



**Request for Proposals for Research on the Middle Market**  
**National Center for the Middle Market**  
**Fisher College of Business**  
**The Ohio State University**

The National Center for the Middle Market at the Fisher College of Business, The Ohio State University, invites proposals to fund research during 2018 on the Middle Market. Proposals are accepted on a semi-annual basis with the following deadlines and approval decisions.

<b>SUBMISSION DEADLINE</b>	<b>APPROVAL DECISIONS</b>
November 28, 2017	January 31, 2018

Proposals should be limited to five pages plus necessary appendices, and should contain the following components:

Introduction

In this section, identify the topic area and the research question you propose to study. Briefly describe the significance of the research proposed, specifically, the contribution of the research to the creation of new knowledge and *its particular relevance to middle market firms*. Also, note if you plan to do theoretical, exploratory empirical, or confirmatory empirical research. List the journal(s) at which this research is targeted (see preferred list of journals below). The Center has defined the Middle Market as firms with revenues ranging from \$10 million to \$1 billion. This can be a matter of assumption or an issue in your proposal.

Literature Review

Briefly summarize previous work in areas related to your proposed research question. In doing so, address the following questions. What related work have you undertaken in the area, and your suitability for the proposed research? What interesting questions are outstanding in light of extant work? Provide sufficient details regarding the literature to show how your proposed work relates to prior work and will potentially add to the accumulated body of knowledge.

Methodology

Please note approach, data needs, and analytic procedures. The testable form of your question should be clearly spelled out if your research intends to be confirmatory in nature. Address how your data needs will be addressed since many middle market firms are privately held and data are not always

readily available. If data collection is involved, describe its nature. If you propose a theoretical contribution, describe the nature of the model or conceptual framework you propose to develop. Whatever your proposed research approach, make sure to address the strengths and weaknesses you recognize in your methodology.

### Expected Results

Describe your a priori expectations as to the possible nature of findings and their implications for knowledge in general and for middle market firms in particular.

### Implications for Middle Market firms

Highlight the potential implications for middle market firms in this section, even if it repeats information provided elsewhere in the proposal. This is an important criteria in the selection process for funded projects.

### Bibliography

Provide an annotated bibliography.

### Funding request

- (a) Provide a timeline for the major steps of this research (e.g., (1) further formulation, (2) data collection, (3) analysis, (4) preliminary draft, and (5) journal submission or a corresponding scheme if doing theoretical work). If human subjects are involved, you may be required to obtain exemption or approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at your institution. This can be a lengthy process, but must be addressed.
- (b) Who will conduct the research? Provide resumes of the principal investigator (main contact with the Center) and all the other investigators.
- (c) Your coauthors may be drawn from other institutions. Compensation of coauthors from other institutions will be set on a comparable basis to that used to support Fisher faculty for approved proposals, except that benefits will not be covered.
- (d) What are the anticipated costs associated with data? Are the required data available through standard databases, and at what cost? If data must be collected, what are the steps you plan to take to collect data, and what are the anticipated costs?
- (e) Is there related travel involved, including conferences where you seek feedback on your work? Supplies? Other costs?
- (f) Provide line by line detailed breakdown of the anticipated costs. Total funding requests for a proposal should not exceed \$30,000. If total costs are in excess, note how the excess will be funded.

(g) Funding will be provided in one lump sum.

The following procedures will be followed in the processing of proposals:

#### Funding Limits

Part of the Center's mission is to encourage the study of middle market companies by scholars wherever they are, and funds accordingly are equally available to Fisher faculty and those from other schools. There is no penalty, therefore, for projects that involve collaboration with scholars from other institutions.

It is the responsibility of the investigators to ensure that such additional income from the NCMM is permissible and conforms to rules at your institution. Specify how funding will be accepted, i.e. as an individual or through your university.

#### Obligations of Researchers

In accepting funding, researchers will be asked to agree to be (a) named a Fellow of the National Center of the Middle Market for the period of the research funds, (b) provide a summary of your research proposal, and later your working paper, to be made available on the Middle Market website, (c) make an academic presentation in a suitable setting, and (d) help write a summary appropriate for dissemination to executives. The product of your research, including any data collected in the process, will belong to the Center in order to facilitate future research. There is a dearth of data on middle market firms, which has impeded research on this segment. However, so that the researchers can benefit from their efforts in creating new data, the Center will work with you to set a reasonable time before data are released to the Center. There may also be constraints on the release based on the agreements under which the researchers themselves have used other data.

You may be asked, with compensation based on rates used by our Executive Education Center at Fisher, to present your findings to executive audiences either through in-class teaching, webinars, or other format.

#### Review Process

The proposals will be reviewed by the Academic Advisory Committee of the National Center for the Middle Market. The Academic Advisory Committee, which can change, currently consists of Fisher professors, Thomas Goldsby (Department of Marketing and Logistics), Johnny Rungtusanatham (Department of Management Science), Oded Shenkar (Department of Management and Human Resources), Michael Weisbach (Department of Finance), Tzachi Zach (Department of Accounting and Management Information Systems), Steven Davidoff Solomon (UC Berkley), Peter Williamson (University of Cambridge), and Academic Director Oded Shenkar (Center rep). You may approach Oded Shenkar, or

any of the other members of the Academic Advisory Board for clarifications regarding this RFP. If a member of the Research Advisory Board puts in a research proposal, they will be asked to recuse themselves (an alternate, may be added for area expertise). Area-specific and cross-disciplinary proposals are welcome. Recommendations from the Research Advisory Board will be forwarded to the Oversight Board of the Center for final approval.

### Selection Criteria

Among the selection criteria, the following should be especially noted. Preference will be given to proposals that 1) contribute significantly to a better understanding of middle markets firms (e.g. enables growth of middle market firms). 2) Proposals whose investigators have demonstrated publishing in pertinent top journals (see preferred list below) have a higher likelihood of being selected. 3) Proposals focusing on at least one of the following topics: Operations/Logistics, Talent, Growth & Innovation, and issues related to Capital. Junior researchers are encouraged to co-author proposals with accomplished senior faculty colleagues for this reason. One of the objectives of the Center is to engage the best researchers, wherever they may be, in work on middle market firms.

### Monitoring of Progress

Approved funding will be released based on the researchers' ability to demonstrate sufficient progress in their work. For this purpose, one page reports will be due every three months with the final product due one year from date of acceptance unless otherwise agreed upon.

### Submission Process

Email your proposals as attachments to Alicia Ritchey at [ritchey.63@osu.edu](mailto:ritchey.63@osu.edu).

All faculty members are encouraged to submit proposals that enhance our understanding of Middle Market firms.

### Preferred List of Journals

The proposed research should be targeted at the following journals, and others of equivalent/higher quality.

Academy of Management Journal  
Academy of Management Review  
Accounting Review  
Administrative Science Quarterly  
American Business Law Journal  
Contemporary Accounting Research



— IN COLLABORATION WITH —



Harvard Business Review  
Information Systems Research  
Journal of Accounting and Economics  
Journal of Accounting Research  
Journal of Applied Psychology  
Journal of Business Logistics  
Journal of Business Venturing  
Journal of Consumer Research  
Journal of Finance  
Journal of Financial Economics  
Journal of International Business Studies  
Journal of Marketing  
Journal of Marketing Research  
Journal of Operations Management  
Management Science  
Marketing Science  
MIS Quarterly  
Operations Research  
Organization Science  
Production and Operations Management  
Review of Accounting Studies  
Review of Financial Studies  
Strategic Management Journal