



## 2020 MFW4A CALL FOR ESSAYS

secretariat@mfw4a.org

### 1. Background

The Making Finance Work for Africa Partnership (MFW4A) is an initiative to support financial sector development in Africa which stems from the recognition that advancing financial sector development (FSD) in Africa requires cross-sector collaboration. The Partnership’s mission is to be the platform of reference for advocacy, knowledge sharing and cooperation on financial sector development in Africa. MFW4A has established a strong brand identity as a leading knowledge platform and an independent voice on African financial sector development. Our products and tools—our website ([www.mfw4a.org](http://www.mfw4a.org)), our bi-lingual bi-weekly newsletters, our members-only weekly press digests, the MFW4A Webinar Series, and the Africa Finance Forum (AFF) Blog Series—have stimulated discussion both on the continent and abroad, and helped to heighten awareness of FSD issues in Africa.

In 2018 and 2019, MFW4A and the African Development Bank (ADB) launched a series of Regional Financial Sector Dialogues. The aim of the dialogues was to enable policy makers, private actors and development partners to discuss the progress of ongoing reforms and to agree on priorities and future actions aimed at accelerating the development of the African financial sector. Participants addressed topics covering a wide range of products and services, including financial infrastructure and digital platforms, digital finance, nonbank financial services such as insurance, microfinance, participatory or Islamic finance, cross-border trade and business finance, green finance, and capital markets.

The MFW4A Secretariat is issuing a call for essays to foster a better understanding of some of the lingering challenges identified during the dialogues and other MFW4A events and gather thoughts, opinions and innovative ideas best suited to developing the African financial sector.

The Secretariat welcomes a wide range of perspectives and analysis on the broad theme, however submissions that relate to areas the Partnership most closely work on such as financial inclusion, long-term finance and financial regulation and supervision in Africa would be appreciated. The following are areas/topics for respondents to consider:

<b>Broad-Themes (MFW4A priorities)</b>			
	Financial inclusion in Africa	African Long-Term Finance	Financial Sector Regulation and Supervision in Africa
<b>Sub-Themes / Proposed topics</b>			
<b>Call for essays</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressing financial illiteracy in Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CDCs and African institutional investors: Roadmap for better social and economic outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulating non-bank financial services and Fintechs</li> </ul>

### 2. Eligibility

To qualify for the call, applicants must be at least 18 years of age in 2020 and enrolled in an academic institution. There are no restrictions regarding an applicant’s area of study as long as their essay meets all requirements outlined below. Candidates from all countries and regions are eligible to submit their

essay. The Secretariat particularly encourages essay submissions by women and students from the ADB regional member countries. Only single-author essays will be accepted.

Essays must describe unpublished work that is not currently submitted for publication elsewhere. Essays that contain any overt political statements, commercial content, and other inappropriate material will not be accepted.

No fees are required from applicants.

### 3. Instructions For Submission

There is a two-step submission process.

#### Step 1: Outline submission requirements

All candidates must first submit a short outline that provides a quick overview of the essay. The outline should be written in English or French language. It should include the main idea of the essay, approach, results (if any) and conclusions as well as all arguments organized in paragraphs. The maximum number of words is 500. Each outline will be graded based on the below scale:

Criteria	Grade
Author appears to understand pressing challenges raised by the topic or their implication for African financial sector development	/25
Approach in attempting to solve the issue at hand is suitable and relevant to a large number of African countries	/25
Essay has the potential for further research	/10
Effectiveness of the writing style	/20
Use of correct grammar and scientific terminology	/10
Appeal and accuracy of the title	/10

**Outlines** must be submitted via e-mail by **April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020** to [secretariat@mfw4a.org](mailto:secretariat@mfw4a.org). Email acceptance or rejection notifications will be sent to each applicant. An outline template is attached in annex A.

Only applicants with a grade of **70** or higher will be invited to submit their essay.

#### Step 2: Essay submission requirements

Selected applicants must submit a Word format of their essay in either French or English, via e-mail by **May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020** to [secretariat@mfw4a.org](mailto:secretariat@mfw4a.org). Essays must adhere to a length requirement of between 1,000 and 2,500 words. In the event that an essay exceeds 2,500 words, the essay may be declined or returned to the applicant with a request for further editing and resubmission. There is no requirement for formal or extensive footnoting.

Applicants are required to send a brief biography together with their submission. The biography must include name; address; credentials or designations (if appropriate); title; academic institution; proof of enrolment (student ID, enrolment number, admission letter, etc.); institution address; country of citizenship; e-mail address; and phone number. They must also sign a release form authorizing MFW4A to publish the essay on any support.

An information and release form can be found in Annex B.

#### 4. Timeline

**February 04, 2020:** Call for essays issued

**April 30, 2020:** Deadline for outline submission

**May 30, 2020:** Deadline for submission of essays

**May 30 - June 30, 2020:** Review of essays and selection by **June 30, 2020**

#### 5. Review process

Submitted essays will be screened and reviewed to first ensure that they meet minimum standards set forth by the Selection committee. Minimum standards will include the following:

	<b>Minimum Standard</b>
<b>Overall maximum length</b>	2,500 words
<b>Outline</b>	Included and 500 words max
<b>Timing</b>	Submitted prior to the deadline
<b>Integrity</b>	No plagiarism
<b>Original</b>	Not published or submitted for publication elsewhere

All screened essays will then undergo a double-blind review by the Selection committee. Results of the review will be sent via email to all applicants within days of winning essay announcement.

Essays will be judged on their originality and structure of argument, conceptual clarity, rigor of defense, quality of writing, and conclusions. Consideration will also be given to creativity and the extent to which an idea could contribute to the further development of solutions.

#### 6. Award and publication

The winning essay will be awarded a 1,000 Euros (€) grant to undertake further enhancements. The grant will be procured in accordance with the ADB's guidelines.

The author could also be considered to attend a MFW4A activity or a sponsored third-party workshop or conference and discuss his essay. In this event, all participation expenses will be covered by the Secretariat.

The winning essay, along with the 2 runners-up essays, each from the 2 remaining thematic/subthemes (if warranted), will be published on MFW4A portal, MFW4A newsletter and MFW4A donors and partners' blog section of their websites.

#### 7. Rights

Applicants understand that by submitting an essay for consideration, they are granting to the MFW4A Secretariat an unlimited license to print or republish their essay, with proper attribution given to the author.

## 8. Questions

Please direct any questions regarding this call for essays to:

**Yves Kra**, Research Associate  
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## 2020 MFW4A CALL FOR ESSAYS

### Annex B - Information Form (Biography)

<b>I. Personal information</b>	
Lastname, Firstname	-----
Address	----- -----
Phone number	-----
Email address	-----
Citizenship	-----
Occupation <i>(check one)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate student <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate student <input type="checkbox"/> Post-doctoral researcher <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please specify)</i> -----
Enrolment ID number	-----
Institution / Employer	-----
Institution address	-----
<b>II. Release Form</b>	
<p>I authorize the Making Finance Work for Africa Partnership and its members to use information in my paper/essay for any form of publication (digital or print).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>Date: -----</p> <p>Signature: -----</p>	