William T. Grant
FOUNDATION

Research Grants

Contents

Overview

The research grants program supports high-quality field-initiated studies that are relevant to policies and practices that affect the lives of young people ages 5 to 25 in the United States.

Proposed research must address questions that align with one of the Foundation's two focus areas.

Research proposals are evaluated on the basis of their fit with a given focus area; the strength and feasibility of their designs, methods, and analyses; and their potential to inform change and contribute to bodies of knowledge that can improve the lives of young people.

Considerations

The Foundation does not have a preference for a particular research design or method. We begin application reviews by looking at the research questions or hypotheses. Then we evaluate whether the proposed research designs and methods will provide empirical evidence on those questions. The strongest proposals incorporate data from multiple sources and often involve multi-disciplinary teams.

Across all of our programs, we strive to support a diverse group of researchers in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and seniority, and we encourage research projects led by African American, Latino, Native American, and Asian American researchers.

This application guide details our research focus areas, as well as the eligibility requirements, application procedures, submission instructions, and selection criteria for research grants. It also provides suggestions for developing strong applications. For each focus area, we have included brief profiles of recently funded grants. Descriptions of all grants funded in the past ten years are available on our website.

Focus Areas

The Foundation's mission is to support research to improve the lives of young people ages 5-25 in the United States. We pursue this mission by building bodies of useful research within a finite set of focus areas.

Researchers interested in applying for research grants must select one focus area:

Reducing Inequality

In this focus area, we support research to build, test, and increase understanding of approaches to reducing inequality in youth outcomes on the basis of race, ethnicity, economic standing, or immigrant origin status. We are interested in research on programs, policies, and practices to reduce inequality in academic, social, behavioral, and economic outcomes.

Improving the Use of Research Evidence

In this focus area, we support research to identify, build, and test strategies to ensure that research evidence reaches the hands of decision makers, responds to their needs, and is used in ways that benefit youth. We are particularly interested in research on improving the use of evidence by state and local decision makers, mid-level managers, and intermediaries.

Reducing Inequality

One of our two primary focus areas is reducing inequality in youth outcomes.

In this focus area, we support research to build, test, and increase understanding of approaches to reducing inequality in youth outcomes on the basis of race, ethnicity, economic standing, or immigrant origin status. We are interested in research on programs, policies, and practices to reduce inequality in academic, social, behavioral, and economic outcomes.

Our focus on reducing inequality grew out of our view that research can do more than help us understand problems—it can point us towards effective responses. There is mounting research evidence about the scope, causes, and consequences of inequality in the United States, but we believe that it is time to build stronger bodies of knowledge on how to *reduce* inequality.

To address this complex challenge, we support research from a range of disciplines and methodologies, and we encourage investigations into various systems, including justice, housing, child welfare, mental health, and education.

We welcome descriptive studies that clarify mechanisms for reducing inequality or elucidate how or why a specific program, policy, or practice operates to reduce inequality. We also welcome intervention studies that examine attempts to reduce inequality. In addition, we seek studies that improve the measurement of inequality in ways that can enhance the work of researchers, practitioners, or policymakers. The common thread across all of this work, however, is a distinct and explicit focus on reducing inequality—one that goes beyond describing the causes or consequences of unequal outcomes and, instead, aims to build, test, or understand policy, program, or practice responses.

DEFINITIONS

"Programs" are coordinated sets of activities designed to achieve specific aims in youth development.

"Policies" are broader initiatives intended to promote success through the allocation of resources or regulation of activities. Policies may be located at the federal, state, local, or organizational level.

"Practices" consist of the materials and activities through which youth development is enabled (e.g., coaching, mentoring, parenting, peer interactions, teaching). Practices involve direct interaction with youth (though not necessarily in person, as technology affords direct interaction from anywhere).

Proposing Research on Reducing Inequality

The primary line of inquiry in this focus area is building, testing, and increasing understanding responses to inequality in youth outcomes. Applications for research in this focus area must:

- **Identify a specific inequality in youth outcomes, and show that the outcomes are currently unequal. We are especially interested in supporting research to reduce inequality in academic, social, behavioral, or economic outcomes.**

- **Clearly identify the basis on which these outcomes are unequal, and articulate its importance. We are especially interested in research to reduce inequality on the basis of race, ethnicity, economic standing, or immigrant origin status.**

- **Articulate how findings from your research will help build, test, or increase understanding of a specific program, policy, or practice to reduce the specific inequality that you have identified.**

In sum, proposals for research on reducing inequality should make a compelling case that the inequality exists, why the inequality exists, and why the study's findings will be crucial to informing a policy, program, or practice to reduce it.

ASK A PROGRAM OFFICER

Is your interest in reducing inequality in economic outcomes limited to studies of poverty?

Our interest in economic inequality is not exclusively about poverty. Although we have special concern for the outcomes of youth in the most difficult circumstances, we are interested in reducing inequality across the entire spectrum—not just for the least fortunate. Some studies may focus on middle-class families who are increasingly challenged to provide resources to support their children's development, such as high-quality youth programs or college tuition. Moreover, our interest is in promoting better outcomes for youth who have been underserved, not in diminishing outcomes for youth who have been successful in the past.

Immigration status and higher education: Evidence from a large urban university

Principal Investigators: Amy Hsin and Holly Reed, Queens College, City University of New York; Sofya Aptekar, University of Massachusetts Boston; and Thomas DiPrete, Columbia University

Amy Hsin and her team are examining whether recent national, state, and university policies improve the educational outcomes of undocumented students.

Because they are not eligible for government financial aid and they attend school under threat of deportation, the roughly 250,000 undocumented immigrants currently enrolled in college nationwide are assumed to have lower odds of graduating than immigrant students with legal status. But researchers looking to test this assumption have lacked reliable data to track legal status and to include undocumented students from a range of countries. As a result, much of what we know about the college experiences of undocumented youth comes from qualitative studies of youth from Mexico. Thus we have less understanding of a broader cross-section of undocumented immigrants from different countries. Further, previous studies have disproportionately centered on selective four-year institutions rather than the community colleges that many undocumented students attend. Finally,

although those undocumented students that graduate often later face legal barriers to employment, most existing studies have not looked beyond college attendance as the main outcome.

With this study, Hsin and colleagues will advance the field by investigating how legal status and immigration reforms affect the educational outcomes and behaviors of a large and ethnically diverse population of undocumented students who attended two-year and four-year colleges within a large, public university system between 1999–2015. Further, whereas earlier research either inferred legal status or studied non-representative samples, Hsin and colleagues will draw on unique administrative data that will enable them to accurately identify legal status and study the population of undocumented students attending college in a large metropolitan area.

The team is examining the effects of two policies intended to increase the college persistence of undocumented youth: President Obama's 2012 executive order known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which allows youth who arrived before their 16th birthday to work legally on a temporary basis and provides temporary relief from deportation; and changes to professional licensing laws that allow eligible DACA recipients to obtain occupational licenses if they meet all other requirements for licensure except for documentation status. They will also identify institutional policies and practices that create a supportive environment for undocumented students and analyze how they affect outcomes.

By matching undocumented students to similar peers with legal status, the team will identify the causal effect of DACA on college performance, transfer, graduation, and attendance, as well as the impact of professional licensing reforms on these indicators and choice of major. In addition, interviews will be conducted with past and present students, family members, staff and faculty, and campus and community leaders.

Talking justice: Identifying interactional practices to improve the quality of police–civilian encounters

Principal Investigators: Nikki Jones, University of California, Berkeley, and Geoffrey Raymond, University of California, Santa Barbara

Nikki Jones and Geoffrey Raymond are investigating the kinds of interactions between police and youth that can build trust, encourage civilian cooperation, and reduce the use of force by officers.

The challenges confronting police reform stem in part from the frequency of encounters between police and people of color, especially young Black men, the quality of these interactions, and accountability when these encounters go poorly. To address these issues, Jones and Raymond will identify a set of practices that officers can use when they encounter youth to increase trust, reduce the likelihood of violence, and strengthen perceptions of police legitimacy.

Research shows that police legitimacy is lower among minority groups and that frequent encounters with the police can negatively impact the mental health of young men of color. While extant research studies have documented encounters between the police and civilians, they tend to treat officer and civilian interactions as static variables rather than a dynamic interplay in which one party influences the behavior of the other.

In prior work, the team used video recordings collected with law enforcement agencies to examine how officers respond when civilians ask questions or make complaints challenging the officer's agenda. In this study, Jones and Raymond will use a combination of video analysis, conversation analysis, ethnographic methods, and statistical analysis to measure the emergence and management of trust/mistrust for the police officer and the youth and adult civilians. They anticipate that improved police and civilian encounters will reduce the likelihood that youth of color will be arrested for minor crimes such as loitering. They also expect that youth in high surveillance areas may have better mental health, as they will witness fewer aggressive police encounters, which have been found to traumatize bystander witnesses.

Jones and Raymond will examine three collections of video recorded encounters: two were collected in collaboration with law enforcement agencies. The third was collected by a civilian videographer. The team will code law enforcement video data for indicators of civilian mistrust and officer responses to these indicators, as well as how police suspicions inform how they initiate and manage civilian encounters. Policing patterns will

be tabulated, and observed associations will be tested, controlling for civilian characteristics, officer gender, and time of day. The team will analyze the ethnographic interviews for how officers evaluate the trustworthiness of civilians, and will use the civilian video data to focus on civilian complaints and how police officers respond.

Do interventions that promote the idea that intelligence is developed, not fixed, reduce inequalities in math achievement?

Principal Investigator: David Yeager, University of Texas at Austin

David Yeager is investigating school-based programs with the potential to reduce inequality in youth outcomes.

Learning can be encouraged or suppressed by a student's ideas about her or his abilities and emotional responses to education challenges. Critical to such student perceptions of ability and skill are the ways that teachers praise performance, frame critical feedback, and structure grading policies. Growth mindset interventions, which promote the idea that learning is developed and demonstrate the brain's potential to grow, may increase students' achievement by positively influencing their understanding of their abilities.

Yeager hypothesizes that these interventions may help close socioeconomic and racial achievement gaps because Black and Latino students' abilities are often negatively stereotyped by teachers and students. If universally effective, an alternative approach is to apply growth mindset programs in targeted ways.

This study adopts a double-blind randomized controlled trial to test the effectiveness of a growth mindset intervention on a nationally-representative sample of 100 high schools, each providing a census of 9th-graders. Students will receive the intervention or control exercises twice during the first few months of 9th grade. Later student records will be accessed after one year to assess grades, test scores, attendance, and discipline incidents. Students and teachers will also complete surveys on classroom climate, instructional practices, and attitudes about the intervention.

Improving the Use of Research Evidence

One of our two primary focus areas is improving the use of research evidence in decisions that affect young people.

In this focus area, we support research to identify, build, and test strategies to ensure that research evidence reaches the hands of decision makers, responds to their needs, and is used in ways that benefit youth. We are particularly interested in improving the use of research by state and local decision makers, mid-level managers, and intermediaries.

This focus area grew out of our recognition that more can be done to strengthen connections between research and decisions that impact youth outcomes. Based on prior work that we funded from 2009—2015, we have a rich understanding of the conditions that obstruct or support the use of research evidence. What we need now, however, is a more robust understanding of strategies to *improve* the use of research evidence. Measures also are needed to capture changes in the nature and degree of research use.

To build stronger theory and empirical evidence, we support research from a range of disciplines and methodologies, and we encourage investigations into various systems, including justice, child welfare, mental health, and education. Research teams might draw on existing conceptual and empirical work about the use of research evidence, knowledge mobilization, and implementation science, as well as other relevant areas that can teach us about using research for continuous improvement and about changing research, policy, and practice institutions.

DEFINITIONS

"Research evidence" is a type of evidence derived from applying systematic methods and analyses to address a predefined question or hypothesis. This includes descriptive studies, intervention or evaluation studies, meta-analyses, and cost-effectiveness studies conducted within or outside research organizations.

"Use of research evidence" can happen in many ways and may involve the direct application of research evidence to decision making, conceptual influences on how decision makers think about problems and potential solutions, strategic uses of research to justify existing stances or positions, or imposed uses that require decision makers to engage with research.

Proposing Research on Improving the Use of Research Evidence

We seek research that builds strong theory and empirical evidence. Proposed research in this focus area must pursue one of the following lines of inquiry:

- **Identify or test strategies to improve the use of existing research. This work may investigate strategies, mechanisms, or conditions for improving research use. Alternatively, studies may measure the effects of deliberate efforts to improve routine and beneficial uses of research in deliberations and decisions that affect young people.**

- **Identify or test strategies for producing more useful research evidence. This includes examining incentives, structures, and relationships that facilitate the production of research that responds to decision makers' needs. Studies may also examine ways to optimize researchers', decision makers', and intermediaries' joint work to benefit youth.**

- **Test the assumption that using high-quality research in particular ways improves decision making and youth outcomes. This is a long-standing implicit assumption, but the case for using research would be more compelling if there were a body of evidence showing that using research benefits youth. We want to know the conditions under which using research evidence improves decision making and youth outcomes.**

These lines of inquiry require a range of methods, from experimental to observational designs, from comparative case approaches to systematic reviews. Where appropriate, applicants should consider using existing methods, measures, and analytic tools so that findings can be compared and aggregated across studies. That said, existing measures may not be well-suited

for some inquiries, and thus we welcome studies that adapt existing measures or develop new ones that can be employed in future studies. Finally, we continue to promote the use of mixed methods wherein multiple types of data are collected and integrated.

We encourage applicants proposing projects on the use of research evidence to read "Improving the Use of Research Evidence: An Updated Statement of Research Interests and Applicant Guidance," which describes these lines of inquiry in greater detail.

ASK A PROGRAM OFFICER

Why is the Foundation focused on improving the use of research evidence by state and local decision makers and intermediary organizations?

- State and local departments of education, child welfare, and juvenile justice directly influence the frontline practices that affect youth outcomes. Increased attention to evidence-based policy also creates unprecedented demands to use research in decision making at those levels.

- Mid-level managers are particularly important, given their roles deciding which programs, practices, and tools to adopt; deliberating ways to improve existing services; shaping the conditions for implementation; and making resource allocation decisions.

- Intermediaries that shape the production of research, or that translate and package research for use are also important. These organizations and individuals include think tanks, advocacy groups, consultants, professional associations, and others.

RECENT GRANTS ON THE USE OF RESEARCH EVIDENCE

Coordinated knowledge systems: Connecting evidence to action to engage students in school-based mental health

Principal Investigators: Bruce F. Chorpita, University of California, Los Angeles, and Kimberly D. Becker, University of South Carolina

Bruce Chorpita and Kimberly Becker are testing whether a Coordinated Knowledge System (CKS)—a suite of tools that embeds research evidence into a coordinated sequence of actions for school-based mental health professionals—will produce greater use of research relative to traditional practice guidelines.

Schools are the primary entry point and service delivery setting for young people who receive mental health services. Yet participation in services is low and attrition is high, with as many as half of students dropping out of those services. Although there is a robust evidence base on effective strategies for engaging youth and their families, it has limited use by mental health professionals in schools. In part, this is because the research is not consolidated for easy use by practitioners nor are there mechanisms that embed the research into practitioners' daily work.

The study includes 30 clinical supervisors, 120 of their therapist-supervisees, and 360 students enrolled in school-based services and at risk of prematurely dropping out of services. To test whether the CKS impacts the use of research evidence, Chorpita and Becker will randomly assign the clinical supervisors to either a CKS condition or a comparison condition in which they are provided with practice guidelines.

Digital recordings will be made of three supervision and two therapy sessions. The team will code these recordings to determine whether and how the CKS affected collaborative reflection and planning between supervisors and therapists. Specifically, data analysis will determine whether clinicians and their supervisors are more likely to draw on research to identify students' clinical problems and whether they are using the full range of available evidence to address those problems. Supervisors and therapists will also complete surveys about their attitudes toward and experiences with research evidence, so that the research team can better understand how the CKS performs across different contexts and across professionals with a variety of beliefs and backgrounds.

Intermediary Organizations and Education Policy: A Mixed-Methods Study of the Political Contexts of Research Utilization

Principal Investigator: Janelle Scott, University of California, Berkeley

The rise of large strategic philanthropies has shifted the political dynamics surrounding the production and use of research in education. Philanthropies fund think tanks, advocacy organizations, and centers to conduct research that will support their reform priorities around charter schools, school vouchers, teacher merit pay, and parent trigger laws. These intermediaries also have been particularly successful in using that research to persuade others to adopt their reform agendas in cities across the country.

Scott and colleagues will examine whether intermediaries' promotion of research differs depending on a city's governance structure and policy processes, as well as changes in political actors. They will also investigate whether changes in the supply of research, such as increasing non-partisan and independent research organizations, shift the use of research evidence by local decision makers. Lastly, the study will include a focus on how these intermediaries exploit social media to promote the use of research evidence.

The research team will conduct a cross-case analysis of the political ecology and use of research evidence in Los Angeles and New York City. They will conduct semi-structured interviews with policymakers, journalists, intermediary organization representatives, and university based researchers. They will also observe governance and school board meetings. All sources will be coded for the adoption and enactment of policy and for references to research, dismissals of research, and the use of research in idea and argument development. In addition, the team will conduct bibliometric analysis to map the frequency and clustering of references to research and reform policies in education blogs and Twitter feeds. Study findings will offer insights about the context of policymaking and inform strategies for improving the use of research evidence.

Integrating Theoretic and Empirical Findings of Research Evidence Use: A Healthcare Systems Engineering Approach

Principal Investigator: Thomas Mackie, Rutgers University

There has been a rise in incentives to encourage the use of evidence-based programs and research-informed practices in services to treat foster care youth. However, given the number

of forces that shape state decision makers' use of research evidence, it is difficult to anticipate how and when research is used and what research might be useful. Mackie and colleagues will leverage results from prior studies on the use of research evidence, new interviews with policymakers, and input from a panel of experts to develop simulation models to test hypotheses about the forces shaping how research evidence is used in policy development and implementation. They will capitalize on an opportunity presented by the passage of the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-34), which requires select federally funded child welfare agencies to use evidence-based trauma-focused mental health services for children in foster care. The natural variation that occurs in states' responses to P.L. 112-34 will allow Mackie and colleagues to apply a health care systems engineering approach and develop simulated decision making models to better understand the conditions supporting the use of research and key drivers of use.

Mackie and colleagues will use a mixed methods approach as they move through three phases of work. In the first phase, the team will interview 108 mid-level administrators from 12 states' child welfare, Medicaid, and mental health systems to identify factors influencing evidence use. Phase II involves mapping links and identifying gaps between what policymakers prioritize as relevant information for making decisions about

evidence-based programs and what the existing evidence indicates. Phase III will use strategies from systems engineering and the two other phases to develop models that simulate the logic and processes involved in decision making. The study will advance what we know about the conditions that support the use of research evidence.

Awards

Major research grants

Research grants in the reducing inequality focus area typically range between $100,000 and $600,000 and cover two to three years of support.

Research grants in the improving the use of research evidence focus area range between $100,000 and $1,000,000 and cover two to four years of support.

For both focus areas, projects involving secondary data analysis are at the lower end of the budget range, whereas projects involving new data collection and sample recruitment can be at the higher end. Proposals to launch experiments in which settings (e.g., classrooms, schools, youth programs) are randomly assigned to conditions sometimes have higher awards.

In addition to financial support, the Foundation invests significant time and resources in capacity-building for research grantees. We provide opportunities for connections with other scholars, policymakers, and practitioners, and we organize learning communities for grantees in each of our focus areas. Such meetings allow grantees to discuss challenges, seek advice from peers and colleagues, and collaborate across projects. To strengthen our grantees' capacities to conduct and implement strong qualitative and mixed-methods work, the Foundation provides access to a consultation service through the University of California, Los Angeles's Semel Institute, Center for Culture and Health, Fieldwork and Qualitative Data Research Laboratory.

Officers' research grants

Officers' research grants are a separate funding mechanism for smaller projects with budgets ranging from $5,000 to $50,000. Some are stand-alone projects; others build off of larger projects. All must fit one of our research focus areas.

Submissions for the Officers' research grants will be accepted on the January 10, 2018 and August 1, 2018 deadlines. **Letters of inquiry for the Officer's research grants will not be accepted for the May 2, 2018 deadline.**

Similar to the major grants program, we encourage research projects led by African American, Latino, Native American, and Asian American researchers. Early career scholars are also encouraged to apply for these grants as a way to build their research programs.

ASK A PROGRAM OFFICER

What do you look for in measurement studies?

We encourage development of practical, cost-effective measures. Proposals for studies to develop or improve measures should provide detailed plans for establishing reliability and validity.

What do you look for in evaluation studies?

Proposals must specify a theoretical basis for the program, policy, or practice interventions under study. We are interested in investigations of the mechanisms through which intervention effects occur, as well as variation in intervention effects. Thus, studies should shed light not solely on "what works," but on what works for whom, under what conditions, and why. We are more likely to fund thoughtful, exploratory studies than work that is narrow, even if it involves random assignment. The project should produce findings that have broader relevance to the field, beyond the particular program, policy or practice being studied.

Many studies will provide direct evidence of impact on youth outcomes, but we will consider studies that examine intermediate outcomes shown in other work to reduce inequality in youth development or to improve the use of research evidence by decision makers.

Do you fund pilot studies, feasibility studies, or the planning stages of studies?

Rarely. We focus our support on empirical studies in which applicants have already performed a literature review, have identified specific research questions and/or hypotheses, and possess sufficiently detailed research methods and data analysis plans so that reviewers can evaluate their rigor. Intervention studies should be beyond the pilot phase.

Do you fund international studies?

Rarely. Our mission focuses on supporting research to improve the lives of young people in the United States.

What are the Foundation's top recommendations for applicants?

- Clearly describe the theory or conceptual frame guiding the study. This helps reviewers understand why you are approaching the project in a particular way and how your study relates to the approaches others have taken.

- Focus on doing a few things well rather than trying to cover the waterfront. For example, pursue a few key research questions or hypotheses thoroughly and rigorously, rather than proposing an extensive list.

- Propose research methods that are tightly aligned with the project's research questions or hypotheses.

- Make a strong case for how the study is relevant to important policy or practice issues, and how it will advance work on those issues

The Foundation encourages interdisciplinary research teams How should applicants indicate the composition of their team in their applications?

Within the narrative, investigators can describe how the research team is well-positioned to address the varied tasks demanded by the study's conceptualization and research design. This might include combining expertise across disciplines or methods. We encourage applicants to be specific about the value of each member's contributions to the team, and strongly discourage teams that comprise many senior investigators for very limited time and effort.

Eligibility

Eligible Organizations

Grants are made to organizations, not individuals. Grants are limited, without exception, to tax-exempt organizations. A copy of the Internal Revenue Service tax-exempt status determination letter is required from each applying organization. We do not support or make contributions to building funds, fundraising drives, endowment funds, general operating budgets, or scholarships.

Eligible Principal Investigators

Institutions usually have their own eligibility criteria regarding who can act as Principal Investigator (PI) on a grant. This often excludes graduate students. Graduate students can, however, be included as Co-Principal Investigators.

Application Materials

For Major Research Grants Letters of Inquiry

The application process begins with a letter of inquiry (LOI). Letters of inquiry for major research grants are accepted three times per year (in the winter, spring, and summer). LOIs must include the following:

Project Information

Including your project title (120 characters MAXIMUM), brief description (see below), start and end dates, and total requested amount, which includes the combined direct and indirect costs for the full grant period.

Brief Description of the Project (1,500 characters MAXIMUM)

- Start with the major research questions.

- Briefly summarize the project's rationale and background.

- Describe the intervention (if applicable), research methods, and data analysis plan.

- Language should be appropriate for an educated lay audience.

Project Narrative (FIVE PAGES TOTAL)

Your narrative should be formatted as follows: 12-point font, single-spaced text with a line between each paragraph, and 1-inch margins on all sides.

- State the major research questions or aims guiding the proposal.

- Provide a strong rationale, including:

  - a brief literature review indicating how the project complements and extends prior and concurrent research,

  - a clear description of the theories providing the foundation or organizing frame for the work,

- how the project advances theory, and

- the project's relevance for policy or practice.

- Include specific hypotheses and/or research questions to be tested or addressed.

- Describe the methods and data collection plan.

- Describe the research methods, including:

  - Sample/case definition and selection procedures;

  - research design;

  - key constructs, measures and data sources; and procedures for data collection

  - intervention (if applicable).

- Summarize the data analysis plan for addressing the hypotheses and/or research questions.

  - Identify the key measures;

  - If you are using qualitative data, you should provide some detail about coding processes and the plan for establishing that the coding is reliable;

  - If you are proposing to develop or improve measures, you should discuss how you will show that the measures are valid and reliable.

- If you have a reference page, include it in this upload. It will not be counted toward the five-page maximum.

Curriculum Vitae, Biographical Sketch or Resume (ONE PAGE)

Include a one-page curriculum vitae, biographical sketch, or resume for each Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator. Be sure to include education and training, peer-reviewed publications, and grants. Do not send full curricula vitae or resumes. There are no specific formatting requirements for curricula vitae, biographical sketches, or resumes.

For Officers' Research Grants Letters of Inquiry

Letters of inquiry for Officers' research grants should include all of the materials required for major research grants (project information, project narrative, curriculum vitae), as well as the following materials. Note that the following materials (budget, budget justification form, IRS tax exempt status determination letter) are only required for Officers' research grants letters of inquiry and are not required for major research grants letters of inquiry.

Budget

The template for the Budget can be found within the Budget tab of your online application. Applicants may take an indirect cost allowance of up to 15 percent of total direct costs.

Budget Justification Form

The template of this form can be found within the Uploads tab of your online application.

IRS Tax-Exempt Status Determination Letter

You will be required to submit a copy of your institution's IRS tax-exempt status determination letter.

Submission Instructions

The William T. Grant Foundation accepts applications only through our online application system, which is accessible through our website at wtgrantfoundation. org. For specific deadlines, please visit the Grants page of our website.

We encourage applicants to begin the LOI as early as possible to review the online application and allow sufficient time to resolve any technical issues that may arise.

Step 1: Log in (or register if you are a new user).

- Go to wtgrantfoundation.org and click "LOG IN" at the top right of any page. If you forgot your password, click the link to reset your password.

- If you are the principal investigator (PI), and do not have an account, register on our website to create one. If you are not the PI, obtain the account login information from that person or help the PI create an account.

Step 2: Select the research grants funding opportunity or the Officers' research grants funding opportunity, and complete the eligibility quiz.

- Once you have completed the eligibility quiz, return to your Easygrants homepage and click on the 'Letter of Inquiry' link to enter the application.

Step 3: Enter PI contact information, PI demographic information, and contact information for each additional Co-Principal Investigator.

Step 4: Provide project information.

Step 5: Enter and upload all required information.

- Refer to the Application Materials sections for major research grants or Officers' research grants.

Step 6: Review and Submit.

- Review the application PDF to make sure that your materials are in order. Once the application is submitted, you will not be able to make any changes.

Selection Criteria

The letter of inquiry functions as a mini-proposal, and should meet the selection criteria detailed below:

Projects must be aligned with one of the Foundation's focus areas.

- Research questions should inform either responses to inequality in youth outcomes or strategies to improve the use of research evidence in ways that benefit youth.

Projects should demonstrate sound theoretical grounding, sophisticated conceptualization, and relevance to policy or practice.

- Proposals must reflect a mastery of relevant theory and empirical findings, and clearly state the theoretical and empirical contributions they will make to existing knowledge.

- Projects may focus on either generating or testing theory, depending on the state of knowledge about a topic.

- Although we do not expect that any one project will or should impact policy or practice, all proposals should discuss how the findings will be relevant to policy or practice.

Projects should employ rigorous methods that are commensurate with the proposal's goals.

- The research design should describe how the empirical work will test, refine, or elaborate specific theoretical notions.

- The study's design, methods, and analysis plan should fit the research questions.

- The sampling and measurement plans should clearly state why they are well-suited to address the research questions or hypotheses. For example, samples should be appropriate in size and composition to answer the study's questions.

- The quantitative and/or qualitative analysis plan should demonstrate awareness of the strengths and limits of the specific analytic techniques and how they will be applied in the current case.

- If proposing mixed methods, plans for integrating the methods and data should be clear.

- Where relevant, attention should be paid to the generalizability of findings and to statistical power to detect meaningful effects.

- The proposal must demonstrate adequate consideration of the gender, ethnic, and cultural appropriateness of concepts, methods, and measures.

Research plans must demonstrate feasibility.

- The methods, time frame, staffing plan, and other resources must be realistic.

- Prior training and publications should demonstrate that the applicant has a track record of conducting strong research and communicating it successfully.

Where appropriate, we value projects that:

- harness the learning potential of mixed methods and interdisciplinary work;

- involve practitioners or policymakers in meaningful ways to shape the research questions, interpret preliminary and final results, and communicate their implications for policy and practice;

- combine senior and junior staff in ways that facilitate mentoring of junior staff;

- are led by members of racial or ethnic groups underrepresented in academic fields;

- generate data useful to other researchers and make such data available for public use.

Application Review Process

Major research grants

Letters of inquiry are reviewed internally by staff with social science expertise. Given the breadth of work presented in LOIs, internal reviewers may lack deep knowledge of an applicant's specific area of work, so applications should be written with this in mind. On occasion, internal reviewers will request more information from applicants or solicit expert opinions in order to more adequately assess a project.

There are three application cycles for letters of inquiry each year. For specific deadlines, please visit our website. After internal review of a letter of inquiry, the Foundation will decide whether to decline the LOI or invite a full proposal for further consideration. The investigator will be notified of this decision within eight weeks of the LOI deadline. In recent years, about fifteen percent of the letters received for major grants have been invited to submit a full proposal. Typically, applicants are offered two deadlines for full proposals, ranging from approximately six weeks to six months from the time of the invitation. We do not accept unsolicited full proposals.

The full proposal follows a format similar to that of the letter of inquiry, and includes a proposal narrative of about 25 pages, a budget and budget justification, and full curriculum vitae or resumes for key staff and investigators. (Institutional Review Board Approval is not required at the time of the proposal's submission, but is required before issuing grant funds.) Full proposals are reviewed using a scientific peer review process involving two or more external reviewers. The Foundation chooses reviewers with content, methodological, and disciplinary expertise in the proposed work. The Foundation's Senior Program Team then reviews promising proposals and offers additional feedback. Applicants who receive positive reviews with critiques that can be addressed within a short time frame are given an opportunity to provide written responses to reviewers' comments. Full proposals, external reviews, and applicants'

responses to external reviews are then further reviewed by the Senior Program Team. The Team makes funding recommendations to the Program Committee and Board of Trustees. Approved awards are made available shortly after Board meetings, which occur in late March, June, and October.

The review process for a successful application, beginning with the submission of a letter of inquiry and ending with approval by our Board of Trustees, is 10 to 15 months.

Officers' research grants

Applications for Officers' research grants are accepted two times per year, and share the same deadlines in January and August as the larger research grants program. Officers' research grants are awarded on the merit of the letter of inquiry alone and the review process is usually eight weeks from the corresponding deadline. Awards are made available after internal review.

All letters of inquiry—for both major grants and Officer's grants—will be reviewed internally. Investigators will receive an email notification of staff's decision within eight weeks of the LOI submission date.

Having problems? For questions about application instructions and procedures, contact Cristina Fernandez, research assistant, at cfernandez@wtgrantfdn.org. If you encounter technical difficulties, please use the contact form that is located at the bottom of each page on the application website.