To: Northwestern University Faculty

From: School of Education and Social Policy, Office of Community Education Partnerships (OCEP)

Re: Northwestern-CPS Rapid Impact Grants Program, Request for Proposals

Overview

With generous support from the Spencer Foundation, the Steans Family Foundation, the Chicago Public Education Fund, and an anonymous donor, Northwestern University’s School of Education and Social Policy (SESP) and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) are proud to announce the **Northwestern-CPS Rapid Impact Grants Program**. The program’s goal is to fund small grants for research projects that are of high scholarly quality; that are completed along an accelerated timetable; that are immediately actionable; and that align with CPS programmatic priorities. While the program is administered and supported by SESP, all Northwestern faculty and postdoctoral researchers are invited to participate in the program. Postdoctoral applicants must include a faculty mentor on their project.

As detailed below, researchers will have 6-8 weeks to submit a short proposal. The proposals will describe the research question, its contribution to the scholarly literature, and its methodology, its budget and timeline, and proposed products (both scholarly products and those delivered to CPS).

An anonymous review panel comprised of Northwestern faculty members will review the proposals for scholarly quality and contribution, appropriateness of the budget, and feasibility. Based on recommendations from the faculty panel, proposals will then be reviewed by CPS on actionability, timeliness, and alignment to CPS priorities.

If the full allocation of the Rapid Impact Grants Program is not spent in this first round of funding, there will be a second round of funding announced in the fall. Some proposals from the first round may be offered the opportunity to “revise and resubmit” for a second round of funding.

Preliminarily approved research proposals will require approval by Northwestern’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and CPS’s Research Review Board.

Timeline

- Early August: Call for proposals announced to Northwestern researcher community
- September 7: Due date for proposals
- Early/Mid-September: Northwestern scientific review committee meets, delivers rated proposals to CPS by September 21, 2018
- Late September/Early October: CPS leadership rank orders proposals; CPS and SESP leadership determine preliminary funding decisions from round 1 and notify researchers by October 19.
- November: Second round of call for proposals, if necessary
- December: Due date for second round of proposals
- Early/Mid-January: Northwestern scientific review committee meets, delivers rated proposals to CPS, if second round occurs
• Late January/Early February: CPS leadership rank orders proposals; CPS and SESP leadership determine preliminary funding decisions for second round, if it occurs.

• Proposals are due to ed_partnerships@northwestern.edu no later than September 7th at noon. Please submit as a PDF with “Rapid Impacts Grant Submission” as the subject line.

• Preliminary funding decisions will be announced by October 19, 2018.

• Disbursement of funds for preliminarily approved proposals will occur immediately following proposal approval from Northwestern’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and CPS’s Research Review Board. Researchers are encouraged (though not required) to begin the IRB process in parallel with proposal submission, to accelerate the final approval and funds disbursement.

• Applicants are encouraged to consult the CPS research agenda, available at https://ocep.northwestern.edu/data-partnerships.html, to understand CPS’s research priorities.

While the program is administered and supported by SESP, all Northwestern faculty and post-doctoral researchers are invited to apply. Postdoctoral applicants must include a faculty mentor on their project.

Evaluation & Guidelines
Proposals will be initially evaluated by an anonymous panel of Northwestern faculty for scholarly quality and contribution, appropriateness of the budget, and feasibility and then by CPS leadership on the basis of these criteria as well as timeliness, actionability, and CPS priorities. The Northwestern faculty panel will give each proposal a rating ranging from 1 (very highest quality) to 5 (low quality) during the initial review. Proposals rated 3 or better will be conveyed to CPS, which will rank-order the remaining proposals on the basis of this quality rating, actionability, timeliness, and CPS priorities.

Proposals should be 3-6 pages in length, single spaced and describe the following:

• Research question and its contribution to the scholarly literature
• Methodology
• Budget and timeline
• Expected products

Successful proposals will lead to both scholarly products as well as products generated for CPS use. Proposals using administrative data are especially encouraged, but proposals making use of other data sources are also welcome.

Proposals that can produce products for CPS by June 30, 2019 will have priority for funding. Projects must be 12 months maximum or shorter in duration, and end no later than March 31, 2020.

Budget
The maximum budget for a proposal will be $35,000. Proposals with budgets under $20,000 have the best chance of funding. Budgets should include only direct costs.

Questions
Questions can be addressed to ed_partnerships@northwestern.edu. Information regarding the CPS-Northwestern data sharing agreement and instructions for applying for administrative data from CPS, regardless of receipt of a grant, are available at https://ocep.northwestern.edu/data-partnerships.html