William T. Grant Scholars Program

2017 APPLICATION GUIDE

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Announcement of Awards:
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Overview

The William T. Grant Scholars Program supports career development for promising early-career researchers. The program funds five-year research and mentoring plans that significantly expand junior researchers’ expertise in new disciplines, methods, and content areas. We recognize that early-career researchers are rarely given incentives or support to take such risks, so this award includes a mentoring component, as well as an emphasis on community and collaboration.

Scholars Program applicants should have a track record of conducting high-quality research and an interest in pursuing a significant shift in their trajectories as researchers. Proposed research plans must address questions of policy and practice that are relevant to the Foundation’s focus areas.

Focus Areas

We are focused on youth ages 5 to 25 in the United States. We fund research that increases our understanding of:

- programs, policies, and practices that reduce inequality in youth outcomes, and
- strategies to improve the use of research evidence in ways that benefit youth.

We seek research that builds stronger theory and empirical evidence in these two areas. We intend for the research we support to inform change. While we do not expect that any one study will create that change, the research should contribute to a body of useful knowledge to improve the lives of young people.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to this guide, the Foundation provides a variety of resources related to our focus areas, including blog posts, commissioned papers, and articles and presentations by staff and grantees on our website.

We also provide answers to frequently asked questions about our funding priorities, which may prove useful when developing and submitting your application.

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 in greater detail our key interests and recent shifts in our focus. This document can be found on the Scholars Program page of our website, under “Resources for Applicants.”
Mesmin Destin
Class of 2021
FOCUS AREA

Reducing Inequality

Inequality by race, ethnicity, economic standing, and immigrant origin status is pervasive in the United States, and, in many ways, has become more extreme in recent decades. This inequality is evident across a range of systems, including the education, child welfare, mental health, and justice systems, and in varied settings, such as neighborhoods, schools, families, and communities. Young people from marginalized backgrounds face increasing barriers to achieve their potential in the academic, social, behavioral, and economic realms. The William T. Grant Foundation contends that the research community can play a critical role in efforts to reduce inequality. Toward this end, we support research to identify, build, and test responses to inequality in youth outcomes and opportunities.

To propose research on reducing inequality, applicants should:

1. Clearly identify the dimension(s) of inequality to be studied (e.g., race, ethnicity, economic standing, and/or immigrant origins).
2. Make a case for the importance of the dimension(s) of inequality.
3. Specify the youth outcome(s) to be studied (e.g., academic, social, behavioral, and/or economic).
4. Show that the outcomes are currently unequal.

Strong proposals will establish a clear link between a particular dimension of inequality and specific youth outcomes. Too frequently, across different research proposals that we see, dimensions of inequality are referenced only in passing, and are not thoughtfully conceptualized. Sometimes in quantitative studies, they are used as moderators. Sometimes, qualitative studies do not conceptualize how the findings will inform a response to inequality. Proposals for research on reducing inequality should make a compelling case for why the inequality exists, and why the study’s findings will be crucial to informing a policy, program, or practice to reduce it.

OUR 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).
We welcome different strategies to reduce inequality. For instance, inequality may be reduced by implementing a program, policy, or practice that helps disadvantaged students more than others, or by applying a universally beneficial approach in a compensatory way so that it especially benefits the youth who need it the most. Responses to inequality may also be informed by studies that offer critical insights on a key dilemma that practitioners or policymakers face in addressing unequal youth outcomes, or challenge assumptions that underlie current approaches. In all cases, the applicant must be specific about the dimension of inequality that is the focus of the study.

For instance, one policy for improving the academic outcomes of adolescents who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken and are classified as English learners is to reclassify them when they have the English skills to join mainstream classrooms. But we know little about whether reclassification helps English learners succeed academically, or at what stage of their language development it is best to reclassify these students.

Through one study that we are funding through our research grants program, Laura Hill and her colleagues are analyzing quantitative data to examine the causal impact of reclassification policies on English learner outcomes in Los Angeles Unified and San Diego Unified School Districts. The team will also conduct interviews to understand how policies and practices designed to reduce unequal outcomes were developed and how they actually work. Hill and colleagues will analyze how district leaders choose test score thresholds for reclassification, and will identify the challenges that central office administrators and school leaders and staff encounter in reclassifying students according to policy. Finally, they will investigate how leaders, counselors, and teachers support recently-arrived English learners, as well as those students who have been classified as such for six or more years, in courses specifically designed for them. The goal is to understand the conditions that promote favorable outcomes for English learners.

Is your interest in economic inequality 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.
Tuppett Yates and Micere Keels, Class of 2017
FOCUS AREA

Improving the Use of Research Evidence

Critical gaps exist between research, decision making, and youth outcomes. Too often, research is absent from deliberations about programs and practices for youth. And the information needs of decision makers working on behalf of youth too rarely shape research agendas. These gaps persist despite increased calls for research-informed programs, policies, and practices, and sizable investments to generate stronger research evidence. In addition, we lack a strong evidence base to demonstrate the value of social science research when it is used. We see a need for new knowledge about how to improve the use of research evidence.

The Foundation’s use of research evidence initiative takes up this challenge and aims to build theory and empirical evidence on strategies to improve the use of research evidence in ways that benefit youth. We recognize that research use is rarely a simple process whereby research “facts” are passed from researchers to research users and then applied in a rational decision-making process.

As the Foundation commits to renewed interest in this area, we shift our focus from understanding how and under what conditions research is used to understanding how to create those conditions.

Our renewed focus includes:

• Investigations to identify, create, and test the structural and social conditions that foster more routine and constructive uses of existing research evidence.
• Studies to identify, create, and test the incentives, structures, and relationships that facilitate the production of new research evidence that responds to decision makers’ needs.
• Studies that investigate whether and under what conditions using high quality research evidence improves decision making and youth outcomes.

OUR 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.

“Strategies” are systematic and replicable methods, activities, or policies intended to improve the use of research evidence or to maximize its benefits on decision making and youth outcomes.

To propose research on improving the use of research evidence, applicants should clearly identify how they conceptualize and will operationalize the use of research evidence. Studies should focus on an area in which a body of research evidence, if used, has the potential to benefit youth. Proposals should be strong both theoretically and methodologically. Studies that seek to develop novel measures and methods for capturing research use are also welcome.

We generally support studies in education, child welfare, and justice, and focus on the use of research evidence by state and local decision makers and intermediary organizations. However, because we recognize that the best ideas might fall outside these decision making groups and policy domains, we remain open to groundbreaking studies that fall outside of these areas if applicants provide a compelling rationale.

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. They also face unprecedented demands to use research in decision making.
- 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 and translate and package research for use are also especially important. These organizations and individuals include think tanks, advocacy groups, consultants, professional associations, and others.
Former William T. Grant Scholar:

GUANGLEI HONG
Associate Professor, Comparative Human Development, the University of Chicago

My William T. Grant Scholars award, “Causal Inference Methods for Studying Instruction Effects for Language Minority Students,” expanded my methodological expertise in causal inferences for multi-level longitudinal educational data, and increased my knowledge of educational policies and instructional programs for language minority students. Most significantly, it allowed me to conduct research that might otherwise have been hard to launch.

With my Scholars award, I examined the short- and long-term effects of providing English language learning (ELL) services in kindergarten and first grade on students’ math learning throughout the elementary school years. Using a non-randomized study of about 3,000 language minority students from kindergarten through fifth grade, I sought to answer complex questions, such as how to assess the benefit of an additional year of ELL support, and why a given ELL program produces (or fails to produce) its impact. My research revealed that learning is affected by the number of years a student receives ELL services, the form in which ELL services are implemented, and the ways that teachers organize math instruction in a language-diverse classroom. I also found that ELL support in kindergarten boosted the math skills of Spanish-speaking children, a benefit that was maintained through the fifth grade.

Each of my three mentors offered strong support during the years of my Scholars award. From my mentor, Esther Geva, I learned a great deal about the development of literacy skills in second language learners. Professor David Francis’ expertise in statistical and psychometric methods and his research on ELL education perfectly matched the dual focus of my research: language minority students and causal inference methods. Professor Larry Hedges also provided insightful feedback for my attempts at making methodological advances.

While supported by my mentors to make the stretch into ELL research, I also had the opportunity to reflect on and improve my own mentoring skills through the Supplementary Mentoring program. The program taught me how to help junior researchers of color become independent and successful scholars. At one point, I worked with three postdoctoral researchers, encouraging each of them to take leadership and claim ownership of an individual research agenda while building strong rapport with one another.

The value of the Scholars award far surpasses the research funding it provides. With the knowledge I gained, I completed my research monograph, Causality in a Social World: Moderation, Mediation, and Spill-over, in 2015. What’s more, the award gave me membership in a community of Scholars tackling important questions to improve the lives of young people while also fostering their own professional growth.
My Scholars award, “Moving Matters: Residential Mobility, Neighborhoods and Family in the Lives of Poor Adolescents,” built upon eight years of research that I had been conducting on housing policies which help poor families relocate to better neighborhoods. In that work, I primarily used Census data, administrative data from government agencies, geocoding, and, to a much lesser degree, qualitative data.

After completing my Ph.D., I accepted a position in the Department of Sociology at John Hopkins University and joined the fieldwork team for the Baltimore site of HUD’s Moving To Opportunity study. I spent over a year conducting fieldwork with mothers and teenagers in Baltimore neighborhoods. This experience was transformative: I discovered that qualitative methods were crucial for understanding how policies intersect with the everyday lives of poor families, and for helping design better quantitative studies. I was eager to pursue fieldwork and design my own study.

The Scholar’s award changed the trajectory of my career by supporting the development of mixed-methods skills and helping me discover the kind of scholar I was meant to be. With the award, I became a mixed methods researcher, with expertise in longitudinal, team-based fieldwork. I developed a research program that was bigger in scope and more ambitious than I had ever imagined. My Scholars research provided the basis for additional funding, which allowed me to conduct fieldwork in four cities (rather than one), and included interviews with over 800 families, children, and landlords (not the 100 families I originally proposed). I trained a team of over thirty students and postdocs (rather than the five I planned for). By combining quantitative research with multi-city, in-depth fieldwork, I could better describe parental decisions about mobility, housing, schooling, and family dynamics.

I worked with my mentors to cultivate mixed methods skills and carry out my first independent data collection project. Kathryn Edin provided guidance for the qualitative components of my study, helping me recruit participants, manage my team, and analyze the data for journal articles. Michael Oakes, a social epidemiologist with expertise in methodology, helped with my sampling design and the analysis of panel survey data. John Bolland provided the inspiration for my fieldwork in Alabama. My mentors were amazing: they provided “on call” support, especially when I was in the field.

Ultimately my Scholars award helped me bring over a decade of neighborhood and youth research together into a forthcoming book (with Susan-Clampet Lundquist and Kathryn Edin), Coming of Age in the Other America. The Scholars award shaped and amplified my career by allowing me to take risks, pursue adventures, and think big.
Awards

Award recipients are designated as William T. Grant Scholars. Each year, four to six Scholars are selected and each receives up to $350,000, distributed over five years.

Awards begin July 1 and are made to the applicant’s institution. The award must not replace the institution’s current support of the applicant’s research.

CAPACITY-BUILDING

The Foundation holds annual meetings during the summer to support the Scholars’ professional development. These summer retreats are designed to foster a supportive environment in which Scholars can improve their skills and work. Scholars discuss works-in-progress and receive constructive feedback on the challenges they face in conducting their projects. The retreat consists of workshops centered on Scholars’ projects, research design and methods issues, and professional development. The meeting is attended by Scholars, Scholars Selection Committee members, and Foundation staff and Board members. Scholars are also invited to attend other Foundation-sponsored workshops on topics relevant to their work, such as mixed methods and the use of research evidence in policy and practice.

In years one through three of their awards, Scholars may apply for additional awards to mentor junior researchers of color. The announcement and criteria for funding are distributed annually to Scholars. Our goals for these two-year awards are to build Scholars’ mentoring skills and understanding of the career development issues faced by junior colleagues of color. We also seek to expand their mentees’ research assets and increase the number of strong, well-networked researchers of color doing work on the Foundation’s research interests. The Foundation convenes annual workshops to strengthen these mentoring relationships and support career development.
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 and enhance understanding of its effects. This may include investigations of the mechanisms through which effects occur or 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 is more rigorously controlled. 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. The project should also have relevance to the field, beyond the particular program, policy or practice being studied.

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.
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.

Eligible Applicants
Applicants must be nominated by their institutions. Major divisions (e.g., College of Arts and Sciences, Medical School) of an institution may nominate only one applicant each year. In addition to the eligibility criteria below, deans and directors of those divisions should refer to the Selection Criteria on pages 12-14 to aid them in choosing their nominees.

Applicants must have received their terminal degree within seven years of submitting their application. We calculate this by adding seven years to the date the doctoral degree was conferred. In medicine, the seven-year maximum is dated from the completion of the first residency.

Applicants must be employed in career-ladder positions. For many applicants, this means holding a tenure-track position in a university. Applicants in other types of organizations should be in positions in which there is a pathway to advancement in a research career at the organization and the organization is fiscally responsible for the applicant’s position. The award may not be used as a post-doctoral fellowship.

Applicants outside the United States are eligible. As with U.S. applicants, they must pursue research that has compelling policy or practice implications for youth in the United States.

Applicants of any discipline are eligible.
Application Materials

Applications to the William T. Grant Scholars Program are accepted once per year, and must include the following:

Mentor and Reference Letters
We recommend beginning the online application early in order to give mentors and references ample time to complete their sections. You may work on other sections of the application while waiting for your mentors and references to submit their letters, but you will not be able to submit your application until all letters are received.

Mentors: Each proposed mentor should submit a letter. Mentor letters are not recommendations, and applicants should discourage cursory letters of support. Please refer to the Scholars Program Selection Criteria for more information. The letter should include:

- a brief assessment of the applicant’s research plan, and a summation of the applicant’s potential, his or her strengths, and areas for growth;
- his or her current relationship to the applicant, and how the award will add significant value beyond what would normally occur in the relationship;
- an explanation of the expertise the mentor will help the applicant acquire and the mentoring activities that will be undertaken. Provide a persuasive rationale that the types of activities and time commitments are appropriate for developing particular kinds of expertise. Activities generally include direct interactions with applicants, but can also include indirect support such as facilitating access to new professional networks, readings, or training opportunities. Describe how the mentor and applicant will interact (e.g., in-person, email, phone), the frequency of that interaction, and how potential barriers such as distance and busy schedules will be addressed; and
- confirmation of his or her willingness to complete annual reports for the award (mentors receive an honorarium of $500 upon receipt of reports).

References: Three letters of recommendation should be submitted from colleagues, supervisors, or the department/division chairperson who nominates the applicant. Proposed mentors may not submit these.

Budget
Provide budget information for five years using the form included in the online application. The total budget can be up to $350,000. It can include an indirect cost allowance of up to 7.5 percent of total direct costs.
Requests to fund recipient’s salary must not exceed 50 percent of the total salary received from the sponsoring institution. The portion of the grant used for salary must be equivalent to the time made available for research by this award. The remainder of funds may be used to support research-related work. (The Foundation pays expenses related to the Scholars’ participation in Foundation-sponsored meetings.)

ALL UPLOADED DOCUMENTS SHOULD:

• use a font no smaller than 12 pt.;
• have margins of at least one inch on all sides;
• be single-spaced, with two lines between paragraphs; and
• be in .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf format.

Please adhere to the page limits specified below. Files can only be uploaded one at a time. They may be uploaded in any order; the final application PDF will sort the uploads as they are listed below.

Budget Justification Form
Complete and upload the Foundation’s budget justification form, which can be found within the Uploads tab of your online application.

Abridged Curriculum Vitae
Use the Foundation’s form on the website.

Full Curriculum Vitae

Abstract (6 pages maximum)
Use the Foundation’s form on the website. Do not edit the form or delete instructions from the form. Abstracts are a critical part of the application, and Foundation staff use them to screen applications. In addition, Selection Committee members will review the abstracts of all finalists, but will not read all the full applications. We advise applicants to include sufficient details about the research sample, methods, and designs for all reviewers to be assured of the quality of the proposed research.
Full Research and Mentoring Plan (40 pages maximum)

The five-year research plan (20 pages maximum) should include one or more research projects and provide convincing evidence that the projects meet the Selection Criteria. The project descriptions should include:

- the unique contribution of the research,
- its significance in terms of policy and/or practice,
- a brief literature review,
- research design and methodology,
- data sources and collection procedures,
- data analysis plans, and
- plans for protection of human subjects.

The mentoring plan must demonstrate that it meets all the Selection Criteria and must be developed in conjunction with the proposed mentors. It should include detailed descriptions of the following:

- applicant’s current areas of expertise and the new ones that will be added during the award;
- the rationale for the proposed mentor(s);
- the mentoring activities designed to develop the new expertise;
- how the applicant and mentor will interact (e.g., in-person, email, phone), how often, around what substantive issues, and how barriers such as distance and busy schedules will be handled; and
- how the award will add significant value to the proposed mentoring relationship.

Plans should also include:
- Bibliography (10 pages maximum)
- Appendices (10 pages maximum)

The Foundation is committed to helping Scholars navigate their way through successful mentoring relationships. The following resources are provided to aid applicants in creating strong mentoring plans: Maximizing Mentoring: A Guide for Building Strong Relationships and Pay it Forward: Guidance for Mentoring Junior Scholars. The latter was developed to help Scholars become stronger mentors, but it may also provide insights on being mentored.
Publication 1 (20 pages maximum)
This should be a journal article, chapter, or research report that exemplifies the applicant’s research. Ideally, the publication is relevant to the proposed research. We prefer publications that have already been published or are in press, though some applicants choose to submit work that is directly relevant to the proposed research, but is still under review.

Publication 2
Same requirements as Publication 1.

Nominating Statement
This statement from the chairperson of the nominating division should describe why the applicant was selected; an assessment of the applicant’s plan; the applicant’s current and expected future roles in the division; the supporting resources available; the applicant’s current source and amount of salary; and the appointment, promotion, and institutional support plans for the applicant, including a guarantee that 50 percent of the applicant’s paid time will be devoted to research. (Successful examples of the mentoring plan can be found on the Foundation’s website.)

Endorsement of Project
This document should come from the appropriate institutional office and personnel (e.g., Office of Sponsored Research, chief administrative officer), contain general information about the applicant, and confirm that the institution is aware the applicant is submitting the proposal.

Letter of Independence of Multiple Applicants (if applicable)
If an institution nominates more than one applicant, a central administrative officer must submit confirmation that the applicants represent distinct schools or major divisions (e.g., College of Arts and Sciences, Medical School, major division of a nonprofit) of the institution.

Resubmission Statement (if applicable)
Applicants who have applied previously should describe their response to reviewer comments on the prior application and the major ways this application differs from the prior one.
Adriana Galván,
Class of 2018
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 application 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 William T. Grant Scholars funding opportunity, and complete the eligibility quiz.
- Once you have completed the eligibility quiz, return to your Easygrants homepage and click on the Application link to enter the application.

Step 3: Enter contact information.

Step 4. Select “Notify” in the mentors and references section of the online application.
- This will send an automated email to your mentors and references, with instructions for completing their sections.
- You will receive an email confirmation when your mentors and references have submitted their sections. We advise applicants to inform their mentors and references to be aware that these emails may get caught by spam filters.

Step 5: Enter and upload all required application information.
- See the Scholars Program Application Materials section for more information.

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. An automatic confirmation email confirmation will be sent to you.
Josh Brown,
Class of 2016
Selection Criteria

Selection is based on applicants’ potential to become influential researchers, as well as their plans to expand their expertise in new and significant ways. The application should make a cohesive argument for how the applicant will expand his or her expertise. The research plan should evolve in conjunction with the development of new expertise, and the mentoring plan should describe how the proposed mentors will support applicants in acquiring that expertise.

Applicant
• Applicant demonstrates potential to become an influential researcher. An ability to conduct and communicate creative, sophisticated research is proven through prior training and publications. Competitive applicants have a promising track record of first authored, high-quality empirical publications in peer-reviewed outlets. The quality of publications is more important than the quantity.
• Applicant will significantly expand his or her expertise through this award. The applicant should identify area(s) in which the award will appreciably expand his or her expertise, and specific details should be provided in the research and mentoring plans. Expansion of expertise can involve a different discipline, method, and/or content area than the applicants’ prior research and training.

Research Plan
• Research area is consistent with Foundation’s current focus areas. We’ve compiled resources related to our focus areas—including blog posts, commissioned papers, and articles and presentations by staff and grantees—on our website.
• Research questions have relevance for policies and/or practices affecting youth ages 5 to 25 in the United States. Some funded studies directly examine policies, programs, or services. Others inform efforts to improve them or their effects on youth. While we do not expect that any one study will create these changes, the research should contribute to a body of useful knowledge to improve the lives of young people.
• Research plan informs theory and extends prior and concurrent work in the field. The application reflects a mastery of related theory and empirical findings and builds upon that prior work.
• Research plan reflects high standards of evidence and rigorous methods, commensurate with the proposal’s goals. The latter years or projects of the research plan may, by necessity, be described in less detail than those of the first few, but successful applicants provide enough specificity for reviewers to be assured of the rigor and feasibility of the plan.
  » Research designs, methods, and analysis plans clearly fit the research questions under study.
  » Samples are appropriate in size and composition to address the research questions.
» Assessments, observations, and/or measurements reflect methodological rigor.
» Analysis plans for quantitative and/or qualitative data reflect sufficient sophistication for addressing the research questions.
» Plan reflects a clear understanding of the strengths and limits of various research designs, methods, and analytic techniques.
» Where relevant, there is attention to generalizability of findings and to statistical power to detect meaningful effects.

- Research plan demonstrates adequate consideration of the gender, ethnic, and cultural appropriateness of concepts, methods, and measures.
- Research plan is feasible. The work can be successfully completed given the resources and time frame. Some research plans require additional funding, and in those cases, applicants have viable plans for acquiring that support.
- Research plan is cohesive and multiple studies (if proposed) are well-integrated.
- Research plan will significantly extend the applicant’s expertise in new and significant ways. Applicant provides specific details about how the research activities will stretch his or her expertise.

**Mentoring Plan**

- Applicant proposes one to two mentors for the first two years of the award. Two is typical and recommended. (The mentoring plan for the latter years will be developed in consultation with Foundation staff after the second year of the program.)
- The mentoring plan and mentor letters demonstrate that all parties have identified and agreed on specific goals that expand the applicant’s expertise in the ways outlined in the research plan.
- Each mentor has appropriate credentials, expertise, and resources to aid the applicant’s acquisition of the new expertise; has a strong track record of mentorship; and demonstrates a commitment to mentoring the applicant.
- The mentoring plan and mentor letters convincingly detail how the mentor will aid the applicant in acquiring the new expertise. A compelling rationale and specific details about the mentoring activities are provided. This includes information about how the mentor and applicant will interact, how frequently, and around what substantive issues. Reviewers must be persuaded that the mentoring activities are sufficiently robust to result in the new expertise that have been identified, and that the mentor is making a sufficient time commitment. Careful consideration should be devoted to the types of activities and time that is required to learn different types of skills (e.g., new methods versus disciplinary perspectives). Examples of activities include advising on new disciplinary norms, data collection plans, analytic techniques, and publication; providing feedback on manuscripts; arranging training opportunities; facilitating access to new professional networks; recommending readings; and more general career advising.
- Award will add significant value to each mentoring relationship beyond what would normally occur. Applicants should propose relationships and activities that are unlikely to occur without the award. Deepening a relationship with a casual colleague, or developing a new relationship, adds greater value than proposing a former advisor.
Institutional Support

- The supporting institution nominates the applicant. Each year, only one applicant may be nominated from a major division (e.g., College of Arts and Sciences, Medical School) of an institution.
- The institution is committed to providing the researcher with sufficient resources to carry out the five-year research plan. This includes computer equipment, colleagues, administrative staff, research facilities, and the balance of his or her salary, absent denial of tenure or dramatic reduction in institutional funding. At least half of the Scholar’s paid time must be spent conducting research.

Application Review Process

Review occurs in the following stages: Staff screen abstracts, brief CVs, and, if warranted, full applications to determine whether they fit our research focus areas and potentially meet other Selection Criteria. Next, the Scholars Selection Committee reviews the remaining applications. Each application receives detailed reviews by two Committee members. The Committee then chooses approximately 10 finalists, who will be invited to New York City for an interview in February 2018. Prior to the interview, finalists’ proposals are reviewed by two external reviewers.

During the interview, finalists have the opportunity to respond to Committee members’ and external experts’ reviews. Following the interviews, the Selection Committee chooses four to six William T. Grant Scholars. Applicants will be notified of the Committee’s decision by the end of March 2018.
Scholars Selection Committee

Margarita Alegría, Ph.D.
Chief of the Disparities Unit
Massachusetts General Hospital
Professor of Psychology
Harvard University

Margaret R. Burchinal, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist and Director,
Data Management and Analysis Center
FPG Child Development Institute
University of North Carolina
Adjunct Professor
Department of Education
University of California, Irvine

Linda M. Burton, Ph.D.
Dean of Social Sciences
James D. Duke Professor of Sociology
Duke University

Edith Chen, Ph.D.
Professor of Clinical Psychology
Faculty Fellow, Institute for Policy Research
Northwestern University

Adam Gamoran, Ph.D.
President
William T. Grant Foundation

Susan M. Kegeles, Ph.D.
Professor of Medicine
Co-Director, Center for AIDS Prevention Studies
University of California, San Francisco

Vonnie C. McLoyd, Ph.D.
Ewart A.C. Thomas Collegiate Professor
Department of Psychology
University of Michigan

Richard J. Murnane, Ph.D.
Juliana W. and William Foss Thompson Professor of Education and Society
Graduate School of Education,
Harvard University

Lawrence Palinkas, Ph.D.
Albert G. and Frances Lomas Feldman Professor of Social Policy and Health
School of Social Work,
University of Southern California

Robert C. Pianta, Ph.D.
Dean, Curry School of Education
Novartis US Foundation Professor of Education
Founding Director, Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning
Director, National Center for Research in Early Childhood
Education
University of Virginia

Jane Waldfogel, Ph.D.
Compton Foundation Centennial Professor of Social Work and Public Affairs
School of Social Work,
Columbia University

Top L to R: Elizabeth Birr Moje, Robert C. Pianta, Linda Burton, Margaret R. Burchinal, Vonnie C. McLoyd, Lawrence Palinkas, Richard J. Murnane
Bottom L to R: Susan M. Kegeles, Edith Chen, Margarita Alegría, Adam Gamoran, Jane Waldfogel
William T. Grant Scholars: Class of 2017

Jason Fletcher, Ph.D.
Professor
La Follette School of Public Affairs
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Interconnected Contexts: The Interplay Between Genetics and Social Settings in Youth Development

Micere Keels, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Comparative Human Development
University of Chicago
Consequences of the Within-Race/Ethnicity Gender Imbalance in the College Campus Setting

Tamara G.J. Leech, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Indiana University
Pockets of Peace: Investigating Urban Neighborhoods Resilient to Adolescent Violence

Jelena Obradović, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Graduate School of Education
Project Director, Stanford Project on Adaptation and Resilience in Kids (SPARK)
Stanford University
Executive Functions and Biological Sensitivity in Classroom Settings

Monica Tsethlikai, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics
Arizona State University
An Examination of Cultural and Cognitive Processes Facilitating Positive Youth Development in American Indian Communities

Tuppett Yates, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
University of California, Riverside
Settings for Success among Emancipating Foster Youth: Youth and Workers in Communication and Collaboration

L to R: Monica Tsethlikai, Micere Keels, Tamara G.J. Leech, Matthew Fletcher, Jelena Obradović, Tuppett Yates
William T. Grant Scholars: Class of 2018

Aprile Benner, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Human Development and Family Sciences
University of Texas at Austin
Adolescents and the Social Contexts of American Schools

Donald Chi, DDS, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Dental Public Health Sciences
University of Washington
Neighborhood Social Capital and Oral Health for Publicly Insured Adolescents

David Deming, Ph.D.
Professor
Graduate School of Education and the National Bureau of Economic Research
Harvard University
The Long-Term Influence of School Accountability: Impacts, Mechanisms, and Policy Implications

Adriana Galván, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
University of California, Los Angeles
Predictors and Outcomes of Insufficient Sleep in Disadvantaged Youth: A Study of Family Settings and Neurobiological Development

Phillip Hammack, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Psychology Department
University of California, Santa Cruz
Subverting the Impact of Stigma and Subordination: Toward Empowering Settings for Sexual Minority Youth

L to R: David Deming, Aprile Benner, Phillip Hammack, Adriana Galván, Donald Chi
Noelle Hurd, Ph.D., MPH
Assistant Professor
Department of Psychology
University of Virginia
Critical Contexts for the
Formation of Natural
Mentoring Relationships
among Economically
Disadvantaged African
American Adolescents

Michael MacKenzie, Ph.D., MSW
Associate Professor School of
Social Work and Pediatrics
Rutgers, the State University
of New Jersey
Children in Limbo: A
Transactional Model of Foster
Care Placement Instability

Rebecca M.B. White, Ph.D., MPH
Associate Professor
T. Denny Sanford School of
Social and Family Dynamics
Arizona State University
A New Look at Neighborhood
Ethnic Concentration: Implications for Mexican-Origin Adolescents’ Cultural Adaptation and Adjustment

Joanna Williams, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Leadership, Foundations, and Policy
University of Virginia
Benefits and Challenges of Ethnic Diversity in Middle Schools: The Mediating Role of Peer Groups

David Yeager, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Psychology
University of Texas at Austin
Toward a Sociological, Contextual Perspective on Psychological Interventions

L to R: Rebecca M.B. White, David Yeager, Joanna Williams, Michael MacKenzie, Noelle Hurd
William T. Grant Scholars: Class of 2020

Leah D. Doane, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
Arizona State University
Transiciones: Examining the Latino Transition to College in Support of Academic Equality

Matthew Kraft, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Education
Brown University
Teacher Effects on Students’ Non-Cognitive Competencies: A Study of Impacts, Instruction, And Improvement

Parag Pathak, Ph.D.
Professor
Department of Economics
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Using Unified School Enrollment Systems to Improve Access to Effective Schools and for Research and Evaluation

Laura Tach, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Policy Analysis and Management
Cornell University
Adolescent Well-Being in an Era of Family Complexity

Eve Tuck, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto
Deferred Action and Postsecondary Outcomes: The Role of the Migrant Youth Settings in Effective and Equitable Policy

L to R: Laura Tach, Leah D. Doane, Eve Tuck, Matthew Kraft

Not pictured: Parag Pathak
William T. Grant Scholars: Class of 2021

Matthew Desmond, Ph.D.
John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences
Department of Sociology and the Committee on Degrees in Social Studies
Harvard University
When the State Takes Your Children: How the Child Protective Services System Changes Young Parents

Mesmin Destin, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
School of Education and Social Policy and the Department of Psychology
Northwestern University
Healthy Pathways towards Academic Achievement and Social Mobility for Low-SES Youth

Laura Hamilton, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Sociology
University of California, Merced
How Does Institutional Context Matter? Shaping Success for Disadvantaged College Students

Jacob Hibel, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Sociology
University of California, Davis
Supporting Young Students’ Special Needs in New Immigrant Destinations

Kristin Turney, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Sociology
University of California, Irvine
The Unequal Intergenerational Consequences of Paternal Incarceration: Considering Sensitive Periods, Resiliency, and Mechanisms

L to R: Jacob Hibel, Laura Hamilton, Mesmin Destin

Not pictured: Matthew Desmond, Kristen Turney