

Fatherhood Research and Practice Network* Grants for Exploratory and Descriptive Research Call for Letters of Interest

The Fatherhood Research and Practice Network (FRPN) is pleased to announce a new competitive grant opportunity to support **exploratory and descriptive research** that will provide insights into previously unstudied or understudied areas.

FRPN expects to make 3-6 awards of approximately **\$20,000 to \$50,000**. Applicants are encouraged to leverage FRPN awards with other grant or matching funds. Each award will be for a **maximum of 18 months**. Administrative overhead or indirect costs may not exceed 15%; these costs will be included as part of the total award.

Background

Exploratory research is conducted when too little is known about a subject to conduct a rigorous study. Exploratory research collects and analyzes data that will help refine research questions for future research. It can involve surveys, interviews with experts, observations, focus groups or other data collection approaches.

Descriptive studies descriptive studies gather and analyze data that describes things like who is served, how services are provided, what changes are observed over time in those who are served, and how specific subgroups of interest differ in their reactions to the services or the outcomes they experience. They do not employ an experimental design with random assignment of subjects to treatment and control groups. Like exploratory studies, descriptive studies may utilize surveys, interviews with experts, observations, focus groups or other data collection approaches.

Areas of Interest

Applicants are encouraged to propose studies that they believe will further the fatherhood field and that have not been the subject of sufficient research. The proposed study should consider innovative programs or interventions related to co-parenting, employment and economic security, and/or father engagement and effective parenting for low-income fathers. Such studies might include, but would not be limited to, the following:

* Information about FRPN can be found at www.frpn.org.

- How fatherhood programming can operate effectively and efficiently in rural settings
- The use of cognitive behavioral therapy approaches in fatherhood programming
- How to engage mothers for co-parenting interventions
- Interventions to strengthen parenting time with never-married populations
- The use of smartphones or other technology for data collection
- Text messages to promote positive father engagement/behaviors
- Fatherhood programming for specific populations, including Latinos, Native Americans, teen fathers, immigrant fathers, and others
- Integrating fatherhood programming into batterer treatment or integrating violence education and prevention into fatherhood programming

Eligible Applicants

Applicants may be researchers, practitioners, or a researcher-practitioner team. FRPN strongly encourages collaborations between a researcher and practitioner; for this RFP, however, researchers or practitioners may apply independently. Thus, a researcher might collect new data independent of a fatherhood program or conduct a secondary analysis of previously collected data. Alternatively, a fatherhood program might propose an in-house evaluation of a program component using qualified research staff. In all cases (a research-practitioner team, a solo researcher, or a solo program), the award will be made to a single organization that will be responsible for accepting the award and administering the grant. To be eligible, applicant organizations must be a university or research organization, a non-profit with 501 (c) (3) IRS status, or a state or local government agency based in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Researchers and practitioners from underrepresented racial, ethnic, and cultural groups are encouraged to apply. Early career investigators with requisite evaluation skills are also welcome to apply.

Applicants who are awarded grants from FRPN must agree to comply with U.S. Department of Health and Human Service requirements for subawards (see Grants Policy Statement at <http://www.hhs.gov/asfr/ogapa/aboutog/hhsgps107.pdf>, pages II-2 (“flow down”) and II-78). Grantees must agree to participate in FRPN-sponsored learning community activities. Grantees must also agree to use FRPN grants only to conduct the evaluation and not for the delivery of services.

Application Process

The application process involves two steps. First, an eligible organization must submit a *letter of interest* for the FRPN's evaluation funding. The FRPN will review the letters and invite applicants who meet the eligibility criteria and address the items noted below to submit a *full proposal*.

The full proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by expert fatherhood researchers and practitioners. The following table shows the requested application materials and timeline:

	Date Due
All prospective applicants must submit a letter of interest (maximum 2 pages, single-spaced)	September 30, 2016
Applicants will be notified whether they are invited to submit a full proposal (full proposals must be invited)	October 17, 2016
Invited applicants must submit a full proposal (maximum 12 pages, double-spaced)	November 18, 2016
Applicants will be notified whether they have been selected for an award	December 16, 2016
Start date	January 2, 2017
Draft final report	March 31, 2018
Revised final report	June 30, 2018

Letter of Interest

Letters of interest must include the following information and be signed by the party who will be responsible for the successful completion of the study. In the case of a collaboration, the letter should be signed by both the researcher and a senior official within the fatherhood program who can commit the organization to participate in the study. Letters of interest must be submitted in a single pdf document via email to FRPN Submissions (frpnsubmissions@gmail.com) no later than 11:59 pm EST on September 30, 2016 and must include the following:

1. Description of the research questions.
2. Statement about the evaluation gap being addressed and the contribution of your proposed evaluation to the fatherhood field.
3. Brief description of the research design, proposed research activities, recruitment plan, and data collection strategies.
4. A brief description of the population that will be studied.

5. Identification of applicant organization and description of any collaborating partners. This should include a brief overview of the program such as services offered, targeted population, and number of fathers served, and a brief biography of the researcher and the lead program representative, if applicable.
6. Brief statement of the amount of grant dollars sought, any expected match or funding from other sources, the research activities that the grant will fund (e.g., researcher's time, data collection), and the proposed timeframe for the conduct of evaluation activities.

Full proposals:

Full proposals should not exceed 12 pages, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and a font of 12 or larger. The page limit does not include budget and attachments, including letters or other documents specifically requested in this RFP. Please submit all items in a single pdf document via email to frnsubmissions@gmail.com no later than 11:59 pm EST on November 18, 2016.

Proposal Topics and Selection Criteria:

Full proposals should address the 6 main topics noted below. Suggested page lengths are noted in parentheses. Bulleted items describe what the FRPN reviewers will be considering during their review of each proposal topic.

1. Importance of the Evaluation Being Proposed (3 pages)

- The evaluation issue being addressed is clearly defined and is important.
- The study addresses an important gap in the study of fatherhood programs or issues.
- The evaluation will build the knowledge base and support future research.
- If the study focuses on a program or practice model, this should be something that can be replicated by other programs.

2. Study Design (4 pages)

- The study is well-designed and will generate credible data.
- The data analyses proposed are appropriate.
- The project has IRB approval or a reasonable plan to obtain IRB approval.
- The study can be conducted (including data analysis and report writing) within a maximum of 18 months (Timeline or milestone chart must be submitted as a required Attachment).
- Studies that plan to evaluate the implementation and operation of a program will result in a detailed description of the intervention and operating context.

- Anticipated limitations and barriers in the study design are discussed and proposed mitigation methods are reasonable.

3. Qualifications of the Researcher (1 page)

- The researcher has experience in evaluating fatherhood programs, doing evaluations of other social programs/interventions, or in conducting basic research on fathers.
- There are resumes/curriculum vitae for the lead investigators as a separate attachment.

4. Description of the Fatherhood Program, if applicable (1 pages)

- The program has experience providing fatherhood services and offers services related to economic security, positive father engagement with children and/or co-parenting/healthy relationships that are of appropriate intensity and quality to produce an effect on fatherhood outcomes.
- The program has a demonstrated ability to recruit, serve and retain a sufficient number of fathers within the required time period for an effective evaluation.
- The program staff will devote a sufficient amount of time and effort for recruitment and retention of fathers during the period when the evaluation is being conducted.
- There is a description of the population that the program serves and the nature and amount of services it provides.
- There are resumes or biographical sketches for the lead fatherhood program partners as a separate attachment.

5. Collaboration and Staffing Plan (2 pages)

- The proposal describes the roles and responsibilities of key project staff including research personnel and, if applicable, personnel at the fatherhood program.
- The proposal identifies a clear plan about how needed data will be collected, who will be responsible for data collection during each phase of the study, who will supervise the collection of data, how the data will be kept confidential, and other research implementation issues.

6. Capabilities and Competencies (1 pages)

- The applicant organization is identified and has specified the amount of funding requested, and provided a detailed budget and budget narrative as an attachment.
- The applicant organization and any contractors that the applicant will use to implement and manage this project have the experience, capability and capacity to conduct it.
- The applicant organization has the capacity to administer the grant and has included details on its system for fiscal accountability such as project cost accounting,

internal controls, policies and procedures, and the ability to prepare financial reports.

Attachments for Full Proposal

These attachments provide detail on the budget for the project, the timeline for project performance, and the capabilities and competencies of the applicant organization and its contractors. Grant funds may cover research expenses only, including but not limited to: research salary and/or consultant fees, research assistance (no tuition remission), data collection costs, participant incentives, research travel, and software or hardware (not to exceed \$1,500). Administrative overhead or indirect costs may not exceed 15%. *Program service costs may not be covered by FRPN grant funds.*

- A detailed budget (up to 2-pages) for the full grant period showing all personnel costs, travel costs, supplies, participant incentives and administrative overhead or indirect costs limited to 15% total for both research and program organizations. Please show any additional funding that has been committed to the project that would be added to the FRPN award
- A budget narrative explaining each budget category (personnel, travel, contractual expenses and other costs), including the payment of participant incentives, transportation assistance and food
- A timeline or milestone chart showing major research tasks and completion of each task by month or quarter (e.g., Month 1 or Quarter 1)
- Curriculum vitae/resumes or biographical sketches for the lead applicant(s).
- For non-university or non-government applicants, a copy of the applicant's determination letter for 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status and a 2014 or 2015 audited financial report
- If the applicant is a researcher/practitioner, team, a memorandum of understanding between the researcher and practitioner outlining the partnership and plan for working together
- A letter of commitment showing the researcher will have access to needed data if the proposed project involves an augmentation of an on-going study or funding by another source
- Bibliography/references

What to Expect in the Grant Agreement

FRPN will collaborate with grantees to ensure that funded projects are successfully executed and that grantees contribute to and participate in a learning network aimed at improving the quality of evaluation research and practice in the fatherhood field. As a condition of their award, awardees will be asked to:

- Utilize some outcome measures identified and developed by FRPN staff (where appropriate) to test their effectiveness and build cross-program knowledge.
- Notify and seek prior approval for *major* changes to the original study plan.
- Participate in monthly telephone meetings to review progress of the evaluation.
- Participate in FRPN learning community activities such as periodic conference calls and/or webinars with other current and future grantees.
- Submit a draft final report by March 31, 2018 and the revised final report that incorporates feedback by the FRPN by June 30, 2018.
- Allow FRPN to post the final report on the FRPN website.
- Be prepared to present the results of the research at a research conference convened by FRPN in Washington, DC in late May/early June 2018 (FRPN will pay travel costs for the lead investigator and program representative, if applicable.)

Help for Programs and Researchers Seeking Partnerships

The FRPN strongly encourages collaboration between a researcher and practitioner in this funding opportunity. The FRPN's website includes a message board ("The Researcher & Practitioner Forum") to help researchers and fatherhood programs interested in applying for an award to find a researcher or program partner. The message board can be accessed at: <http://www.frpn.org/research-practice/general-discussion>. When submitting a message for posting on the board, please include the following information: 1) your contact information for potential partners to reach you, 2) a short summary of what you seek to contribute to the application (type of program you offer or research you would like to do), and 3) the type of partner you are looking for. You can also submit a request via the listserv at frpn@list.frpn.org. To sign up for the listserv visit www.frpn.org.

Questions

Please contact Rebecca Kaufman (rebecca.kaufman@temple.edu) with any questions.