

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**SURVEY OF INCOME AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION (SIPP)
ANALYTIC RESEARCH
SMALL GRANTS COMPETITION**

DEADLINE: Friday, December 4, 2009 at 5 PM

Purpose

The National Poverty Center (NPC) at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan seeks proposals for innovative research projects that use data from the 2004 and/or 2008 SIPP Panels. The NPC anticipates funding up to 8 proposals. Awards will range from a maximum of \$20,000 for research using SIPP public-use data and/or SIPP Synthetic Beta (SSB) data, to a maximum of \$40,000 for research using SIPP Gold Standard restricted-use data and/or comparative analyses using SIPP Synthetic Beta (SSB) and SIPP Gold Standard restricted-use data. Funds for this competition are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economics Statistics Division.

Background

The U.S. Census Bureau is re-engineering the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) to accomplish several goals, including reducing program costs, improving accuracy, improving timeliness and accessibility, and improving research and policy relevance.

For the past two decades, the SIPP has been the leading source of panel data on the economic well-being of individuals and households in the United States. A major use of the SIPP has been to evaluate the use of and eligibility for government programs and to analyze the impacts of options for modifying them. The SIPP collects detailed information on cash and non-cash income (including participation in government transfer programs) three times a year; detailed data on taxes, assets, and liabilities are collected annually.

The main objective of the SIPP has been to provide accurate and comprehensive information about the income and program participation of individuals and households. The survey's mission is to provide a nationally representative sample for evaluating: 1) annual and sub-annual income dynamics, 2) movements into and out of government transfer programs, 3) family and social context of individuals and households, and 4) interactions among these items.

The Census Bureau is committed to improving the SIPP, and one of the major goals of this grant program is to support research that will inform the Census Bureau in this effort. Therefore, research projects that will inform Census on data quality aspects of the SIPP, including ways to improve the survey, will be given priority.

We seek proposals for innovative research projects that go beyond extant knowledge of obtaining estimates from SIPP for sub-annual federal and state program participation and receipt amounts, using different recall periods and methods.

Proposals will be considered that use earlier waves of SIPP data, but the project must use data from the 2004 and/or 2008 SIPP Panels, or from the SIPP Synthetic Beta (SSB) or SIPP Gold Standard restricted-use data. Comparisons of estimates from various data sources and studies on the effects of program participation on low income populations are also encouraged.

Listed below are some examples of priority topics, intended for illustrative purposes. This is not a comprehensive list of fundable topics. For example, researchers might propose to:

- Investigate spell length and transitions to and from use of government programs, such as TANF, Food Stamps, WIC, SSI, unemployment insurance, etc.;
- Analyze the interaction of employment and unemployment with participation in government programs;
- Elucidate the various mechanisms accounting for relationships between family structure/changes and indicators of well-being broadly defined to include income, material hardships, health or mental health;
- Focus on the well-being of both adults and children in analyses of the impact of family structure and change; disentangle the effects of income on family structure/transitions;
- Focus on men's or women's work lives, family transitions, and well-being;
- Examine the transitions and/or spells in health insurance coverage and their relationship to other transitions.

Terms of Funding

The following terms apply:

1. Applicants must hold a Ph.D. or equivalent academic degree by September 1, 2009. Preference will be given to non-tenured researchers with full-time academic appointments and researchers using new approaches and innovative methods.
2. Applicants must be eligible for employment in the United States.
3. Recipients of funding through previous NPC small grants competitions **are** eligible to apply.
4. Grants will begin February 1, 2010 and end January 31, 2011. A draft paper will be due September 10, 2010. A final paper will be due February 1, 2011. No-cost extensions are not permitted.
5. These awards will only be made as personal services contracts to one or more individual researchers; **the NPC will not contract with the grantees' employers or any other organization.**

6. The NPC will fund reasonable research expenses, specifically: up to three months of salary for each investigator, data or software purchases, research assistance, research-related travel, and relevant supplies. Awards will range from a maximum of \$20,000 for research using SIPP public-use data and/or SIPP Synthetic Beta (SSB) data, to a maximum of \$40,000 for research using SIPP Gold Standard restricted-use data and/or comparative analyses using SIPP Synthetic Beta (SSB) to SIPP Gold Standard restricted-use data. Budgets must include adequate funds to travel to Washington, D.C. for a one-day conference on October 15, 2010.
7. The NPC will fund direct costs only; we will not provide indirect cost recovery (overhead).
8. Award recipients must present their draft papers at a 1-day conference in Washington, D.C. on October 15, 2010.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by senior scholars affiliated with the NPC in consultation with staff from the U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economics Statistics Division. Proposals will be evaluated based upon several factors, including:

- The quality of study design, including the choice of appropriate research methodology and data;
- The feasibility of the proposed study to be completed during the grant period;
- The significance of the proposed analyses in terms of extending knowledge.

Application Instructions

Applicants should submit their proposal via email to npcinfo@umich.edu. Proposals must be received by **5 PM Eastern Time on Friday, December 4, 2009**. The proposal should be submitted as a single PDF file that includes the following elements, in the order listed below:

- A cover sheet that includes:
 - The title of the proposed research
 - The investigators' name and institutional affiliation with mailing address, email address, phone and fax numbers
 - If the proposed research involves more than one investigator, a principal investigator (PI) must be identified. All correspondence will be with the PI.
- A one-page abstract describing the specific aims, data and methods, and policy significance of the proposed study.
- A description of the proposed project, 7-10 double-spaced pages in length (excluding figures and references). The description should clearly (1) describe specific aims and their research and policy significance, (2) **very** briefly summarize the relevant literature, (3) present major hypotheses, (4) **fully** describe the research design, proposed methodology and data sources, (5) clearly indicate

how the proposed analyses will address the research and policy questions. Long literature reviews should not be submitted. Particular emphasis should be given to items (3), (4) and (5).

Researchers proposing research using SIPP Synthetic Beta (SSB) and/or SIPP Gold Standard restricted-use data must include a plan for gaining access to a Census Research Data Center (RDC), and should note that obtaining Special Sworn Status will be required. Research should focus on performing additional validation studies exploring the analytic validity of the SIPP Synthetic Beta File (SSB).

- An itemized proposed budget and a budget narrative that describes and explains each line item. Please note that these awards will only be made as personal services contracts to one or more individual researchers (we will not contract with universities, colleges or other research organizations).

Please detail each funding item requested. Appropriate research expenses include:

- Research assistance
 - Up to 3 months of salary for each investigator
 - Research-related travel expenses
 - Purchase of data or software
 - Pertinent supplies
 - Travel expenses for author(s) to attend one-day conference in Washington, D.C. on October 15, 2010.
- A project timeline listing specific milestones for study completion. The timeline must be within the period from February 1, 2010 through January 31, 2011.
- Curriculum vitae* for all investigators.
- Human subjects review approval (often a waiver in the case of secondary data analysis) is required for all projects before funding can be dispersed.

Timeline of Important Dates

Deadline for receipt of proposals.....	December 4, 2009
Notification of award	February 1, 2010
Draft paper due	September 10, 2010
Present paper at 1-day workshop in Washington, D.C.	October 15, 2010
Submit final paper that responds to workshop comments	February 1, 2011

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE NATIONAL POVERTY CENTER
NO LATER THAN 5 PM EASTERN TIME ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2009.

Contact Information

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