



Knowledge Laboratory
Addressing inequalities in Latin America:
perspectives on wealth and power

Call for research grants
“Regulation and deregulation of wealth”

Latin America’s history of high levels of persistent social inequality has been accompanied by social struggles and institutional efforts to regulate wealth, promote social rights and even intervene in questions of ownership. In spite of this, obstacles to citizens’ effective political participation as well as the difficulties states face in regulating capital, have curtailed the results of ambitious programs that had, in certain historical periods and regimes, promised to guarantee collective and social rights in the face of economic power. The roots of this inequality lie not only in the asymmetrical distribution of material resources –which include great holdings of land, income and wealth—, but also in its perpetuation through prejudiced and exclusionary ethno/racial and gender relations. As such, social and institutional efforts have failed to bring about substantial changes in the continent’s patterns of accumulation, which continues to be characterized by a high concentration of wealth relative to the global average, and the highest level of social inequality.

The area’s recurring conflicts have been fueled by frustrated attempts to regulate wealth and failed agreements between capital and society, along with continued social resistance movements in Latin American societies that have mobilized against exclusionary economic programs. This panorama of social and political crisis in Latin America has continued over the course of successive historical cycles into the present day, making headlines all over the world.

In the last few decades, the humanities and social sciences have focused on the issue of poverty instead of providing a relational approach to two connected dynamics: the forms of accumulation of wealth and the production of social inequality. In this “povertology”, the relational nature of inequality is highlighted, laying bare the fact that wealth and poverty are two ineluctable sides of the same equation. A research program that proposes to provide knowledge on the joint functioning of social, institutional and cultural processes with the aim of regulating wealth and mitigating inequality in Latin America must include a rigorous examination of the mechanisms that produce and reproduce the accumulation of wealth, the form in which inequalities are constructed, and strategies that allow the powers that be to



ward off antagonistic forces. In this sense, the relational character of wealth and inequality remains to be explored. Furthermore, additional knowledge is required to understand the conflictive sociopolitical processes and the social and institutional efforts that Latin American states have been embroiled in over contested alternatives for the regulation or deregulation of wealth. With the aim of addressing the aforementioned problems, the laboratory proposes to pursue research within a transdisciplinary space for dialogue. Within this framework, the laboratory calls for meta-critical reflections that explicitly address convergences and divergences (ConDiv) between the humanities and the social sciences regarding academic discourses on power and wealth in Latin America, focusing on the discursive patterns in academia on the regulation and deregulation of wealth.

The topic **Regulation and deregulation of wealth** focuses on the following problems:

1. Different social classes' role in sociopolitical disputes over the regulation or deregulation of wealth and/or the construction of mechanisms that govern and procure the concentration of wealth (such as the role of elites or other social groups and actors defined by ethnic/racial categories and/or gender).
2. Historical processes of politicization and institutional/state efforts to regulate wealth by means of tax codes.
3. Processes of regulation or deregulation of wealth in the 21st century: changing cycles, impact on social inequalities, regional or national processes and/or comparative analysis.
4. Discourses, cultural representation and imaginaries of wealth and regulatory systems.
5. Patterns of knowledge in academic discourses on regulation and deregulation of wealth; convergences and divergences between the humanities and social sciences.

Call: CALAS seeks to promote the horizontal exchange of different types of knowledge. Researchers, intellectuals, and social actors are invited to apply with thoughtful proposals informed by experience in constructing knowledge in social, political and cultural arenas.

Grant conditions:

- On the basis of qualifications and academic experience, up to **10 grants** will be awarded to researchers in two categories: senior and junior.
- The selected recipients must carry out a research stay at CALAS' principal offices at the University of Guadalajara between September and December, 2020. During this



period, short excursions are permitted outside of Guadalajara for the purposes of gathering material relevant to the research project in libraries and documentary collections.

- Candidates must have a doctoral degree or demonstrate an equivalent level of research experience and reflection on the call's topic. Junior candidates must include a recommendation letter focused on the applicant's capacities for addressing the research topic.
- Grant recipients will participate in CALAS' events and activities during the period of their fellowship.
- Grant recipients will publish the results of their projects in the form of a working paper or in at least two academic articles and present their work in public talks in CALAS' Headquarters and/or its Regional Centers (CALAS' Andes regional office at FLACSO-Ecuador; CALAS Southern Cone and Brazil at the National University of San Martín-Buenos Aires, Argentina; CALAS Central America and the Caribbean at the University of Costa Rica – San José, Costa Rica).
- Senior and junior grant recipients will receive monthly compensation. They will also have at their disposal CALAS' infrastructure and will receive family support and funds for research trips.
- CALAS is committed to inclusion and the goal of gender parity and promotes affirmative action. We invite applications from qualified individuals with disabilities.

Requirements

- [Application form](#)
- Cover letter that explains how the project fits into the Laboratory's research program "Addressing inequalities in Latin America: Perspectives on wealth and power", especially within the research focus "Regulation and deregulation of wealth" and what are the project's aims.
- Two-page *curriculum vitae* with a list of relevant publications.
- A research project proposal, including a short summary of the status of the issue, objectives, work plan, methodological strategy and timeline. This proposal should concentrate on ONE of the call's proposed dimensions and specifically in one of the problems. Total length of proposal: between 3,000-4,000 words.



Submissions: Proposals (in Spanish, Portuguese, or English) should be sent in one single pdf file to the following email address: convocatorias@calas.lat, Reference: Research grant: wealth and power.

Deadline: March 26, 2020

Publication of selected proposals: May 22, 2020

This call is funded by Germany's Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Due to the quantity of proposals we receive, we will be unable to provide explanations for rejections.

Further information: Dr. Jochen Kemner, Centro María Sibylla Merian de Estudios Latinoamericanos Avanzados, tel. ++52 33 3819 3000 (ext. 23594), info@calas.lat