Introducing the Institutional Challenge Grant

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@wtgrantfdn
Today’s Webinar

• Brief description of the William T. Grant Foundation
• Introduction to the Institutional Challenge Grant
• Questions

• The award and application
• Resources
• Questions
Our History

- Founded in 1936
- Committed to understanding human behavior through research
- Focus on the most pressing challenges confronting young people
- Support high-quality research relevant to youth ages 5 to 25 in the U.S.
Focus Areas

USE OF RESEARCH

• Launched in 2008; new phase launched in 2015
• Strategies not barriers to research use
• Understand how to create the conditions that improve the production and use of research evidence in ways that benefit youth

REDUCING INEQUALITY

• Launched in 2014
• Responses not causes/consequences
• Understand how programs, policies, and practices reduce inequality among young people in the United States
Too often policymakers’ and practitioners’ ideas fail to shape research agendas.

Too often the capacity is lacking to bridge these gaps.

Too often researchers lack incentives to undertake research to inform policy and practice.
Institutional Challenge Grant

**PARTNERSHIP**
- Build a sustained institutional partnership with a public agency or nonprofit organization

**RESEARCH**
- Pursue a joint research agenda to reduce inequality in youth outcomes

**CAPACITY**
- Develop the partners’ capacity to collaborate, and to produce and use high-quality relevant research

**INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE**
- Create institutional change to value research-practice partnerships and their work
Research-practice partnerships are long-term, mutually beneficial collaborations that promote the production and use of rigorous and relevant research evidence.
Why Partnerships?

• Researchers
  o understand the local context
  o learn about policymakers’ and practitioners’ needs and questions
  o provide insights that facilitate groundbreaking research

• Policymakers and practitioners
  o gain access to existing research
  o contribute to research that is relevant to their context
  o receive assistance with their efforts to use research
Barriers to Success

• Policies and practices within institutions inadvertently create barriers to the success of partnerships
  o limit participation between and within institutions
  o obstruct career advancement
  o undermine longevity
Changing Policies & Practices

- Examine and redesign policies and practices to:
  - encourage sustained institutional partnerships with public agencies or nonprofit organizations
  - incentivize experienced researchers to pursue rigorous and relevant research agendas
  - improve the partnership skills of researchers
Reducing Inequality

- Conduct research on *programs, policies, & practices that reduce inequality in youth outcomes*
  - Inequality by economic, racial/ethnic, and immigrant origins is pervasive
  - Evidence often exists on the nature and sources of inequality
  - Ways to *reduce* inequality are less well understood
Questions?
The Award
Institutional Challenge Grant

AWARD

• $650K for 3 years, with possible 2-year renewal
  o A 6-12 month planning period
  o The partnership’s research to reduce inequality
  o Mid-career fellows
  o Capacity-building activities
  o Indirect cost allowance of up to 15% of total direct costs
• In-kind support for one fellow for one year
THE APPLICATION
Partnership

- Research-Practice Partnerships
  - The plan for partnering demonstrates mastery of the literature on partnering to promote research use
  - There is evidence of the public agency or nonprofit’s commitment to the partnership and to use the research
Research

• Research Agenda to Reduce Inequality in Youth Outcomes
  ✓ The research questions and findings will significantly advance the public agency or nonprofit organization’s efforts to reduce inequality
  ✓ The research is rigorous
• Developing the Capacity of Fellows and Partners
  ✓ The criteria ensure fellows will have the requisite skills to carry out the proposed work
  ✓ A feasible plan for increasing the capacity of the public agency or private nonprofit organization to use research in decision making to improve outcomes for youth
Institutional Change

• Changing Institutional Policies and Practices
  ✓ A thoughtful discussion of potential obstacles that may limit participation in research-practice partnerships
  ✓ A plan for overcoming these obstacles
  ✓ Assurances that the research institution will alter policies or enact new practices to attract and reward strong investigators to conduct partnership research
APPLICATION

Important Notes

• Applications are due September 12, 2017; no letter of inquiry

• We welcome partnerships in a variety of areas

• We encourage proposals from teams with African-American, Latino, Native American, and Asian American members in leadership roles
RESOURCES
On Our Website

- Institutional Challenge Grant Application Guide
- Illustrative examples
- Research-practice partnership website
- Related essays and articles by staff and grantees
Three examples to illustrate the kinds of partnerships, research agendas, fellows, capacity-building activities, and institutional shifts we hope to see.

wtgrantfoundation.org/grants/institutional-challenge-grant
rpp.wtgrantfoundation.org

Guiding tips, work samples, and resources for partnerships

- Structuring a partnership
- Developing a joint research agenda
- Developing data sharing agreements
- Communicating research findings
- Staffing
- Funding
- Design-based implementation research
- Evaluating partnerships
Research-Practice Partnerships
A Strategy for Leveraging Research for Educational Improvement in School Districts

A white paper prepared for the William T. Grant Foundation
January 2011

Cynthia E. Coburn, University of California, Berkeley
William R. Penuel, University of Colorado, Boulder
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Research-Practice-Policy Partnerships
for Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices in Child Welfare and Child Mental Health

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August 2015
On Our Website

- Institutional Challenge Grant Application Guide
- Illustrative examples
- Research-practice partnership website
- Related essays and articles by staff and grantees
- The FAQs are on their way!
Questions?
THANK YOU!

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