



March 11, 2015

**IRP RIDGE Center for National Food and Nutrition Assistance Research  
2015–2016 Small Grants Program**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Funding for the Period from July 1, 2015, to December 31, 2016

Deadline for notice of intent: **April 17, 2015**

Deadline for proposal receipt: 5:00 p.m. Central Time, **May 6, 2015**

Note: Both electronic *and* paper copies of proposals must be received by the deadline to be eligible.

**Purpose**

The Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) seeks to stimulate innovative research related to federal food assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) and the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program, and to support training of researchers interested in food assistance issues.

**Background**

IRP is a university-based center for interdisciplinary research into the causes and consequences of poverty and social inequality in the United States. It also serves as the Research Innovation and Development Grants in Economics (RIDGE) Center for National Food and Nutrition Assistance Research, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service. The RIDGE program supports small grants for studies focusing on food assistance programs.

The IRP RIDGE Center Director is Judith Bartfeld; the Center Associate Director is IRP Director Lawrence Berger; and the USDA RIDGE Program Director is Alex Majchrowicz.

**Focal Research Theme for 2015–2016**

***The Impacts of Food Assistance Programs on Child, Adult, and Family Well-Being***

Food assistance programs have grown dramatically in recent years. Program growth has occurred in conjunction with other trends, including persistently high poverty and food insecurity rates.

The focus of the 2015–2016 IRP RIDGE Center for National Food and Nutrition Assistance Research funding competition is on the impacts of food assistance programs on well-being, broadly defined. Overall, we are seeking to fund work that expands our understanding of the importance of food assistance programs in influencing a variety of indicators of well-being, including but not limited to food security, school performance, learning, health, nutrition, and employment. We have a particular interest in research that goes beyond simple participation measures to explore how program outcomes may be linked to program characteristics, interactions among food assistance programs and local contexts, multiple program participation, intensity or duration of program exposure, and similar topics.

Further details about the research priority are available at:  
<http://www.irp.wisc.edu/initiatives/irpridge/themes.htm>.

## Terms of the Grants

1. Applicants must hold a doctorate or the highest degree appropriate for their discipline at the time of proposal submittal.
2. Grants may not exceed \$40,000. These amounts include indirect costs at the applicant's institution, if required, and expenses incurred for obligatory participation in a fall 2016 conference in Washington, D.C. (see # 5 below). **Indirect costs are limited to not greater than 26 percent MTDC per the award of the prime grant.**
3. Grant recipients are expected to attend a workshop at IRP in spring 2016 to discuss their early research results. The Institute will cover the travel expenses to this workshop of one investigator per project (co-investigators may attend, but must cover their own expenses); applicants need not include support for travel to the workshop in their application budgets.
4. Workshop attendees are asked to prepare a draft paper—recognizing that what they are discussing is a work in progress and findings may be preliminary and incomplete—and submit it to the IRP RIDGE Coordinator Deborah Johnson ([djohnson@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:djohnson@ssc.wisc.edu)) at least 10 days prior to the workshop.
5. Grant recipients will present their research results at a USDA/ERS conference in Washington, D.C., in fall 2016.
6. Grant recipients are required to furnish the Institute with brief quarterly progress reports, and a final report describing the results of their research *and* an executive summary thereof no later than November 30, 2016. The final report will consist of the paper they present at the fall conference, revised to respond to comments received there. The final report may appear in the IRP Discussion Paper series. The executive summary must follow a format provided by ERS. These reports should be submitted to [djohnson@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:djohnson@ssc.wisc.edu).

### **Availability of Funds**

Program support is subject to the availability of funds. Nothing in this description of applications should be construed as committing the Institute to dividing available funds among all qualified applicants.

### **Application Instructions: Electronic and Paper Components**

The RIDGE proposal process includes online submission of a Notice of Intent and Application and the mailing of three hard copies of the proposal package to IRP. The process is as follows:

1. Complete a **Notice of Intent** form at [https://irpwisc.formstack.com/forms/ridge\\_rfp](https://irpwisc.formstack.com/forms/ridge_rfp) by April 17, 2015. Please note that this is a firm deadline and is integral to our planning.
2. Complete an **Application** form and upload a PDF of your proposal at [https://irpwisc.formstack.com/forms/ridge\\_app](https://irpwisc.formstack.com/forms/ridge_app) by 5:00 p.m. Central Time on **May 6, 2015**. See the list of required application components below.
3. Mail three paper copies of your full proposal to the address below. Proposals must be received by IRP no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Time on **May 6, 2015**, in order to be eligible. Fax submissions will not be accepted. Proposal receipt will be acknowledged.

Institute for Research on Poverty  
IRP RIDGE Center for National Research  
University of Wisconsin–Madison  
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3412 Social Science Building  
Madison, WI 53706-1320

## ***Application Components***

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

1. A cover sheet giving the title of the proposed research, applicant's name, institutional affiliation with full address and telephone number, e-mail address, home address, and time period of the proposed research.
2. A one-page abstract, describing purpose, data, and methods.
3. Description of the applicant's proposed research, not to exceed 10 double-spaced pages exclusive of References or Appendixes. The proposal should carefully describe the issues to be examined, hypotheses to be evaluated, methodology proposed, data sources to be used, and anticipated results of the research. The anticipated results should be related to policy issues.
4. A budget showing funds requested from the Institute and funds available or applied for from other sources. The budget must be itemized, showing, for example, the researcher's time, research assistant's time, travel costs, computer services, supplies, and indirect costs if required. Indirect costs are limited to not greater than 26 percent MTDC per the award of the prime grant. Please note that equipment purchases such as computers are not allowable.
5. A statement of qualifications of the applicant.
6. Applicant's curriculum vitae.
7. A one-paragraph summary of any other projects that have been funded by the RIDGE Program in the past five years (through either of the participating institutions).
8. A brief summary of any other related or similar research that is either currently funded or under review elsewhere, including clarification as to the relationship between such research and this proposal.
9. A brief summary of the current status of the research proposed here, including whether the proposed data are currently available, any uncertainty about data availability or access including special permissions needed, and the status of the proposed analyses.
10. A letter from the office of research and sponsored programs of the applicant's institution confirming administrative approval of the budget and proposal.
11. Go to [https://irpwisc.formstack.com/forms/ridge\\_app](https://irpwisc.formstack.com/forms/ridge_app) to submit the file comprising all these elements.

## ***Application Processing and Selection Criteria***

Applications will be screened for relevance to the subject areas described above in the Focal Research Theme section. If judged irrelevant or inadequate by any of the criteria listed below, the application will not be considered further. If judged relevant, the application will be evaluated by a panel of experts. The evaluation will employ the criteria listed below. The Institute will consult with ERS before making any funding decisions. **Award notification will be made in early to mid-June.**

### ***Selection Criteria***

1. The potential usefulness of the proposed research for the advancement of scientific knowledge concerning the development or analysis of government policy related to food assistance programs.
2. The relevance of the topic to the Center's 2015–2016 research focus: understanding the impact of food assistance programs on child, adult, and family well-being.
3. Clarity of statement of objectives, methods, and anticipated results. The appropriateness and soundness of methodology, including research design, choice of data, methods of analysis, and other procedures.
4. The reasonableness of estimated cost and time commitments in relation to anticipated results, and the necessity of the funds for the completion of the research.
5. The qualifications and experience of personnel, including demonstrated familiarity with the literature.

While the above criteria are critical, we also consider past and current RIDGE and other ERS funding (with an interest in using funds to support high-quality work from a range of researchers), and seniority of principal investigator (with an interest in supporting highly qualified junior researchers and those newer to the field).

**Questions**

Applicants may direct process-related questions to Deborah Johnson ([djohnson@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:djohnson@ssc.wisc.edu)) and budget-related questions to Vicki Johnson ([vljohnson@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:vljohnson@ssc.wisc.edu)). Research-related questions should be directed by e-mail to Judith Bartfeld ([bartfeld@wisc.edu](mailto:bartfeld@wisc.edu)).

**Timeline**

<b>IRP RIDGE Center for National Research</b> 2015–2016 Small Grants Timeline of Important Dates	
Notice of Intent deadline	April 17, 2015
Deadline for proposal receipt (electronic and paper)	May 6, 2015, 5:00 p.m. Central Time
Notification of award	Early to mid-June
Contract begins	July 1, 2015
Quarterly progress reports due (6 total)	Mid-month in January, April, July, and October
Initial paper draft due	10 days before spring 2016 IRP workshop
Spring workshop (Madison)	April 2016 (exact date TBD)
Fall ERS RIDGE conference (Washington, D.C.)	Fall 2016 (exact date TBD)
Final report and executive summary due	November 30, 2016
Contract ends	December 31, 2016
Deadline for submitting final invoices	February 28, 2017

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