

# Use of Research Evidence Early-Career Reviewer Program

**2026 Application Guidelines**

*Updated May 2026*

*Application Deadline*

July 8, 2026, 3:00 PM ET

## **Program Overview**

The early-career reviewer program recruits early-career researchers to serve as peer reviewers of grant proposals submitted to the William T. Grant Foundation for **studies on improving the use of research evidence**. The use of research evidence program supports research on strategies aimed at improving the use, usefulness, and impact of evidence in ways that benefit young people ages 5-25 in the United States. Further, the program focuses on research use by policymakers, leaders of service agencies and school districts, organizational managers, and others who make high-stakes decisions that shape youth-serving systems.

In addition to reading and evaluating grant proposals in their areas of expertise, early-career reviewers receive personalized feedback from Foundation staff and have access to redacted grant reviews from senior peer reviewers. Altogether, this professional development program aims to build early-career researchers' understanding of the proposal evaluation and peer-review process for use of research evidence grants to strengthen their own grant writing skills and ultimately advance their careers.

## **Program Activities**

The Foundation anticipates assigning each reviewer between one and four proposals during a two-year period. Early-career reviewers, once selected, will receive training from Foundation staff on criteria and skills for proposal review and familiarity with the Foundation's priority area on improving the use of research evidence. Upon receiving a proposal that matches their area of expertise, early-career reviewers will be asked to submit a written review within 3-4 weeks. Following submission of the written review, Foundation staff will provide feedback and request that any necessary revisions be submitted for the final deadline within 1-2 weeks.

At the completion of the process, early-career reviewers will have the opportunity to review the full set of redacted peer reviews on the assigned proposal, which will serve as a resource for continued learning. In addition, the program offers virtual learning sessions to discuss grant reviewing experiences and to facilitate interaction with use of research evidence grantees.

**All early-career reviewers will be compensated \$300 per review.**

## Eligibility

*Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:*

- Received doctoral degree within seven years of submitting an 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.
- Currently working toward an independent research program aligned with the Foundation's focus area on studying ways to improve the use of research evidence to improve the lives of young people (ages 5-25) within the United States. This focus area includes two lines of inquiry:
  1. Building or testing ways to improve the use of existing research evidence, and
  2. Testing whether strategies that improve the use of research evidence in turn improve decision-making and youth outcomes.
- Successfully authored and engaged with the peer review process for at least one research publication related to research on the use of research evidence.
- In addition, it is valuable if you have been involved in the preparation of at least one grant proposal submitted to a funder in the past.

*Across all our programs, we strive to support a diverse group of researchers.*

## Application Materials and Selection Criteria

**All application materials must be submitted by email to [earlycareerreviewer@wtgrantfdn.org](mailto:earlycareerreviewer@wtgrantfdn.org) by July 8, 2026, 3:00 PM ET.**

**In a single PDF**, applicants must submit a CV and a two-page cover letter indicating:

- Motivation and rationale for applying for the early-career reviewer program.
- Area(s) of subject and methodological expertise.
- Specific example(s) of authorship and role on at least one research publication related to research on the use of research evidence.
- Prior role in submitting at least one grant proposal in the past to any funder.
- If applicable, specific example of grant writing and responding to reviewer feedback.
- Evidence of how one's independent research program is aligned with or working towards improving the use of research evidence.
- How participating in the early-career reviewer program would support developmental career aims.

The CV and cover letter must be submitted together as a **single PDF**, with the cover letter first and CV second.

Applications will be reviewed on the strength of the cover letter and the extent to which the applicant's research aligns with the Foundation's focus on improving the use of research evidence. We recommend reviewing the Foundation's [Resources for Applicants](#) page for the use of research evidence to check your alignment with the focus area.

Should you have questions about the program or selection criteria, please reach out to research assistant Maddie Scavotto at [earlycareerreviewer@wtgrantfdn.org](mailto:earlycareerreviewer@wtgrantfdn.org).



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