William T. Grant FOUNDATION

Research Grants

APPLICATION GUIDE

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2017 APPLICATION DEADLINES:

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Research Grants

Since our founding in 1936, the William T. Grant Foundation has worked to further the understanding of human behavior through research. Today, we support high-quality research that is relevant to policies and practices that affect the lives of young people ages 5 to 25 in the United States.

This application guide details our research focus areas, funding criteria, eligibility requirements, and application procedures for research grants. It also provides suggestions for developing strong applications. Throughout this guide, you will find "Ask a Program Officer" features, which provide answers to common questions asked by prospective applicants. Also included are brief profiles of funded grants. Descriptions of all current grants are available on our website.

RESEARCH 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.

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 strong data and empirical evidence on those questions. The strongest proposals incorporate data from multiple sources and often involve multi-disciplinary teams.

FOCUS AREA:

Programs, policies, and practices that reduce 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 reversing this trend.

To propose research on reducing inequality, applicants should clearly identify the dimension of inequality (e.g., race, ethnicity, economic standing, and/or immigrant origins), and make a case for its importance. Applicants should specify the youth outcome(s) to be studied (e.g., academic, social, behavioral, and/or economic), and show that the outcomes are currently unequal. Strong proposals will establish a clear link between a particular dimension of inequality and specific youth outcomes.

Applicants should also include a compelling case for how the study is relevant to reducing inequality, not just to furthering an understanding of inequality as a problem. 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 most. Studies may address a key dilemma that practitioners or policymakers face in addressing unequal youth outcomes, or challenge assumptions that underlie current approaches.

Within this research focus area, as illustrated by the examples that follow, we support different types of studies. We welcome descriptive studies meant to clarify the mechanisms for reducing inequality. We also seek intervention studies that examine attempts to reduce inequality. And we invite studies that improve the measurement of inequality in ways that will enhance the work of researchers, practitioners, or policymakers. For example, we supported measurement research on an observational tool that will help define and identify effective English language arts instruction for English language learners in elementary school.

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).

Recent Research Grants on Reducing Inequality

Can Housing Assistance Reduce Inequality Among Youth?

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: SANDRA NEWMAN, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Research can inform housing policies that reduce inequality in cognitive, non-cognitive, and other outcomes among low-income youth.

Sandra Newman is examining whether federal housing assistance leads to better outcomes for youth by making housing more affordable for low-income families.

Roughly 80 percent of poor children live in households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing, and many families' housing costs are greater than half of their income. Prior research shows that living in affordable housing enhances children's cognitive skills because parents have more to spend on children's necessities, activities, and services that benefit child development. Newman's study is the first to use a nationally representative sample to investigate the extent to which differences in individual youth outcomes can be explained by housing affordability. The research team will also examine the assumption that young people who live in assisted housing have better outcomes because they get to live in neighborhoods with more resources.

Newman and colleagues will draw on data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), the PSID Child Development Supplement (CDS), and the PSID-Assisted Housing Database to analyze outcomes of children who live in assisted housing and children whose families are eligible for but do not receive such assistance. The team will investigate diverse outcomes, including cognitive and non-cognitive skills, health, and academic achievement, as well as later income.

The Middle School Classroom Language Environment: Interactions Among Teachers and Youth and Effects on Literacy

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PERLA BLANCA GAMEZ, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Research can inform practices that reduce unequal academic outcomes among language minority youth.

Perla Gamez's study describes key features of middle-school language classrooms that enhance literacy for immigrant-origin youth. As English-language acquisition is one of the key challenges confronting immigrant-origin students, classroom practices that positively influence these students' language and reading skills can be a promising lever for reducing inequality. This work advances extant research in its focus on adolescents (as compared to early-childhood and elementary-school children), language minority learners (rather than English only learners), and two-way interactions between teachers and students (rather than one-way interactions). The findings have the potential to change how educators develop instructional practices to improve language minority youth's language and reading skills.

Approximately 1,200 teachers and students from forty sixth-grade English Language Arts classrooms from the Chicago and Boston areas (20 from each city) will participate in the study. Five language minority and five English only students from each classroom will wear audio recording devices that will allow Gamez to capture students' interactions with teachers and assess the quality of these exchanges. The team will also conduct videotaped observations of the classrooms five times during the academic year. They will examine the use of academic language, such as diverse vocabulary and complex grammar and techniques used by teachers and students to facilitate language, such as open-ended questions.

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

Research can inform school-based programs that reduce inequality in academic youth outcomes.

David Yeager's study assesses growth mindset interventions as a strategy to improve math achievement for struggling students.

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.

Ask a program officer

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.

FOCUS AREA:

Strategies that improve 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.

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.

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.

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.

Within this research focus area, and as illustrated by the examples that follow, we support different types of studies. We welcome descriptive studies meant to clarify the mechanisms for improving research use. We also seek intervention studies that examine attempts to improve research use. And we invite studies that improve the measurement of the use of research evidence in ways that will enhance the work of researchers or decision makers. For example, we have supported research on a structured interview protocol to assess how different stakeholders understand research and their level of engagement in acquiring, evaluating, and applying research evidence in social service settings. The tool will help others monitor the application of research evidence in social work practice.

We encourage applicants proposing projects on the use of research evidence to read the supplementary guidance, which describes in greater detail our key interests and recent shifts in our focus. This document can be found on the Grants page of our website, under "Research Grants."

Ask a program officer

Why are you 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.

Recent Research Grants on the Use of Research Evidence

Comparative Effectiveness of Narratives to Promote Provider Adoption of Evidence Related Antipsychotics Use for High-Risk Youth

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: DAVID RUBIN, CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA

Research can test strategies to bolster physician's use of research-informed guidelines and decrease over-prescribing behaviors.

There has been a troubling shift toward more widespread use of antipsychotic medications to address disruptive behavior among publicly insured children and youth in foster care. Rubin and colleagues posit that clinicians' prescribing behaviors are influenced by their attitudes, the norms of their peers, and how easy they think it is to perform the recommended behaviors. Rubin suspects these factors are amenable to change, and proposes that narratives—stories with a clear beginning, middle, and end, as well as information about characters, scenes, and conflicts—can be used as persuasive tools to change behavior. Rubin and his team are testing whether physicians who are exposed to stories about doctors who adhere to research-informed prescribing guidelines adopt similar behaviors.

The study will unfold in two phases. In phase one, the team will interview 30 clinicians to assess knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, barriers, and facilitators related to antipsychotic prescription practices. The team will also elicit patient care narratives to identify salient examples of physicians whose practices were guided by research. Phase two will involve a randomized controlled trial to test the effectiveness of these narratives in both written and video form, as compared to standard evidence-based guidelines. Rubin will look at Medicaid claims data to ascertain the influence of the guidelines and narratives on changes in prescribing behaviors.

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

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: JANELLE SCOTT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Research can identify what accounts for intermediary organizations' successful leveraging of research to change education policy.

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—particularly 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 on the supply side, 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 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

Research can identify conditions that support state policymakers use of research evidence in decisions about mental health treatment for foster care youth.

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.

Funding Criteria

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

Research questions should inform programs, policies, and practices to reduce inequalities in youth development or study how 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.
- 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.

Ask a program officer

What are your 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. 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 listed as Co-Principal Investigators.

AWARDS

Research grants about reducing inequality typically range between $100,000 and $600,000 and cover two to three years of support. Research grants about improving the use of research initiative will range between $100,000 and $1,000,000 and cover two to four years of support. This shift to a million dollar ceiling reflects our renewed commitment to this focus area and our interest in funding bold, large-scale studies to significantly advance the field. 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.

For smaller projects, we have a separate funding mechanism, Officers' Research grants. These awards cover budgets up to $25,000. Some are stand-alone projects that fit our research focus areas; others build off of larger projects. Junior scholars of color are encouraged to apply for these grants as a way to build their research programs.

APPLICATIONS

Letters of inquiry for research grants and Officers' Research grants are accepted three times per year (in the winter, spring, and summer).

CAPACITY-BUILDING

The Foundation invests significant time and resources in capacity-building for grantees. We provide opportunities for connections with other scholars, policymakers, and practitioners. We also organize targeted learning communities, such as our annual meeting for grantees working on the use of research evidence. 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 a consultation service through the University of California, Los Angeles's Semel Institute, Center for Culture and Health, Fieldwork and Qualitative Data Research Laboratory. Services range from phone conversations and email exchanges to meetings or training sessions, depending on the needs of the grantee.

Ask a program officer

The Foundation encourages interdisciplinary research teams. How should applicants indicate this 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 comprised of many senior investigators for very limited time and effort.

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, or 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.

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

Do you fund international studies?

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

In addition to this guide, the Foundation has compiled resources related to our research interests, including blog posts, commissioned papers, and articles and presentations by staff and grantees, on the Focus Areas page of our website.

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

Application Process & Required Materials

The William T. Grant Foundation only accepts applications through our online application system, which is accessible through our website, wtgrantfoundation.org.

The application process for all research grants begins with a letter of inquiry (LOI). The LOI functions as a mini-proposal and should meet our funding criteria. 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.

All letters of inquiry will be due by 4:00 pm EST on the submission deadline date.

There are three application cycles for letters of inquiry each year. For specific deadlines, please visit the Grants page of our website. 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.

After internal review of a letter of inquiry, the Foundation will decide whether to reject 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. 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.

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.

Applications for Officers' Research grants are accepted three times per year, and share the same deadlines as the larger research grants program. These 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.

LETTER OF INQUIRY PROCEDURES

Each grant cycle becomes active about 4–6 weeks prior to the application deadline.

Step 1: Register.

- Go to wtgrantfoundation.org and click "LOG IN" at the top right of any page.
- If you are the principal investigator (PI), register on our website to obtain a login ID. If you have on existing login ID and do not remember your password, click the link to reset your password (please do not create a new account).

Step 2: Log in and screen for eligibility.

- Log in and select "Apply for Funding."
- Choose the appropriate grant cycle listed under "Research Grants."
- Complete the Eligibility Quiz. After passing the quiz, you will be brought back to your homepage.

Step 3: Start your application.

- On your homepage, under "My Tasks," select "Letter of Inquiry—Research Grants." (Select this task even if you are applying for an Officers' Research grant.)
- Enter **PI contact** information. (Note: Development officers or staff applying on behalf of the PI should enter the PI's contact information.)
- Enter **PI demographic** information. (Note: The Foundation is working to improve its research grants application process. Better understanding the background of our applicant pool will help us in the effort. This information will not be shared with external reviewers.)
- Contacts—Project Personnel: add contact information for each additional Co-Principal Investigator (co-PI).

Step 4: Provide project information.

- Project title (maximum of 120 characters)
- Brief description of the project (maximum of 1,500 characters)
  - 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.
- Start and end dates of the project
- Total requested amount, including the combined direct and indirect costs for the full grant period (please note that indirect costs should not exceed 15% of the proposed direct costs)
- Indicate whether this is a resubmission of a prior application.

- Project Coding: indicate the Foundation focus area to which you are applying (reducing inequality or improving the use of research evidence) and provide information on the project focus, research methods, type, system/setting, and ages of youth involved. We encourage applicants to complete this section, although it is not required.

Step 5: Officers' Research grants ONLY—Enter a budget in the budget grid.

- The budget does not need to be signed by your institutional representative at this stage. If the grant is awarded, a signed budget will be required then.
- Note for major grants: if you are applying for a major grant, please do not complete the budget section. Only an estimated amount is required at this time.

Step 6: Upload narrative (up to five pages).

Your narrative should be formatted as follows: 12-point font, single-spaced text with a line space 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 research methods, including:
  - sample definition and selection procedures;
  - research design;
  - intervention (if applicable);
  - key constructs, measures and data sources; and procedures for data collection.
- Summarize the data analysis plan for addressing the hypotheses and/or research questions.
  - If you are using qualitative data, you should provide some detail about coding processes and how the coding will be reliable.
  - If you are proposing to develop or improve measures, you should discuss how you will show that the measures are reliable.
- If you have a reference page, include it in this upload. It will not be counted toward the five-page maximum.

Step 7: Upload a one-page curriculum vitae, biographical sketch, or résumé for each Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator.

- Include education and training, peer-reviewed publications, and grants.
- Do not send full curricula vitae or résumés.

Step 8: Officers' Research grants ONLY—upload a completed budget justification form.

- Follow the "Budget and Budget Justification Guidelines," which can be found on our website.

Step 9: Officers' Research grants ONLY—upload your institution's IRS tax-exempt status determination letter.

- Major grant applicants: You may include your institution's tax-exempt documentation, but it is not required at this stage. Documentation will be required if the grant is awarded and can be uploaded then.

Step 10: All submissions—View PDF.

- Go to Review and Submit and click "View PDF." This will generate your online application in a separate window.
- Review information to make sure your materials are in order. **Once the application is submitted, you will not be able to make any changes**.

Step 11: All submissions—Submit application.

- Go to Review and Submit and click "Submit" at the top of the page.
- You will receive email confirmation of the submission.

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.

What happens next?

Letters of inquiry will be reviewed internally. Investigators will receive an email notification of staff's decision within eight weeks of the LOI submission date. For major research grants, the Foundation invites applicants with promising letters of inquiry to submit proposals. In recent years, about fifteen percent of the letters received have been invited to submit a full proposal. 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.

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wtgrantfoundation.org