

Welcome! The ARDRAW webinar will begin shortly.

Technical Assistance FAQs

1. Why can't I hear anything?

- To hear audio, use your phone to call toll-free: 1-866-705-2554
 - Enter Access code: 331-408
 - There is NO hold music, so you won't hear anything until the webinar begins.

2. Can I get the slides for today's webinar?

- Download this presentation from: <http://ardraw.policyresearchinc.org/>

3. Will this webinar be recorded?

- YES, this webinar is being recorded and will be available for viewing on the ARDRAW website within 1 week of this presentation.

4. Who can I call for technical assistance?

- Contact Suzy Sodergren at ssodergren@prainc.com if you experience technical difficulties.

Analyzing Relationships Between Disability, Rehabilitation, and Work (ARDRAW) Small Grant Program

Informational Webinar
January 28, 2021



Welcome!

Laura King, Federal Project Officer, Social Security Administration
Erica Smitka, Project Coordinator, Policy Research, Inc.



Agenda

- I. Overview of ARDRAW Small Grant Program
- II. ARDRAW Program Details and Application Process
- III. Presentation from current ARDRAW program participants
- IV. Overview of SSA Program Areas
- V. Questions and Answers

ARDRAW Small Grant Program

- Sponsored by the Social Security Administration
- Coordinated by Policy Research, Inc., Delmar, New York
- <http://ardraw.policyresearchinc.org/>

ARDRAW: A Brief History

- A successor research grant program to the Disability Determination Process (DDP) Small Grant Program
 - Completed projects: <https://ardraw.policyresearchinc.org/completed-projects/>
- The goals of ARDRAW
 - To provide new analysis of work, rehabilitation, and disability issues, in suggested research areas
 - To provide experience in conducting funded, independent research projects
 - To promote continued research in the area of disability
- This is the fifth ARDRAW cohort

ARDRAW Program Focus

- Analysis of work, rehabilitation, and disability
- Focus on SSA's employment programs, specifically rehabilitation, work, and SSA's disability programs
- Some suggested areas:
 - Characteristics of SSA beneficiaries, such as age and job characteristics
 - Workplace accommodations and benefits
 - Impact of policy changes on individuals' ability to work
 - Vocational and other services used by SSA beneficiaries

Program Overview

- One-year program
- Graduate-level students
- Supervised independent research
- \$10,000 stipends

Professional Development Opportunities

- Writing and research resources for students on website
 - Publishing guidance
- Professional conferences
- Interact with SSA experts
- Post-project opportunities
 - Webinars for Cohort 5 students to present their research

ARDRAW Program Details and Application Process

Erica Smitka, ARDRAW Program Coordinator



ARDRAW Program Eligibility Criteria

- Full or part-time graduate student in an accredited program at the time of award (Fall semester 2021)
- Academic emphasis on employment, rehabilitation, disability, public health, economics, social work, occupational medicine, etc.
- U.S. citizen or non-citizen national
- University faculty mentor committed to assist in research
- Employees of SSA are not eligible
- Applicants currently receiving funds from another SSA source are not eligible

Application Process

- Complete application packet on the ARDRAW website
- Application packet includes
 - An abstract and research proposal (5 pages)
 - Proof of access to data
 - IRB approval and timeframe
 - A resume or CV
 - Two letters of recommendation emailed directly to ardraw@policyresearchinc.org
- Submit by **February 26, 2021**
- Notification by April 22, 2021

Selection Criteria

- Detailed description in the RFA
- First level of review
 - Completeness of the application packet
 - Relevance to the ARDRAW research objectives
- Second level
 - Review by ARDRAW Project Coordinator
 - May provide feedback on suggested improvements to proposal before “official” review
- Third level
 - Review by a panel of researchers and the Social Security Administration

You're selected! What's next?

- You will have 1 month to submit a detailed Work Plan (by June 1)
- Students and faculty mentors participate on quarterly calls
- Submit deliverables in a timely fashion
 - Work Plan – June 1, 2021
 - Quarterly reports
 - 15 page final research project – Draft due: May 13, 2022
 - Final paper due June 24, 2022

Research Stipend FAQs

- Is there a budget or reporting required?
 - No
- Can my university accept the stipend payment directly and apply it to my account?
 - Yes
- If it is a group project, will both of us get a stipend?
 - No, one representative of the team will receive the payment.
- Can I pay participants in my research project with the stipend funds?
 - Yes

Tips for Success

- Topics that are relevant
- Basic understanding of SSA programs
- Research that is feasible
 - Can be completed in a year
 - Enough participants
 - Access to data
 - Factor in time for IRB review

Timeline Recap

- Application deadline: February 26, 2021
- Award notification: April 22, 2021
- Work Plan due: June 1, 2021
- Draft paper due: May 13, 2022
- Revised paper due: June 24, 2022
- Webinar presentation: August 2022

Current ARDRAW Small Grant Program Awardees

Katherine Hurley, PhD Candidate, George Washington University

Rumi Agarwal, PhD Candidate, Florida International University



Katherine Hurley, PhD Candidate

- ARDRAW grant awards:
 - 2018-2019: *Agriculture and Agriculture-based Employment for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Exploring Benefits and Barriers through Community-based Participatory Research*
 - 2019-2020: *Do Early Mentorship and Work-Exposure Predict Type of Employment and Longevity in the Workforce for Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder Eligible for Social Security Benefits*
 - 2020-2021: *Workplace and Interview Disclosure Strategies for Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder Eligible for Social Security Benefits: An Analysis of Employer, Employee and Applicant Experiences*

Application Tips

- Apply with a study idea you really care about.
- Think about how the study can help the population(s) of interest and include them in the process as much as possible.
- Think about how this study can answer questions related to Social Security Benefits.
- Write toward those goals.
- Expect to get great feedback from the reviewers and apply that feedback.

General Tips

- Stay in touch with ARDRAW about progress, pitfalls, etc.—They really are here to help and want you to succeed!
- Remember this is a one-year grant, so keep that in mind when creating a feasible workplan based on the needs of your research study.
- Learn a lot, research a lot, engage with the process—you'll get out what you put into it!

Rumi Agarwal, PhD Candidate

ARDRAW grant award:

- 2020-2021: *Financial planning behaviors amongst parents of transition-aged adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities: An exploratory study*

Application Tips

- Look at the suggested topics on the ARDRAW website
- Try to keep your research idea simple – identify your one key issue and population of interest
- Seek out individuals who work with your topic of interest (especially in the service sector) to understand what might be some factors to consider - be resourceful and humble
- Don't rush thinking about the research design and analysis plan. The more time you spend thinking about it now, the easier it will be later
- Take feedback you receive on your application into consideration. It will improve your overall study

General Tips

- If you plan to do online survey research, think if you really need to offer a financial incentive or use social media?
- Take the time to design your data collection tools, keeping in mind the analysis and variables you will want to use
- Add attention checks throughout, and check if the online platform has strong security features beyond reCAPTCHA
- Try and envision (better yet write out) an outline with *headings* of what the results section of your final paper may look like
- Create a file/sheet of paper to track ALL the dates and corresponding activities you undertake. This will help with writing the quarterly reports.
- Keep ARDRAW updated with any changes & progress

Overview of SSA Program Areas

Disability Programs and Work Incentives

Laura King, ARDRAW Project Officer



SSA's Disability Programs and Work Incentives

Laura King



SSA has two different disability programs.

- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) provides benefits to disabled or blind people who are “insured” by workers’ contributions to the SSA trust fund.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) makes cash assistance payments to the aged, blind and disabled who have limited income and assets.

SSA's Definition of Disability

The inability to engage in substantial gainful activity because of a medically determinable impairment:

- That is expected to result in death, or
- That has lasted or is expected to last for a period of 12 continuous months.

Definition of Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)

- SGA is work activity either as an employee or a self-employed person
- It is used as a guideline to determine initial and continuing disability entitlement for SSDI beneficiaries and initial entitlement for SSI recipients.
- Monthly amounts for 2021
 - \$1,310: Non-blind
 - \$2,190: Blind

More Information

- If you are not familiar with SSA's disability benefit programs, you can learn more on our website. A good place to start is <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/qualify.html>

Work Incentives

- Work Incentives are SSA rules that help beneficiaries keep their benefits as they explore work.
 - For SSDI recipients, work incentives provide opportunities for beneficiaries to make money that exceeds SGA, gain new skills, and achieve greater independence through work without losing access to valuable benefits.
 - For SSI recipients, the more income an individual has, the lower his or her benefit will be – but work incentives include some exclusions that help the individual keep a higher benefit payment.

More Information

- For more information on employment supports visit the SSA website and download The Red Book <https://www.ssa.gov/redbook/index.html>

Questions and Answers

- Please type your question into the chat panel located on the right-hand side of your screen, or
- To ask a question by phone, please unmute and introduce yourself before asking your question
- Following today's webinar, you can email questions directly to ardraw@policyresearchinc.org

Contact Us

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