



**INSTITUTE** *for*  
**RESEARCH** *on*  
**POVERTY**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

*RIDGE Center for National Food and Nutrition Assistance Research*

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March 14, 2014

**IRP RIDGE Center for National Food and Nutrition Assistance Research  
2014–2015 Small Grants Program**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Funding for the Period from July 1, 2014, to December 31, 2015  
Deadline for notice of intent: **April 18, 2014**; Deadline for proposal receipt: **May 2, 2014**

Note: Electronic AND hard copies of the proposal must be received at IRP by the due date 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 RIDGE (Research Innovation and Development Grants in Economics) 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 RIDGE Center Director is Judith Bartfeld; the Center Associate Director is Timothy Smeeding; and the USDA RIDGE Program Director is Alex Majchrowicz.

**Focal Theme for 2014–2015**

The Impacts of Food Assistance Programs on Food Security, Consumption Patterns, Food Choices, Nutritional Outcomes, and Other Diet-Related Health Outcomes

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, high rates of diet-linked health problems, and growing attention to the health implications of food choices. Due in part to these converging trends, there is increasing interest in the potential of food assistance programs to serve as vehicles for influencing food insecurity, food choices, food consumption patterns, and diet-linked health outcomes such as obesity and early-onset diabetes.

The focus of the 2014–2015 IRP RIDGE Center for National Food and Nutrition Assistance Research funding competition—a continuation of our focus from last year—is on the impacts of food assistance

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programs on food insecurity, consumption patterns, food choices, nutritional outcomes, and other diet-related health outcomes. Overall, we are seeking to fund work that expands our understanding of the importance of food assistance programs in influencing a variety of outcomes directly linked to the food and nutrition focus of the programs. 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.

More detail on the research priority is 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 2015 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 2015 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 applications.
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 2015.
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, 2015. 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**

A notice of intent that includes name of principal investigator and co-investigator(s) and tentative project title, must be **e-mailed** by **April 18, 2014**, to: [irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu). ***Please note that this is a firm deadline and is integral to our planning.***

Applicants must submit five hard copies and an e-mailed electronic copy (PDF) of their proposal by 5:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time on **May 2, 2014**. Electronic AND hard copies of the proposal must be received by IRP by the deadline to be eligible. Fax submissions will not be accepted. Proposal receipt will be acknowledged.

Five hard copies of your application should be addressed to:  
IRP RIDGE Center for National Research  
Institute for Research on Poverty  
University of Wisconsin–Madison  
1180 Observatory Drive  
3412 Social Science Building  
Madison, WI 53706-1320

The electronic copy of your application should be e-mailed to Robin Snell at [irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu).

**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 current or recent projects that have been funded by the RIDGE Program (through either of the participating institutions).
8. A brief summary of any other related research that is either currently funded or under review, 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 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 proposal.

**Application Processing and Selection Criteria**

Applications will be screened for relevance to the subject areas described above in the Focal Theme section on p. 1. 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 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 2014–2015 research focus: understanding the importance of food assistance programs in influencing a variety of outcomes directly linked to the food and nutrition focus of the programs.
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 RIDGE and other ERS funding (with an interest in using funds to support high-quality work from a range of researchers), and seniority of PI (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)).

<b>IRP RIDGE Center for National Research</b> 2014–2015 Small Grants Timeline of Important Dates	
Notice of Intent e-mail deadline	April 18, 2014
Deadline for proposal receipt	May 2, 2014, 5:00 p.m. CDT
Notification of award	Early to mid-June
Contract begins	July 1, 2014
Quarterly progress reports due (6 total)	Mid-month in January, April, July, and October
Initial paper draft due	10 days before spring IRP workshop
Spring workshop (Madison)	April 2015 (exact date TBD)
Fall ERS RIDGE conference (Washington, D.C.)	Fall 2015 (exact date TBD)
Final report and executive summary due	November 30, 2015
Contract ends	December 31, 2015
Deadline for submitting final invoices	February 28, 2015

3/13/14