



## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Transformative research on minimum wage policies**

**ISSUED:** April 7, 2015

**DUE:** May 29, 2015, at 5 p.m. CDT

Many communities across the country have recently passed, or are considering, increases to the minimum wage in order to provide greater financial stability for workers. However, the existing research on minimum wage policy does not include a comprehensive evaluation of how the minimum wage impacts workers and communities. As part of its commitment to ensuring that public policies are rooted in data and evidence, the Laura and John Arnold Foundation (LJAF) is seeking to fund pioneering research projects that study the effect of minimum wage policy changes on economic opportunity, mobility, and household well-being. Research projects should highlight the impact that minimum wage policy has on individuals, employers, governments, and the economy. They should specifically explain the ways in which employers adapt to minimum wage increases and the implications of those changes for workers. In addition, studies should extend beyond sole assessments of employment outcomes and should illuminate the broader ramifications of minimum wage policy changes.

The most competitive projects will include the following components:

- Original research—rather than critiques of previous research or methodologies—that substantially improves understanding of key, policy-relevant questions;
- Research with the potential to significantly advance the national policy discussion that includes a high degree of external validity and that identifies the underlying mechanisms driving the outcomes of a higher minimum wage;
- Methods that leverage new or unique data to answer meaningful policy questions, or the development of new datasets that will be made publicly available and will be valuable for future research on minimum wage policies; and
- Policy-relevant research that results in papers suitable for publication in the top academic journals.

The following questions are of particular interest:

- What are the differential effects of increases to the minimum wage among the households that are impacted?
- What are the effects of increasing the minimum wage on the quality of life for workers and their households?
- Does the minimum wage offer unique advantages or disadvantages relative to other policy tools to address inequality, economic mobility, and wage stagnation?



- How does minimum wage policy interact with government programs or tax policies targeted at low-income earners?
- How do employers adapt to minimum wage increases? How does the response differ by type of employer?

### **Submissions**

Applicants should submit a research proposal by May 29, 2015, at 5 p.m. CDT to **Michelle Welch** ([MWelch@arnoldfoundation.org](mailto:MWelch@arnoldfoundation.org)).

All proposals should include the following sections and should not exceed 10 pages (inclusive of the sections listed below, appendices, and exhibits):

- A half-page abstract;
- A concise summary of the motivation for the project, a description of how the proposed work transcends the current debate, and its importance for public policy;
- A brief review of relevant literature and a clear statement that explains how the proposed work will provide a meaningful and innovative contribution to both academic literature and the evidence base for policymakers (please specifically address how policymakers would be able to use the results of your work);
- A detailed description of research design and methods, which follow LJAF's [Guidelines for Investments in Research](#);
- A project budget and timeline including dates for key milestones, deliverables, and completion; and
- Vita(e) of the researchers.

### **Selection**

All submitted research proposals will be evaluated by a panel of leading experts. Selected proposals will be transformative, will fundamentally improve our understanding of key minimum wage policy questions, and will have broad implications for policy across the country. In addition, selected proposals will bring an innovative and fresh approach to the evaluation of minimum wage policies.

The duration of the award will be three years, and selected projects will be presented and discussed at three annual conferences scheduled during the early, mid, and final stages of the work.

### **About the Laura and John Arnold Foundation**

The Laura and John Arnold Foundation is a private foundation committed to producing substantial, widespread, and lasting reforms that will maximize opportunities and minimize injustice in our society. Its strategic investments are currently focused in criminal justice, education, public accountability, and research integrity. <http://www.arnoldfoundation.org/>