

IRP Extramural Large Grants 2022–2024

Letter of Intent Deadline: 11:59 p.m. CDT **January 18, 2022**

Full Application Deadline: 11:59 p.m. CDT **March 13, 2022**

[Optional webinar: January 10, 2022](#)

12:00–1:00 ET | 11:00–12:00 CT | 10:00–11:00 MT | 9:00–10:00 PT

Release Date: 12/6/2021

ABOUT GRANT

As the National Research Center on Poverty and Economic Mobility, the **Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP)** at the University of Wisconsin–Madison seeks to fund research on how human services program and policy design, implementation, and practice create, perpetuate, and dismantle inequities in the following two programmatic areas: (1) child welfare; and (2) populations returning to their communities from incarceration. These are both key areas of interest identified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), Office of Human Services Policy (HSP), which serves as the sponsor of the National Research Center on Poverty and Economic Mobility.

IRP has established this large grant program to address emerging policy-relevant research questions and support research that proactively engages affected communities in the research and dissemination processes. Research is “policy-relevant” when it informs local, state, or federal law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, or program adoption and implementation in a way that is targeted, timely and actionable. Policy-relevant research may inform knowledge and understanding of the nature, causes, correlates, and effects of policy issues such as income dynamics, poverty, individual and family functioning, and child well-being with the goal of improving the effectiveness of public policies.

HSP is particularly interested in the research that focuses on the policy implications for human services programs administered by HHS (e.g., child welfare, child support, child care, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, youth homeless services, and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) but is also interested in the broader social safety net programs (e.g., Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, subsidized housing programs, employment and training programs, and tax credits) especially when those programs interact with the human services administered by HHS.

Competitive applications will meaningfully engage affected communities in the research and/or dissemination process (e.g., collaboratively developing research questions, potential methods, and plans for data collection; working with community members to interpret findings and put them into context; and sharing results in ways that are accessible to impacted individuals such as through visuals, blogs, and videos).

Research | Training | Policy | Practice

Proposals are invited from Ph.D.-holding scholars at all career stages, from postdoctoral fellows to senior faculty, and from all disciplines who are interested in pursuing policy-relevant research. Researchers will participate in partnership consultations with IRP throughout the grant cycle and will be asked to consider integrating this feedback into their projects and ongoing research.

ABOUT IRP

The Institute for Research on Poverty is a center for interdisciplinary research into the causes and consequences of poverty and inequality in the United States and the impacts of related policies and programs.

As the National Research Center on Poverty & Economic Mobility sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), IRP coordinates the **U.S. Collaborative of Poverty Centers (CPC)**. IRP and its partner centers support and train poverty and economic mobility scholars with a special focus on expanding opportunities for scholars from historically underrepresented groups. In addition, IRP and its partner centers provide relevant, cutting-edge research on a wide range of topics with the ultimate goal of improving the effectiveness of public policies to reduce poverty and its consequences.

ABOUT OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PLANNING AND EVALUATION (ASPE), OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES POLICY (HSP)

The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation is the principal advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on policy development. ASPE is responsible for major activities in policy coordination, legislation development, strategic planning, policy research, evaluation, and economic analysis. Within ASPE, the **Office of Human Services Policy (HSP)** conducts policy research, analysis, evaluation, and coordination on various issues across the Department, including but not limited to, poverty and measurement, marginalized communities, early childhood education and child welfare, family strengthening, economic support for families, and youth development. HSP serves as a liaison with other agencies on broad economic matters and is the Department's lead on poverty research and analysis.

HSP is focused on human services programs and their ability to promote the economic and social wellbeing of many of America's most marginalized people. Through a variety of programs, services, and benefits administered at the federal, state, local, and community levels, the field of human services provides a range of resources to best support the complex needs of a variety of America's lower income families and individuals.

HSP's work centers on three overlapping goals:

1. **Enhancing equity, inclusion, diversity & access.** We define "equity" as the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian,

gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality ([Executive Order 13985](#)). To enhance this goal, we are:

- a. Centering our work in the experiences and needs of individuals, families and communities who are the intended beneficiaries of human services supports and programs.
 - b. Being more inclusive in all aspects of project and policy design and execution—including expanding inclusion in who helps to identify problems and research questions, who informs that work along the way, and seeding opportunities for greater diversity in contractors and staff who are performing the work.
 - c. Identifying ways to be systems-focused in our work and identify potential root causes in context setting when presenting evidence.
 - d. Evolving how we talk about groups of people and target populations of programs so that we are accurate, respectful, person-centered and responsive to how people want to identify themselves.
2. **Amplifying evidence around prevention of social welfare challenges and crisis.** Clearly identifying the evidence of what works in preventing social challenges/crises and highlighting the benefits or potential benefits of a prevention framework across programs for individuals and families.
 3. **Identifying aligned well-being metrics for program adoption.** Promoting metrics that could be reasonably adopted across different social programs to highlight multiple dimensions of person/family/community strengths and needs and prompt data-informed dialogue and action about the partners, resources, supports and services that enhance well-being beyond individual program outcomes.

2022 FOCAL THEME 1: CHILD WELFARE

Millions of families interact with the child welfare system. Each year, over 4.4 million reports of suspected child maltreatment are submitted to child protective services; 650,000 children in the United States are substantiated victims of maltreatment; and over 400,000 children are in an out-of-home placement. Although foster care may be the safest option for some children, being removed from their home is often traumatic for children and may interrupt children’s healthy development. Black and American Indian/Alaska Native children are disproportionately represented at all stages of the child welfare system, are more likely to be removed from their home, and often face worse outcomes in foster care than child-welfare involved white children. To promote children’s healthy development and strengthen families, it is critical to ensure that parents have the resources, supports, and skills needed to promote whole-family well-being. Access to a robust social support system, adequate economic resources, and accessible prevention services may reduce incidences of child maltreatment, child welfare involvement, and ultimately reduce the need for foster care.

IRP seeks to support research that identifies structural and system barriers and informs policies

and programs to understand and improve outcomes for youth and families currently involved or at risk of involvement with child welfare systems. There is particular interest in the role of human services programs administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to prevent child welfare involvement and children's removal from the home (e.g., services to provide families with adequate material resources and parenting skills to prevent child neglect and maltreatment). We are also particularly interested in, and will prioritize, research on the phenomenon of oversurveillance of families by the child welfare system and how that may affect the well-being of both parents and their children. Projects may utilize a variety of analytic methods and may focus on:

- (1) a specific policy, program, or intervention (e.g., policies and practices regarding mandatory reporting of child maltreatment; services to support youth aging out of foster care; services to address parental mental health conditions and substance use disorders; one or more states' implementation of Plans of Safe Care required for substance-exposed infants; comprehensive or wraparound service models; parent training, support, and engagement programs);
- (2) broader social and economic factors (e.g., racial disparities; leveraging data in support of research and analysis; operational issues regarding access to the disconnected service systems with which child welfare involved families interact; stigma; oversurveillance of families by child welfare agencies and mandatory reporters); or
- (3) a variety of well-being metrics (e.g., family and child well-being; families' strengths and needs; aligning child and family well-being outcomes).

Successful projects will be designed to generate policy and/or programmatic implications at the federal, state, or local level for children and families involved or at risk of involvement with the child welfare system. Projects must also include meaningful engagement with affected communities. The form of such engagement will vary depending on the type of research proposed but may include engaging and collaborating with individuals with lived experience throughout the research and dissemination processes (e.g., collaboratively developing research questions, potential methods, and plans for data collection; working with community members to interpret findings and put them into context; and sharing results in ways that are accessible to impacted individuals such as through visuals, blogs, and videos).

2022 FOCAL THEME 2: REENTRY FROM INCARCERATION

Nearly 7 million Americans are incarcerated or on probation at any given time and more than 600,000 Americans are released from state and federal prisons annually. Successful reentry is a persistent challenge for populations with justice system involvement and more than two-thirds of community members returning from prison are rearrested within three years of their release. Incarceration may disrupt many aspects of an individual's life including their employment, housing, education and training, family relationships, child support payments, and medical care and has high costs for families, communities, and taxpayers. HHS initiatives that include returning community members and their families encompass a range of human services, health,

and behavioral health services to improve child outcomes, enhance family relationships, promote employment opportunities, and connect individuals and families affected by incarceration with needed supportive social and health services. Importantly, incarceration and recidivism rates vary greatly by race. Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native individuals, particularly men, are disproportionately represented in the justice system and such involvement places a disproportionate negative impact on the health and well-being of these communities and their families.

IRP seeks to support research that identifies structural and systemic barriers and informs policies and programs that aim to understand and improve outcomes for community members returning from incarceration and prevent repeated involvement with the justice system. Consistent with President Biden's Executive Orders on [incarceration](#) and [advancing racial equity](#), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is particularly interested in policies and programs that aim to increase the safety, health, and well-being of reentering individuals, their families, and their communities. There is particular interest in the role of human services programs administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Projects may utilize a variety of analytic methods and may focus on a specific policy, program, or intervention (e.g., services administered by the Administration for Children and Families such as child support and Responsible Fatherhood Programs; services to address mental health conditions and substance use disorders; comprehensive/wraparound service models), on broader social and economic factors (e.g., racial disparities in incarceration and reentry outcomes; leveraging data in support of research and analysis; mental health and substance use; homelessness and housing; employment and education outcomes), or on a variety of outcome metrics (e.g. child well-being; family strengths and needs; employment outcomes for reentering individuals).

Successful projects will be designed to generate policy and/or programmatic implications for reentering individuals and families at the federal, state, or local level. Projects must also include meaningful engagement with affected communities. The form of such engagement will vary depending on the type of research proposed but may include engaging and collaborating with individuals with lived experience throughout the research and dissemination processes (e.g., collaboratively developing research questions, potential methods, and plans for data collection, interpreting findings and putting them into context; as well as sharing results in ways that are accessible to impacted individuals such as through visuals, blogs, and videos).

TERMS

Eligibility

The Principal Investigator must hold a doctorate or the highest degree appropriate for their discipline at the time of application. Individuals not associated with a university (domestic or foreign) and foreign entities are ineligible for grants made under this announcement. University of Wisconsin–Madison faculty and postdoctoral fellows are ineligible for funding.

Contract Period

The grant contract period is flexible depending on scope of the project not to exceed 24 months from grant start date.

Funding

Grants may not exceed \$50,000. This amount includes indirect costs at the applicant's institution, if required (see Item 4 under Application Instructions below).

Commitment

Receipt of a grant from IRP will require a commitment to:

- Within the **first 6 weeks** of the grant period, participate (either in person or via video conferencing) in a meeting with IRP to discuss the project and how to maximize its policy relevance.
- Submit brief quarterly progress reports (≤ 150 words) of work accomplished during the preceding three months **every quarter** in the established grant period except for the last two quarters (see timeline for more details) to irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu.
- Submit a draft paper for review and comments to irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu **three months before the end of the established grant period**.
- **Within two weeks of submitting the draft**, participate (either in person or via video conferencing) in a meeting with IRP to provide an update on project progress and discuss how to maximize its policy relevance.
- Submit a revised draft by **end of established grant period**, to irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu.
- Present the paper at a seminar, workshop, or other mutually agreed upon public event sponsored by IRP.
- Agree to have the work summarized in an IRP publication (i.e., *Focus on Poverty*; *Fast Focus Poverty Brief*), webinar, and/or podcast.
- Submit a final paper for academic publication **no later than nine months after the end of the established grant period** and alert IRP of the submission by sending an e-mail to irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu with the name of the journal.

All travel related to project conversations referenced above and all travel related to presentations requested by IRP will be funded by IRP directly; applicants do not need to include this travel in their budgets. When relevant, IRP will coordinate meetings with ASPE and principal investigators.

All publications associated with the grant should acknowledge the support of IRP and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE).

Selection Process

This is a two-stage selection process. All interested parties must submit a letter of intent which will be reviewed by IRP scholars and staff for the following:

- The relevance of the topic to one of IRP's focal themes;

- The potential usefulness of the proposed research project to influence the policymaking process, especially related to programs administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and
- The quality and feasibility of the plan for engaging affected communities in research or dissemination processes.

IRP will provide feedback to applicants within four weeks.

Applicants will then have an additional four weeks to submit a full proposal. Final applications will be reviewed in a two-stage process.

1. Applications will be screened for completeness, including:
 - a. online application completed; and
 - b. application materials uploaded.
2. Qualifying applications will be evaluated by a panel of distinguished scholars from IRP, its CPC partners, and ASPE staff. The panels will use the application materials as the basis for scoring the following:
 - a. The relevance of the topic to one of IRP's focal themes of (1) child welfare or (2) justice-involved populations (as discussed above);
 - b. The potential usefulness of the proposed research project to influence the policymaking process, especially related to programs administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
 - c. The potential usefulness of the proposed research project for the advancement of scientific knowledge;
 - d. Clarity of stated objectives, methods, and anticipated results;
 - e. The appropriateness and soundness of the research design, including choice of data, methods of analysis, and other procedures;
 - f. Clarity, appropriateness, and feasibility of stated plan for engaging affected communities in research and/or dissemination processes;
 - g. Demonstrated ability of research to be conducted in the timeframe established in this grant particularly regarding the availability of data required to conduct described analysis;
 - h. The reasonableness of estimated cost and time commitments in relation to anticipated results; and

- i. The qualifications and experience of personnel, including demonstrated familiarity with the literature and data to be used.

Award Information

IRP anticipates funding four to five projects, with total funding (including direct and indirect costs) up to \$50,000 each. Applicants are encouraged to request that their home institution forego or charge minimal indirect costs. Support is subject to the availability of funds. Nothing in this description of applications should be construed as committing IRP to dividing available funds among all qualified applicants.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

This is a two-stage selection process. All interested parties must submit a letter of intent. IRP will provide feedback to applicants within four weeks. Applicants will then have an additional four weeks to submit a full proposal.

Submit letter of intent by January 18, 2022 at:

https://irpwise.formstack.com/forms/extramural_large_grant_letter_of_intent

Fax submissions will not be accepted. Proposal receipt will be acknowledged.

The letter of intent must contain the following components as a single PDF file in the order listed:

1. A letter (not to exceed two pages) that describes at a high level:
 - a. the issue(s) to be examined;
 - b. hypotheses to be evaluated;
 - c. methodology proposed;
 - d. data sources to be used (including whether the data sources are already available to the PIs and how and in what timeframe those data sources will be acquired if not already available);
 - e. anticipated results of the research, including their potential implications for public policy; and
 - f. how the project will engage affected communities.
2. Curriculum vitae for the Principal Investigator.

Submit full proposal by March 13, 2022 at:

https://irpwise.formstack.com/forms/extramural_large_grant

Fax submissions will not be accepted. Proposal receipt will be acknowledged.

The application must contain the following components as a single PDF file in the order listed:

1. A cover sheet giving the title of the proposed research, applicant's name, date of Ph.D., and institutional affiliation with full address and telephone number, e-mail address, and home address.
2. A one-page (double-spaced) abstract, describing research objectives, data, and methods.
3. Description of the applicant's proposed research, not to exceed eight double-spaced pages in 12-point font with one-inch margins all around, exclusive of references or appendices. The proposal should carefully describe:
 - a. the issue(s) to be examined;
 - b. hypotheses to be evaluated;
 - c. methodology proposed;
 - d. data sources to be used (including whether the data sources are already available to the PIs and how and in what timeframe those data sources will be acquired if not already available);
 - e. anticipated results of the research, including their potential implications for public policy; and
 - f. how the project will engage affected communities, including compensating those who consult on the project.
4. An itemized budget showing (as relevant) the researcher's time, research assistant's time, people with lived experiences' time spent on project consultation, travel costs (other than those related to IRP-initiated meetings and events), computer services, supplies, and indirect costs if required. (Note that applicants are encouraged to request that their home institution forego or charge minimal indirect costs.) Grant awards will be issued in two or three increments corresponding to the IRP parent award and depending on the length of the project. As such, the itemized budget should be presented in the following periods: from June 1, 2022 to September 29, 2022; from September 30, 2022 to September 29, 2023; and from September 30, 2023 to May 31, 2024.
5. Curriculum vitae for all investigators.
6. A letter from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs of the applicant's institution confirming administrative approval of the proposal.
7. A timely plan for obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or exemption for human subjects research. The University of Wisconsin–Madison will not execute subcontracts without documentation of IRB exemption or approval.

CONTACTS

All inquiries, including questions on the application process, budget, and research issues, should be directed to: irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu.

TIMELINE

Proposal release	December 6, 2021
Optional Webinar	January 10, 2022 from: 12:00–1:00 ET // 11:00–12:00 CT // 10:00–11:00 MT // 9:00–10:00 PT Link to webinar: https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/98285163612
Deadline for letter of intent	January 18, 2022
Feedback provided by IRP on LOI	February 11, 2022
Deadline for full application	March 13, 2022
Notification of grant award	mid May 2022
Contract begins	June 1, 2022
Meeting with IRP	June 2022
Quarterly progress reports due	Due the fifth day of the following quarter; examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work completed from June 1, 2022–September 30, 2022 will be included in October 5, 2022 report• Work completed from October 1, 2022–December 31, 2022 will be included in the January 5, 2023 report
Complete initial draft paper due	Three months before the end of the established grant period
Meeting with IRP	Within two weeks of initial draft submission
Revised draft paper due	End of established grant period
Grant ends	End of established grant period not to exceed 24 months
Meeting with IRP	Within a month of revised draft paper submission
Paper submitted for publication (with notice to IRP)	Within nine months of the established grant period end date

Note: Contract dates and reporting requirement deadlines will be specified in the award letter upon notification.