Engaged Research Competition
Request for Applications (Funding Period: January–June 2023)

Applications due September 30, 2022,
at 5:15 p.m. ET
The Engaged Research Competition, held annually over the next four years, will provide $35,000 in flexible funding to support engaged research with public or non-profit partners. It is open to all tenure-track assistant professors at Georgia State University.

Background

The Georgia Policy Labs (GPL) recently won an Institutional Challenge Grant, jointly funded by the William T. Grant Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and Spencer Foundation. One goal of the award is to reduce structural barriers that inhibit early and mid-career researchers from pursuing research-practice partnerships (RPPs). To help researchers build impactful RPPs, GPL has designed this Engaged Research Competition to provide funding over the next four years to tenure-track assistant professors to develop or further develop an engaged partnership with a non-profit or public entity.

We thank the Office of the Provost, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, and Dan E. Sweat Endowment for providing funds for this competition.

What is an RPP?

According to the William T. Grant Foundation, research-practice partnerships are “long-term, mutually beneficial collaborations that promote the production and use of rigorous research about problems of practice.” These RPPs take many forms and have several benefits:

[RPPs] are a promising strategy for better aligning the research and practice communities. Researchers who partner with practitioners are well equipped to understand local contexts, address pressing questions, and produce informative and actionable findings. They also gain access to policy insights and data that can facilitate rigorous and groundbreaking research. Likewise, practitioners can more easily access, interpret, and use research evidence when they collaborate with researchers and help define research agendas. Partnerships, then, equip organizations—whether they are school districts, public agencies, or nonprofit entities—with new knowledge and tools to better serve [communities].
**What is the Engaged Research Competition?**

Over the next four years, GPL will award one or more internal grant to tenure-track assistant professors who are engaged in or actively pursuing a long-term, mutually-beneficial research-practice partnership with a non-profit or public agency. Funds of up to $35,000 annually can support course releases, summer funding, doctoral-level graduate research assistantships (GRAs), and registration and travel costs to an RPP-aligned conference. Partnerships can be emerging or established. Funds are intended to remove structural barriers from conducting engaged research (e.g., the longer time to publication when answering questions of practice, complications setting up data sharing agreements, and time spent building trust with a partner). Priority will be given to applications that demonstrate how the funds will support engaged research; the potential to build and/or sustain the RPP; and the ability to generate a lasting, impactful research agenda.

**How to Apply**

Applications must be submitted by September 30, 2022, at 5:15 p.m. ET. All individuals in the workflow must approve the application by October 4 at 5:15 p.m. ET.

The proposal narrative must be uploaded through the [Internal Grants portal](#) as a single PDF file not to exceed three single-spaced pages. You must also upload the budget and budget justification using the [provided Excel template](#). Within the portal, you will be asked to provide some basic information; upload the two files (not to exceed 10 MB combined for both files); and route it through an application approval workflow that consists of (a) your department chair, (b) your unit business manager, and (c) your unit grants manager or your college grants and contracts officer.

**Narrative**

The narrative should address the elements below and not exceed three single-spaced pages.

- Partner information
  - Organization name
  - Website
○ Contact person
○ Contact person’s email address
○ Type of partnership (new or established)

● Brief organizational overview and history of the research-practice partnership

● Problem articulation
○ What’s the problem you’re trying to solve?
○ What do you bring to solving the problem?
○ What does the partner organization bring to solving the problem?

● Outline your year 1 goals related to
○ Partnership building,
○ Research agenda setting/planning,
○ Data acquisition/data-sharing agreements (if applicable), and
○ Preliminary research.

● What would this RPP be doing in five years?

● How does this RPP align with your advancement toward tenure and promotion?

● Optional: Applicants are highly encouraged to append a letter of support or commitment from their partner to the narrative, but it is not required. Supportive letters from partners will be viewed favorably by the review committee. Letters of support do not count toward the three-page narrative limit.

Budget and Budget Justification

Using the provided Excel budget template, applicants should indicate the amount of funding requested (up to $35,000) and describe how the funding will be used. Please download the budget and budget justification template below.

Download Budget and Budget Justification Template

This competition does not allow indirect costs, and personnel costs must include the corresponding fringe rate. Funds must be spent by June 30, 2023. Funds can only be used for doctoral-level GRAs if students are actively
contributing to the project in partnership with the principal investigator (PI). If requesting funding for GRAs, describe their roles in the budget justification.

**Application Checklist**

A full and complete application will include the following items. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

1. Application page completed within the [Internal Grants portal](#).
2. An application narrative that does not exceed three single-spaced pages. **Optional:** A signed letter of support or commitment from the partner organization.
3. A budget and budget justification using the template.
4. Approval workflow that consists of (a) your department chair, (b) your unit business manager, and (c) your unit grants manager or college grants and contracts officer (completed and approved by October 4, 2022, at 5:15 p.m. ET).

**Application Review Process**

Applications will be reviewed beginning in October 2022, with award decisions expected by the end of the month. Funding will begin in January 2023. A committee consisting of Maggie Reeves, Janice Fournillier, and Jonathan Smith will review applications based on the rubric below.

- How is this RPP uniquely positioned to solve the articulated problem?
- Does the application outline a clear plan to achieve the immediate and long-term goals of the RPP?
- How well does this application document the history of the RPP and explain its ability to succeed?

**Eligibility**

The Engaged Research Competition is open to all tenure-track assistant professors at Georgia State University across all campuses. Applicants must not be tenured at the time of application.
Frequently Asked Questions

What are the document formatting requirements?

The proposal narrative cannot exceed three single-spaced pages. The optional letter of support or commitment does not count toward the three-page limit. The budget and budget justification should use the provided Excel template and follow the instructions contained within that file. Please use one-inch margins and Times New Roman font. The narrative (and optional letter of support or commitment) should be uploaded as a single PDF file in the Internal Grants portal. The budget should be uploaded as an Excel (.xlsx) file.

Who should I include in the approval workflow?

For your application to be eligible for review, it must include all the required elements and be approved in the Internal Grants portal by (a) your department chair, (b) your unit business manager, and (c) your unit grants manager or college grants and contracts officer. Applications are due by September 30, 2022, at 5:15 p.m. ET. All individuals in the workflow must approve the application by October 4 at 5:15 p.m. ET.

Is this competition for new, developing, or established RPPs?

This competition is designed to support new, developing, and/or established RPPs.

Are you funding any particular subject matter or any particular field?

No. We encourage applications from all disciplines and focus areas.

Does the budget allow for indirect costs?

No.

Does this award allow sub-awards?

No, this award does not allow sub-awards or any flow through of funds to the partner(s).
Can funding be used to support graduate research assistantships?

Yes. Funds can only be used for doctoral-level GRAs if students are actively contributing to the project in partnership with the PI. If requesting funding for GRAs, please describe their roles in the budget justification.

When can I expect an award decision?

The review process will begin in October 2022, with award decisions expected by the end of the month. Funding will begin in January 2023.

Is this award renewable?

Applicants may apply for future rounds of funding, but this application is for the first year only.

Will there be any reporting requirements?

Yes. Within 30 days of receiving the award, the PI will meet with GPL to discuss the project and to determine how GPL can best support them through the RPP experience. Additionally, the PI and partner organization will prepare a joint presentation for GPL at the end of the award to highlight activities and progress to date, which will be shared with all funders.

Are there limits on the size of the uploaded files?

Yes. The total file size combined between the narrative (including the optional letter of support or commitment) and the budget and budget justification template cannot exceed 10 MB. Please note, adding images and graphics to your proposal narrative can substantially increase the file size. If this happens, you may need to reduce the file size before uploading.

Who can I contact with questions?

For questions about the Engaged Research Competition and the application, please contact Tyler Rogers at trogers11@gsu.edu or (404) 413-0136.
Endnotes

1. See gpl.gsu.edu/

2. news.gsu.edu/2022/04/13/georgia-state-university-achieve-atlanta-research-practice-partnership-wins-national-challenge-grant/

3. See rpp.wtgrantfoundation.org/about/

4. See rpp.wtgrantfoundation.org/about/

5. For example, Association of Public Management and Policy, Association for Education Finance and Policy, National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships
About the Review Committee

Maggie Reeves

Maggie Reeves is the senior director of the Georgia Policy Labs at Georgia State University. Serving as the organization’s first director, she built the organization over the past three years and now leads its strategy, team, and operations. Her roles in creating evidence-based policies to improve Georgian’s lives have spanned positions in academia, the state executive branch, and the state judicial branch. She received her master’s degree in public administration from the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University and her bachelor’s degree in women’s studies from Emory University. She is a proud alumna of the Executive Leadership Academy for Women.

Janice Fournillier

Janice Fournillier is a professor with tenure at Georgia State University. She teaches and writes about qualitative research methodologies and works as a program evaluator and research methodologist on state- and national-funded grants. She published several articles exploring the use of qualitative research methodologies from the perspective of a “native” ethnographer using data from her Ph.D. dissertation on Carnival mas’ making in her native country of Trinidad and Tobago. She has a research interest in auto-ethnography, case studies, teaching and learning in non-school contexts like Trinidad and Tobago Carnival mas’ camps, teacher education, and urban contexts.

Jonathan Smith

Jonathan Smith is an associate professor of economics at Georgia State University and a fellow with the Georgia Policy Labs. His research focuses on the behavioral and institutional factors that determine how students transition from high school to college and the consequences of those decisions. Prior to joining Georgia State University, he worked as a policy research scientist at the College Board. He received his Ph.D. in economics from Boston University and a B.A. in economics from Tufts University.
About the Georgia Policy Labs

The Georgia Policy Labs is an interdisciplinary research center that drives policy and programmatic decisions that lift children, students, and families—especially those experiencing vulnerabilities. We produce evidence and actionable insights to realize the safety, capability, and economic security of every child, young adult, and family in Georgia by leveraging the power of data. We work alongside our school district and state agency partners to magnify their research capabilities and focus on their greatest areas of need. Our work reveals how policies and programs can be modified so that every child, student, and family can thrive.

Housed in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University, we have three components: the Metro Atlanta Policy Lab for Education (metro-Atlanta K–12 public education), the Child & Family Policy Lab (supporting children, families, and students through a cross-agency approach), and the Career & Technical Education Policy Exchange (a multi-state consortium exploring high-school-based career and technical education).

Learn more at gpl.gsu.edu.