



CALL FOR POLICY RESEARCH PROPOSALS: NATIONAL DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES POLICY RESEARCH PROGRAMME (DTPRP)

The Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ), in partnership with the Research Council of Zimbabwe (RCZ) and the Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre (SIRDC), invites submissions of Policy Research Proposals under the National Digital Technologies Policy Research Programme (DTPRP).

1. Background

The Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) is the national regulator of Zimbabwe's postal and telecommunications sector, established under the Postal and Telecommunications Act [Chapter 12:05]. In addition, POTRAZ is the designated Cyber and Data Protection Authority under the Cyber and Data Protection Act. The Research Council of Zimbabwe (RCZ) is a statutory body established under the Research Act of Zimbabwe, Chapter 10:22, Section 27, mandated to promote, direct, supervise, and coordinate research and development activities across all fields in Zimbabwe. The Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre (SIRDC) is the Zimbabwe Technology Centre, registered under the Research Act, Chapter 10:22. It facilitates the commercialisation of technical services and R&D outputs/technologies, and conducts research and development (R&D) to support Zimbabwe's industrialisation.

The National Digital Technologies Policy Research Programme seeks to strengthen Zimbabwe's national capacity to develop evidence-based policies, regulatory frameworks, and governance of emerging technologies through policy research, capacity development, and collaboration between researchers, regulators, and policymakers.

2. Priority Policy Research Areas

Proposals are invited in the following areas:

1. Postal & Telecommunications Regulation & Emerging Technologies
• AI, 5G, IoT, and emerging technology regulation
• Postal & Telecommunications market competition and innovation
• Responsible technology deployment, transparency, and trust
2. Data Governance, Cybersecurity, and Consumer Protection
• Data protection, privacy, and governance

• Cybersecurity and critical communications infrastructure protection
• Consumer protection and online safety
3. Digital Economy and Platform Regulation
• Internet governance and digital regulation
• Over-the-top (OTT) services and telecommunications regulation
• Digital platform governance and market competition
• E-commerce and digital service delivery enabled by communications networks
4. Universal Access, Infrastructure, and Connectivity
• Broadband expansion and universal access initiatives
• Spectrum management and infrastructure development
• Digital skills and digital inclusion strategies
5. Research, Intellectual Property and ICT Development
• Research commercialisation & intellectual property frameworks for digital technologies
• University–industry–government collaboration models and ICT entrepreneurship
• Regulatory sandboxes, investment promotion, and innovation-friendly regulation

3. Target Participants

Applicants are invited from:

1. Policy analysts
2. Researchers (social sciences and ICT)
3. Academia
4. Regulatory experts
5. Legal experts
6. Economists
7. Technical experts, etc.

4. Programme Outputs

Successful participants will contribute to the development of:

1. Policy briefs
2. Draft policy frameworks
3. Stakeholder consultation reports
4. National policy recommendation documents

5. Selection Process

Participants will be selected through a competitive and merit-based process involving:

1. Submission of a policy research proposal.
2. Evaluation based on relevance, analytical capacity, and impact potential.
3. Consideration of gender, institutional, and geographic diversity

Successful applicants will participate in a phased, structured national programme comprising onboarding and problem framing; policy training and analytical foundations; embedded policy research laboratories; policy design and prototyping; policy paper development and validation; and policy uptake, dialogue, and dissemination activities.

6. Policy Research Proposal Submission Guidelines

Applicants are required to submit a Policy Research Proposal aligned to one of the programme's priority policy research areas.

A) Format Requirements

1. Maximum length: 3.5 pages (excluding cover page)
2. Font: Times New Roman, Size 12
3. Spacing: 1.5
4. Format: PDF
5. Language: English

Note: AI-generated text below 10%

B) Proposal Structure

- i. Title of the Proposed Policy Research:** Provide a concise title that clearly reflects the policy issue being addressed.
- ii. Priority Research Area:** Indicate the programme priority area under which the proposal is being submitted.
- iii. Policy Problem Statement:** Clearly describe the policy, regulatory, or governance challenge to be addressed, including its significance to Zimbabwe.
- iv. Background and Justification:** Provide a brief overview of the issue and explain why it is important for policy and regulatory decision-making.
- v. Research Objectives:** State the objectives of the proposed policy research.
- vi. Key Research Questions:** Outline the key questions the research seeks to answer.
- vii. Proposed Approach:** Briefly describe how the research will be conducted, including potential sources of information and stakeholder engagement where applicable.
- viii. Expected Policy Contribution:** Applicants should clearly indicate how the proposed research will contribute to policy formulation, regulatory development, or governance of digital technologies in Zimbabwe.
- ix. Applicant Information:** Full name, Institution/organisation, email address, telephone number.

7. Submission Details: Policy Research Proposal should be submitted to:

Email: research.development@potraz.zw no later than 3 October 2026.

8. Review Process: Submitted proposals will undergo a competitive review process based on relevance to priority policy research areas, analytical merit, and potential policy impact. Successful applicants will be notified by 23 October 2026.

9. Further information:

For further information, please contact: Email: research.development@potraz.zw