



# CALL FOR PAPERS 2023

## Fifth Edition

### Terms of Reference for the Call for Papers 2023 “Central American Integration advancing towards sustainable, resilient, innovative and inclusive development”

#### INTRODUCTION

The General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SG-SICA), the Central American Economic Integration Secretariat (SIECA) through the Center for Economic Integration Studies (CEIE) and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) through the Regional Center for Innovation and Technology (CRIT) and the Independent Evaluation Office (ODEI), are conducting the fifth edition of the regional call for the presentation of academic articles on issues related to the Central American integration named this year as: "Central American integration advancing towards development sustainable, resilient, innovative and inclusive".

Through this initiative, the coordinating institutions seek to create a space for the dissemination of knowledge and specialized research on Central American Integration with the purpose of analysing the opportunities that the Central American Integration System represents in the face of global challenges which have a direct impact on the region. Aiming for the development of propositional articles with high applicability, that can provide new knowledge and strategic information to strengthen the regional work of the Central American Integration System (SICA).

It is expected that this Call for Papers provide a framework for knowledge sharing and generate an impact on the current technical-academic debate through the publication of research articles that comply with the rigor and analytical robustness that characterizes research methodologies. The coordinating institutions welcomes the participation of professionals, academics, public officials and researchers interested in the dynamics of the regional integration process who wish to contribute to the collective construction and management of knowledge around relevant and applicable topics for the development of the SICA member countries.





## 1. Context

Central American integration has been part of the historical nature of the region for more than 70 years. In its current model, created from the subscription of the Tegucigalpa Protocol to the Charter of the Organization of Central American States (ODECA) in 1991, the Central American Integration System (SICA) established as its fundamental objective to constitute a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development, since then it has been established as the institutional, multidimensional and intersectoral framework of the Regional Integration of Central America and the Dominican Republic, offering its eight member states a strategic space for dialogue, cooperation and political understanding in favour of development of Central Americans, and, especially, for the generation of results around the five pillars of work prioritized by the Member States: Democratic Security, Climate Change and Comprehensive Risk Management, Social Integration, Economic Integration and Institutional Strengthening.

For this purpose, the Central American Integration System has twenty-eight Organs, twelve Secretariats and thirty Regional Institutions; all which seek to complement the national efforts aimed at meeting the challenges faced by Member States in an increasingly globalized world<sup>1</sup>.

In 2020, the region faced a complex economic and social panorama as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and a series of extreme climatic events that had important implications at a regional level; however, the indicators show that given the economic resilience of the region, compared to other countries of the continent, the economic impacts were minor. According to data from ECLAC, even though trade in the Central American intraregional market fell by 5.6% in 2020, this percentage is much lower than the impact registered in the rest of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, whose trade perceived decreases ranging from between 20% and 31%.

Looking ahead, the region must increase investment to lay the foundations for sustainable development. Regardless of the financing needs marked by structural deficits, it is estimated that countries must assume a greater investment effort to advance towards accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) linked to infrastructure services.

Within this framework, a space for dialogue between all potential actors (Governments, Multilateral Development Banks, International Organizations, Development Partners, Regional Integration Organizations, Academia, the Private Sector and Organized Civil Society) can be provided to promote initiatives that could strategically address these common challenges and highlight the characteristics of cooperation and resilience that have defined Central America throughout its history.

<sup>1</sup> Special Declaration regarding the instances that make up the Central American Integration System (SICA). Mandate 2°. December 9, 2022.





The Central American Integration System (SICA) is precisely conceived as an instrument at the service of its member countries to establish initiatives and consensus that support national efforts to overcome this type of challenges and at the same time promote a sustainable development that guarantees better socio-economic opportunities for the population.

In this sense, and in this context, the Call for Papers, in its fifth edition, seeks to promote applied research, prospective and proactive reflection from innovative scenarios for the promotion of development and Central American regional integration, encouraging a space for the construction, application and dissemination of technical-academic proposals and dissemination of knowledge that allows for the strengthening of capacities of regional institutions to advance in an integrated agenda, providing a response to current challenges in an interconnected world.

## 2. Research Topics

The development of academic research articles based on the following thematic areas within the five Priority Pillars of the Central American integration process is encouraged.

### Institutional strengthening

1. Challenges and opportunities for South-South and Triangular Cooperation in SICA member countries.
2. New paradigms of innovation, digital transformation and the promotion of professional training in data science, internet of things, blockchain technologies, cryptocurrencies, connectivity, interoperability, use of artificial intelligence and other emerging digital technologies in SICA member countries.
3. Benefits of the Central American integration process: a quantitative-qualitative approach and good practices of regional governance.
4. The application of regional policies at the national level: internalization of the decisions of the Organs of the Central American Integration System (SICA).
5. Reconfiguration of the global geopolitical scenario: political and economic implications for the Central American region.
6. Comparative perspectives of SICA in relation to other integration schemes in the American continent.

### Democratic Security

1. Fight against drug trafficking from an approach of shared and differentiated responsibility between States.
2. Protection of the human rights of people in irregular migratory flows.
3. Condition of vulnerability of victims of human trafficking throughout their migration cycle: prior to, during their migration and recruitment process, and upon their return.





4. Protection of the security and privacy of people in the era of artificial intelligence against cybercrime.
5. Culture of peace, democracy, political incidence, and citizen participation.
6. Implementation of digital transformation in government institutions, to guarantee transparency in democratic processes, with the purpose of strengthening the rule of law.
7. Development of digital document management programs to guarantee transparency and access to information for the construction of the Central American memory in terms of Human Rights.

### **Economic Integration**

1. Trade agreements, trade facilitation and customs union as mechanisms for the regional economic reactivation.
2. Opportunities and challenges of food production in view of the difficulties of supplying raw materials at a global level and the rise in food prices.
3. The Association Agreement between Central America and the European Union: opportunities and challenges in the economic recovery of the Central American region.
4. Clusters and Regional Value Chains for the economic growth of the SICA Region.
5. Resilience of MSMEs in the face of the challenges of the economic dynamics of the Central American region.
6. Opportunities to promote tourism and services associated with touristic activity.
7. Analysis of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Central American region: alternatives to promote actions aimed at promoting the economic growth of MSMEs.
8. The entrepreneurial university: opportunities to strengthen formal education processes towards the promotion of entrepreneurs.
9. Strengthening of the regional productive infrastructure: logistics corridors, digital interconnection, and transportation.

### **Social integration**

1. Context of gender equality in Central America: Impact of innovation ecosystems on the economic, physical and political autonomy of women.
2. Poverty reduction, local development and food and nutrition security in the region.
3. Social innovation for the strengthening of educational systems under an inclusive and resilient approach.
4. Digital and information literacy for the construction of citizenship.
5. Social innovation to strengthen health systems in the face of new health emergencies.
6. Social innovation to strengthen social protection systems in view of the region's recovery.
7. Orange economy: innovative alternatives for the development of the cultural sector and preservation of the identity of native and Afro-descendant peoples in the region.





## Climate Change and Comprehensive Risk Management

1. Adaptation and mitigation in the face of the effects of climate change in SICA member countries: Best practices and innovative solutions in the agricultural sector from a synergistic approach between Mitigation and Adaptation.
2. Resilience and comprehensive disaster risk management in the region. Lessons learned, challenges and opportunities in the face of floods and droughts in SICA member countries.
3. Innovation and digital transformation as instruments for comprehensive risk management and vulnerability reduction to the effects of climate change.
4. Renewable energies and energy efficiency: electromobility, smart solutions and other sustainable alternatives for the development of the region.
5. Growth and development of the blue economy in SICA member countries as a sustainability strategy. Challenges and opportunities in strategic regional ecosystems.
6. Importance of assessing environmental and social externalities in development projects.

### 3. Submission Guidelines

- Submissions will be open from **June 21 to November 30, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. Guatemala time, Central America.**
- The text of the proposed article must be attached in an electronic file in Word format and the tables and graphs in editable format (Excel or Word).
- SIECA will enable a section on its website where the article submission form will be available (the submission process is totally digital).
- In case of queries, please contact the following emails: **info\_ceie@sieca.int**, with a copy to **disseminationodei@bcie.org**, **crit@bcie.org** and **fcolocho@sica.int**
- The text may be presented in Spanish or English and must have a minimum structure that includes:

#### I. Cover

The cover of the research article must contain the following elements:

- i. Work title.
- ii. Pseudonym of the author or co-authors.
- iii. Elaboration date of the research article.

#### II. Executive Summary:

The text may be in Spanish or English, it should not exceed 150 words or 900 characters including spaces and should address the main points discussed in the article. It should not include bibliographical citations, figures or tables.





### III. Keywords [minimum five and maximum eight].

#### IV. Document body.

- i. Introduction.
- ii. Theoretical – Conceptual Framework.
- iii. Methodology.
- iv. Results.
- v. Conclusions and recommendations.
- vi. Bibliography.

Research articles that do not meet all the requirements of the minimum structure detailed in this section will be given a lower score in accordance with the evaluation criteria.

#### 4. Editorial aspects

- The text of the article must be between two thousand five hundred (2,500) to three thousand five hundred (3,500) words, which excludes:
  - Cover
  - Executive summary and keywords.
  - Titles, subtitles and footer of the text of the article.
  - Titles, content and source of tables, figures and graphs.
  - References.
  - Annexes.
- The format must be in Times New Roman font, size 12, double spaced and text aligned to the left.
- The use of italics will be reserved to highlight those concepts or strong ideas that the author wants to highlight, as well as titles of books and magazines, scientific names, and words foreign to the Spanish or English language. In no case should bold or underline be used for this purpose.
- Acronyms are written without points or spaces and will always be preceded by the article corresponding to the main noun. In addition, the acronyms must be specified the first time they are mentioned in the text within parentheses, for example, Central American Integration System (SICA).

#### About the titles

- The titles will be aligned on the left margin of the text, without numbering, and complying with the following criteria:





**Title of the article** [in bold, size 14, Times New Roman]

**Title** [in bold, size 12, Times New Roman]

**Level 1 subtitles** [in bold, size 10, Times New Roman]

**Level 2 subheadings** [in bold, italics, size 10, Times New Roman]

**Level 3 subheadings** [in italics, size 10, Times New Roman]

- The titles corresponding to the Bibliography and the Annexes will be written in bold, size 12, Times New Roman.

### Graphic Format

Graphs, figures and tables must meet the following requirements:

- The graphic elements must be prepared in Excel format and must be incorporated into the body of the article.
- In addition to the submission of the Word document containing the article, a single Excel file must be submitted that contains all the original graphic elements (the use of graphics, figures or tables that are copied and pasted from other texts, even when they have the proper source citation, could be subject to disqualification, so it is suggested to avoid).
- In the case of including images within the article, these must be in high definition.
- In case of using an inferential analysis methodology, the programming code used for this purpose must be included in Annexes.
- The titles, notes and sources of graphic elements must be placed as part of the text of the document, not within the body of the graph, figure or table.
- Titles should be placed at the top of each graph, figure or table, indicating time period and measurement units when necessary [in bold, size 12, Times New Roman].
- In the lower left part of each graph, figure or table, explanations on abbreviations should be incorporated when necessary.
- Each graphic element must be duly numbered according to the order in which they appear in the article, identifying the type of graphic element to which they belong (graph, figure or table). The numbering of the graphic elements is restarted when incorporating another type of graphic element. For example: (Table 1, Table 2, Graph 1, Table 3, Figure 1, Table 4, etc.)
- The title of each graphic, figure or table should appear one line below the number of said graphic element. Titles will be aligned to the left margin of the text.





## About the References

- The citations and bibliographical references must follow the standards of the American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition.
- All bibliographical references must correspond to the citations made within the text.

## 5. Strategic Partners.

The Call for Papers initiative contemplates a category of Strategic Partners that includes the participation of institutions of the Central American Integration System (SICA), universities, think tanks among other Development Partners, who with the purpose of enriching the initiative provide their technical or financial assistance.

The following strategic partners will participate in this edition:

- Central American Institute of Public Administration (ICAP).
- Central American Higher University Council (CSUCA).
- ETEA Foundation, Development Institute of the Loyola Andalucía University.
- Institute of International Studies of the University of Chile.

## 6. Participation terms and conditions.

- a. Professionals, academics, public officials and researchers linked to and interested in the dynamics of the Central American integration process are invited to participate.
- b. Any person may apply, regardless of their nationality.
- c. The winners of previous editions are excluded from this initiative as well as the officials of the General Secretariat of SICA, SIECA and CABEI. Participants that won an honourable mention on previous editions have the right to participate in the present edition.
- d. Participation may be as an individual author or co-author, with no limit to the number of researchers. In both cases, only one research paper per participating author or co-authors must be submitted. In case of co-authorship, all those involved must approve the postulation of the article.
- e. Participants must be responsible for the authorship, originality and unpublished nature of the work presented, assuming the responsibilities that proceed if the intellectual property rights of third parties are violated in its preparation. Unpublished articles will be understood as any work that has not been published or disseminated, totally or partially, nor is it in the process of acceptance and/or publication in any other media, contest or academic-scientific journal.







- f.** Participation is free, this initiative does not accept payments for registration or disbursements of any nature. Likewise, the General Secretariat of SICA, SIECA and CABEL do not assume or reimburse the costs of elaboration and presentation of research articles.
- g.** The evaluation criteria of the present edition are the following:
- Clarity and precision in writing.
  - Originality in their contribution to the state of the art of knowledge.
  - Validity and scientific support.
  - Applicability and inclusion of regional approach.
  - Compliance with editorial standards.
- h.** Opinion articles will not be accepted.
- i.** Graduation works, monographs, dissertations and/or university theses will not be accepted. Notwithstanding this condition, these works may constitute the basis for developing a new research article designed specifically for this call.
- j.** Articles that have been presented in previous editions of this call will not be accepted.
- k.** Articles that do not comply with the provisions and requirements established in this call will be disqualified.
- l.** All received articles will be evaluated by an Editorial Committee, made up of officials from the General Secretariat of SICA, SIECA and CABEL, in addition to the participation of specialists invited to evaluate the various thematic areas of the initiative. The Editorial Committee will verify compliance with editorial standards, the thematic relevance, and the proper structuring of the article. The authors will receive information about the resolution of said Committee.
- m.** The Strategic Partners will have the possibility of participating as Observers in the Editorial Committee meetings, they will be allowed to have a say in each of the sessions in order to provide, from their perspective, technical elements that can strengthen the review and assessment process. However, the power to receive, review, award and/or disqualify the participating articles will rest exclusively within the Editorial Committee.
- n.** If plagiarism is detected in part or in the whole research article, it will automatically be disqualified.
- o.** The Editorial Committee reserves the right to suggest editorial changes to adapt the content of the research articles to the editorial policy of the call, in order to be considered in the recognition or award process.



- p. The SICA General Secretariat, SIECA and CABEL are granted the rights to use and publish the text in any format, whether printed or digital, with full acknowledgment of the authorship.
- q. The cases that are not contemplated in these Terms of Reference will be resolved by the Editorial Committee, which is responsible for their interpretation.

## 7. Award categories.

The winning articles will be presented at an award ceremony organized jointly by the SICA General Secretariat, SIECA and CABEL, to be held in the first trimester of 2024 at the SICA Headquarters Building, in San Salvador, El Salvador.

In each edition, the host venue for the award event rotates among the coordinating institutions of the initiative: the General Secretariat of SICA, SIECA and CABEL.

An economic prize will be awarded to the three best research articles, in accordance with the eligibility criteria in the following order:

### First Place:

USD 3,000 plus a 50% scholarship for a Master given by the Institute of International Studies of the University of Chile.

### Second Place:

USD 2,000 plus a 100% scholarship for a Diploma given by the Institute of International Studies of the University of Chile.

### Third Place:

USD 1,000 plus a 100% scholarship for a Short Course given by the Institute of International Studies of the University of Chile.

In case of co-authorship, the prize will be divided and awarded to each co-author in equal parts.

In addition to the first three place winners, the Editorial Committee has the power to recognize with an honourable mention, articles that achieve a high score in the evaluation process, for which they will receive a certificate that accredits them as such.

Additionally, as part of the award, all winning articles may be included in academic publications disseminated by the participating institutions of this initiative.





## 8. Schedule of Activities

- **Launch Event of the Call for Papers 2023 at the SICA Headquarters Building, San Salvador.**  
June 21, 2023
- **Doubts and enquiries to emails**  
info\_ceie@sieca.int with a copy to disseminationodei@bcie.org, crit@bcie.org and fcolocho@sica.int  
  
June 21 – November 29, 2023
- **Application closing date**  
November 30, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. in Guatemala, Central America.
- **Review of Papers by the Editorial Committee**  
December 1st, 2023 – January 19, 2024
- **Communication of results to winners and honourable mentions**  
January 22 – February 2nd, 2024
- **Award Ceremony at the SICA Headquarters Building, San Salvador**  
February 5 – February 9, 2024

