# COVID-19

# Request for Proposals

# The Social Science Research Institute (SSRI) invites proposals for funding to supplement ongoing, externally funded, interdisciplinary “parent” research projects to cover the costs of altered methodologies and other researcher activities resulting from challenges to human subjects research due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes, but is not limited to, new costs arising from temporary halts or stoppage of human subjects data collection, modifications to data collection protocols, intervention delivery, and the need for pilot data on alternative methods before these are integrated into an ongoing study.

# We will prioritize applications that:

# Propose sound and feasible activities that can be integrated into an ongoing, externally funded, interdisciplinary research project to address constraints on human subjects research imposed by the pandemic;

# Provide a compelling case for why the supplemental funding is needed and how it will enhance progress toward project milestones and, if relevant, continued external funding.

# Eligibility

Although research teams can include students, post docs, faculty from other institutions and other external collaborators, our intent is to support interdisciplinary teams involving Penn State's faculty. For this reason, team leaders should be tenure track or research faculty with continuing appointments. Single investigator proposals will not be considered. Investigators may be PI/MPI on only one proposal; however, investigators may serve as a collaborator on up to two proposals.

**Timeline**

January 11, 2021: Call for proposals released

February 15, 2021: Proposals due by 5pm Eastern Time

March 15, 2021: Funding decisions announced

# Proposal Guidelines

* Awards up to $50K; we anticipate funding 4-8 projects
* Members of SSRI’s Executive Committee and relevant college Associate Research Deans will provide reviews
* Funds are allocated for a 12-24 month period

**Support will be provided for:**

* Innovative interdisciplinary research projects that involve collaborations among Penn State faculty
* Consultants, graduate student time, or hourly support of activities

**Funds are NOT intended to support:**

* Student (masters, dissertation research) or post-doctoral projects
* Projects of individual faculty members
* Salary, including summer salary, of tenure line faculty
* Graduate student tuition
* Publication costs
* Delivery of outreach programs or services
* Activities supported by departments and colleges (travel to conferences, computer or software purchase unless specific to the proposed study, etc.)
* Projects involving a Penn State faculty member and external collaborators only; our goal is to build and support Penn State teams

**Criteria for Review**

NIH funding criteria will be used to evaluate proposals including as follows:

* Explanation of how the pandemic has challenged the conduct of the study;
* Well-articulated description of how the supplement will build on the ongoing, externally funded, interdisciplinary research project to cover the costs of altered methodologies and/or other researcher activities impacted by the pandemic;
* Details on how the funds will be used to advance progress/support the ongoing project for continued funding and the potential scientific and real-world impacts
* Inclusion of rigorous and reliable methods that will allow the team to pivot/adapt their current methods to overcome challenges
* Clear contribution to social/behavioral science
* Interdisciplinary teams comprised of investigators with relevant expertise
* Proposals must provide strong evidence for access to the population of interest via any new proposed methods; investigators are expected to prepare and submit the appropriate revisions for IRB approval.

**Structure and Submission of Proposals**

Proposals should be single-spaced, in Times New Roman font size no smaller than 12-point type, left-aligned with one-inch margins (see Proposal Submission Form below). Please include a NIH or NSF biosketch for each investigator. Your proposal should be sent as **one** document, including letters of support and biosketches to [ssri-seed-grant@psu.edu](mailto:ssri-seed-grant@psu.edu). To complete your proposal submission, please download, complete, and email the [Proposal Submission Form](https://ssri.psu.edu/sites/ssri/files/2021-01/SSRI%20COVID%20Emergency%20Proposal%20Submission%20Form.docx) (also included below).

**Other Issues to Consider as You Prepare Your Proposal**

* Consult with SSRI Associate Director, Danielle Downs, about your project as needed.
* Talk with any of the SSRI unit directors (e.g., Geographic Information Analysis (GIA), Survey Research Center (SRC), Social, Life, and Engineering Sciences Imaging Center (SLEIC), and Methodological Consulting Center) about how you might use the expertise of their units to enhance your research
* If you need time and funding to network, organize your team, or further develop your research ideas, consider applying for a SSRI Level 1 project at: <https://ssri.psu.edu/funding/ssri-level-1-funding>.

**Project Reports**

Funded investigators are required to provide an annual project status update and a brief (one page) final report upon completing the project. These materials allow us to track and report outcomes as well as monitor the success of our seed grant program.

If you need to make changes to the project team, description, design, or budget during the course of your projects, please send a request to ssri-seed-grant@psu.edu with the specific details of these changes.

**Questions?**

**Contact** Danielle DownsPh.D., Associate Director, Social Science Research Institute and Professor of Kinesiology and Obstetrics and Gynecology