliography of relevant literature.

**Applications are due on February 20<sup>th</sup> 2010.** Please send applications by email as PDFs to [espassistance@osi.hu](mailto:espassistance@osi.hu). To ensure appropriate processing, please use "Parents Survey Research Grant" as the subject line of the email.

## **Selection criteria**

The quality of the research proposal will be the primary criterion for selection. This includes:

1. The relevance of the proposed research question for the 2009 Cross-National Survey of Parents in South East Europe (SEE) countries.
2. The clarity of the proposed research question.
3. The proof of competence in carrying out analysis of complex survey data (e.g. prior publications, familiarity with the use of advanced statistical software packages, etc.).

Applicants will receive confirmation of their application by February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010, and selection results will be announced by March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010.