



Request for Proposals

Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement at Minority Serving Institutions

Issued on

April 2, 2018

Proposal due

May 1, 2018, 11:59 p.m. Pacific time

Submit your proposal using this link to our Qualtrics site:

https://cgs.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_da6p8pwSh7aYC7X

Questions about proposal submission can be directed to:

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A PROJECT OF THE COUNCIL OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS

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I. Background

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) invites member institutions that are federally recognized Minority Serving Institutions (such as HBCUs, HSIs, and Tribal Colleges) to submit proposals for sub-awards to support their participation in *Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement*. This multi-university project seeks to increase the capacity of U.S. graduate institutions to collect data on PhD career pathways and to use resulting datasets to improve doctoral programs. The project is designed to:

- Implement the survey instruments and implementation guidelines developed in Phase I of the *Understanding PhD Career Pathways* project;
- Identify promising practices for the sustainable integration of a major PhD career pathways data collection effort into existing university processes;
- Help graduate schools collect and use data regarding PhD career pathways to improve programs; and
- Stimulate broad-scale adoption of the CGS PhD Career Pathways surveys.

In this RFP, CGS is soliciting proposals from federally recognized Minority Serving Institutions to participate in collecting this careers pathways data. Using supplemental funding provided by NSF (NSF #1661272), CGS will provide awards of \$50,000 to each of four selected institutions to support implementation of surveys of PhD students and alumni over a period of twenty-four months.

II. Role of Project Partners

Each university selected for an award will be a project partner and will commit to conducting the following activities on their campuses. With the support of CGS and a network of partner institutions, each university will:

- Develop a plan for implementing two survey instruments developed by CGS. This plan should be based on the CGS Implementation Guide for PhD Career Pathways Surveys (Attachment A).
 - The CGS Career Pathways PhD Alumni Survey (Attachment B) must be administered in Fall 2018 and Fall 2019.
 - The CGS Career Pathways PhD Student Survey (Attachment C) must be administered in Spring 2019 and Spring 2020.
- Perform analyses of resulting data from the surveys to inform the improvement of doctoral programs.
- Submit deidentified data to CGS for aggregate analysis.
- Participate in related research activities conducted by the Council of Graduate Schools to gain information about challenges and lessons learned in the process of implementing the surveys.

III. Eligibility

To qualify for consideration, institutions submitting proposals must:

- Be U.S.-based, [Regular Members](#) of CGS in good standing and not an awardee of the current Career Pathways project.
- Be a federally recognized [Minority Serving Institution](#) (i.e., Alaska Native-Serving Institution, Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution, Historically Black College & Universities, Hispanic Serving Institution, Native America-Serving Non-Tribal Institutions, Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution, Predominantly Black Institution, and/or Tribal College or University)
- Have awarded PhDs degrees since at least AY 2009-2010, currently award PhDs, and commit to collecting data on PhD student and alumni in at least one STEM doctoral program. Please see Appendix D for the list of STEM fields and programs.

Note: The institution must commit to collecting data on PhD student and alumni in at least one STEM doctoral program. However, the institution is encouraged to also administer the PhD Career Pathways Alumni and Student survey to students and alumni from any doctoral program the institution offers.

The director of a project must be the graduate dean (or primary institutional official responsible for graduate education). Institutions may designate a co-director(s) and other key personnel to implement the project. These individuals do not need to be staff members or affiliates of the graduate school; proposers are encouraged to include individuals from across campus in their project teams.

IV. Selection Criteria and Process

The following selection criteria will be used in evaluating proposals. More detailed guidance on how to prepare a proposal can be found in Section VII., *Proposal Preparation*.

To be competitive, a proposal must outline a clear, organized and realistic plan to implement the required data collection effort on campus, starting with the alumni survey in Fall 2018. Successful proposals will incorporate elements discussed in the CGS Implementation Guide for PhD Career Pathways Surveys (Attachment A), as well as innovative ways to efficiently locate PhD alumni and ensure high response rates to both surveys. Each proposal should:

1. Describe a thoughtful strategy for communicating resulting analyses to stakeholders on campus and informing program improvement. Successful proposals will identify who intended audiences of resulting analyses and data products are, as well as how project teams plan to communicate with them.

2. Demonstrate the capacity of the project team to successfully implement all required and proposed activities. Successful proposals will include brief background information about key project personnel, including examples of past successful initiatives they initiated, and their intended contributions to this project.
3. Provide evidence of strong institutional support beyond the graduate school, including a statement of commitment to sustaining the data collection effort beyond the funding period.
4. Provide a data management plan that will ensure data integrity and protection of human subjects.
5. Provide a reasonable budget for \$50,000 spread over 2 years. The budget must follow NSF budget guidelines (https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg18_1/pappg_2.jsp#IIC2g) and be prepared on NSF budget forms. Cost sharing is not allowed by NSF on these proposals. Allowable indirect costs at the federally-negotiated rate must be included in each year's budget request. All award budgets must be approved by NSF before funds can be allocated. Please note that IRB approval for your data collection effort is required at the time of the initial award installment.

Selection Process

In May-June 2018, a selection committee will review proposals, and make funding recommendations based on the above criteria. The committee may recommend funding pending revisions to the proposed activities and/or budget. Final funding decisions will be announced in June 2018.

Please note that the first disbursement of the subaward will be contingent upon appropriate IRB documentation (either approval or exemption) for administering the Alumni and Student Surveys, on completion of a Data Sharing Agreement, and NSF's approval of the subawardee's budget.

V. Required Activities

1. CGS Research Activities

As a part of the overall project, CGS will address several research questions, including:

- What are the processes that best support sustainable implementation?
- To what extent do these instruments catalyze university action?
- How do the surveys and their data get diffused across a university?
- How do graduate deans and doctoral programs use data from the surveys to inform decision-making and program improvement?
- Are there patterns of difference among subgroups of survey respondents?

Project partners are study participants in these research activities, and as a condition of this funding support, are expected to:

- **Submit to CGS de-identified, individual-level data** derived from the data gathered via the required data collection efforts at your institution.

- **Share information about the implementation processes** of their proposed activities with the CGS research team through webinar meetings, a private listserv/discussion board, in-person/telephone interviews, and questionnaires.
- **Offer a clear sustainability plan** to ensure data collection and analyses continue beyond the funding period. This plan should incorporate at least some of the recommendations for sustainability outlined in the Implementation Guide (Attachment A).

2. Grant Administration Activities

In addition to the core project activities outlined in Sections II and V(1), all sub-awardees must commit to the following:

- **Submit annual reports** to CGS.
- **Attend biannual in-person meetings** for project directors (PDs). These will be held in conjunction with the CGS Summer Workshop and New Deans Institute (every July) and the CGS Annual Meeting (every December).
- **Participate in quarterly webinar meetings** for all active project staff to share challenges, information and lessons learned.
- Provide ongoing care and **protection of human subjects**. Institutions are responsible for taking necessary steps to assure the protection of human subjects and obtaining and maintaining an IRB approval to conduct data collection efforts, as well as subsequent uses of resulting datasets in relation to this project.

VI. Timeline

The following timeline provides a broad overview of the schedule of activities for CGS and project partners. Please refer to the Implementation Guide (Attachment A) for a more detailed schedule for submitting data to CGS.

Date	CGS Administration	Survey Implementation	Grant Administration Activities
2018	Proposals due May 1 Selections made (June) Funding period begins on or after July 1	Wave 1 Alumni survey (Fall/Winter)	Biannual webinar meetings for project team * Project Director (PD) meeting at CGS Summer Workshop (Jul) PD meeting at CGS Annual Meeting (Dec) Preliminary sustainability plan due (Dec) *

2019	Second year funding starts July 1	Wave 1 student survey (Spring) Wave 2 alumni survey (Fall/Winter)	Biannual webinar meetings for project team * Annual report due (Jun) Revised sustainability plan due (Jun) * PD meeting at CGS Summer Workshop (Jul) PD meeting at CGS Annual Meeting (Dec)
2020	Funding period ends June 30	Wave 2 student survey (Spring)	Webinar meeting for project team Final sustainability plan due (Jun) * Final report due (Jun) PD meeting at CGS Summer Workshop (Jul)

*Awardees will not be required to commit to the indicated activities but are encouraged to participate.

VII. Proposal Preparation

Full Proposals

Proposals should include the following information, in the exact order listed below. All sections of full proposals should be in 12-point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. **The entire proposal (parts A and B) will be submitted using a Qualtrics form that can be found at:**

https://cgs.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_da6p8pwSh7aYC7X

- A. **Proposal narrative** (maximum of 10 pages total in the requested format) including the following four sections:
1. A brief description of your institution
 2. Proposed activities, addressing:
 - a. Plan for implementing CGS Career Pathways surveys
 - b. Plan for analyzing resulting datasets
 - c. Strategy for communicating resulting analyses to stakeholders on your campus
 - d. Strategy for using data for program improvement
 - e. Strategy for sustainability (continuing data collection beyond the funding period(s))
 3. Project personnel and their roles
 4. Data Management Plan. This should include a statement of protection of human subjects, analyzing resulting survey data, and using findings for program improvement. The plan should outline: i) where and in what format original survey responses will be stored and for how long; ii) who will have access to student-level data; iii) what the process of granting access to student-level data will be; iv) how analysis results will be shared and disseminated

without compromising privacy and confidentiality of survey respondents; and v) your plan for submitting data to CGS. In addition, this section should include a plan to secure and maintain appropriate IRB approvals or exemption for the duration of this project.

- B. Supplementary materials** (do not count towards 10-page limit). All components of this section must be uploaded via Qualtrics as a single pdf document:
1. *Budget*. Please refer to the guidance below when preparing your budget(s).
 - a. STEM award (\$50,000 total) over two years
 - i. **MUST** include indirect costs calculated at institution's federally-negotiated indirect cost rate.
 - ii. Allowable costs must adhere to NSF [guidelines](#) and policies.
 1. NSF does not allow the payment of incentives for survey participation
 - iii. Cost sharing is **NOT** allowed for this award.
 - iv. Budget must be submitted on NSF budget forms (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf9784/append.htm>).
 2. *Budget justification*.
 3. *Letter of support* from university president or provost that is sufficiently specific to demonstrate institutional support, even in the event of leadership change. A letter of support is required from a president or provost at each participating university in a consortium.

Please note that materials faxed or sent by regular mail will not be accepted.