

## 8<sup>th</sup> European Research Conference on Microfinance

### Information for Applicants to Host University

The **European Research Conference on Microfinance** (ERCM) is the largest academic conference dedicated to microfinance and inclusive finance, gathering researchers, students, and professionals from a large variety of countries, disciplines and backgrounds who meet every two years to engage in rich debates and collaborations.

The first ERCM took place in June 2009 at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and was organised by the **Centre for European Research in Microfinance** (CERMi) in collaboration with the **European Microfinance Platform** (e-MFP) former Research Action Group. Since then, e-MFP and CERMi, in partnership with a broad group of European Universities, organise this unique event ensuring that the latest academic research is disseminated to the whole microfinance and inclusive finance community.

Previous editions:

- 2-4 June 2009, hosted by CERMi at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Brussels, Belgium
- 16-18 June 2011, hosted by the Groningen University, Groningen, the Netherlands
- 10-12 June 2013, hosted by the Norwegian Centre for Microfinance Research at the University of Agder, Agder, Norway
- 1-3 June 2015, hosted by the Geneva Finance Research Institute at the University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
- 12-14 June 2017, hosted by the Portsmouth Business School at the University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth, UK
- 3-5 June 2019, hosted by the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), Montpellier Business School and the Paris Dauphine Université at the Paris Dauphine Université, Paris, France
- 20-22 June 2022, hosted by the Yunus Centre for Social Business & Health at Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, Scotland

Each ERCM edition has been broad in scope, translating the diversity of models and contexts in the inclusive finance sector, as well as its evolution in result of the adoption of new technologies and the need to address crises such as the impact of climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic. The conferences have focused on specific topics and embraced a diversity of subjects and disciplines through different session formats - plenaries, roundtables and parallel sessions plus the all-important networking and social events. Particular attention has also been given to students and young researchers. In this respect, e-MFP, with the support of the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, has launched in 2017 the first edition of the Best Graduate Research Paper Award.

## 1. Application to Host University

### a. **Who should apply:**

Universities based in Europe developing or interested in developing research on microfinance and inclusive finance.

### b. **When and how to apply:**

Proposals should be sent by e-mail to [contact@e-mfp.eu](mailto:contact@e-mfp.eu) by the deadline established in the call for hosts launched by e-MFP. In 2023, the call for hosts will be launched on 18 April and the **deadline for applications is 31 May**.

### c. **Benefits of applying:**

Host universities are the centre of academic research on microfinance and inclusive finance in Europe for a three-day period, gaining visibility among peers and the inclusive finance community. The event provides learning and networking opportunities, and it increases exposure for students and young researchers from the University.

## 2. Host Selection and Formalisation

### a. **Timeline:**

The decision regarding the ERCM Host University will be taken during the month of June 2023. During this period, additional information may be required from the shortlisted universities. The **selection decision** will be taken by the ERCM Research Committee and communicated to the applicants the **latest by 15 July**.

### b. **Decision letter and MoU:**

Following the decision letter and confirmation of acceptance by the selected University, the e-MFP Secretariat will prepare the **Memorandum of Understanding between e-MFP and the University**. This MoU refers to the financial agreement associated with the sponsorship of 20,000€ provided by e-MFP.

## 3. Role of e-MFP and CERMi

### • **e-MFP:**

- Financial support to Host University (20,000€) – pre-condition that University is/becomes e-MFP member.
- Guidance/Advisory on logistics and other organisational aspects.
- Interface between the University and the Research Committee.
- Communication/dissemination of the conference within the inclusive finance community.
- Provision of the monetary reward to the winners and support in the organisation of the Best Graduate Research Paper Award.

### • **CERMi:**

- Support in the dissemination of the conference within the academic community through its mailing list.
- Support in the evaluation process of the extended abstracts/papers submitted to the conference.
- Support in identifying invited speakers and chairpersons for the plenary sessions included in the conference agenda.

#### 4. Research/Scientific Committee

The **ERCM Research Committee** is composed of renowned academic experts in microfinance and inclusive finance, including the previous organisers of the conference. The RC members provide input regarding the call for host university, have voting capacity in the decision of the host, and are expected to have an active role in the conference Scientific Committee (according to their availability). The RC members are also expected to have an important role in the dissemination of the call for hosts and the conference.

The ERCM Research Committee 2023-2024 includes:

- Adalbert Winkler
- Anastasia Cozarenco
- Annette Krauss
- Ariane Szafarz
- Arvind Ashta
- Baptiste Venet
- Bernd Balkenhol
- Dirk Andreas Zetzsche
- Hans Dieter Seibel
- Isabelle Guerin
- Johan Bastiaensen
- Laura Viganò
- Marc Labie
- Marek Hudon
- Michael O'Connor
- Niels Hermes
- Olga Biosca
- Robert Lensink
- Roy Mersland
- Solene Morvant-Roux

This document was prepared to serve as guide for applicants to be the host university of the ERCM 2024. Any questions or comments regarding the document are welcome – please send your feedback to Joana Afonso at [jafonso@e-mfp.eu](mailto:jafonso@e-mfp.eu).