

# *Analyzing Relationships Between Disability, Rehabilitation and Work (ARDRAW)*

## *Small Grant Program for Graduate-Level Research*

### *2018-2019 Request for Applications (RFA) and Application Instructions*

#### **Program Description**

The objective of the ARDRAW Small Grant Program is to foster new analysis of work, rehabilitation, and disability issues, which may develop innovative and fresh perspectives on disability by providing research stipends to a broad spectrum of graduate students. ARDRAW replaces the 5-year grant called the [Disability Determination Process Small Grant Program](#), **with a new focus on** research relevant to SSA's work incentives and employment support - specifically rehabilitation, work and the disability program.

SSA has provided guidance on issues that might be fruitful areas for research. Potential research areas of inquiry include, but are not limited to:

- Working conditions and characteristics of SSA beneficiaries who return to work
- SSA's work incentive programs
- Work accommodations and needs of SSA beneficiaries and other individuals with impairments
- Vocational and other types of service use by SSA beneficiaries
- Other factors affecting return to work efforts for SSA beneficiaries and individuals with impairments

Information on additional research topics can be found at the end of this RFA.

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

- Applicants must be masters, doctoral, or post-doctoral-level part-time or full-time graduate students pursuing studies in accredited programs at the time of the award (Fall semester of 2018) with an academic emphasis in topics of interest to disability programs, including, but not limited to, public health, social work, economics, occupational medicine, vocational and rehabilitation counseling, public policy and administration, sociology, psychology, education, medicine, employment and law.
- At the time of stipend award, selected graduate student researchers must be citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States, or must have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence. Members of minority and historically disadvantaged groups are encouraged to apply.
- Students who are **not** eligible for the stipend award:
  - Individuals on temporary or student visas
  - Employees of SSA (including DDS)
  - Students receiving funds from multiple SSA sources (like the Disability Research Consortium) at the time of applying for an ARDRAW stipend
- Students are required to list any other federal funding for their research.
- Applicants may submit more than one proposal for consideration per year, but can receive only one stipend award per year.

## Amount and Disbursement of Award

Students will receive a stipend of \$10,000 for the one-year program: stipends may be subject to tax withholding. The stipend may be added to other financial support the graduate student receives from his or her university/research organization. The stipend is not provided as a condition of employment either with the federal government or PRI.

Payments will be disbursed directly to awardees in two installments: (1) after submission and approval of research paper work plan (4-6 weeks following notification of the award) and (2) upon completion of the final research product and other deliverables as specified below.

## Application Procedures

1. **Read** this RFA for complete details and requirements of the program.
2. **Familiarize** yourself with the SSA Red Book (<https://www.ssa.gov/redbook/>) and view the Suggested Research Projects below to ensure that your proposal meets the goals of this program. As a further resource, you may read some of our previously funded research projects from the [DDP Small Grant Program](#). Titles of current ARDRAW Cohort 1 papers can be accessed [here](#).
3. **Attend one of the informational calls, either on January 31, 2018 at 3:30 pm (ET) or February 8, 2018 at 2:00 pm (ET)**. These calls are designed to provide an overview of a successful application. Potential applicants and their faculty mentors are strongly encouraged to attend. **Please go to the following links to register:**
  - **January 31, 2018 at 3:30pm (ET):** <http://bit.ly/2zAk4j5>
  - **February 8, 2018 at 2:00 pm (ET):** <http://bit.ly/2BvcEhO>
4. **Complete** the [online application](#) and attach the following materials **by 5:00 pm (ET) on Thursday, March 1, 2018:**
  - a. **An abstract and five (5) page research proposal written in APA style**, excluding references, tables, and figures (12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins, single-spaced). Please see Evaluation Criteria below for further guidance.
  - b. **Proof of Access to Data**. If secondary data is being used (data not collected by the applicant), a letter from the agency or organization clearly approving access to and use of data is required.
  - c. **IRB Approval Plan and Timeframe**. Projects must be reviewed by your academic institution's IRB. Please address how this will be accomplished.
  - d. **A resume or curriculum vitae**. (12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins, single-spaced)
5. **Two (2) Letters of Recommendation** must be e-mailed directly by the referrers to [ardraw@policyresearchinc.org](mailto:ardraw@policyresearchinc.org) **by 5:00 pm (ET) on Thursday, March 1, 2018:**
  - a. One (1) from the Faculty Mentor for this project clearly stating support of your proposed research as feasible and potentially impactful to the field, as well as a willingness to provide consistent supervision and guidance throughout the project. This includes participation in quarterly calls and the review of all deliverables prior to submission.

- b. One (1) from an academic or professional contact who can comment on the qualities that make you an effective researcher and your potential for success with independent research.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Applications will initially be screened for completeness and relevance to the research goals of the ARDRAW Small Grant Program. If judged complete and relevant, the application will be further evaluated by a panel of scholars. Your application will be evaluated **based on the following criteria:**

1. Statement of Problem and Literature Review (20%)
  - a. Clear statement of the problem
  - b. Specific and relevant research questions designed to explore/strengthen relationships between work, rehabilitation, and disability issues. Comprehensive literature review - your review should identify strengths and weaknesses of existing research and identify areas of further exploration
2. Understanding and Methodology (30%)
  - a. Demonstration of researcher's understanding of the current relationships between work, rehabilitation and disability
  - b. Appropriateness and soundness of methodology, including research design, choice of data, methods of analysis, and other procedures
  - c. Explanation of how your proposed research might develop innovative and fresh perspectives on the relationships between work, rehabilitation and disability
3. Outcomes and Implications (25%)
  - a. Anticipated outcomes
  - b. Statement of policy or programmatic implications
4. Project Feasibility (20%)
  - a. Feasibility of completing project within a 1-year timeframe (reasonableness of time commitment related to data collection, analysis, and other procedures)
  - b. Statement of how this fits into your academic career (e.g. part of dissertation)
5. Strength of Letters of Recommendation (5%)
  - a. Faculty Mentor: Support of your proposed research as feasible and potentially impactful to the field, as well as a willingness to provide consistent supervision and guidance throughout the project
  - b. Academic or professional contact: Confidence in your abilities as an effective researcher and your potential for success with independent research

Award decisions are expected **by Friday, May 4, 2018. Final approval is contingent on review and acceptance of the project's work plan.**

### **Deliverables**

If selected for this grant, each award recipient is expected to:

1. Submit a detailed work plan indicating objectives, activities, and timeframes
2. Participate in a welcome teleconference with grant recipients, faculty mentors, PRI, and SSA
3. Submit a letter of approval from his/her academic institution's IRB

4. Submit quarterly progress reports summarizing status of research activities
5. Participate in quarterly conference calls with his/her faculty mentor and PRI
6. Submit a draft research product by **Friday, May 17, 2019**
7. Submit a 15-page final written research product by **Friday, June 28, 2019**

For more information visit <http://ardraw.policyresearchinc.org> or contact us at [ardraw@policyresearchinc.org](mailto:ardraw@policyresearchinc.org).

### **Suggested Research Topics**

The Social Security Administration has provided an extensive list of research topics for ARDRAW. Please click [here](#) for a printable version of these topics or you can access them on the [ARDRAW website](#).