

2011-2012 New Scholars Grant Competition
Request for Proposals
Research on Monitoring Trends in Poverty and Inequality

Purpose

The Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality (CPI), a newly established National Poverty Research Center funded by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, seeks to fund research that will expand our knowledge of key trends in poverty and inequality. CPI anticipates funding 5 proposals, with a maximum award of \$15,000 each. The awards will be made to “New Scholars” (i.e., scholars who have received their Ph.D. no earlier than 2004) who will then work collaboratively with one of CPI’s Research Groups to carry out the proposed research project.

Background

The Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality is focused on monitoring trends in poverty and inequality, explaining what’s driving those trends, and developing science-based policies on poverty and inequality. The Director of the Center is David B. Grusky of Stanford University, and the Associate Director of the Center is Christopher Wimer.

In its first year, this research will be carried out by six research groups (RGs) examining (a) poverty, (b) income inequality, (c) social mobility, (d) educational access and achievement, (e) welfare program usage, and (f) the effects of the recent recession and possible recovery. These research groups will each be led by a distinguished scholar of poverty and inequality (Michael Hout, Gary Solon, David Betson, Kathy Edin, Henry Brady, Bruce Owen, Sean Reardon, David Grusky). The RG leaders will be joined by postdoctoral fellows appointed by the Center, scholars who are winners of the Center’s grant competitions, and Stanford University graduate and undergraduate research fellows.

The proposed research should use new or existing data to analyze key trends related to one of the six domains listed above. The types of research that will be supported within each of the domains is described in more detail [here](#) (and applicants are *strongly encouraged* to carefully read these research descriptions before formulating their proposals). The main questions of interest, as detailed in the website descriptions, are as follows:

- How might current tools for measuring poverty in the United States be improved?
- Why has income and earnings inequality increased in the United States?

- Is economic and occupational mobility in the United States declining, increasing, or unchanged? What accounts for such changes (or stability)?
- How well has the “safety net” performed in the economic downturn?
- How has the downturn affected attitudes, beliefs, and lifestyles in the United States?
- Are the effects of family background on educational performance and achievement increasing (and if so why)?

The proposed projects may rely on either qualitative or quantitative data, or a combination of the two.

Terms

1. Applicants must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent by December 31, 2011. Applicants must have received their Ph.D. or its equivalent by no earlier than January 1st, 2004. Stanford University faculty and postdoctoral fellows are ineligible for funding.
2. Grants should begin no later than March 1, 2012, and end no later than November 30th, 2012. A final report will be due to CPI no later than December 15, 2012. No-cost extensions are not allowed.
3. The grant will be awarded either as a personal services contract to one or more researchers or through the applicant’s home institution. Due to the limited funds available, indirect costs will be limited to no more than 10 percent of the grant amount (if made through the applicant’s home institution).
4. Funds may only cover reasonable research expenses up to \$15,000. These may include summer salary, consultant payments for primary investigators, costs of purchasing data or software, research or consulting assistance, and research-related travel. Applicants should include expenses in their budget to cover travel to Stanford University for a mini-conference of all funded grantees in January of 2013.
5. Recipients must submit two short progress reports to CPI, one by May 15th, 2012, and the second by October 15th, 2012.

Selection Criteria

CPI will evaluate applications in collaboration with affiliated scholars and staff from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Proposals will be evaluated according to:

- The quality and appropriateness of the research design, methodology, and data
- The proposed study’s feasibility
- The proposed study’s policy significance
- How the study contributes to the principal investigator’s career development

Application Instructions

Applicants should submit their proposal electronically to inequality@stanford.edu. Proposals must be received by 5 PM Pacific Standard Time on **January 10, 2012**. The proposal should be submitted as a single file and contain the following components in the order listed below:

1. A cover sheet that includes the title of the proposed research project, all investigators' names, affiliations, and contact information, and a principal investigator (PI) for correspondence purposes (if there is more than one investigator).
2. A brief narrative (3-4 single spaced pages, excluding figures and references) delineating: (a) the research question and the study's aims, (b) a review of the literature informing the study, (c) the research design, methods, and data sources, and (d) the likely policy significance of the proposed research.
3. An itemized budget and budget narrative explaining each line item.
4. A project timeline that's consistent with the conditions outlined in the "Terms" section above. This timeline should list the milestones necessary to complete the study in the allotted time.
5. C.V.(s) for all investigators

Please note that Human Subjects review approval (or a waiver in the case of secondary data analysis) is required before any funding may be disbursed.

Contact Information

Christopher Wimer
Associate Director
Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality
cwimer@stanford.edu
(650) 721-3228